

Denver Labor Day Conference

September 5–7, 2009

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK OF ACTS:
BEING ONE WITH THE LORD IN HIS MOVE
FOR THE UNIVERSAL SPREADING
OF THE CHURCH AS THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS**

Message One

**The Wind, the Cloud, the Fire, and the Electrum
and the Coordination of the Four Living Creatures
for God's Expression, Move, and Administration**

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:14; 2:46–47; 5:42; Ezek. 1:4–28

I. The spiritual history of every normal Christian should be a continual cycle involving the experience of God as the wind, the cloud, the fire, and the electrum—Ezek. 1:4:

- A. Whenever God visits us and revives us, His Spirit blows on us like a mighty wind to bring a spiritual storm into our life, into our work, and into our church, causing us to be dissatisfied and concerned about our spiritual condition and to have a turn in our spiritual life—v. 4.
- B. The cloud is a figure of God as the Spirit abiding with His people and covering them in order to care for them and show favor to them—v. 4; Exo. 13:21; 40:34–35.
- C. The fire signifies God's burning and sanctifying power; the more the fire of the Holy Spirit burns in us, the more we are purified and enlightened—Ezek. 1:4; Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29.
- D. The electrum, composed of the elements of gold and silver, signifies the Lamb-God, the redeeming God—Ezek. 1:4; Rev. 22:1:
 1. The more we experience the wind, the cloud, and the fire, the more the electrum is constituted into our being, making us a people who are filled with the Triune God and who manifest His glory—Eph. 3:16–17, 21.
 2. The issue of the spiritual transactions involving the blowing wind, the covering cloud, and the purifying fire is the glowing electrum—the radiant expression of the redeeming God.

II. The more we experience God as the blowing wind, the overshadowing cloud, the burning fire, and the glowing electrum, the more we are enlivened with the divine life to become the four living creatures—Ezek. 1:5a:

- A. The four living creatures are reckoned not as individuals but as a group, one entity.
- B. That the four living creatures bear the likeness of a man and that God on the throne also bears the appearance of a man indicates that God's central thought and His arrangement are related to man—vv. 5b, 26; Gen. 1:26; Psa. 8:4–8

1. According to the vision unveiled in Ezekiel 1, man is the means for God to manifest His glory, for God to move on the earth, and for God to administrate on the throne.
2. God uses the wind, the cloud, the fire, and the electrum to enliven us in order to gain man as the means for His manifestation, move, and administration.

III. Ezekiel 1:11b–14 conveys a clear picture of the coordination of the living creatures—a portrait of the proper church life with the coordination of the members of the Body of Christ:

- A. The joining of the two wings (eagle’s wings) of the living creatures is for their corporate moving in coordination—v. 1 1b:
 1. The wings of an eagle signify the grace, strength, and power of God applied to us—Exo. 19:4; Isa. 40:3 1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:7; 12:9.
 2. The eagle’s wings are the means by which the living creatures are coordinated and move as one; their coordination is not in themselves but in God and by the divine grace, strength, and power—cf. Exo. 26:26–29.
- B. The move of the living creatures is not individual but corporate, the move of one entity in coordination; this is a beautiful picture of the coordination in the church as the Body of Christ, in which each member has his particular position and function, or ministry—Ezek. 1:12; Rom. 12:4–8; 1 Cor. 12:14–30; Eph. 4:7–16.
- C. The issue of the coordination of the living creatures is that they become burning coals, with the holy God as a consuming fire burning among them and within them; that both the Lord on the throne and the living creatures have the appearance of fire indicates that the living creatures are the expression of the Lord—Ezek. 1:13, 26; Heb. 12:29.
- D. The living creatures, having a proper coordination, will not walk but run, because they have the power and the impact—Ezek. 1:14.
- E. The coordination of the believers as members of the Body of Christ results in the corporate expression of Christ, in the move of God on the earth, and in the administration of God on the throne, thus affording God a way to manifest His glory and accomplish His eternal purpose and plan—vv. 4–12, 26.

