

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

RA Hymns: 972, 395

Scripture Reading: Joel 1:4; 2:28-32; 3:11-21; Eph. 3:16-21; 4:15-16; Rev. 19:7-9; 22:17a

- Joel 1:4 What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; / And what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has eaten; / And what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust has eaten.
- Joel 2:28 And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, / And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; / Your old men shall dream dreams; / Your young men shall see visions.
- Joel 2:29 Indeed even upon the male and female slaves / In those days I will pour out My Spirit.
- Joel 2:30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and on earth: / Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
- Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, / And the moon into blood, / Before the great and terrible / Day of Jehovah comes.
- Joel 2:32 And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved; / For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be an escape, / As Jehovah has said, / Even for the remnant / Whom Jehovah calls.
- Joel 3:11 Hurry and come, / All you surrounding nations, / And be gathered. / There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!
- Joel 3:12 Let the nations rouse themselves and come up / To the valley of Jehoshaphat. / For there I will sit to judge / All the surrounding nations.
- Joel 3:13 Send forth the sickle, / For the harvest is ripe; / Come, tread, / For the winepress is full; / The wine vats overflow, / For their evil is great.
- Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes, / In the valley of decision; / For the day of Jehovah has drawn near / In the valley of decision.
- Joel 3:15 The sun and the moon grow dark, / And the stars withdraw their shining.
- Joel 3:16 And Jehovah will roar from Zion, / And from Jerusalem He will utter His voice, / And the heavens and the earth will shake. / But Jehovah will be a shelter to His people / And a stronghold to the children of Israel.
- Joel 3:17 Thus you will know that I am Jehovah your God, / Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. / And Jerusalem will be holy, / And strangers will pass through her no longer.
- Joel 3:18 And in that day / The mountains will drop down fresh wine, / And the hills will flow with milk; / And all the waterways of Judah / Will flow with water, / And a fountain will go forth from the house of Jehovah, / And it will water the valley of Shittim.
- Joel 3:19 Egypt will be a desolation, / And Edom will be a desolate wilderness, / Because of the violence against the children of Judah, / In that they have shed innocent blood in their land.
- Joel 3:20 But Judah will abide forever, / And Jerusalem, from generation to generation;
- Joel 3:21 And I will acquit them of their bloodshed that I had not acquitted them of, / For Jehovah dwells in Zion.
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, 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 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.
- Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...

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. We need to have a clear view of the divine history within the human history—Joel 1:4; 2:28-32; 3:11-21:

- Joel 1:4 What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; / And what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has eaten; / And what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust has eaten.
- Joel 2:28 And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, / And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; / Your old men shall dream dreams; / Your young men shall see visions.
- Joel 2:29 Indeed even upon the male and female slaves / In those days I will pour out My Spirit.
- Joel 2:30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and on earth: / Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
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- Joel 3:13 Send forth the sickle, / For the harvest is ripe; / Come, tread, / For the winepress is full; / The wine vats overflow, / For their evil is great.
- Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes, / In the valley of decision; / For the day of Jehovah has drawn near / In the valley of decision.
- Joel 3:15 The sun and the moon grow dark, / And the stars withdraw their shining.
- Joel 3:16 And Jehovah will roar from Zion, / And from Jerusalem He will utter His voice, / And the heavens and the earth will shake. / But Jehovah will be a shelter to His people / And a stronghold to the children of Israel.
- Joel 3:17 Thus you will know that I am Jehovah your God, / Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. / And Jerusalem will be holy, / And strangers will pass through her no longer.
- Joel 3:18 And in that day / The mountains will drop down fresh wine, / And the hills will flow with milk; / And all the waterways of Judah / Will flow with water, / And a fountain will go forth from the house of Jehovah, / And it will water the valley of Shittim.
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- Joel 3:20 But Judah will abide forever, / And Jerusalem, from generation to generation;
- Joel 3:21 And I will acquit them of their bloodshed that I had not acquitted them of, / For Jehovah dwells in Zion.

1. The history of man, the history of the world, the physical, human history, is outward; the divine history, the history of God with man and in man, is inward; it is a matter of the mystery of the Triune God in humanity—1 Tim. 3:15-16:

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.

a. 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.

- b. 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.
 - c. 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.
 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.
2. 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.
- 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,
- Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- 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.
3. 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.
- Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...
4. At the time of the Lord's coming back, there will be a meeting of two figures—Antichrist, a figure in the outward, human history, and Christ, the Figure in the intrinsic, divine history—2 Thes. 2:2-8:
- 2 Thes 2:2 That you be not quickly shaken in mind nor alarmed, neither by a spirit nor by word nor by a letter as if by us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
- 2 Thes 2:3 Let no one deceive you in any way, because it will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition,
- 2 Thes 2:4 Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or an object of worship, so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth, saying that he is God.
- 2 Thes 2:5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I said these things to you?
- 2 Thes 2:6 And now you know that which restrains, so that he might be revealed in his own time.
- 2 Thes 2:7 For it is the mystery of lawlessness that is now operating, but only until the one now restraining goes out of the way.
- 2 Thes 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord Jesus will slay by the breath of His mouth and bring to nothing by the manifestation of His coming),
- a. Christ will come back, descending with His overcomers as His army (Joel 3:11), to defeat Antichrist and his army (Rev. 19:11-21).
- Joel 3:11 Hurry and come, / All you surrounding nations, / And be gathered. / There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!
- Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
- Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.

Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,

Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.

Rev 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.

Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Him who sits on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

b. After the Figure in the divine history defeats the figure in the human history, the thousand-year kingdom will come, and this kingdom will consummate in the New Jerusalem—the ultimate and consummate step of the divine history—20:4, 6; 21:10.

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

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,

B. We need to consider whether we are living merely in the human history or living also in the divine history—1:11, 20; 12:11; 14:4b; 19:7:

Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

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 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

Rev 14:4b ... These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

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.

1. We all were born in the human history, but we have been reborn, regenerated, in the divine history—John 3:6.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2. If our living is in the world, we are living merely in the outward, human history—Rom. 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15-17.
 - Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
 - Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
 - 1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him;
 - 1 John 2:16 Because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.
 - 1 John 2:17 And the world is passing away, and its lust, but he who does the will of God abides forever.
 3. If our living is in the church, we are living in the inward, divine history—1 Cor. 1:2.
 - 1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
 4. As the enlargement of the manifestation of Christ, the church is part of the divine history within the outward, human history—1 Tim. 3:15-16:
 - 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.
 - a. In the church life God's history is our history; God and we have one history, the divine history; our God has a marvelous history that includes us; God's history has become our history because He is in union with us—1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
 - b. Whatever God has done, whatever He is doing, and whatever He will do in His history are all for our Christian life and church life.
- C. "Our living, our daily walk, our schooling, our job, and our business must be a part of God's history in His marvelous and excellent move on the earth today...We need to be one with God in His history, moving and energizing in His loving overcomers; that is, we need to be one with God in life, in living, and in our entire doing today on this earth! We need to write God's today's history!" (*Life-study of Joshua*, p. 3).

II. In the divine history what is being recovered today is God's economy, which is focused on the central work of God—to work Himself in Christ into His chosen and redeemed people, making Himself one with them for His expression—Eph. 3:16-17a; 4:4-6:

- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 - Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
 - 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.
- A. God's ultimate move in His recovery to carry out His economy is to work Himself—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—into us and to become our life so that we may live Him out and express Him as His Body, the church—3:16-21; 4:4-6, 15-16.
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 - Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
- 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.
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, 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.
- B. God's economy is to make Christ everything, to make Christ the centrality and the universality, for the producing of God's increase, His enlargement, which is the church; the increase, the enlargement, of God is the fullness of God for His expression—Col. 1:18; 2:19; 3:10-11; Eph. 3:19.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col 2:19 And not 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.
- Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- C. In His economy God wants to work Himself into man to be one with us, to be our life, life supply, and everything, and to have us as His expression; thus, God's intention in His economy is to have a corporate entity, composed of God and man, to be His expression for eternity—4:4-6.
- 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.
- D. According to His economy, God will rule over the world, produce a situation for Israel to be His elect, gain the church as His mysterious people, and have the nations to be the peoples in the eternal kingdom of God; if we see this, we will know where we are, and we will know the meaning of our human life—2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:28-30.
- 2 Tim 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages
- Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
- 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 8:30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.
- E. We need to have a clear vision of God's economy and be governed, controlled, directed, preserved, and protected by this vision; today in the Lord's recovery we must be strong and unshakable in the vision of God's economy—Acts 26:19; Prov. 29:18a.
- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
- Prov 29:18a Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; ...
- F. God's ultimate move is to have Christ, the mystery of God, enter into us as our life so that

we may become His living members and form His Body, which is the fullness of the One who fills all in all—Col. 2:2; 1:27; 3:4; 2:19; Eph. 1:22-23:

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 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col 2:19 And not 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 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.

1. Those who live Christ, who live in the spirit, are the actual Body of Christ corporately; they are also the one new man in actuality, a new creation with a new living to express the Triune God—4:16, 24.

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.

Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

2. Eventually, the Body life will reach the reality of Romans 12, and this will be the preparation of the bride for the Lord's coming back—Rev. 19:7.

Rom 12 be omitted.

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.

3. "Be burdened with God's ultimate move. Then you will see God's oneness with you, and there will be no problem with your living" (*The World Situation and God's Move*, p. 43).

4. "Rise up and stand for the Lord's recovery. This is the ultimate time for God to accomplish His purpose to bring the Lord back" (p. 58).