

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message Three : The Universal History according to God's Economy—the Divine History within the Human History

I. Overview:

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. We need to have a clear view of the divine history within the human history. 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. If our living is in the world, we are living merely in the human history. If our living is in the church, we are living in the divine history. God's central work is to work Himself in Christ into His chosen and redeemed people, making Himself one with them for His expression. 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.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Describe what the four stages of the locust in Joel 1:4 signifies.

Four words for locust are used in Joel 1:4, probably referring to one kind of locust in various stages of growth. The four stages of this one kind of locust refer to the nations that devastated Israel in four consecutive empires; Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, including Antichrist, who will be the last Caesar of the Roman Empire. They will be overcome and terminated by Christ.

B. Expound what things God has accomplished by the consuming of the locusts.

Israel has been suffering the cutting, swarming, licking, and consuming of the locusts for twenty-seven centuries. God used the suffering of the Jews to bring in the incarnation, an unprecedented event that brought God into man and mingled God and man as one. The Roman Empire also provided the means for Christ to be crucified for the accomplishing of God's redemption, and the facilities for the spreading of the gospel to the entire inhabited earth.

Day 2 —

A. Explain what a difference of God's move in the Old Testament and New Testament.

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 economy in the New Testament is absolutely unique. In the Old Testament God did a lot indirectly to prepare for the day when He could come to do the direct work in the New Testament.

B. Expound what recorded in the Bible is God's history being of two portions.

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 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.

Day 3 —

A. Why do we say that if we are living in the church, we are living in the divine history?

We all were born in the human history, but we have been reborn, regenerated, in the divine 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 God and we have the same history, the divine history.

B. State what our goal is today we as members of the Body of Christ.

Our goal is to enlarge the manifestation of Christ intrinsically. Christ is now on the throne in the heavens, waiting for us to be perfected and matured. Eventually the time will be ripe for Him to come back to deal with the nations, to save the remnant of Israel, and to complete God's economy with us. Then the age of restoration will be ushered in.

Day 4 —

A. How should we do if we want to know the divine history within the human history?

We first need to realize that the Triune God is eternal. 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.

B. Fellowship with our experience how we write God's today's history.

We need to be one with God in His history, moving and energizing in His loving overcomers. We need to be today's Joshuas and Calebs to take possession of the God-promised land for Christ that we may become His possession. We need to be today's Ruths to turn to God's economy, to enter into the land of Immanuel, and to marry ourselves to Christ that we may bring forth Christ.

Day 5 —

A. Expound that the Bible conveys a vision that should control our living.

This vision is able to keep us in God's economy so that we may live the church life with the goal of reaching the millennium and the New Jerusalem. We are told that without vision the people will perish. Under the heavenly vision we are directed toward God's destination, and our life is controlled according to God's economy. Because we have seen this vision, we can press on in spite of suffering and all kinds of trouble.

B. Explain that we in the Lord's recovery must have a clear vision of God's economy.

If we have the vision of God's economy, we shall automatically have only one choice, preference, taste, and ministry. We shall care only for the all-inclusive and all-extensive Christ and for the genuine and proper church life. Today. Because Paul had seen this vision and was faithful to it, he could be very strong. We all need to be strong and steadfast in this way.

Day 6 —

A. Expound God's ultimate move being to have Christ as everything to us.

This is Paul's completing ministry, telling us that Christ is God's mystery and Christ has become our life; that we are the church, which is Christ's mystery; that the church is the Body. Those who live Christ, who live in the spirit, are the actual Body of Christ corporately. This Body is one. They are a new creation with a new living to express the Triune God.

B. Explain today we in the Lords recovery realizing our tremendous responsibility.

First, we must preach the gospel properly, adequately, and genuinely. Second, we must teach people the Bible, bringing them to the full knowledge of the truth. We must be a people who really respect and know God's divine Word. Third, we must drop all kinds of religion and practices and come together according to the Bible, meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus.

III. Conclusion:

We need to have a clear view of that there are two histories in the universe; first, the physical human history, the history of the world, is outward. If our living is in the world, we are living merely in the outward, human history. Second, the mysterious divine history, the divine history, the history of God with man and in man, is inward. If our living is in the church, we are living in the inward, divine history. In the church life, the history of God is our history; God and we have the same history, the divine history. Our God has a wonderful history that includes us. God's history becomes our history. Because He is joined to us, in the history of God, all that He has done, is being done, and will be done, is for the Christian life and the church life.