

The Crystallization

THE KEY TO THE BIBLE

God's economy is the key to the Bible. This means that the central hermeneutical principle in studying the Scriptures is the Triune God with His plan and arrangement to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people as their life, their life supply, and their everything to make them His corporate expression, initially as the Body of Christ and ultimately as the New Jerusalem. This profound thought, the central line of the divine revelation, is a hermeneutic of the Bible not according to the activity of God but according to the intrinsic being of God. It is a hermeneutical key drawn from the revelation not merely of how God acts but of how God is. The impact of the biblical revelation of the Triune God upon our understanding of the Bible should be profound, and it should result in a threefold realization: that in His eternal, organic existence the Triune God is a God of life, and as the Father, the Son, and the Spirit He enjoys an existence of relationships in life; that the three of the Trinity exist in a condition of perfect, eternal, unfathomable love; and that the Triune God is an incorporation, with the Father, the Son, and the Spirit mutually coinhering and indwelling one another and working together as one to carry out the divine economy.

If we see that God's economy is the key to the Bible, we will use this key in our study of every book of the Bible. In Exodus we have a marvelous depiction of God and of four crucial matters—salvation, provision, revelation, and building. The God revealed in Exodus is not only the sovereign God but also the processed and consummated God who dwells in the tabernacle. With such a God we have full salvation and an abundant spiritual provision, consisting of living water and heavenly manna. At the mountain of God—the place where God's seekers meet with God and with one another—we receive God's revelation and see that the desire of God's heart is to have a dwelling place on earth with His redeemed people. God's goal, therefore, is the building—the corporate expression of Himself in Christ, the firstborn Son of God, with the regenerated, transformed, and glorified believers in Christ as the many sons of God.

The principle is the same in Song of Songs and Ephesians. In Song of Songs we see that the intrinsic content of God's

economy is the divine and mystical romance between God and His chosen and redeemed people. What we have in Song of Songs, a poetic description of our "romantic" experience of Christ, is a portrait of the loving and courting Christ in His union with His individual believers. This portrait unveils the progressive experience of a believer's loving fellowship with Christ, which transforms the believers corporately into His bride, His wife. Such a progressive experience involves four stages: attracted by Christ and drawn by Him in His sweetness to pursue after Him for full satisfaction; called to be delivered from the self through oneness with the cross of Christ; called by Christ to live in ascension as the new creation of God in the resurrection of Christ; and called by Christ more strongly to live within the veil through His cross after our experience of His death and resurrection. As the result of these experiences, the seeker of Christ becomes a "Shulammitte," a duplication of Christ for His satisfaction and expression.

Ephesians is structured according to the economy of God. In each chapter the vital elements of God's economy are present, including the Triune God as the source, the dispensing of the Triune God as the means, the regenerated human spirit as the focal point of the divine dispensing, and the Body of Christ as the issue of the dispensing of the Triune God into God's redeemed, tripartite elect. In chapter one we see the Body of Christ as the fullness of God, an organic expression of God; in chapter two, the Body of Christ as the one new man, an organic masterpiece and dwelling place of God; in chapter three, the Body of Christ as God's wise display, an organic constitution of the riches of Christ; in chapter four, the Body of Christ as the unique completion of God's work, the organic building and living of God and man; in chapter five, the Body of Christ as the bride, the organic counterpart and increase of Christ; and in chapter six, the Body of Christ as a warrior, a corporate man organically exercising dominion and engaging in spiritual warfare. This is the economy of God as the hermeneutic not only of Ephesians but even of the entire Bible. If we see this key and use it, the Bible will become to us what it is to God—the revelation of the divine economy.

by the Editors