

Message Four  
**Daniel—**  
**The Controlling Vision and Living of the Overcomers**

Scripture Reading: Dan. 1—6

**I. “What will happen in the last days” depends on the overcomers, who depend on God for their controlling vision of His heart’s desire and their living in His economy—Dan. 2:28; cf. Ezek. 14:14,20:**

- A. God the Father’s eternal covenant with Noah, signified by the rainbow, is His eternal economy to dispense the all-inclusive Christ into His chosen people as righteousness, holiness, and glory to make them the wise exhibition of all that Christ is—Gen. 3:24; 9:8-17; Ezek. 1:26-28; 36:22-38; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 8:8-12; Psa. 25:14; 1 Cor. 1:9, 24-30; 2:9-10; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 4:3; 21:18-20.
- B. The goal of God’s eternal economy seen with Daniel is to have the corporate Christ, Christ with His overcomers, as the crushing stone to be His dispensational instrument to end this age and become a great mountain to fill the whole earth, making the whole earth God’s kingdom—Dan. 2:31-45; Joel 3:11; Rev. 12:1-2, 5, 11; 19:7-21.
- C. The means of God’s eternal economy seen with Job is to bring His lovers through the process of transformation by the renewing of the Holy Spirit in their seeing God to gain God and be transformed by God to carry out what is in the heart of God—Job 10:13; 42:5; Eph. 3:9; Matt. 5:8; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Titus 3:5.

**II. The principle of the Lord’s recovery is seen with “Daniel and his companions” who were absolutely one with God in their victory over Satan’s devices—Dan. 2:13, 17; cf. Rev. 17:14; Matt. 22:14:**

- A. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the demonic diet—Dan. 1:3-21:
  - 1. The Lord’s recovery is the recovery of the eating of Jesus for the building up of the church—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; Rev. 2:7, 17; 3:20.
  - 2. We can eat Jesus by eating His words and by being careful to contact and be with those who call on Him out of a pure heart—Jer. 15:16; 2 Tim. 2:22.
- B. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the devilish blinding that prevents people from seeing the divine history within human history—Dan. 2:
  - 1. The corporate Christ as the stone and the mountain, the Bridegroom with His bride, the corporate man of God with the breath of God, will crush and slay Antichrist and his armies by the breath, the sword, of His mouth—vv. 24-35, 44-45; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:11-21; Gen. 11:4-9; cf. Isa. 33:22.
  - 2. Christ produces His bride as the new creation by growth, transformation, and maturity; thus, there is the urgent need of maturity—Col. 2:19; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 6:1a.
  - 3. Christ as the living and precious stone, foundation stone, cornerstone, and topstone of God’s building infuses us with Himself as the preciousness to transform us into living and precious stones for His building—1 Pet. 2:4-8; Isa. 28:16; Zech. 3:9; 4:7, 9-10.
- C. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the seduction of idol worship—Dan. 3; cf. Matt. 4:9-10:

1. Whatever is not the true God in our regenerated spirit is an idol replacing God; whatever is not in the spirit or of the spirit is an idol—1 John 5:21.
  2. The enemy of the Body is the self that replaces God with its self-interest, self-exaltation, self-glory, self-beauty, and self-strength; in the Body and for the Body, we deny the self and do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord—Matt. 16:24; 2 Cor. 4:5.
- D. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the covering that hinders people from seeing the ruling of the heavens by the God of the heavens—Dan. 4:
1. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for Christ's preeminence, we are under God's heavenly rule for the purpose of making Christ preeminent—vv. 18, 23-26, 30-32; Rom. &28-29; Col. 1:18b; 2 Cor. 10:13, 18; Jer. 9:23-24.
  2. "He is able to abase those who walk in pride"—Dan. 4:37b.
- E. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the ignorance concerning the result of the debauchery before God and the insult to His holiness—ch. 5:
1. "An excellent spirit and knowledge and insight, and the interpretation of dreams, the declaring of riddles, and the resolving of problems [lit., knots] were found in this Daniel"—v. 12a.
  2. "You [Belshazzar]...have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this; but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of the heavens; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and of gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see nor hear nor know. But the God in whose hand is your breath and to whom all your ways belong, you have not honored"—vv; 22-23, 20.
- F. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the subtlety that prohibited the faithfulness of the overcomers in the worship of God—ch. 6:
1. "Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously"—v. 10.
  2. God will listen to our prayer when our prayer is toward Christ (typified by the Holy Land), toward the kingdom of God (typified by the holy city), and toward the house of God (typified by the holy temple) as the goal in God's economy—1 Kings 8:48-49.

