

WEEK 5 — OUTLINE

The Universal History according to God's Economy—the Divine History within the Human History

Scripture Reading: [Joel 1:4; 3:11](#); [Dan. 2:31-45](#); [Eph. 1:3-6](#); [Micah 5:2](#); [Rev. 19:7-9](#); [22:17a](#)

DAY 1 »

I. In this universe there are two histories: the history of man, the human history, and the history of God, the divine history; the former is like an outward shell, and the latter, like the kernel within the shell:

- A. In the Minor Prophets the human history is clearly defined and is signified by the four kinds of locusts in [Joel 1:4](#), and the divine history is with Christ and His mighty ones, the overcomers, in [3:11](#).
- B. The divine history within the human history is also revealed in the Bible in considerable detail; God's history is our history because He is in union with us:
 - 1. We need to see God's history in eternity past as a preparation for His move to be in union with man:
 - a. The divine history began with the eternal God and His economy ([Eph. 3:9-10](#); [1:10](#)):
 - (1) According to His economy, God wants to work Himself into man to be one with man, to be man's life, life supply, and everything, and to have man as His expression ([Gen. 1:26](#); [2:9](#)).
 - (2) God's intention in His economy is thus to have a corporate entity, composed of God and man, to be His expression for eternity (v. 22).

« DAY 2 »

- b. God in His Divine Trinity held a council in eternity to make the determination concerning the crucial death of Christ for the carrying out of God's eternal economy ([Acts 2:23](#)).
- c. The second of the Divine Trinity was preparing to carry out His "goings forth" from eternity into time to be born in

Bethlehem as a man ([Micah 5:2](#)).

- d. God blessed the believers in Christ with the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies before the foundation of the world ([Eph. 1:3-6](#)):

- (1) He chose the believers to be holy, to be sanctified unto Himself with His holy nature ([v. 4](#)).
- (2) He predestinated them, marking them out, unto sonship, making them sons to Himself with His divine life, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced them in the Beloved ([vv. 5-6](#)).

2. Before Christ's incarnation God moved with men and among men; this was not His direct move to carry out His eternal economy for Christ and the church but His indirect move in His old creation for the preparation of His direct move in His new creation for His eternal economy:

« DAY 3 »

- a. God's history is of two portions—the history of God *with* man, found in the Old Testament, and the history of God *in* man, found in the New Testament.
 - b. God's history in man began with the incarnation and continued with His processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; [Hosea 11:4](#) says that these are the cords of a man, the bands of love.
3. The divine history, God's move in man, continued with the processed Christ, the God-man, as the prototype, unto the New Jerusalem, the great God-man, the ultimate fulfillment of God's eternal economy:
- a. Through Christ's incarnation and human living, He brought the infinite God into the finite man, He united and mingled the Triune God with the tripartite man, and He expressed in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues.

« DAY 4 »

- b. Christ's crucifixion was a vicarious death, an all-inclusive death, an all-inclusive judicial redemption, which terminated the old creation and solved all problems ([John 1:29](#)); in His

crucifixion He terminated all the things of the old creation, He redeemed all the things created by God and fallen in sin [Heb. 2:9](#); [Col. 1:20](#)), He created (conceived) the new man with His divine element [Eph. 2:15](#)), and He released His divine life from within the shell of His humanity [John 12:24](#); [19:34](#); [Luke 12:49-50](#)).

