

HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (5) (Week 11)

The Lamb-God Being on the Throne within the City

Scripture Reading: *Rev. 4:2-3; 22:1-5; 21:23; Ezek. 1:22, 26-28*

- Rev. 4:2 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting;
- 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.
- Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
- Rev. 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.
- Rev. 22:3 And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him;
- Rev. 22:4 And they will see His face, and His name will be on their forehead.
- Rev. 22:5 And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.
- Rev. 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
- Ezek. 1:22 And over the heads of the living creature there was the likeness of an expanse, like the sight of awesome crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.
- Ezek. 1:26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.
- Ezek. 1:27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.
- Ezek. 1:28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking

Day 1

Rev. 22:1-2 - And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month...

Day 2

Rev. 22:3-5 - ...And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him; and they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads...; and they will reign forever and ever.

I. The Lamb-God is on the throne within the city—Rev. 4:2-3; 22:1-5; 21:23:

- A. *The throne of God and of the Lamb* shows that there is **one throne** for both God and the Lamb, indicating that **God and the Lamb are one**—the Lamb-God, the redeeming God, God the Redeemer—22:1; 4:2-3.
- B. In eternity the very God who sits on the throne is our **redeeming God**, from whose throne proceeds the river of water of life for our supply and satisfaction.
- C. This depicts how the Triune God—God, the Lamb, and the Spirit, who is symbolized by the water of life—**dispenses Himself into His redeemed** under His headship (implied in the authority of the throne) for eternity.

II. The throne is the center of our Christian life:

- A. In our daily life, in our family life, in our marriage life, in our business life, and in our church life, the **center must be God's throne**; everything should be subjected to His headship.
- B. Every morning after rising up, we need to say, “Lord, thank You for a new day for me to take You as my Lord. I subject myself under Your headship for the whole day. Lord, set up Your throne in my life. Set up Your throne in the center of my being. Lord, bring my whole day with my daily life under Your throne”; if we would offer such a **prayer** to the Triune God every morning, from that moment we would have the living water flowing within us.
- C. In our experience, whenever **we subject ourselves** to the Triune God, taking Him as our Head, we **enjoy a flow** within us; the river flows with the God who purposed, with the Lamb who redeemed, and with the Spirit who is now the all-inclusive, processed, life-giving Spirit.
- D. Under His headship we enjoy the flow of life with the supply of life and the way of life; in the flow of life we **serve** Him, we **see** Him, and we **reign** with Him—22:2-5.

In the New Jerusalem there is the throne of God. This throne is not only a matter of God's presence but also a matter of **God's ruling**. In this building there is the presence of God, and there is also the dominion of God. Because the throne of God is established, God can exercise His authority. If we want to know whether a certain church is being built up, we need to see whether there is **God's throne and God's dominion** among them.

Sometimes when you go to a certain place and meet some brothers and sisters there, you can sense that among them there is not the throne of God but the throne of man. When you attend their service meeting, you notice they speak **as if they are sitting on a throne**. Whoever speaks is on the throne. Before one finishes speaking, another one speaks over him. He seems to be saying, “Come down from the throne now and let me get up onto it.” Although he does not say this plainly, this is the impression he gives by his attitude and demeanor. After this one finishes, another sister would say, “Brother So-and-so, what you have said is not correct.” While she speaks, her voice may sound very gentle, but the impression is the same: “Come down from the throne.” This is not my imagination. Many times while I was sitting together with God's children, I saw this kind of situation. This means that the **throne of God, the dominion of God, is not there**. Rather, **everyone is sitting on his own throne**. Please remember that once there is such a situation, the presence of the Holy Spirit is definitely not there. This proves that in such a place God's children have not yet been built up.

Although there are numerous Christian groups today, where is the throne of God? In many places you cannot see any building. On the contrary, **everywhere you see human skills and organization**. People use all kinds of ways to facilitate communication among church members and to win believers over. We have to admit that this kind of communication and winning-over is not building; instead, it is **man's organizing work**. Therefore, there is no presence of God, and even more there is no throne of God. I hope that we all will remember that wherever we are, if we also depend on these ways of **facilitating communication and winning people over, then the building of God no longer will be among us**. The church cannot depend on these ways; the church has to be built up in God.

This shows us the experience of God's presence and of God's ruling. Therefore, to determine whether or not a church has been built up, we should not look at whether they have communication and warmth among them; instead, **we should see whether or not they have God's presence and God's throne among them**. (*The Building Work of God, Chapter 7*)

Day 3

Ezek. 1:22 - And over the heads of the living creature there was the likeness of an expanse, like the sight of awesome crystal...