## MESSAGE FOUR READING EXCERPTS

### **THE VICTORY OF THE YOUNG DESCENDANTS OF GOD'S DEGRADED ELECT OVER SATAN'S FURTHER DEVICE IN THE DEMONIC DIET**

The first temptation that came to mankind concerned eating (Gen. 3:1-5). In principle, all the temptations that come to us are related to eating. Nebuchadnezzar's devilish temptation was first to seduce Daniel and his three companions, the four brilliant young descendants of God's defeated elect, to be defiled in partaking of his unclean food, food offered to idols. Nebuchadnezzar provided Daniel and his three companions with the choice food to eat. To Daniel, that choice food was actually the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That tree is something attached to Satan and even one with Satan, but the tree of life is something attached to God and one with God. To eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is to become attached to Satan; to eat of the tree of life is to become attached to God. When Daniel and his companions refused to eat Nebuchadnezzar's unclean food and chose instead to eat vegetables, they were actually rejecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and taking the tree of life.

To eat Nebuchadnezzar's choice food is to take Satan as our supply and to become one with Satan. I am concerned that you may be eating the choice food provided for you by today's Nebuchadnezzar. If we are careless in our eating, in our shopping, in where we go, and in what we do, we may take in something related to idols, something demonic. We are what we eat. If we eat godly food—that is, if we eat God-food, God as our food—we will be one with God.

### **DANIEL'S VISION FROM GOD CONCERNING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM**

The contents of Nebuchadnezzar's dream were a great human image and its destiny (Dan.

2:31-45). This great image signifies the aggregate of human government throughout human history (vv. 31-33), from the beginning of human government in Babel (Babylon) in the land of Shinar (Gen. 10:6-12), as signified by the head, to the termination of human government in human history in the Roman Empire with the ten kings, as signified by the ten toes. From its beginning to its termination, human government has done and will continue to do three things: rebel against God, exalt man, and worship idols (Gen. 11:4, 9). The destiny of the great human image is to be crushed by a stone cut out without hands, at its appearing (vv. 34-35a, 44b-45; 7:13-14). This stone cut without hands is Christ.

As the stone that will crush the entire human government of mankind, Christ was not cut out with human hands (as indicated by "without hands" in 2:34, 45); He was cut by God through His crucifixion and resurrection. Through His crucifixion He was cut by being put to death (Acts 2:23), and in His resurrection He was cut out to be, first, the cornerstone for the building up of the church and the crushing stone to destroy the totality of human government (Acts 2:24; Matt. 21:42, 44b). When Christ comes as the smiting stone, He will not come alone. Rather, He will come with His bride. Then Christ as the God-cut stone will come with His bride to strike the toes of the image, destroying it from the toes to the head. In this way, human government will be crushed and terminated.

### **THE CONTROLLING VISION KEEPING GOD'S PEOPLE FROM THE WORLD**

I hope that we will all see the controlling vision in the second chapter of Daniel and that, in light of this vision, we will have a clear view regarding human government. In the eyes of human beings, there are different kinds of governments, some good and others bad. But in the eyes of God, every human government is a beast. Babylon, Persia, Greece, the Roman Empire—all are beasts. I can testify that this view has preserved me from the world for more

than sixty years. We all need such a view, such a vision. If, as God's people, we see this controlling vision, we will be kept from the world and prepared for Christ's coming as the smiting stone which will crush the aggregate of human government and become a great mountain—the eternal kingdom of God—filling the whole earth.

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR BLESSING  
THE GOD OF SHADRACH,  
MESHACH, AND ABED-NEGO**

Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him and changed the king's word and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God" (v. 28). The three young overcomers did not simply frustrate the king's word—they changed it. Instead of caring for Nebuchadnezzar's word, they changed it in nature and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god other than their own God.

The three young overcomers gained the victory over the seduction of idol worship. The whole universe saw their rejection of that devilish worship. Thus, God could boast to Satan that even in his territory, He had a people worshipping Him. They did not care for Satan. Today, in this dark age, everything seems to be discouraging. But there is still a group of overcomers to stand against the tide and to carry out God's worship, testimony, and interest on earth.