- c. In His resurrection He was begotten to be the firstborn Son of God ([Acts 13:33](#); [Rom. 1:4](#); [8:29](#)), He became the life-giving Spirit ([1 Cor. 15:45b](#)), and He regenerated millions of people to be sons of God and members of the Body of Christ, the church ([1 Pet. 1:3](#)).
- d. He ascended to the heavens and then descended as the Spirit to produce the church as the corporate expression of the Triune God ([Joel 2:28-32](#); [Acts 2:1-4](#), [16-21](#)).
- e. Thus, the church also is part of the divine history, the intrinsic history of the divine mystery within the outward, human history; this part of God's history has lasted for more than nineteen hundred years and is still going on.
- f. At the end of this part of the divine history, Christ will come back, descending with His overcomers as His army [Joel 3:11](#)) to defeat Antichrist and his army:
 - (1) There will be the meeting of two figures—Antichrist, a figure in the outward, human history, and Christ with His overcomers, the Figure in the intrinsic, divine history.
 - (2) The Figure in the divine history will defeat the figure in the human history and then cast him into the lake of fire ([Rev. 19:20](#)).
- g. Following this, the thousand-year kingdom will come; eventually, this kingdom will consummate in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth; the New Jerusalem will be the ultimate, the consummate, step of God's history.

II. We need to have a clear view of these two histories—the physical, human history represented mainly by the four kinds of locusts [Joel 1:4](#)), which are the four sections of the great human image in [Daniel 2](#), and the mysterious, divine history represented mainly by the history of the great crushing stone (Christ with His overcomers),

which will crush the great human image, the totality of human government, and become the eternal kingdom of God, which will fill the whole earth forever (vv. 31-45):

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- A. The corporate Christ, Christ with His overcoming bride, will come as a stone to crush the aggregate of human government to bring in God's kingdom (vv. 34-35; Joel 3:11; Rev. 19:11-21; cf. Gen. 1:26).
- B. Whereas Daniel 2 speaks of Christ coming as a stone cut out without hands, Revelation 19 speaks of Christ coming as the One who has His bride as His army.
- C. In Ephesians 5 and 6 we see the church as the bride and the warrior; in Revelation 19 we also have these two aspects of the church Eph. 5:25-27; 6:10-20):
 1. On the day of His wedding, Christ will marry His bride, the overcomers, who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years (cf. Dan. 7:25; 6:10; Eph. 6:12).
 2. Before Christ descends to earth to deal with Antichrist and the totality of human government, He will have a wedding, uniting His overcomers to Himself as one entity Rev. 19:7-9).
 3. After His wedding He will come with His newly married bride to destroy Antichrist, who with his army will fight against God directly (vv. 11, 14):
 - a. The Lord Jesus, the Word of God, will slay Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, by the breath of His mouth vv. 13-15; 2 Thes. 2:2-8).
 - b. Out of Christ's mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations Rev. 19:15a; cf. 1:16; 2:12, 16).
 4. After crushing the human government, God will have cleared up the entire universe; then the corporate Christ, Christ with His overcomers, will become a great mountain to fill the whole earth, making the whole earth God's kingdom Dan. 2:35, 44; 7:22, 27; Rev. 11:15).

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5. To be the bride in the divine history, we need the beautifying word of God, and to be the warrior in the divine history, we need the slaying word of God (Eph. 5:26; 6:17-18; cf. 2 Tim. 3:16).

III. We all were born in the human history, but we have been reborn,

regenerated, in the divine history:

- A. The divine history, the history of God in man, was from Christ's incarnation through His ascension to become the life-giving Spirit and then continues with His indwelling us through God's organic salvation of regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification to make us the glorious bride of Christ ([Rom. 5:10](#); [Eph. 5:27](#); [Rev. 19:7-9](#)).
- B. This culminates in Christ as the Spirit, the processed and consummated Triune God, marrying the church as the bride, the processed and transformed tripartite man ([22:17a](#)).
- C. Now we need to ask ourselves this question: Are we living in the divine history, or are we living merely in the human history?
 1. If our living is in the world, we are living in the human history.
 2. But if we are living in the church, we are living in the divine history; in the church life God's history is our history; now two parties—God and we—have one history, the divine history.
 3. With the divine history there is the new creation—the new man with a new heart, a new spirit, a new life, a new nature, a new history, and a new consummation *Hymns*,#16; [Ezek. 36:26](#); [2 Cor. 3:16](#); [Matt. 5:8](#); [Titus 3:5](#); [Eph. 5:26](#); [6:17-18](#)).
 4. We praise the Lord that we are in the divine history, experiencing and enjoying the mysterious, divine things for our organic salvation so that we may become His overcoming bride.