IV. In the book of Ezekiel God’s economy and God’s move in His economy are signified by a great wheel—v. 15; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4:

- A. The hub of this great wheel signifies Christ as the center of God’s economy; the rim signifies Christ’s counterpart, the church, which consummates in the New Jerusalem; and the spokes of the wheel spreading from the hub to the rim signify the many believers as the members of Christ—Col. 1:15–18; Eph. 5:30.
- B. The appearing of the wheels on the earth beside the living creatures indicates that God’s move on earth follows the coordination of the four living creatures—Ezek. 1:15.
- C. The wheels being for the four faces of the living creatures indicates that if we would have the Lord’s move, we must first live out the Lord, expressing Him—v. 15; Phil. 1:20–21a.
- D. All four wheels have the same appearance; this indicates that the move of the Lord has the same appearance in every church—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16.
- E. A wheel within a wheel indicates that in the move of the living creatures there is the move of the Lord; the inner wheel, the Lord as the hub, is the source of the power for the moving of the outer wheel, the church as the rim—Ezek. 1:16.

Message One –Ezekiel 1

- 4 And I looked, and there came a storm wind from the north, a great cloud and a fire flashing incessantly; and there was a brightness around it, and from the midst of it there was something like the sight of electrum, from the midst of the fire.
- 5 And from the midst of it there came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: They had the likeness of a man.
- 6 And every one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings.
- 7 And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the sight of burnished bronze.
- 8 And the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides. And the four of them had their faces and their wings thus:
- 9 Their wings were joined one to another; they did not turn as they went; each went straight forward.
- 10 As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and the four of them had the face of a lion on the right side, and the four of them had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four of them had the face of an eagle.
- 11 And thus their faces were. And their wings were spread out upward; two wings of each were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.
- 12 And each went straight forward; wherever the Spirit was to go, they went; they did not turn as they went.
- 13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches; the fire went to and fro among the living creatures, and the fire was bright; and out of the fire went forth lightning.
- 14 And the living creatures ran to and fro like the appearance of a lightning bolt.
- 15 And as I watched the living creatures, I saw a wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of their four faces.
- 16 The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship were like the sight of beryl. And the four of them had one likeness; that is, their appearance and their workmanship were as it were a wheel within a wheel.
- 17 Whenever they went, they went in their four directions; they did not turn as they went.
- 18 As for their rims, they were high and they were awesome; and the rims of the four of them were full of eyes all around.
- 19 And whenever the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and whenever the living creatures were lifted up above the earth, the wheels were lifted up also.
- 20 Wherever the Spirit was to go, they went—wherever the Spirit was to go. And the wheels were lifted up alongside them, for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.
- 21 Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still; and whenever those were lifted up above the earth, the wheels were lifted up alongside them; for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.
- 22 And over the heads of the living creature there was the likeness of an expanse, like the sight of awesome crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.
- 23 And under the expanse one pair of their wings went straight out, one toward the other; each had another pair covering their bodies on this side and on that side.
- 24 And I heard the sound of their wings, like the sound of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, as they went; it was the sound of a tumult, like the sound of an army. Whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.
- 25 And there was a voice from above the expanse that was over their heads. When they stood still, they dropped their wings.
- 26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.
- 27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.
- 28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

Message Two

Being the Lord's Continuation: The Universal Spreading of Christ as the True Vine—the Organism of the Triune God in the Economy of God

Scripture Reading: John 15:1–2, 4–13, 16–17; 13:34–35; 17:21

I. The organic increase and universal spreading of the church is the multiplication of Christ in the fruit-bearing of the branches of Christ, the true vine in the universe, as the organism of the Triune God in the economy of God—John 15:1–2, 4–5, 8, 16.

II. As the true vine, Christ is the center of God's operation in the universe—v. 1; Col. 1:15–18; 2:9; 3:4, 11:

A. The entire universe is a vineyard, and centered in this vineyard is the true vine, which is Christ the Son; everything that God the Father is and has is for this center, is embodied in this center, and is expressed through this center—John 15:1; 1:18; 3:35; 16:15; 17:10.

B. The true vine—the center of God's operation in the universe—is for the propagation and multiplication of life—15:5, 8, 16:

1. To propagate life is to spread life widely, and to multiply life is to reproduce life—10:10; 12:24; 15:16.
2. This propagation and multiplication of life is to express life for the glorification of the Father—v. 8.

