

The Crystallization OLD LEAVEN — NEW JERUSALEM

God's eternal economy is His plan and arrangement to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated tripartite people to be their life, their life supply, and their everything in order to make them His corporate expression. This corporate expression is the church as the Body of Christ, which consummates in the New Jerusalem. Apart from this economy, the universe has no meaning and the Christian life has no purpose or goal.

The Lord's parable in Matthew 13:33 indicates that virtually every aspect of the divine truth in the Scriptures has been leavened. Sadly, this is true also of the divine revelation concerning the Father's house and the New Jerusalem. The leaven of natural concepts and pagan notions has been added to the fine flour of God's economy unfolded in the Gospel of John, resulting in the doctrine that the Father's house in John 14 is a heavenly mansion, a magnificent eternal dwelling in heaven. Likewise, religious leaven has been added to the revelatory sign of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21—22, issuing in the teaching that the New Jerusalem is a literal, golden city with huge pearl gates. The prevalence of such ideas indicates that the ultimate consummation of the divine revelation in the holy Scriptures has been leavened and thus has been changed in its essence and element to produce something distorted and false. Because the truth concerning the house in John 14 and the city in Revelation 21—22 has been leavened, vast numbers of believers have been misled and frustrated in their study of the Word and pursuit of the Lord.

The mistaken view regarding heaven as the goal of the Christian life has resulted in serious misunderstanding concerning the nature and purpose of the Christian life. Furthermore, erroneous teachings regarding the consummation of God's economy in His salvation have made it difficult for believers to know what God's economy is. Only when God's economy is faithfully ministered and the leaven of heaven is thoroughly purged out will God's people know why they were created, redeemed, and regenerated, and only then will they understand God's goal in His dealings with them. God's people deserve the opportunity to reconsider traditional teachings in light of the Word of God and to be recovered to the divine truth and experience of the Father's house and the New Jerusalem.

The traditional teaching that the Father's house in John 14 is a heavenly mansion is incompatible with the basic thought of the Gospel of John. This basic thought is that through Christ's incarnation God has been brought into humanity and that through Christ's death and resurrection humanity has been brought into God for the building up of a mutual abode for the Triune God and His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people. If we understand this basic thought in the Gospel of John, we will realize that the Father's house in chapter fourteen cannot possibly be a house in heaven with many mansions. On the contrary, the Father's house is the church, the house of the living God, in which all the believers have a place. The Lord Jesus went through death and resurrection and then came as the Spirit of reality in order to bring us into our prepared place in the church, the Body of Christ, the Father's house.

The Father's house consummates in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is not a literal, golden city with pearl gates. Contrary to the speculations of some Bible teachers, neither is the New Jerusalem a satellite city floating in space from which we may commute to earth. Such fanciful notions are an insult to God and to His revelation. Moreover, since the New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven, it should not be considered a synonym of heaven. If we understand Revelation 21 and 22 in light of Revelation 1:1, where we are told that the ultimate revelation was made known by signs—symbols with spiritual significance—we will see that the New Jerusalem is a sign, the last and greatest sign in the Scriptures. The New Jerusalem, the ultimate consummation of God's economy, is a sign of the union, mingling, and incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God and the redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified believers in Christ as one organic entity, a divine-human corporate person. This corporate person is an eternal mutual abode, with the redeeming God as the temple for His redeemed and God's redeemed as the tabernacle for the redeeming God. This corporate person is also a universal couple—the Spirit and the bride—consisting of the Lamb God as the Husband and God's redeemed as the bride, the Lamb's wife. God's goal in His salvation, therefore, is the church as the Father's house consummating in the New Jerusalem as a corporate person. This is the unleavened truth concerning the consummation of God's eternal economy.

by the Editors