<< WEEK 5 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Joel What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten;
1:4 and what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has eaten; and what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust has eaten.

3:11 Hurry and come, all you surrounding nations, and be gathered.
There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!

The Bible is a record of two histories: the history of man, the human history, and the history of God, the divine history. The former is like an outward shell, and the latter, like the kernel within the shell. In the Minor Prophets the human history is clearly defined and is signified by the four kinds of locusts mentioned in [Joel 1:4](#)]....The divine history, as the divine mystery of the Triune God in humanity, began in eternity past with the eternal God and His eternal economy [Micah 5:2c](#); [1 Tim. 1:4](#); [Eph. 1:4-5, 9-11](#)). It continues with Christ's incarnation ([Micah 5:2a](#)); His death, burial, and resurrection for the spreading of God's redemption and salvation to all the nations on earth ([Jonah 1:17](#); [2:10](#)); His pouring out of the consummated Spirit to produce the church as the corporate expression of the Triune God ([Joel 2:28-32](#)); His second coming as the Desire of nations ([Hag. 2:7a](#)) and as the Sun of righteousness ([Mal. 4:2a](#)); His coming with His overcomers as His army to defeat Antichrist and his army ([Joel 3:1-15](#)); and His reigning in Zion in the thousand-year kingdom ([3:16-21](#); [Micah 4:7](#)). Eventually, the kingdom will consummate in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and the new earth for eternity. The New Jerusalem will be the ultimate, the consummate, step of God's history. ([Joel 1:4](#), footnote 1)

Today's Reading

The living, purposeful, active, and acting God surely needs a history, a biography.... We need to realize that there is such a book. This book took approximately fifteen hundred years to complete through more than forty writers. The first writer was Moses and the last writer was John. This book is the Bible. The Bible is the biography of God, the history of God. Actually, we may say the Bible is the autobiography of God, because it is a book about God written by God Himself through a number of writers moved by the Holy Spirit. Through His servants, God wrote His autobiography. The entire Bible is a history of the Triune God.

We have to know God's history because His history has everything to do with us.... God's history has become our history because He is in union with us.... The Bible is God's history in union with us. He is our Husband, and we as His chosen and redeemed people are His wife.... The New Testament says that Christ as the embodiment of God is the Husband and the church is the wife (Eph. 5:25-32; 2 Cor. 11:2). The New Testament also says that Christ will have a wedding. Revelation 19 speaks of the marriage of Christ and His marriage dinner (vv. 7-9). Revelation 21 and 22 show us the marriage life in eternity between God embodied in Christ and His chosen, redeemed people. The New Testament is a book concerning the Triune God with His wife. Thus, when we touch God's history, we touch our Christian life.... The Christian life is the life of a wife who is married to the Triune God.

Our God has a history, and the most wonderful part of His history is His history in His union with man. Even in the Old Testament, God referred to Himself as the Husband and to His people as His wife (Isa. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19). The marriage life God desired with His people in the Old Testament is realized in the New Testament. *The History of God in His Union with Man*, pp. 9-10)

The Triune God is eternal.... With Him there is no beginning. Within Himself, this eternal One made an economy. According to His economy, God wants to work Himself into man to be one with man, to be man's life, life supply, and everything, and to have man as His expression. God's intention in His economy is thus to have a corporate entity, composed of God and man, to be His expression for eternity. This divine history began with the eternal God and His economy. (*Life-study of Joel*, p. 34)

Further Reading: Life-study of Joel, msg. 6

<< WEEK 5 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts 2:23 This man, delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, through the hand of lawless men, nailed to a cross and killed.

Micah 5:2 (But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, so little to be among the thousands of Judah, from you there will come forth to Me He who is to be Ruler in Israel; and His goings forth are from ancient times, from the days of eternity.)