C. The vine and the branches are an organism to glorify the Father, to have the intent, the content, the inner life, and the inner riches released and expressed from within—vv. 1,4–5,8:

D. As the organism of the Triune God in the economy of God, the true vine is for the multiplication and spread of the processed and consummated Triune God in millions of His chosen ones—17:20–21; Acts 2:42, 47; 5:14; 6:7; 9:31; 16:5.

III. We need to be brought into a full realization of the fact that we all are branches of the universal vine—John 15:2, 4–5:

A. Christ as the vine does everything through His believers as the branches; without Him we can do nothing, and without us He can do nothing; we need Him, and He needs us—John 15:4–5.

B. As branches of the vine, we need to abide in the vine (v.4). What we are, what we have, and what we do must be in the Lord and by the Lord in us—Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:1.

C. Our destiny as branches of the universal vine is to bear fruit for the glorification of the Father; this God-appointed destiny is fulfilled by the practice of the God-ordained way to carry out God's New Testament economy—John 15:16.

IV. When we abide in Christ as the universal vine, we have the church life—vv. 12, 16–17; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9, 30; 6:17; 12:27:

A. The branches are one with the vine and with one another—John 17:11, 21–23.

B. The church life, the Body, is a life of loving one another; we need to love one another in the life of Christ, in the love of Christ, and in the commission of Christ—15:12, 16–17.

C. When we abide in Christ, we participate in the wonderful fellowship among the co-branches—vv. 4–5; 1 John 1:3–7:

V. For the universal spreading of Christ as the true vine, we need to have effective prayers for fruit-bearing—John 15:7, 16:

A. Prayer is man cooperating and co-working with God, allowing God to express Himself through man and thus accomplish His purpose—Rom. 8:26–27; James 5:17:

B. We need to pray in the Lord's name as the issue of our abiding in the Lord and of His words abiding in us—John 15:7, 16:

1. When we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we actually are one with Him, and He works within us, and there will be a desire in us that comes out of His words, and His desire will become our desire—v. 7:
2. To ask in the Lord's name requires us to abide in the Lord and allow Him and His words to abide in us so that we may actually be one with Him. When we ask, He asks in our asking. This kind of asking is related to fruit-bearing and will surely be answered by the Father—vv. 7, 16.

Message Two –John 15

1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit.

4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

6 If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up....

7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

8 In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.

9 As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

11 These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full.

12 This is My commandment, that you love one another even as I have loved you.

13 No one has greater love than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

17 These things I command you that you may love¹ one another.

Footnote 17 ¹ This is to love one another in the Lord's life, the divine life, in the Lord's love, and in His commission of fruit-bearing. Life is the source, love is the condition, and fruit-bearing is the goal. If we all live by the Lord's life as the source, in the Lord's love as the condition, and for fruit-bearing as the goal, we surely will love one another. Having different sources of life, different conditions, or different goals will separate us and prevent us from loving one another.

John 13:34–35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

Message Three

Being the Lord's Continuation: As Branches Abiding in the Vine with Vital Companions with Whom to Coordinate to Gain Clusters of Fruit

I. Having One or More Companions with Whom to Coordinate (Twos and Threes)

A. The most basic building block—the twos and threes

Matt 18:19–20

19 Again, truly I say to you that if two of you are in harmony on earth concerning any matter for which they ask, it will be done for them from My Father who is in the heavens.

20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.

Do not say that you have the Lord. Just to have the Lord is not enough. You need companions. You need to coordinate with others who are the members of the Body. On the one hand, you are brothers and sisters. On the other hand, you are members one of another.

The Glorious Vision and the Way of the Cross. Chap. 2, p. 19

B. Peter and John learning to coordinate

John 20:1–10

1 Now on the first day of the week, Mary the Magdalene came early to the tomb while it was yet dark and saw the stone taken away from the tomb.

2 She ran therefore and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and said to them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, as well as the other disciple, and came to the tomb.

4 And the two ran together, yet the other disciple ran ahead faster *than* Peter and came first to the tomb.

5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying *there*; however, he did not enter.

6 Then Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered into the tomb; and he beheld the linen cloths lying *there*

7 And the handkerchief which had been over His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in one place apart.

8 At that time therefore the other disciple also, who came first to the tomb, entered, and he saw and believed;

9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He had to rise from among the dead.

