

RETURNING TO THE ORTHODOXY OF THE CHURCH

(Saturday—Evening Session)

Message Nine

The New Jerusalem—

the Consummation of the Central Vision of God's Economy and of the High Peak of the Divine Revelation through the Overcomers, Who Return to the Orthodoxy of the Church

RK Hymns: 976

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:19; Col. 2:2; 3:4; Eph. 3:4; 4:16; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 9-11

- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
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.
Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

I. The central vision of God's economy is the experience of Christ as life for the producing and building up of the church as the Body of Christ—Acts 26:19; Eph. 3:10; 1 Tim. 1:4; Col. 3:4; Eph. 1:22-23:

- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- A. We need to see a vision of the central matter in the Lord's recovery today, the vision in Paul's completing ministry—vv. 17-18a; Acts 26:19; Col. 1:25-26:
- Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
Eph 1:18a The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, ...
Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,
Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
1. The central vision of Paul's completing ministry is God in us as our contents, Christ as

the mystery of God, and the church as the mystery of Christ—Rom. 9:23-24; 2 Cor. 4:7; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4.

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

Rom 9:24 Even us, whom He has also called, not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles?

2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,

Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,

2. The center of the Lord's recovery is Christ and the church: Christ as the embodiment of God—the mystery of God—and the church as the expression of Christ—the mystery of Christ—Col. 2:9; Eph. 3:19b; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Eph 3:19b ... that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.

- B. The governing vision of the Bible is the Triune God working Himself into His chosen and redeemed people in order to saturate their entire being with the Divine Trinity for the producing and building up of the church as the Body of Christ, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

II. The high peak of the divine revelation is that God became man so that man may become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead to produce and build up the organic Body of Christ for the fulfillment of God's economy to close this age and bring Christ back to set up His kingdom—John 1:12-14; 1 John 3:1-2; Rom. 8:3; 12:4-5; Rev. 11:15:

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His

- own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
 Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
 Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
 Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.
- A. God's economy is His intention to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen and redeemed people to be their life and nature so that they may be the same as He is for His corporate expression—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:3-23.
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
 Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
 Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;
 Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,
 Eph 1:8 Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence,
 Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
 Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
 Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
 Eph 1:12 That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ,
 Eph 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,
 Eph 1:14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.
 Eph 1:15 Therefore I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you and your love to all the saints,
 Eph 1:16 Do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,
 Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
 Eph 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
 Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,
 Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
 Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
 Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
 Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- B. God's economy is that God became man to make us God in life, nature, and expression so that we may have a God-man living and become the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; 8:4, 14, 29; 12:4-5.
- Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
 Rom 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,
 Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of

- the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;
- Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.
- Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
- Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
- Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
- Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- C. God redeemed us for the purpose of making us God in life and nature so that He can have the Body of Christ, which consummates in the New Jerusalem as God's enlargement and expression for eternity—Eph. 1:7; 4:16; Rev. 21:2.
- Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,
- 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.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- D. It is only by God's becoming man to make man God that the Body of Christ can be produced and built up; this is the high peak of the divine revelation given to us by God—Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; 8:14, 16, 29; 12:4-5.
- Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
- Rom 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,
- Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;
- Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
- Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.
- Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
- Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
- Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

III. The New Jerusalem is the consummation of the central vision of God's economy and of the high peak of the divine revelation—Rev. 21:2, 9-11:

- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- A. The New Jerusalem, the ultimate consummation of the Bible, involves God becoming man and man becoming God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—v. 2; 3:12:
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
1. In Christ God has become man to make man God in His life and in His nature so that the redeeming God and the redeemed man can be mingled, constituted, together to be

one entity—the New Jerusalem—21:3, 22.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

2. Eventually, the triune, eternal God becomes the New Jerusalem incorporated with all of us, and we also become the New Jerusalem through the process of God's organic salvation—Rom. 5:10; Rev. 3:12.

Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

- B. The New Jerusalem is the corporate God-man—the enlargement, expansion, and expression of God—the corporate God—Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10-12; Rev. 4:3; 21:10-11:

Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Heb 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,

Heb 2:12 Saying, "I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You."

Rev 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

1. The New Jerusalem is a composition of divinity and humanity blended and mingled together as one entity; all the components have the same life, nature, and constitution and thus are a corporate person—vv. 2, 10-21.