God in His Divine Trinity held a council in eternity [Acts 2:23](#), footnote 1)...God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit held a council, a conference, in eternity to make the determination concerning the crucial death of Christ for the carrying out of God's eternal economy. God made an economy, but God had to make a decision regarding how to carry out His economy. For the carrying out of God's economy, Christ had to die an all-inclusive death. (*The History of God in His Union with Man*, pp. 17-18)

Today's Reading

The second of the Divine Trinity was preparing to carry out His “goings forth” from eternity into time to be born in Bethlehem as a man [Micah 5:2](#) tells us that Christ was going to be born in Bethlehem, and that was a part of His “goings forth.”...His goings forth are His coming forth. Before God as the second of the Divine Trinity came to be born in Bethlehem in time, He was preparing to come in eternity past.

God blessed the believers in Christ with the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies before the foundation of the world [Eph. 1:3-6](#)). In eternity past God blessed us before we were created. Before we were created, He blessed us in two things.

In eternity past God chose us to be holy, to be sanctified unto Himself with His holy nature (v. 4). In eternity past God chose us to have His nature, indicating that He would be one with us, that is, that His nature would become our nature. With this nature we are being sanctified, separated unto God. He is holy in nature, and we are being made the same as He is in nature [Heb. 2:11](#); [2 Pet. 1:4](#)).

In eternity past God predestinated us, marking us out, unto sonship, making us sons to Himself with His divine life [Eph. 1:5a](#)). Thus, God blessed us in eternity past with two things—with His nature and with His divine life. This is the top blessing which was given to us in eternity past before we were born.

God's blessing us in eternity past with the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies was according to the good pleasure of His will (v. 5b) to the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in Christ, His Beloved (v. 6).

This is God's history in eternity past and this involves us. In eternity past, God made an economy to produce the church for His manifestation and to head up all things, including us, in Christ. He also held a council to determine that the second of the Divine Trinity should come to die for us to carry out His economy. Then in eternity past He chose us to have His nature and to have His divine life so that we could be holy as He is and be His sons as His children to express Him. This is God's history in eternity past, and this history is our history. (*The History of God in His Union with Man*, pp. 18-19)

Before His incarnation, God moved only with men and among men in the Old Testament....But that was not God's direct move to carry out His eternal economy for Christ and the church.

God's move with men and among men was just the indirect move in His old creation for the preparation of His direct move in His new creation for His eternal economy. This is why the church is not mentioned in the Old Testament. The church was a hidden mystery....God's economy in the New Testament is absolutely unique. In the Old Testament, you cannot see God's move for His eternal economy directly. God did a lot indirectly to prepare for the day when He could come to do the direct work....The Old Testament was a preparation for the direct move of God in man in the New Testament. (*The Move of God in Man*, pp. 10-12)

Further Reading: The History of God in His Union with Man, ch. 1; *The Move of God in Man*, ch. 1

<< WEEK 5 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

Hosea 11:4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them like those who lift off the yoke on their jaws; and I gently caused them to eat.

Matt. 4:19-20 And He said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately leaving the nets, they followed Him.

Where do we find the history of God? God's history, the divine history, is recorded in the Bible. God's history is of two portions—the history of God *with* man, found in the Old Testament, and the history of God *in* man, found in the New Testament. In the Old Testament God's history was a history with man. In the New Testament God's history is a history in man, for this history involves God's being one with man. Therefore, the history of God in the New Testament is a divine history in humanity. (*Life-study of Joel*, p. 38)

Today's Reading

The phrase *with cords of a man, with bands of love* [in [Hosea 11:4](#)] indicates that God loves us with His divine love not on the level of divinity but on the level of humanity. God's love is divine, but it reaches us in the cords of a man, that is, through Christ's humanity. The cords through which God draws us include Christ's incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. It is by all these steps of Christ in His humanity that God's love in His salvation reaches us ([Rom. 5:8](#); [1 John 4:9-10](#)). ([Hosea 11:4](#), footnote 1)

In His full ministry in the first stage, the stage of His incarnation, Christ brought the infinite God into the finite man....This is our new language today. God is infinite, and we human beings are finite.