10 The disciples therefore went away again to their own *home*.

Acts 3:1, 4, 11

1 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the ninth-hour prayer;

4 And Peter, gazing at him with John, said, Look at us!

11 And while he was holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together toward them at the portico called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

C. The key to coordination is fellowship. We need to fellowship until everyone has peace. We may not reach the best or most efficient conclusion, but if building took place, then we have reached the proper goal.

Ezek. 1:13m

...The fire¹ went to and fro among the living creatures...

¹Lit., it. The fire going to and fro among the living creatures is not static but is always moving, indicating that in their fellowship the living creatures allow God, signified by the fire, to move freely among them. *Ezek. 1:13 – Note 1—Recovery Version*

1 Cor. 14:26b

...Let all things be done for building up.

II. The Vital Group Coordinating to Gain a Cluster

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Acts 10:24

And on the next day they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was awaiting them, having called together his relatives and intimate friends.

Acts 16:14–15

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple-dyed goods from the city of Thyatira who worshipped God, was listening, whose heart the Lord opened to give heed to the things being spoken by Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, as well as her household, she entreated *us*, saying, If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide. And she constrained us.

Acts 16:30–33

30 And leading them outside, he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.

32 And they spoke the word of God to him together with all those in his house.

33 And he took them with *him* in that *very* hour of the night and washed their wounds. And he was baptized immediately, he and all his *household*.

A. Go to the new ones' dwellings

Acts 5:42

And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus *as* the Christ.

B. Follow up

Acts 14:21b–22

21 ...they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

22 Establishing the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith and *saying* that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.

Man's soul is composed of his mind, emotion, and will. To establish the souls of the disciples is to establish them (1) in their mind, that they may know and understand the Lord and the things concerning Him (1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 3:10); (2) in their emotion, that they may love the Lord and have a heart for the Lord's interest (Mark 12:30; Rom. 16:4); and (3) in their will, that they may be strong to remain with the Lord and do the things that please the Lord (11:23; Col. 1:10; 1 Thes. 4:1).

Acts 14:22—Note 1—Recovery Version

III. The Vital Group in Antioch

Acts 13:1–4

1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on *them*, they sent them away.

4 They then, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed away to Cyprus.

IV. The Body Building Up Itself in Love

Col 2:19b

...holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

Eph 4:16

Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Message Four

Being the Lord's Continuation: As Persons Called to Serve God—The Signs of a Called One

I. A person who is called by God must see the vision of the burning thornbush—Acts 7:22–36; Exo. 3:2–3:

- A. Because of God's redemption, the excluding flame of Genesis 3 has become the visiting and indwelling flame of Exodus 3—Gal. 3:13–14; Rom. 12:11; 2 Tim. 1:6–7:
1. The thorns in Genesis 3 indicate that fallen man is under a curse; sin brought in the curse, and the curse brought in the excluding flame of fire—vv. 17–18, 24.
 2. In Exodus 3 the cursed thorn becomes the vessel of God, and the flame of fire becomes one with the thornbush—vv. 2–4.
 3. The redeeming Christ has taken away the curse, and the Spirit as the fire has been given to us—Gen. 3:2 1; 4:4; John 1:29; Gal. 3:13–14; Luke 12:49; Acts 2:3–4.
- B. Everyone who is called of God must realize that he is just a thornbush (a sinner under God's curse—Gen. 3:17–18) with a fire burning within him and that this fire is the Triune God Himself, the God of resurrection—Deut. 33:16; Mark 12:26:
1. The fact that the thornbush burned without being consumed indicates that God does not want to use our natural life as fuel; He will burn only with Himself as fuel—Lev. 10:1–11; Rom. 12:11; 2 Tim. 1:6–7; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:29.
 2. Through the sign of the burning thornbush, God impressed Moses that he was a vessel, a channel, through which God was to be manifested—Deut. 33:1, 16; Psa. 90, title; cf. 2 Cor. 4:7; Phil. 1:20, 25; 2 Tim. 3:16–17; cf. Jer. 23:29.
- C. The church is a corporate thornbush burning with the God of resurrection—Num. 9:15–16; Deut. 33:16; Heb. 3:6; cf. Gen. 2:22; Eph. 2:6:
1. God's ultimate goal is to obtain a dwelling place, to build up His habitation—John 1:14; 2:19; 1 Cor. 3:16; Rev. 21:3, 22.
 2. The church is the Triune God burning within redeemed humanity; this is the divine economy—Luke 12:49; Acts 2:3–4; 1 Tim. 3:15–16; Rev. 1:14b; 4:5; 5:6.
 3. The children of Israel, typifying today's church, were a corporate thornbush, who were redeemed (Exo. 13:14–16), sanctified (v. 2), transformed, and built up:
 - a. Do not say that the church is poor, low, or dead; the more you say this, the more you put yourself under a curse; but if you praise the Lord for the church life and speak well concerning it, you will put yourself under God's blessing—Gen. 12:2; Num. 23:21; 24:5, 9b; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:3.
 - b. In spite of all the division, sin, confusion, abuse of gifts, and heretical teaching in the church in Corinth, the apostle still called it the church of God, because the divine and spiritual essence which makes the assembled believers the church of God was actually there—1 Cor. 1:2.
- D. The Triune God burning within and upon His redeemed ones is the focal point of the divine revelation in the Scriptures; the record of the burning thornbush is to be a continuing memorial and testimony to God's called ones—Deut. 33:16; Mark 12:26.