Ezek. 1:26 - And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

III. Ezekiel 1 reveals that the highest point in our spiritual experience is having a clear sky with God's throne above it; to reach this point means that in everything we allow God to have the preeminence and are completely submissive to His authority and administration—vv. 22, 26:

- A. The spiritual sky over the heads of the living creatures is **crystal clear**, like a great expanse of awesome crystal; furthermore, this sky is expanding and is as stable, unchanging, as crystal—v. 22.
- B. In such a situation, there is **nothing between** us and God and **nothing between** us and one another; we have a **thorough and clear fellowship** with the Lord and with one another.
- C. This requires the maintaining of a **pure conscience without any offense** toward God and men; the story of our sky is the story of our conscience—Acts 24:16.
- D. The **throne is Christ's ruling presence**:
 - 1. The **Lord's presence** is always with His **throne**; the Lord's throne is both in the third heaven and in our spirit—Rev. 4:2-3; Heb. 4:16; cf. 2 Tim. 4:22:
 - a. The very Christ who is sitting on the throne in heaven (Rom. 8:34) is also **now in us** (v. 10), that is, **in our spirit** (2 Tim. 4:22), where the habitation of God is.
 - b. At Bethel, the house of God, the habitation of God, which is the gate of heaven, **Christ is the ladder** that joins earth to heaven and brings heaven to earth—Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51.

- c. Since today our spirit is the place of God's habitation, it is now the gate of heaven, where Christ is the ladder that **joins us**, the people on earth, to heaven, and brings heaven to us.
 - d. Hence, whenever we **turn to our spirit**, we **enter through the gate of heaven** and touch the throne of grace in heaven through Christ as the heavenly ladder.
2. The throne above the crystal clear expanse indicates that whenever we have a **clear sky** in our Christian life and in our church life, we will be **under the ruling** of the throne; the authority in the church is the throne above the clear sky.

Day 4

Heb. 2:10 - For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Rev. 3:21 - He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

3. The throne is not only for God to reign over us but also for **God to accomplish His eternal purpose**; if we have the throne in our spiritual life, God will not only rule over us but will also fulfill His purpose in us, with us, and through us—Rom. 5:17, 21; cf. Matt. 28:18-20.
4. The throne has the appearance of a sapphire stone; a sapphire stone, which is blue in color, signifies the heavenly situation, condition, and atmosphere of Christ's ruling presence—Exo. 24:10.

IV. Ezekiel 1 reveals that the One on the throne looks like a man, yet with Him there is the appearance of the glory of Jehovah, indicating that the **One sitting on the throne is both God and man**; this is Jesus Christ, the God-man, the mingling of God and man—vv. 26, 28:

- A. Jesus Christ was the complete God, and He was incarnated to be a man; having the nature of man, He lived, died, resurrected, and ascended as a man, and now as the One on the throne, **He is still the Son of Man**—John 1:1, 14; 6:62; Acts 7:56, 59-60.
- B. Hence, since the ascension of the Lord Jesus there has been a man on the throne; in the millennium and in the new heaven and new earth for eternity, **there will still be a man on the throne**—Matt. 19:28; Rev. 22:1, 3.
- C. God's mysterious intention in His relationship with man is to **minge Himself with man** and thereby to become the same as man and make man the same as He is in life, in nature, and in expression but not in the Godhead; man was created in the image of God to express God and to rule for God—Gen. 1:26-28; cf. Isa. 14:12-14:
 1. The One on the throne and the four living creatures both have the **appearance of a man**, indicating that the four living creatures on earth are the expression of the One on the throne; this expression is the manifestation of God in humanity—Ezek. 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.
 2. God in heaven desires to gain man on earth for His expression **by working Himself into man**; furthermore, God's intention is to work on man in order that man will be on the throne—Eph. 3:16-21; Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 20:4; 22:5; Matt. 19:28.

3. As the Pioneer, the Forerunner, the Lord Jesus cut the way to enter into glory and sit on the throne, and we, His many brothers, are **now following Him**—Heb. 2:6-12; Rev. 3:21; 22:5.

Day 5

Ezek. 1:27 - Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.

Heb. 12:29 - For our God is also a consuming fire.