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev 21:12 It had a great and high wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel:

Rev 21:13 On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

Rev 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Rev 21:15 And he who spoke with me had a golden reed as a measure that he might measure the city and its gates and its wall.

Rev 21:16 And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to a length of twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Rev 21:17 And he measured its wall, a hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

- Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
- Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysopraxe; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.
- Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
2. The New Jerusalem is the expansion and expression of the processed and consummated Triune God with His chosen, redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, built-up, conformed, and glorified people—vv. 10-11.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
3. The New Jerusalem is God's enlargement and expansion, God's expression in eternity, which is the corporate God—Gen. 1:1; John 1:1, 14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 22:17.
- Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.
- C. The New Jerusalem is the real and consummate Shulammitte—a corporate Shulammitte, including all of God's chosen and redeemed people—S. S. 6:13; Rev. 21:2, 9-10; 22:17:
- S.S. 6:13 Return, return, O Shulammitte; / Return, return, that we may gaze at you. / Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, / As upon the dance of two camps?
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.
1. The wonderful Shulammitte, the duplication of Solomon, is the greatest and ultimate figure of the New Jerusalem as the counterpart of Christ—S. S. 6:13; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.
- S.S. 6:13 Return, return, O Shulammitte; / Return, return, that we may gaze at you. / Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, / As upon the dance of two camps?
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
2. As Solomon's counterpart, the Shulammitte became the same as Solomon in life, nature, and image, as Eve to Adam—Gen. 2:20-23:
- Gen 2:20 And the man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of heaven and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper as his counterpart.
- Gen 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.

- Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- Gen 2:23 And the man said, This time this is bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh; / This one shall be called Woman / Because out of Man this one was taken.
- a. This signifies that the lover of Christ becomes the same as He is in life, nature, and image to match Him for their marriage—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29; Rev. 19:7; 21:2.
- 2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
- Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- b. The many lovers of Christ eventually will become duplications of God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead; this is the fulfillment of God becoming man so that man may become God, which is the high peak of the divine revelation.
3. The wife of Christ and Christ will be joined together to be the New Jerusalem for God's expression; this is the consummated Shulammitte—22:17.
- Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.
- D. The New Jerusalem is the universal golden lampstand, the ultimate consummation of the lampstands in the Scriptures—1:12, 20; 21:18b, 23-24a; Exo. 25:31-37; 1 Kings 7:49; Zech. 4:2:
- Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
- Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
- Rev 21:18b ... and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
- Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
- Rev 21:24a And the nations will walk by its light; ...
- Exo 25:31 And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it.
- Exo 25:32 And there shall be six branches going out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand out of one of its sides, and three branches of the lampstand out of its other side;
- Exo 25:33 Three cups made like almond blossoms in one branch, a calyx and a blossom bud; and three cups made like almond blossoms in the other branch, a calyx and a blossom bud—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand.
- Exo 25:34 And there shall be on the lampstand four cups made like almond blossoms, its calyxes and its blossom buds;
- Exo 25:35 And a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, for the six branches going out of the lampstand.
- Exo 25:36 Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it one beaten work of pure gold.
- Exo 25:37 And you shall make its lamps, seven; and set up its lamps to give light to the area in front of it.
- 1 Kings 7:49 And the lampstands of pure gold, five on the right and five on the left, before the innermost sanctuary; and the flowers and the lamps and the tongs, of gold;
- Zech 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see that there is a lampstand all of gold, with its bowl on top of it and its seven lamps upon it, with seven pipes for each of

the lamps on top of it;

1. The churches as golden lampstands will be consummated in the New Jerusalem, the aggregate of all the lampstands—Rev. 1:20; 21:18b, 23.
Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
Rev 21:18b ... and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
2. The New Jerusalem, a mountain of gold, is the universal golden lampstand holding the Lamb as the lamp shining out God as the light—vv. 18, 23; 22:1, 5.
Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
Rev 22:5 And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.
3. The New Jerusalem, the aggregate of all the lampstands, the totality of today's lampstands, is a consummate, universal golden lampstand to shine forth God's glory in the new heaven and new earth for eternity—21:24.
Rev 21:24 And the nations will walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.
4. The golden lampstand signifies the Triune God embodied and expressed, and the more we experience the aspects of the Triune God depicted in the lampstand, the more we will be in reality the golden lampstand as the embodiment and expression of the Triune God and thus become the New Jerusalem as the universal golden lampstand—1:12, 20; 21:18.
Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