II. A person who is called by God must have a revelation of who God is:

- A. For the purpose of calling and sending Moses, God, the sending One, appeared to him as the sent One—Exo. 3:2, 6; John 20:21–22; Zech. 2:6–11.
- B. The name of the One who called Moses is "I Am"—Exo. 3:14–15:

1. The name “I Am” indicates that God, Christ, is the reality of every positive thing—John 8:58; 6:35; 8:12; 15:1; Col. 2:16–17.
 2. We must know that the God who calls us is and we are not—Heb. 11:6.
- C. The One who called Moses was the God of his father—Exo. 3:6:
1. *The God of your father* denotes history with God.
 2. In the eyes of God, the Lord who calls us is the God of our spiritual father—1 Cor. 4:15, 17; Psa. 103:7; Phil. 2:19–22; cf. 1 Cor. 1:9; Phil. 3:14.
- D. The One who called Moses was the God of resurrection—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the resurrecting Triune God—Matt. 22:31–32; Exo. 3:6:
1. The God of Abraham signifies God the Father who calls man, justifies man, and equips man to live by faith and live in fellowship with Him—Gen. 12:1; 15:6; chs. 17–18; 19:29; 21:1–13; 22:1–18.
 2. The God of Isaac signifies God the Son who blesses man with the inheritance of all His riches, with the life of the enjoyment of His abundance, and with a life in peace—25:5; 26:3–4, 12–33.
 3. The God of Jacob signifies God the Spirit who works in all things for the good of His lovers, transforms man, and makes man mature in the divine life that man may be able to bless all the people, to rule over all the earth, and to satisfy all the people with God the Son as the life supply—48:15–16; Rom. 8:28–29.
 4. A called one of God must be in resurrection and do everything in resurrection for the building up of the church, which is altogether in resurrection—Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:17–18; Eph. 1:19–23; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:45b, 58; 2 Cor. 1:8–9.
- E. The One who called Moses was the God of the Hebrews, the God of the people who have crossed the river for the fulfillment of God’s purpose—Gen. 14:13; Exo. 3:18.

III. A person who is called by God must know the purpose of God’s calling—v. 8:

- A. The purpose of God’s calling is to deliver God’s chosen people out of the usurpation and tyranny of Satan and the world, typified by Pharaoh and Egypt—Rom. 1:16.
- B. The purpose of God’s calling is to bring God’s chosen people into the all- inclusive Christ realized as the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit, typified by the land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey—Col. 2:6; Gal. 3:14; Rom. 8:16; cf. Isa. 7:14–15.

