

- a. God has called us not only by His glory but also to His glory.
 - b. In order that we might enter into His eternal glory, the God of all grace is ministering to us the riches of the bountiful supply of the divine life in many aspects and in many steps of the divine operation on and in us in God's economy—v. 10; 2 Pet. 1:3.
 - 1 Pet 5:10 But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and ground you.
 - 2 Pet 1:3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,
8. God has called us into His kingdom—1 Thes. 2:12:
- 1 Thes 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.
 - a. The kingdom of God is an organism constituted with God's life as a realm of life for His ruling, in which He reigns by the divine life and expresses Himself in the divine life— John 3:3, 5-6; Matt. 6:10, 13.
 - John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
 - John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 - John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
 - Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
 - Matt 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.
 - b. Today we, the called ones, should live in the church as the kingdom of God so that we may grow and develop in the life of God unto full maturity; through this growth and development, the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied to us—Rom. 14:17; 2 Pet. 1:5-11.
 - Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
 - 2 Pet 1:5 And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;
 - 2 Pet 1:6 And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;
 - 2 Pet 1:7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.
 - 2 Pet 1:8 For these things, existing in you and abounding, constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 2 Pet 1:9 For he in whom these things are not present is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his past sins.
 - 2 Pet 1:10 Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble.
 - 2 Pet 1:11 For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you.

Message Four

The Corporate Thornbush

MC Hymns 976, 853

Scripture Reading: Deut. 33:1, 16; Exo. 3:2-6a; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:2-4

Deut 33:1	And this is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death.
Deut 33:16	With the choicest things of the earth, and the fullness thereof, / And the favor of Him who dwelt in the thornbush. / May they come upon the head of Joseph, / And upon the top of the head of him who is separated among his brothers.
Exo 3:2	And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but the thornbush was not consumed.
Exo 3:3	And Moses said, I must turn aside now and see this great sight, why the thornbush does not burn up.
Exo 3:4	And when Jehovah saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the midst of the thornbush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am.
Exo 3:5	And He said, Do not come near here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.
Exo 3:6a	And He said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ...
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.
Luke 12:49	I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled!
Luke 12:50	But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!
Acts 2:2	And suddenly there was a sound out of heaven, as of a rushing violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.
Acts 2:3	And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which were distributed; and it sat on each one of them;
Acts 2:4	And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.

I. In the eyes of God, Moses was a thornbush burning with the Triune God (cf. Deut. 33:1, 16); as individuals, we all are today's Moses, but we are also a part of the church as the corporate thornbush (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15-16):

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| Deut 33:1 | And this is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death. |
| Deut 33:16 | With the choicest things of the earth, and the fullness thereof, / And the favor of Him who dwelt in the thornbush. / May they come upon the head of Joseph, / And upon the top of the head of him who is separated among his brothers. |
| 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. When God called Moses, he saw the great sight of a burning thornbush; once we were thorns under the curse in Genesis 3, but in Exodus 3 we are a redeemed thornbush; this burning thornbush is both the children of Israel in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament.
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| Gen 3 | be omitted. |
| Exo 3 | be omitted |
- B. In the church today there are still "thorns"; the church is not yet precious stone; nevertheless, we praise the Lord that we are undergoing the process of transformation—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
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| 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. In Deuteronomy 33:16 Moses spoke of God as the One who dwelt in the thornbush; this word was uttered when Moses was one hundred twenty years of age, forty years after he had seen the vision of the burning thornbush:
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| Deut 33:16 | With the choicest things of the earth, and the fullness thereof, / And the favor of Him who dwelt in the thornbush. / May they come upon the head of Joseph, / And upon the top of the head of him who is separated among his brothers. |
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1. Moses never forgot that vision, even after the tabernacle had been built and God had come to dwell in it.
2. How marvelous that a thornbush can be God's dwelling place on earth today!

II. God's ultimate goal is to obtain a dwelling place; this means that God's eternal purpose is to build up His habitation:

- A. In Genesis we have the revelation of the house of God at Bethel (28:10-22), but we do not have the actual building of the house of God.