In His full ministry in the first stage of His incarnation, Christ also united and mingled the Triune God with the tripartite man. The Triune God is mysterious, and the tripartite man is difficult to understand....According to the new language of the new culture in the divine and mystical realm, we need to say that Christ united and mingled the Triune God with the tripartite man. Concerning the Triune God, the Father is the source, the Son is the expression, and the Spirit is the entering in. Concerning the tripartite man, the spirit is the innermost part, the soul is in the middle, and the body is on the outside.

In His full ministry in the first stage of His incarnation, Christ also expressed in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues. No one can deny that the human virtues of Christ were aromatic; even when non-Christians read the four Gospels, they sense that the Jesus recorded in these books was a sweet and fragrant One, whose virtues were aromatic. This is because He expressed in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes.

Our God has His attributes, and His attributes are rich because He is great and bountiful. He is love, light, holiness, and righteousness. These rich attributes were expressed by the Lord Jesus in His humanity to become the aromatic virtues in His humanity.

Furthermore, Christ in His humanity expressed God through His aromatic virtues by which He attracted and captivated people. [In [Matthew 4:18-22](#)]...the disciples forsook everything to follow Him. I truly believe that at that time the Lord Jesus must have displayed an aromatic power in His countenance and His voice which could really attract and captivate people.

Christ expressed His aromatic virtues by which He attracted and captivated people, not by living His human life in the flesh but by living His divine life in resurrection. He was in the flesh, but He did not live by His human life in His flesh; rather, He lived by His divine life in His resurrection. Today, as God-men...we can get out of the realm of the flesh and enter into resurrection to live by the divine life in resurrection, that is, in the divine and mystical realm. (*How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations*, pp. 15-20)

Further Reading: Life-study of Joel, msg. 7

<< WEEK 5 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Eph. 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace.

The all-inclusive judicial redemption of Christ is of five aspects. First, He terminated all things of the old creation. Second, He redeemed all the things created by God and fallen in sin [Heb. 2:9](#); [Col. 1:20](#))....Third, He created (conceived) the new man with His divine element [Ephesians 2:15](#) says that on the cross He created the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers in Himself into one new man. That creation was a conception....Christ created (conceived) the new man in Himself, indicating that He was the very element for the conceiving of the new man. He conceived in Himself as the element the two peoples into one new man. While the Lord Jesus was dying on the cross, He was creating the new man. (*How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations*, p. 21)

Today's Reading

Fourth, when Christ accomplished His all-inclusive judicial redemption, He released His divine life from the shell of His humanity....Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, its outer shell cannot be broken and its life within cannot be released [\[John 12:24\]](#). Christ had the divine life, but it was concealed in the shell of His humanity. Hence, He needed to suffer death on the cross that the shell of His humanity might be broken to release His divine life from His human shell.

Fifth, in accomplishing His all-inclusive judicial death, Christ also laid a

foundation for His organic salvation and set up the procedure to attain His ministry in the stage of His inclusion. Christ's judicial redemption is the foundation of [and procedure for] His organic salvation. *How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations*, pp. 21-22)

At the end of His life and ministry on earth, the Lord Jesus went willingly to the cross. His crucifixion was a vicarious death, an all-inclusive death which terminated the old creation and solved all problems. His death ushered Him into resurrection. On the one hand, in His resurrection He was begotten to be the firstborn Son of God ([Acts 13:33](#); [Rom. 1:4](#); [8:29](#)). On the other hand, in and through His resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit [1 Cor. 15:45b](#)).

Through Christ's resurrection millions were begotten, regenerated, by God [1 Pet. 1:3](#)) to be sons of God and to be members of the Body of Christ, the church. The Christ who was incarnated, crucified, and resurrected, the Christ who ascended to the heavens and then descended as the Spirit, has produced the church as the corporate expression of the Triune God....Thus, the church also is part of the divine history, the intrinsic history of the divine mystery within the outward, human history. This part of God's history has lasted for more than nineteen hundred years, and it is still going on.