IV. A person who is called by God must know how to deal with Satan, the flesh, and the world—Exo. 4:1–9; 1 John 3:8; Gal. 5:17; 1 John 2:15:

- A. Anything that we rely upon apart from God is a hiding place for the serpent—Exo. 4:2–4; Luke 10:19; cf. S. S. 8:5a.
- B. Our flesh is a constitution of leprosy—sin, rottenness, uncleanness, and corruption—Exo. 4:6–7; Rom. 7:17–18, 24–25; cf. Isa. 6:5; 2 Kings 5:1–14.
- C. The world with its supply, entertainment, and amusement is filled with the blood of death—Exo. 4:9; 1 John 5:19; Gal. 6:14.

V. A person who is called by God needs the experience of matching and cutting—Exo. 4:14b-16, 24–26; Luke 10:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:9; 4:10–12:

- A. A called one must have someone to match him in the principle of the Body for his restriction, safeguard, and protection—Exo. 4:14b-16; Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9–12.
- B. A called one must be willing to have the subjective experience of the circumcision of his natural life in order to become useful to the Lord for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose and the carrying out of His commission—Exo. 4:24–26; Phil. 3:3.
- C. May every aspect of God’s calling be our experience in the Lord’s recovery today.

Message Four – Exodus 3–4

Acts 7:22 And Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was powerful in his words and works.
23 But when he was approaching forty years of age, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel.
24 And when he saw one of them being wronged, he defended him, and he avenged him who was being oppressed by striking the Egyptian dead....
26 And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting and tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, Men, you are brothers. Why are you wronging one another? 27 But the one who was wronging his neighbor pushed him away, saying, "Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Do you want to do away with me the same way you did away with the Egyptian yesterday?" 29 And Moses fled at this word and became a sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begot two sons.
30 And when forty years had been fulfilled....

Exodus 3:1 Now Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the **back of the wilderness** and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb.
2 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in **a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush**. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but **the thornbush was not consumed**.
3 And Moses said, I must turn aside now and see this great sight, why the thornbush does not burn up.
4 And when Jehovah saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the midst of the thornbush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am....
6 And He said, **I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
7 And Jehovah said, I have surely seen **the affliction of My people who are in Egypt** and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.
8 And I have come down to **deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians** and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey....
10 So come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.
13 Then Moses said to God, If I come to the children of Israel and say to them, **The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they say to me, What is His name? what shall I say to them?**
14 **And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you....**
17 And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites ... to a land flowing with milk and honey.
18 And they will listen to your voice, and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, Jehovah, **the God of the Hebrews**, has met with us; and now let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God....

Exodus 4:1 Then Moses answered and said, What if they do not believe me or listen to my voice, but say, Jehovah has not appeared to you?
2 **And Jehovah said to him, What is this in your hand? And he said, A staff.**
3 **And He said, Throw it on the ground. And he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses recoiled from it.**
4 **And Jehovah said to Moses, Stretch out your hand, and take it by its tail - so he stretched out his hand and seized it, and it became a staff in his hand....**
6 **And Jehovah further said to him, Now put your hand into your bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, there his hand was, leprous like snow.**
7 And He said, Put your hand into your bosom again - so he put his hand into his bosom again, and when he took it out of his bosom, there it was, restored like the rest of his flesh....
9 **And if they will not believe even these two signs or listen to your voice, then you shall take some of the water of the River and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you take out of the River will become blood upon the dry ground.**

Mark 12:26–27 But concerning the dead, that they are raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, **in the section concerning the bush**, how God spoke to him, saying, "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob"? **He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.**

Message Five

Being the Lord's Continuation: Having the Living of Persons Called to Serve God—A Life Hidden with Christ in God

Scripture Reading: Col. 3:3–4; Matt. 6:1–6; Col. 2:7; Jer. 17:7–8; SS 1:2–4; Isa. 45:15