Gen 28:10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba and went toward Haran.
 Gen 28:11 And he came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and he lay down in that place.
 Gen 28:12 And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
 Gen 28:13 And there was Jehovah, standing above it; and He said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give to you and to your seed.
 Gen 28:14 And your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.
 Gen 28:15 And, behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will cause you to return to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.
 Gen 28:16 And Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I did not know it.
 Gen 28:17 And he was afraid and said, How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.
 Gen 28:18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head, and he set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.
 Gen 28:19 And he called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz previously.
 Gen 28:20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go and will give me bread to eat and garments to put on,
 Gen 28:21 So that I return to my father's house in peace, then Jehovah will be my God,
 Gen 28:22 And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house; and of all that You give me I will surely give one tenth to You.

- B. At the beginning of Exodus God dwelt in the thornbush, but at the end of the book He dwelt in the tabernacle—3:2-6a; 40:34-38.

Exo 3:2 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but the thornbush was not consumed.
 Exo 3:3 And Moses said, I must turn aside now and see this great sight, why the thornbush does not burn up.
 Exo 3:4 And when Jehovah saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the midst of the thornbush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am.
 Exo 3:5 And He said, Do not come near here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.
 Exo 3:6a And He said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ...
 Exo 40:34 Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.
 Exo 40:35 And Moses was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud settled on it and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.
 Exo 40:36 And whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel set out on all their journeys;
 Exo 40:37 But if the cloud was not taken up, they did not set out until the day that it was taken up.
 Exo 40:38 For the cloud of Jehovah was upon the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel on all their journeys.

- C. The tabernacle with the Ark thus became the focal point of the history of the children of Israel; eventually, the tabernacle was enlarged into the temple.

- D. The Lord Jesus came both as God's tabernacle (John 1:14) and as God's temple (2:19); the church today is also the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16); ultimately, this temple will consummate in the New Jerusalem, which will be both God's tabernacle and God's temple in eternity (Rev. 21:3, 22).

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 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.
 1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
 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.

E. In the beginning God's dwelling place was a redeemed thornbush, but gradually this thornbush is being sanctified, transformed, conformed, and even glorified; the tabernacle is an illustration of transformation:

1. In the tabernacle there was acacia wood overlaid with gold and also linen embroidered with gold thread; both the acacia wood and the linen signify humanity, and the gold signifies divinity—Exo. 25:10-11; 26:15, 29; 36:34; 37:1-2; 28:6; 39:3.

Exo 25:10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits shall be its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height.

Exo 25:11 And you shall overlay it with pure gold; inside and outside you shall overlay it; and you shall make a rim of gold upon it all around.

Exo 26:15 And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing up.

Exo 26:29 And you shall overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold as holders for the bars; and you shall overlay the bars with gold.

Exo 36:34 And he overlaid the boards with gold and made their rings of gold as holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

Exo 37:1 And Bezalel made the Ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits was its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height.

Exo 37:2 And he overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a rim of gold around it.

Exo 28:6 And they shall make the ephod of gold thread, of blue and purple and scarlet strands, and fine twined linen, the work of a skillful workman.

Exo 39:3 And they beat the gold into thin sheets and cut them into threads, to work into the blue and into the purple and into the scarlet strands and into the fine linen, the work of a skillful workman.

2. In Exodus 3 God's dwelling was a thornbush, but in Exodus 40 His dwelling was the tabernacle made of humanity overlaid by and interwoven with divinity; such an overlaid and embroidered humanity is a transformed humanity.

Exo 3, 40 be omitted

F. Both the thornbush and the tabernacle are symbols; God's actual dwelling place was neither the physical thornbush nor the tabernacle; it was His people:

1. After the children of Israel had been dealt with by God, they became acacia wood overlaid with gold and also linen embroidered with gold thread; the church today is the fulfillment of this type.

2. At present, the church may be a redeemed thornbush; however, the day is coming when we shall be gold, pearl, and precious stone—Rev. 21:18-21.

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, chrysoprase; 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.

3. Praise the Lord for this marvelous vision of God's dwelling place! This vision covers God's habitation from the initial stage, the stage of the thornbush, to the consummate stage, the stage of the New Jerusalem.

G. When Moses was called by God, he saw the holy fire burning within the thornbush; when Paul was called, he saw the same vision in principle—cf. Acts 9:4-5:

Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?

Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.

1. Paul saw the Triune God burning within His redeemed ones; through this divine burning, the holy fire was one with the thornbush, and the thornbush was one with the fire, which is the Triune God Himself.