IV. In His ministry in the stage of intensification, Christ as the sevenfold intensified Spirit produces the overcomers, who return to the orthodoxy of the church, overcome the degradation of the church, build up the Body of Christ, and consummate the New Jerusalem—1:4; 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21:

- Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
- Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His

- angels.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
- A. Because of the degradation of the church, Christ as the life-giving Spirit has been intensified sevenfold to become the seven Spirits—the sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit—to produce the overcomers—1:4; 4:5; 5:6; 3:13.
- Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- Rev 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- B. In overcoming the degradation of the churches, the overcomers return to the orthodoxy of the church and overcome satanic Judaism, demonic Catholicism, and dead and Christless Protestantism—2:9-10, 24-28; 3:1-5, 20-21.
- Rev 2:9 I know your tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander from those who call themselves Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.
- Rev 2:10 Do not fear the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison that you may be tried, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.
- Rev 2:24 But I say to you—the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they say—I put no other burden upon you;
- Rev 2:25 Nevertheless what you have hold fast until I come.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.
- Rev 3:2 Become watchful and establish the things which remain, which were about to die; for I have found none of your works completed before My God.
- Rev 3:3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and keep it and repent. If therefore you will not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall by no means know at what hour I will come upon you.
- Rev 3:4 But you have a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments, and they will walk with Me in white because they are worthy.
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
- C. The overcomers overcome anything that is against Christ or that replaces Christ—1 John 2:18, 22; Phil. 3:7-11.
- 1 John 2:18 Young children, it is the last hour; and even as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come; whereby we know that it is the last hour.
- 1 John 2:22 Who is the liar if not he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the

- one who denies the Father and the Son.
- Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.
- Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
- Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
- Phil 3:11 If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.
- D. The overcomers are for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:12, 16; Rev. 2:7b; 3:12, 21:
- Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- 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.
- Rev 2:7b ... To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
1. Without the overcomers the Body of Christ cannot be built up, and unless the Body of Christ is built up, Christ cannot come back for His bride—19:7-9.

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.

Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
 2. The building up of the Body of Christ is by the overcomers produced by Christ as the sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit—1:4; 4:5; 5:6; 3:1, 12.

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Rev 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
 3. The building up of the Body of Christ by the overcomers in this age is for the initial consummation of the New Jerusalem in the kingdom age and eventually for the full consummation of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth—2:7; 3:12; 21:2.

- Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

- E. “I will write upon him [the overcomer] the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name”—3:12b:
1. That the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the name of the Lord are written on the overcomer indicates that what God is, the nature of the New Jerusalem, and the person of the Lord have all been wrought into the overcomer.
 2. The mentioning of the New Jerusalem as a prize to the overcomer indicates that this promise will be fulfilled in the millennial kingdom; the New Jerusalem in the millennium will be a prize only to the overcomers.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

OVERCOMING OUR CONCEPTS AND HABITS TO SEE AND PRACTICE THE CENTRAL VISION OF THE BIBLE

We may wonder why most Christians do not see the central vision in Paul’s writings when they read the Bible. There are four things that prevent us from seeing the central vision. The first three are our natural concepts, our religious concepts, and our traditional concepts. We are all under the influence of these three kinds of concepts. In order to accomplish anything, especially in the spiritual or political realm, we must deal with people’s concepts. Our problem is our natural, religious, and traditional concepts, but these are hidden. We usually do not think that we are under the influence of our natural, religious, or traditional concepts, but we actually are greatly influenced by them. For this reason, when we read the Bible, there is a covering, or veil, which prevents us from seeing the central vision. The fourth thing that prevents us from seeing this vision is our habitual practices.

Because each of us has concepts and habitual practices, when we read the Bible, we take what we read for granted. We assume that we understand it, but we actually understand very little. The real truth and revelation are veiled by our concepts and habits.

To point out the shortcomings of traditional religious concepts may offend some and stir up opposition. However, this was the way the Lord took in His earthly ministry. He even called the religious Pharisees “hypocrites” and “offspring of vipers” (Matt. 23:13; 12:34). He spoke in this way so that His disciples could be rescued from traditional Judaism. If the Lord had not offended the traditional religionists, many more people would have welcomed and followed Him. However, He ultimately would have gained no one, because His ministry would have become part of Judaism. He first had to discredit the traditional religious concepts.