I. The life of a serving one should be a hidden life—a life hidden with Christ in God—Col. 3:3–4:

- A. In God, Christ—not our self, our soul—is our life; this life is now hidden—v. 3.
- B. God in the heavens should be the sphere of our living; with Christ we should live in God—v. 1:
 - 1. Because God has been processed, we who believe in Christ are now in God; we are also in the heavens and in the church; to be in God is to be in the heavens, and to be in the heavens is to be in the church.
 - 2. We are truly one with Christ and cannot be separated from Him—1 Cor. 1:30; 6:17:
 - a. In God we are with Christ, in the heavens we are with Christ, and in the church we are with Christ—Col. 3:1, 3–4.
 - b. Where Christ is, there we are also; with Christ, our life is hidden in God—John 14:3, 10–11, 20; 17:24.
- C. God's life is the life of Christ, and the life of Christ has become our life—5:26; Col. 3:4:
 - 1. For Christ to be our life means that He is subjective to us to the uttermost—John 1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:6, 10–11:
 - It is impossible to separate a person from the life of that person, for a person's life is the person himself. To say that Christ is our life means that Christ has become us and that we have one life and living with Him—Col. 3:4; John 14:6a; Phil. 1:21a.
 - 2. With Christ as the believers' life there are three characteristics that distinguish it from the natural life:
 - This life is a crucified life (Gal. 2:20); this life is a resurrected life (John 11:25); and this life is a life hidden in God (Col. 3:3–4; Matt. 6:1–6, 16–18).
 - 3. If our natural life has not been dealt with, our service in the church will not last long, but if our life in serving is a crucified, resurrected, and hidden life, nothing will be able to defeat it—Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:12; Rom. 5:17.
 - 4. Whatever we do in the church should be done by a life hidden with Christ in God—Col. 3:3; S. S. 4:12, 15–16.

II. The life of a serving one in the kingdom of the heavens should correspond with the mysterious, hidden nature of the divine life—Matt. 6:1–6:

- A. We should live in an emptied and humbled spirit and walk in a pure and single heart under the ruling of the kingdom; we are not allowed to do anything in the flesh to gain the praise of men but must do all things in spirit to please our heavenly Father—5:3, 8; 6:1–2.
- B. As much as possible, our righteous deeds should be kept secret; what we do in our spirit under the heavenly rule to please our Father must not be interfered with by our flesh in its lusting for man's glory—vv. 2–3.

- C. As serving ones in the kingdom of God, we live by the Father's life and walk according to our spirit; thus, we are required to do good things in secret—v. 4a.
- D. As children of the heavenly Father, we must live in the presence of the Father and care for His presence; whatever we do in secret for the Father's kingdom is seen in secret by the Father, and He will repay us—v. 4b.
- E. As serving ones, we must have some experience of praying in private, contacting our Father in secret, experiencing some secret enjoyment of Him, and receiving some secret answer from Him—vv. 5–6.

III. The life of a serving one should be a life deeply rooted in Christ and thereby be a hidden life before God—Col. 2:7; Eph. 3:17b; Hosea 14:5–7; Jer. 17:7–8; cf. Mark 4:6, 17:

- A. Roots refer to the hidden life; they are the parts that cannot be seen, that are hidden, and that are in secret—Matt. 13:21; Mark 4:6; Luke 8:13:
 - 1. If we do not have a hidden life before God, we do not have any roots.
 - 2. Those who do not have any roots before the Lord will be dried up in their life—v. 6.
 - 3. Those who do not have a hidden life and who do everything before men and have nothing special before the Lord cannot stand the test of the cross—Mark 4:6, 17.
 - 4. Nothing can preserve us as much as a hidden life before God; it is crucial that we have such a hidden life—Col. 3:3.
 - 5. If we have deep roots and we bring forth riches from the depths of our inner life, other lives will be deeply affected—Matt. 13:52; 2 Cor. 12:2–4.
- B. A serving one who trusts in God is “like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream”—Jer. 17:8:
 - 1. According to God's economy, the one who trusts in God is like a tree planted by water, signifying God as the fountain of living waters—2:13a.
 - 2. A tree grows beside a river by absorbing all the riches of the water:
 - a. This is a picture of God's economy, which is carried out by His dispensing.
 - b. In order to receive the divine dispensing, we as the trees must absorb God as the water—cf. 1 Cor. 3:6.
 - c. The riches of the supplying God dispensed into us as the trees constitute us with God's divinity and cause us to grow into God's measure—Col. 2:7, 19.
 - d. In this way we and God become one, having the same element, essence, constitution and appearance—Rev. 4:3; 21:11.
- C. As serving ones, we all need to have deep roots in order to absorb God as the living water so that we may be constituted with His element and essence and thus be able to minister life to others—Jer. 17:7–8; 1 John 5:16.