2. The Lord Jesus once said that He came to cast fire on the earth (Luke 12:49-50); on the day of Pentecost the Spirit came in the form of tongues of fire (Acts 2:2-4).

Luke 12:49 I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled!

Luke 12:50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there was a sound out of heaven, as of a rushing violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which were distributed; and it sat on each one of them;

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.
3. Today the Lord is still casting fire on the earth; this holy fire, this divine burning, has captured us, and now we are part of the thornbush that is burning with the Triune God.
4. The Triune God is burning within and upon the church, which He has chosen and redeemed; thus, the church is the Triune God burning within a redeemed humanity; this is the divine economy.
5. This economy was revealed to Paul (Eph. 3:3-5, 9), and it is the focus of the divine revelation; Moses saw this in symbol, but Paul saw it in reality.

Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,

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

Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
6. How we praise the Lord that His economy has been unveiled to us! Every local church is a thornbush burning with the Triune God.
7. In Ephesians 1 and 3 we have the divine economy, the dispensing of the Triune God into His redeemed people so that they may become His expression; this dispensing brings into being the church as the burning thornbush today.

Eph 1, 3 be omitted.

III. Because of God's redemption, the excluding flame of Genesis 3 has become the visiting and indwelling flame of Exodus 3—Gen. 3:24; Exo. 3:2-3; Gal. 3:13-14; Rom. 12:11; 2 Tim. 1:6-7:

- Gen 3:24 So He drove the man out, and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.
- Exo 3:2 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but the thornbush was not consumed.
- Exo 3:3 And Moses said, I must turn aside now and see this great sight, why the thornbush does not burn up.
- Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, "Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree";
- Gal 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
- Rom 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.
- 2 Tim 1:6 For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
- 2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.
- A. The thorns in Genesis 3 indicate that fallen man is under a curse—vv. 17-18.

Gen 3:17 And to Adam He said, Because you listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree concerning which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it; Cursed is the ground because of you; / In toil will you eat of it / All the days of your life.

Gen 3:18 And thorns and thistles will it bring forth for you, / And you will eat the herb of the field;
 - B. Sin brought in the curse, and the curse brought in the excluding flame of fire—v. 24.

Gen 3:24 So He drove the man out, and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.
 - C. In Exodus 3 the cursed thorn becomes the vessel of God, and the flame of fire becomes one with the thornbush—vv. 2-4:

Gen 3:2 And the woman said to the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

Gen 3:3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.
 Gen 3:4 And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die!

1. Through redemption, signified by the lamb slain and offered to God for fallen man (Gen. 4:4), the curse has been taken away, and the fire has become one with the thorn.
 Gen 4:4 And Abel also brought an offering, from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.
2. Galatians 3:13 and 14 reveal that the redeeming Christ has taken away the curse and that the Spirit as the fire has been given to us—cf. Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:3-4.
 Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, "Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree";
 Gal 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
 Luke 12:49 I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled!
 Luke 12:50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!
 Acts 2:3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which were distributed; and it sat on each one of them;
 Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.

- D. The very God Himself, the Holy One whose holiness excludes sinners from His presence, can come to visit us, stay with us, and even dwell in us through the redemption of Christ.

IV. The church is a corporate thornbush burning with the God of resurrection:

- A. The children of Israel were a corporate thornbush; as such a thornbush, they were redeemed (Exo. 13:14-16), sanctified (v. 2), transformed, and built up; this is a type of the church as a corporate thornbush.
 Exo 13:14 And when your son asks you in time to come, saying, What is this? you shall say to him, By strength of hand Jehovah brought us out from Egypt, from the slave house.
 Exo 13:15 And when Pharaoh hardened himself against letting us go, Jehovah slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I am one who sacrifices to Jehovah every male that opens the womb; and all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.
 Exo 13:16 So it will be as a sign upon your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand Jehovah brought us out of Egypt.
 Exo 13:2 Sanctify to Me all the firstborn: Whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast, it is Mine.
- B. Do not say that the church is poor, low, or dead; the more you say this, the more you put yourself under a curse, but if you praise the Lord for the church life and speak well concerning it, you will put yourself under God's blessing:
1. "He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, / Nor has He seen trouble in Israel"—Num. 23:21.
 2. "How fair are your tents, O Jacob, / Your tabernacles, O Israel!"—24:5.
 3. "Blessed is everyone who blesses you, / And cursed is everyone who curses you"—v. 9b.
- C. From the time that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem until now, every nation, people, race, or individual who has cursed the Jewish people has received a curse, and whoever has blessed the Jewish people has received a blessing (Gen. 12:3); it is the same with our attitude toward the church—if we curse the church, we will be cursed, but if we bless the church, we will be blessed.
 Gen 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, / And him who curses you I will curse; / And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.
- D. In spite of all the division, sin, confusion, abuse of gifts, and heretical teaching in the church in Corinth, the apostle still called it the church of God because the divine and spiritual essence which makes the assembled believers the church of God was actually there—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:

