

Message 4

GOD'S PROCEDURE OF BUILDING

Genesis 2:10-25

¹⁰And a river went forth from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four branches. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that goes around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³And the name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴And the name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one that goes east of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵And Jehovah God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it. ¹⁶And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of it you shall not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

¹⁸And Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart. ¹⁹Now Jehovah God had

formed from the ground every animal of the field and every bird of heaven. And He brought [them] to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called any living animal, that was its name. ²⁰And 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.

²¹And 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. ²²And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³And 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. ²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And both the man and his wife were naked and were not ashamed before each other.

I. We must experience transformation in the flow of life for God's building—2:10-12:

A. God builds with stone:

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

1 Pet. 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

B. Precious stones require transformation:

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.

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.

C. The flow of life brings forth building materials—gold, pearl (silver), and onyx (precious) stones:

1 Cor. 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble.

- 2 Pet. 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
- Matt. 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.
- 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.
- D. The building materials are built into a city in Revelation:
- Rev. 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
- 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.
- Rev. 21:19a The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone.

II. The third step God took was to build a complement and a counterpart for man— Gen. 2:18-25:

- A. Adam is a type of Christ—Gen. 2:18:
- Rom. 5:14 But death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam’s transgression, who is a type of Him who was to come.
- 1 Cor. 15:45 So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- B. Christ came as a man to be “put to sleep” on the cross—Gen. 2:21a:
- 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.
- John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- C. On the cross, the divine life (the “rib”) flowed out of Christ—Gen. 2:21b:
- John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.
- 1 Pet. 1:18-19 Knowing that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ;
- Exo. 17:6 I will be standing before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it so that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.
- D. When Christ was resurrected, the church was brought forth with His divine life—
Gen. 2:22:
- 1 Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- Eph. 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.

- 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.
- Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
- E. God wants to marry man and to be one with man—Gen. 2:24:
- Eph. 5:31-32 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
- 1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- 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.

Focus: We need to open to the Lord to transform us into precious stones so that we can be built up into His bride and counterpart to marry Him, and thus accomplish His heart's desire and His eternal purpose.

Ministry Excerpts:

TRANSFORMATION FOR BUILDING IN THE FLOW OF LIFE

We also need to pay attention to a very crucial word in the New Testament—transformation. This word is correctly translated from the Greek language in Romans 12:2, which says that we should be transformed by the renewing of our mind. ...An English equivalent to the Greek is the term metabolic change. Transformation is not a mere outward change; it is an organic change, a metabolic change. Transformation means to change a substance from one form and element into another form and element. Precious stones are produced by such a process of transformation. This is the meaning of transformation.

When we come to Revelation 21 and 22, we do not find a garden, but a city. A city is not created; it is built. In Genesis 2 we have creation; in Revelation 21 and 22 we have the building. In the city we also have the tree of life. Thus, the Bible begins and ends with life. Moreover, in the city we find a river of living water proceeding out of the throne of God. This corresponds to the river in the garden. Furthermore, in Revelation we find the three categories of precious materials, not in a natural state, but built into a city made with gold, pearl, and precious stones. Therefore, what was sown in Genesis as a seed is reaped in Revelation as the harvest.

If we read Revelation 21 and 22 carefully, we will see the entire city of New Jerusalem is a mountain of gold. It is not an edifice of clay. This golden mountain is also a golden city. Thus, the gold is the site, the ground for the building of the city. The precious stones are built into the wall of the New Jerusalem, and every gate in this wall is a large pearl. The site of the New Jerusalem is gold, the wall is composed of precious stones, and each of the twelve gates is a pearl. Therefore, this city is a composition of the precious materials found in a natural state in the garden. In Genesis the precious substances are lying in the garden; in Revelation they are built into a city.