Because His disciples saw that what the Lord taught was absolutely different from traditional religion, when the day of Pentecost came, the one hundred twenty were absolutely separate from traditional Judaism. Nevertheless, some, such as James and Peter, were still not clear. The Lord eventually allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70 because of the ongoing influence of Judaism on the church, which was a situation of mixture. Only a few years earlier, those with James in Jerusalem told Paul, “You observe, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews who have believed; and all are zealous for the law. And they have been informed concerning you that you are teaching all the Jews throughout the nations apostasy from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, nor to walk according to the customs” (Acts 21:20-21). Then they convinced Paul to prove

that he was not opposed to the Judaic law by taking a vow in the temple and paying the expenses of four others who were doing the same thing. Paul may have gone along with this according to the principle in 1 Corinthians 9:20—to become a Jew to the Jews in order to gain them. However, God would not tolerate this and allowed an uproar to rise up against Paul to prevent the completion of his vow. Soon thereafter God allowed the destruction of the temple and all of Jerusalem so that the church would be cleared up of the old Judaistic influence. By allowing Jerusalem to be destroyed, God also allowed the church in Jerusalem to be destroyed, and it has not been restored for nearly two thousand years.

Traditional concepts are terrible. Even we who are in the Lord's recovery must be alert to avoid falling back under the influence of traditional concepts. For an airplane to remain on the ground or fall out of the sky requires no effort, but it requires constant power to remain in the air. In the same way, it is easy to remain or fall back under the influence of traditional religious concepts, but to remain above them requires constant exercise.

All the truth that the Lord has recovered among us in recent years has been in the Bible all along. For centuries Christians have translated, studied, expounded, and interpreted all these verses. However, they did not see the truth because they were veiled by traditional concepts. Concerning the children of Israel, Paul says, "Their thoughts were hardened; for until the present day the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant...Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart" (2 Cor. 3:14-15). They treasured the Old Testament, but because a veil covered their heart, they saw nothing when they read it. The principle is the same with many Christians today.

Traditional Christian teaching deals with only a small portion of God's redemption. What they say is not wrong, but it is a small portion of God's full salvation. Furthermore, many groups use the title *Christ* but do not have Christ in reality. The denominations have replaced Christ with many other things for their members to enjoy. For example, many Christians today enjoy Christmas much more than they enjoy Christ. They spend no time to take care of Christ, but they find much time to take care of Christmas. This is only one example. Countless things replace Christ in Christianity today. Most Christians do not even talk about the enjoyment of Christ. They leave Him in the heavens while they enjoy many idolatrous things on earth.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant denominations spend millions of dollars to gain members, but the real truth of the gospel does not reach these people. Today the Lord has given us the truth, but it seems that we cannot reach those in religion because they are behind a retaining wall. The Lord raised us up as His recovery to forsake religious tradition and follow His pure Word. What we teach and live is absolutely different from religion. As a result, religious ones attack, oppose, and spread false rumors concerning us in order to keep their members behind a retaining wall and to blockade us. The enemy has used this strategy not only in the United States in recent years but also from the beginning in China.

The devil also tries to subtly creep into the churches in the recovery and bring in damaging foreign things that are cleverly disguised and difficult to discern. These things may appear to be part of the Lord's recovery, but their inward element and nature are absolutely different. There is a real battle. The enemy, Satan, fights to keep the earth for himself. This is not a small thing. The Lord's only way to gain the earth is to recover and spread the truth. The truth is the only remedy, inoculation, and antibiotic. We need to be reminded of the situation and reminded of the truth. As long as the truth is being released, many problems will be solved. Even the leading brothers in the churches need to be reminded of the truth because everything can become habitual to us, and our habits are veils. When we do things out of habit, we lack revelation.

The truths need to be inscribed in our being in a way that cannot be erased. When Martin Luther saw justification by faith in the Word, he emphasized it to the extent that it could never be erased or lost again. Today among us the Lord has recovered the central revelation of Paul's completing ministry concerning Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ. This vision includes

the Body of Christ, the new man, and our organic union with the Lord. We need to be deeply impressed with these truths.