- E. Being a corporate thornbush as God's dwelling place today is a matter altogether in resurrection:
1. The church is "Christly," "resurrectionly," and heavenly— cf. Gen. 2:22; Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6.

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.
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.
Eph 2:6	And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
 2. Resurrection is the life pulse and lifeline of the divine economy—1 Cor. 15:12.

1 Cor 15:12	But if Christ is proclaimed that He has been raised from the dead, how is it that some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?
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 3. Our labor for the Lord in His resurrection life with His resurrection power will never be in vain, but will result in the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose through the preaching of Christ to sinners, the ministering of life to the saints, and the building up of the church with the experiences of the processed Triune God as gold, silver, and precious stones— v. 58; 3:12.

1 Cor 15:58	Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
1 Cor 3:12	But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,
- F. Individually we are a thornbush, and together we are a corporate thornbush burning with the God of resurrection; this is a picture of the church life today.

- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- E. In order to recover the building of God, God must first recover the priesthood—Ezra 1:1-4; 7:1-7.
- Ezra 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- Ezra 1:2 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
- Ezra 1:3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel—He is God—who is in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 1:4 And everyone who is left, in whatever place he sojourns, let the men of his place support him with silver and with gold and with goods and with cattle, besides the freewill offering for the house of God, which is in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 7:1 Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,
- Ezra 7:2 The son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub,
- Ezra 7:3 The son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth,
- Ezra 7:4 The son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki,
- Ezra 7:5 The son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest;
- Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request according to the hand of Jehovah his God upon him.
- Ezra 7:7 Some of the children of Israel and some of the priests, and the Levites and the singers and the gatekeepers and the temple servants also went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.

VII. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the priesthood— Zech. 3:1-5; 6:12-13; Hag. 1:8, 12, 14:

- Zech 3:1 Then He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of Jehovah and Satan standing at his right hand to be his adversary.
- Zech 3:2 And Jehovah said to Satan, Jehovah rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, Jehovah, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?
- Zech 3:3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and was standing before the Angel.
- Zech 3:4 And He answered and spoke to those standing before Him, saying, Remove the filthy garments from him. Then He said to him, See, I hereby make your iniquity pass from you and clothe you with stately robes.
- Zech 3:5 And He said, Let them put a clean turban upon his head. And they put the clean turban upon his head and clothed him with garments while the Angel of Jehovah stood by.
- Zech 6:12 And speak to him, saying, Thus speaks Jehovah of hosts, saying, Here is a man, whose name is the Shoot; and he will shoot forth from his place and will build the temple of Jehovah.
- Zech 6:13 Indeed, it is He who will build the temple of Jehovah; and He will bear majesty and will sit and rule on his throne; and He will be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace will be between the two of them.
- Hag 1:8 Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it and will be glorified, says Jehovah.
- Hag 1:12 And Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all the remnant of the people listened to the voice of Jehovah their God and to the words of Haggai the prophet, as Jehovah their God had sent him; and the people were in fear before Jehovah.
- Hag 1:14 And Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of Jehovah of hosts their God,
- A. What the Lord needs today is a group of people who are brought into His presence and even into the Lord Himself until they are one with Him—Heb. 10:19; 2 Cor. 3:18; John 17:22, 24.
- Heb 10:19 Having therefore, brothers, boldness for entering the Holy of Holies in the blood of Jesus,
- 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.
- John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;

John 17:24 Father, concerning that which You have given Me, I desire that they also may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

B. When the Lord has such a priesthood—a kingdom of priests— He will have the freedom to flow out and work out His will for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; Phil. 2:13; Rev. 4:11.

Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

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,

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.