Between Genesis and Revelation we have 1 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 3 Paul says that as a master builder he laid the unique foundation, Jesus Christ, and that we all must take heed how we build upon it. What materials are we using in building up the church? Paul tells us to

build with gold, silver, and precious stones. (Later we will see why he substituted silver for pearl.) By this we can see that not only the New Jerusalem is built with gold, pearl, and precious stones, but even the church in this age must be built with gold, silver, and precious stones, not with wood, grass, and straw. As we shall see, gold contrasts with wood, silver opposes grass, and precious stones are versus straw. (*Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 12, pp. 147-150)

TO WORK GOD INTO MAN AS LIFE

Humanly speaking, the end of Genesis 2 is easy to understand because it relates the story of a marriage. Adam was created, but he had no wife. Thus, God provided a wife for him. This does not sound allegorical. If we only read Genesis 2 we will not recognize it as an allegory. However, if we read through the whole Bible, we will realize that the marriage found in Genesis 2 is indeed an allegory. Why do we say this? Because later in the Old Testament God told His people, “For thy Maker is thine husband” (Isa. 54:5). Man’s creator is his husband, meaning that in the universe the unique man is God Himself.

Not Good for God to Be Alone

After man was created, God said of him, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his complement” (Gen. 2:18, Heb.). Although man was perfect, he was not complete. For example, a human head is perfect, but without the body it is incomplete. Although he is perfect, he needs a counterpart to complete him. ...Thus, as God looked at Adam, He seemed to say, “Adam, you are perfect, but you are only a half a unit. You are too lonely. I will make a complement for you. I will make you a counterpart.”...Man is a type of God, the real, universal husband. Before God had secured the proper man, He was alone. It was not good for God to be alone. Although God is absolutely and eternally perfect, He is not complete. To say that God is imperfect is to speak blasphemy. Our God is eternally perfect. Nevertheless, without the church He is incomplete. Without the church He is like a husband without a wife or like a head without a body. Therefore, when God said that it was not good for Adam to be alone, it meant that God Himself was incomplete and that it was not good for Him to be alone. Adam’s need for a wife typifies and portrays God’s need to have a complement. If we see this, every aspect of Genesis 2 will be clear.

To Bring Forth the Church—Eve Built

What is the church? The church is a part of Christ; it is nothing less than Christ Himself. The church is the element of Christ in the believers. When this element in so many believers is added together, it equals the church. ...The church is the totality of the Christ in all His believers. Although we are regenerated people, if we live and act according to our natural disposition, we are not in reality members of the Body of Christ. Only in a shallow sense can we say that we are members of His Body. When we behave according to our natural disposition we may be typical Americans, Jews, or Chinese, but we are not actually the members of Christ. What actually is a member of Christ? It is a person produced with the element of Christ who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit. Christ as the life-giving Spirit indwells His believers. When this Christ in His believers is added together, the sum equals the church. ...Only that which comes out of Christ can be recognized by Christ. Only that which comes out of Christ can return to Christ and match Him. Only that which comes out of the resurrection life of Christ can be His complement and counterpart, the Body of Christ. Only that which comes out of Christ and which is Christ Himself can be one with Christ.

To Be One with Man—Adam and Eve Becoming One Flesh

In typology, Adam and Eve became one flesh (Gen. 2:23-24). In actuality, Christ and the church are one spirit, because he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Figuratively speaking, all the believers of Christ are “members of His Body.” The marriage union between husband and wife is a great mystery “with regard to Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:29-32). If we have such a vision...we will understand the whole New Testament in the way of life, not in a natural way or in the way of knowledge. We will realize that we have all been reborn and recreated with Christ, that we are now one spirit with Him and with one another, and that on earth today we are living a marriage life with our husband, Christ. We are not just waiting for the future; we are living a corporate marriage life today. In one sense we have the marriage life already and we are living with our husband. In another, fuller sense we have only the foretaste today and are awaiting the full taste of the marriage to come. This marriage will be carried out in Revelation 19. Following that, the church will be consummated as the New Jerusalem, which will be the completed bride of Christ for eternity. Christ and the completed wife will enjoy a marriage life for eternity. This wife, of course, will not be an individual person, but will be a corporate, builded expression, the New Jerusalem. (*Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 17, pp. 213-214, 216-17, 221-223)