**BELSHAZZAR'S DEBAUCHERY  
BEFORE GOD AND  
HIS INSULT TO HIS HOLINESS**

Daniel 5:1-4 describes Belshazzar's debauchery before God and his insult to His holiness.

**Making a Great Feast for  
a Thousand of His Lords**

Belshazzar (a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar and a king of Babylon) made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and he drank wine before them (5:1). Here we see Belshazzar's debauchery before God. Debauchery is an overindulgence in eating and drinking for an adulterous purpose.

Belshazzar, under the influence of the wine, commanded men to bring the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar his forefather had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem, that he, his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them and praise the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone (vv. 2-4). They took the vessels that were for God's worship in His holy temple at Jerusalem and used them in worshipping idols. That was an insult to God's holiness.

**THE VICTORY OF THE YOUNG  
DESCENDANTS OF GOD'S DEGRADED  
ELECT OVER THE SUBTLETY THAT  
PROHIBITED THE FAITHFULNESS OF  
THE OVERCOMERS IN THE  
WORSHIP OF GOD**

Daniel 6 is very crucial because it shows us how God carries out His economy with His elect for Christ's coming. God desires to carry out His economy, but man is needed to pray for His economy on earth. God carries out His economy on the earth through His faithful channels of prayer. Satan's strategy is to frustrate the prayer which is for God's move.

The intention of the chief ministers and satraps was to destroy Daniel, but Satan, who was behind them, wanted to stop or cut off the

channel of prayer God was using for the carrying out of His economy.

### **DANIEL'S FAITHFULNESS IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD**

Verse 10 reveals Daniel's faithfulness in the worship of God. "Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously." He had read the prophecy of Jeremiah which prophesied that the children of Israel would serve the king of Babylon for seventy years (9:2b; Jer. 25:11). Standing upon this word, Daniel must have prayed many times for the fulfillment of this prophecy and for the return of the captives. He prayed, and he would not let anything stop or frustrate his prayer. He knew that his prayer was for the carrying out of God's economy concerning His elect. Therefore, his prayer was a serious matter. Today, prayer is the lifeline in the Lord's recovery. The more Satan tries to frustrate our prayer, the more we should pray. (*Life-study of Daniel*, pp. 8-10, 14, 16-17, 24, 28-29, 39-40, 45-47)

### **THE DIVINE HISTORY WITHIN THE HUMAN HISTORY God's Intention in His Economy**

If we would know the divine history that takes place within the human history, we first need to realize that the Triune God is eternal. For God to be eternal means that with Him there is no beginning. Within Himself, this eternal One made an economy. According to His economy, God wants to work Himself into man to be one with man, to be man's life, life supply, and everything, and to have man as His expression. God's intention in His economy is thus to have a corporate entity, composed of God and man, to be His expression for eternity. This divine history began with the eternal God and His economy.

### **The Continuation of the Divine History**

#### *Christ's Incarnation and Human Living*

The divine history continued with the incarnation and human living of Christ. One day the very God who created the universe became incarnated, being conceived of the Holy Spirit within the womb of a human virgin and then born of this virgin to be the God-man, the One who is the complete God and a perfect man. It is marvelous that God became a man named Jesus and that this man lived in Nazareth, working as a carpenter, until the age of thirty. Christ's incarnation and His human living both are parts of the divine history, the history of God within the history of man.

#### *Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection*

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

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

*Christ's Coming Back,  
the Kingdom, and the New Jerusalem*

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

With the divine history there is the new creation—the new man with a new heart, a new spirit, a new life, a new nature, a new history, and a new consummation. We praise the Lord that we are in the divine history, experiencing and enjoying the mysterious, divine things. (*Life-study of the Minor Prophets*, pp. 100-102)

**THE NEED FOR A CLEAR VIEW  
OF THE TWO HISTORIES**

We need to have a clear view of these two histories—the physical human history and the mysterious divine history—and I hope that we all will have such a view. The history of man, the history of the world, is outward. The divine history, the history of God in and with humanity, is inward. This history is a matter of the divine mystery of the Triune God in humanity.

**BORN IN THE HUMAN HISTORY AND  
REBORN IN THE DIVINE HISTORY TO  
LIVE IN THE DIVINE HISTORY IN THE  
CHURCH LIFE**

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