In the early days of the Lord's recovery in China, few saints saw the central vision as Brother Watchman Nee did. There were hundreds of co-workers and hundreds of local churches. However, Brother Nee told me that he was unhappy with the situation because many followed his ministry yet did not see the vision that he saw. Now that the Lord's recovery has come to the United States, my greatest concern is whether many of the saints truly see the central vision. If they do not see it, our labor is in vain. Numbers mean nothing without the central vision. Although the Lord fed five thousand, after His ascension only one hundred twenty remained. If we are only giving good messages, the Lord cannot gain what He is seeking. The difference between the Lord's recovery and traditional Christianity is the central vision. If the saints do not see the central vision, we will become a repetition of traditional Christianity, and the Lord will be delayed in carrying out His recovery and accomplishing His purpose. This is serious.

This is why I do not care primarily for the spreading of the churches, the increase in numbers, or other apparent signs of blessing. Instead, my main interest is to release the word concerning the central vision and to care for the real situation in all the churches. Some saints must see the central vision in a solid way in order for the Lord to have a way. Otherwise, we are only a repetition and a part of traditional Christianity.

We all need to see the central vision in Paul's completing ministry. The leading brothers need to spend time to study Paul's fourteen Epistles and fellowship concerning the Lord's central vision. Paul's Epistles have never been as opened as they are today. The Lord has given us the principles that are the keys to fully open His Word. Just as a house is built according to a blueprint that places doors in certain locations to allow access into the house, the Bible was written in a regulated way according to certain divine principles. In order to unlock and rightly interpret and expound the Bible, we must know the correct principles. The Lord has given us these principles. The opening of the Lord's Word also depends on His mercy. When the Word is properly opened, a genuine believer will unmistakably recognize that it has been opened. Today the entire Bible is opened, and the seekers who receive the ministry that is according to the opened Word receive the benefit and the profit.

At this time the Lord is carrying out His ultimate recovery. There will be nothing left to be recovered. This is the highest peak of the Lord's recovery. The highest peak of the Bible is Paul's completing ministry. John's mending ministry strengthens and confirms Paul's completing ministry. These two ministries are like a single mountain with two peaks. Sooner or later, the Lord will carry out the highest peak of His recovery. If we fail Him, He will be forced to wait and gain another people who will find and treasure what we have spoken and published but failed to appreciate or experience. Although I am concerned for the present recovery, the leading brothers, and the result of my ministry, I am comforted by knowing that if this generation fails the Lord, all the truths are printed and will remain for another generation to pick up and carry out. As long as the truth is released, it will not return vainly. This principle is found in Isaiah 55:10-11: "Just as the rain comes down / And the snow from heaven, / And does not return there, / Until it waters the earth / And makes it bear and sprout forth, / That it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; / So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; / It will not return to Me vainly, / But it will accomplish what I delight in, / And it will prosper in the matter to which I have sent it." Whether this truth accomplishes its purpose today or we fail and delay it, someday it will prevail to accomplish its goal.

What the Lord and the churches need today is for us to carry out the truth that the Lord has opened to us in His Word. Otherwise, we can only do an ordinary Christian work. Our goal should not be to exercise our human wisdom and politeness to avoid problems. If we do this, we will obscure the truth. Politeness never gains anyone. No friendship is built upon politeness. Real friendship is built upon frankness. If we avoid offending others at all cost, organized Christianity may welcome us, but we will gain no one for the Lord's recovery. Paul was persecuted because of his frankness. I believe

that he was arrested and martyred in the first persecution under Nero because he would not “politely” hide himself. However, he gained much for the Lord’s purpose.

Although the Plymouth Brethren were used by the Lord to recover certain truths, they became absolutely habitual. The way they meet and do things, such as preaching the gospel, is no longer a result of their inner revelation or zeal but because of their habitual practices. The same thing may happen with us. We should meet and function not merely out of habit but because our vision is an inner motivation that causes us to be fresh and burning in spirit. We need to have a new start, a new development of the inner life. If we become habitual, we will be like the children of Israel, who wandered in the wilderness for many years. We should not take things for granted as we meet and function. In order to avoid becoming old and falling into habitual practices, we should exhort one another. Paul says in Hebrews 3:13, “Exhort one another each day, as long as it is called ‘today.’” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1982, vol. 1, “The Ministry of the New Covenant,” pp. 151-156*)