At the end of this part of the divine history, Christ will come back, descending with His overcomers as His army [Joel 3:11](#)) to defeat Antichrist and his army. There will be the meeting of two figures—Antichrist, a figure in the outward, human history, and Christ with His overcomers, the Figure in the intrinsic, divine history. The Figure in the divine history will defeat the figure in the human history and then cast him into the lake of fire [Rev. 19:20](#)). Following this, the thousand-year kingdom will come. Eventually, this kingdom will consummate in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth. The New Jerusalem will be the ultimate, the consummate, step of God's history.

We need to have a clear view of these two histories—the physical human history and the mysterious divine history....The history of man, the history of the world, is outward. The divine history, the history of God in and with humanity, is inward. This history is a matter of the divine mystery of the Triune God in humanity. (*Life-study of Joel*, pp. 34-36)

Further Reading: How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations, ch. 1

<< WEEK 5 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

Rev. ...His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which 19:13-15 are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations...

2 Thes. And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord 2:8 Jesus will slay by the breath of His mouth and bring to nothing by the manifestation of His coming).

In [Ephesians 5 and 6](#) we see the church as the bride and as the warrior. In [Revelation 19](#) we also have these two aspects of the church....As the bride, we must be beautiful, without spot or wrinkle, and be clothed in fine linen. As the warrior, we must be equipped to fight against God's enemy. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, p. 815)

When Christ comes as the crushing stone, He will not come alone; rather, He will come with His overcomers, His bride, His increase, as His army ([John 3:29-30](#); [Rev. 17:14](#); [19:7-8, 11, 14](#)). During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride [Eph. 5:25-29](#)). Before He descends to earth, Christ will have a wedding, in which He will marry the overcomers [Rev. 19:7-9](#)), those who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years and who have already overcome the evil one (cf. [Rev. 12:11](#)). After His wedding, He as the Husband will come with His newlywed bride to destroy Antichrist, who with his army will fight against God directly [Rev. 17:14](#); [19:19](#)). ([Dan. 2:34](#), footnote 1)

Today's Reading

According to [Revelation 19](#), the church is both the bride who is presented to Christ and the warrior who fights with Him against God's enemy. At His

coming again, the Lord Jesus firstly will meet His bride. After receiving the bride, Christ and the overcomers will enter into battle against the enemy. According to [Revelation 19:11](#), the Lord will ride on a white horse, and the armies which are in heaven will follow Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and pure (v. 14). [Revelation 17:14](#) also refers to this: “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.”

In [Revelation 19:7 and 8](#) we see that the bride is clothed in “fine linen, bright and clean.” Then in [verse 14](#) we see that the armies which follow the Lord into battle are “dressed in fine linen, white and clean.” These verses indicate that the bride’s wedding garment will also be the uniform she wears as God’s army to fight against His enemy. Therefore, to have the wedding garment is also to have the uniform.

As God’s warrior, the church does not fight by her own strength. [Ephesians 6:10](#) says, “...Be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength” [indicating] clearly that we should not fight in our own strength. On the contrary, we must be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength. The Greek word rendered “empowered” has the same root as the word *power* in [1:19](#). To deal with God’s enemy, to fight against the evil forces of darkness, we need to be empowered with the greatness of the power that raised up Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavens, far above all the evil spirits in the air. In the spiritual warfare against Satan and his evil kingdom, we can fight only in the Lord, not in ourselves. Whenever we are in ourselves, we are defeated.

By praying in spirit we apply Christ as the whole armor of God. As we take the word by praying in spirit, we spontaneously contact Christ as the life-giving Spirit. Immediately, our praying and reading become living, and we are empowered by Christ and covered with Him as our armor. Furthermore, we have the realization that we are in the Body and that Christ with all that He is and has is our portion. In this way we apply Him as the all-inclusive armor.

When we are in the Body, we actually do not carry on the spiritual warfare; we simply enjoy it. Instead of struggling in the battle, the battle becomes an enjoyment. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, pp. 814, 816, 818)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msg. 95

<< WEEK 5 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 36:26 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

Eph. 6:17-18 And receive...the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints.

We all were born in the human history, but we have been reborn, regenerated, in the divine history. Now we need to ask ourselves this question: Are we living in the divine history, or are we living merely in the human history? If our living is in the world, we are living in the human history. But if we are living in the church, we are living in the divine history. In the church life God's history is our history. Now two parties—God and we—have one history, the divine history. This is the church life.

With the divine history there is the new creation—the new man with a new heart, a new spirit, a new life, a new nature, a new history, and a new consummation. We praise the Lord that we are in the divine history, experiencing and enjoying the mysterious, divine things. (*Life-study of Joel*, p. 36)

Today's Reading

We need to receive the word of God by means of all prayer and petition. According to [Ephesians 6:17 and 18](#), we are to take the word of God by means of all prayer. These verses indicate that we may take the word by pray-reading, that is, by praying with the words of Scripture and over them, using the words of the Bible as our prayer to God.

By pray-reading we take the word of God into us. Usually when we speak of taking the word of God into us, we think of the word as nourishment. However, in [Ephesians 6](#) the emphasis is not on the nourishing word, but on the killing word. The nourishing word is for our building up, whereas the killing word deals with the enemy. In this context, we should pray-read the word not mainly to receive nourishment, but primarily to experience the sword as the killing instrument. The more we pray-read the word, the more we should experience the killing power of the word.

Because the self is the greatest enemy, we need to experience the killing power of God's word. As we pray-read, we are nourished on the one hand, but certain elements are killed on the other hand....After a time of pray-reading the word, we may discover that the adversary who was attacking us has disappeared. In a very practical sense, he has been slain by the word we have taken into us.

Do not think that the battlefield for the spiritual warfare is outside us. The battlefield is within us; in particular it is in our mind. All the elements of the adversary can be found in the mind. The way to slay them is to pray-read the word. As we pray-read God's word, the elements of the adversary within our mind will be killed one by one. In this way we shall gain the victory.

Pray-reading is a practical way to kill the negative elements within us. The more we take the word of God by means of all prayer in spirit, the more the negative things within us will be put to death. Thus, pray-reading is not only feasting; it is also a way of fighting. As we pray-read the word, the battle is raging as the negative elements in our being are slain. Eventually, the self, the worst foe of all, will be put to death. When the negative things in us are killed through pray-reading, the Lord is victorious. Because He is victorious, we are victorious also.

In [Ephesians 5](#) the word is for nourishment that leads to the beautifying of the bride. But in [Ephesians 6](#) the word is for killing that enables the church as the corporate warrior to engage in spiritual warfare. Through the killing word, the adversary within us is slain. Sometimes we gain the victory over the enemy objectively, but we are defeated by the adversary subjectively. Although we may rejoice that the enemy outwardly is fleeing, we are still troubled by the adversary within us who remains....Let us kill the adversary by pray-reading the word. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, pp. 817, 819-822)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msg. 97

<< **WEEK 5 — HYMN**

Hymns, #16

- 1 Our Father, as the evergreen,
Thou art forever new;
Thou art the ever living Lord,
Thy freshness as the dew.
- 2 O Thou art God, and Thou art “new”;
Without Thee all is worn,
But all with Thee is ever fresh,
Though many years have gone.
- 3 Each blessing Thou hast given us
Thy newness doth contain;
Thy covenant, Thy ways are new,
And ever thus remain.
- 4 Now we Thy new creation are—
New spirit and new heart;
We’re daily from the old renewed,
New life Thou dost impart.
- 5 The earth and heavens will be new
And Thy new city share;
New fruits each month will be supplied,
For all is newness there.
- 6 O Father, Thou art ever new,
And all is new in Thee;
We sing the new eternal song,
New praise we give to Thee.