V. Ezekiel 1 says that the appearance of the man on the throne has two aspects: from His loins upward He has the appearance of **electrum, and from His loins downward, the appearance of **fire**—v. 27:**

- A. The **electrum** is a glowing metal, a **mixture of gold and silver**; gold signifies the nature of God, and silver signifies redemption; thus, the electrum, composed of the elements of gold and silver, **signifies the Lamb-God**, the redeeming God—v. 4.
- B. The **upper part of a man**, from his loins to his head, is the part of **feeling**, of **sensation**, signifying his **nature and disposition**; according to His nature and disposition the Lord Jesus on the throne has the appearance of electrum, signifying the redeeming God.
- C. The **lower part** of a man's body is for **moving**; the appearance of **fire** from the loins downward signifies the **Lord's appearance in His move** with God's burning and sanctifying power.
- D. When the Lord comes to us, He comes as **fire** to **enlighten**, **search**, and **burn**; then through the fire **He becomes the glowing electrum** to us, and we are filled with the radiant expression of the redeeming God.
- E. After all the negative things have been **burned out** of us by the Lord as the consuming fire (Heb. 12:29), **what will remain in us is the electrum**, the redeeming God.

Day 6

Ezek. 1:28 - Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah...

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...

VI. Ezekiel 1 says that there is a **rainbow as the brightness around the man who is sitting on the throne, signifying the **splendor and glory** around the Lord on the throne—v. 28; Rev. 4:3:**

- A. At Noah's time the rainbow in the cloud was a sign of **God's faithfulness** in keeping His covenant with man and every living creature, signifying that He would never again destroy mankind with a flood—Gen. 9:13.

- B. A rainbow can be considered as being produced from three basic colors—red, yellow, and blue: **red**, the color of fire, refers to **God’s holiness**; **yellow**, the color of electrum, signifies **God’s glory**; and **blue**, the color of the sapphire throne, signifies **God’s righteousness**—Psa. 89:14:
1. **God’s righteousness, holiness, and glory** are three divine attributes that keep sinners **away** from God—Gen. 3:24.
 2. However, **Christ came**, died on the cross to **satisfy the requirements** of God’s righteousness, holiness, and glory, and was resurrected, and He is now our righteousness, holiness, and glory—1 Cor. 1:30.
 3. Because we, the believers, **are now in Christ**, in the sight of God **we bear the appearance of Christ as righteousness, holiness, and glory**; this is the appearance of a rainbow as a testimony of God’s faithfulness in sparing us and saving us, the fallen ones, from His judgment on sinners.
 4. In the New Jerusalem, a city whose foundations have the appearance of a rainbow (Rev. 21:19-20), we, the aggregate of the saved ones, will be a **rainbow reflecting the brightness of God’s righteousness, holiness, and glory** and testifying forever that God is righteous and faithful.
 5. As portrayed in Ezekiel 1, the Christian life and the church life **will consummate in such a rainbow**; at that point God’s eternal plan will have been accomplished.

THE STORMY WIND

The first part of Ezekiel 1:4 says, “*I looked, and there came a **storm wind** from the north.*” Why did the storm wind come from the north and not from the south, the east, or the west? The answer to this question is found in Psalm 75:6-7a: “*Neither from the east nor from the west, / And neither from the south, does exaltation come; / For God is the Judge.*” Here north is replaced with God. This indicates that **God is at the north**. In geographical terms the north is commonly regarded as up, and thus to go north is to go up. **God, who is at the north, is always up**. Spiritually speaking, this means that **when we are going north, we are going to God**. The fact that the storm wind came from the north means that it came from God. The dwelling place, the habitation, of God is the source of all spiritual things. The storm wind came from the north, from the habitation of God. God, therefore, was the source of the storm wind.

Our spiritual experiences always begin with a spiritual storm. According to church history, throughout all the generations the Spirit of **God has blown like a mighty wind to move people to repent** of their sins, to **believe** in the Lord Jesus for their regeneration, to **give up** the world in order to follow the Lord, and to be **desperate in heart** and burning in spirit to serve the Lord. Have you not had this kind of experience? Have you not sensed the wind of God blowing upon you? Have you not been touched by the Spirit of God? Have you not sensed, at least once in your life, that a certain power—the storm wind from God—was moving upon you, causing you to hate sin, to have a different attitude toward the world, or to change your view concerning your life? If you have never had such experiences, you need to look to the Lord and pray for His wind from the north to blow upon you. (*Life-Study of Ezekiel* (2nd ed.), chapter 3)

THE CLOUD

The **cloud** **always follows the stormy wind**. If we have the wind, we will surely have the cloud, for the cloud is the issue of the blowing of the wind. Like the stormy wind, the **cloud signifies the Holy Spirit**. When the Holy Spirit touches us, He is like the wind. When the Holy Spirit visits us and overshadows us, He is like the cloud. First, the Holy Spirit blows upon us like the wind to move us, and then He abides with us like a cloud to cover us. The **cloud** in Ezekiel 1:4 is a figure of **God covering His people**. We may use the word brooding and say that the cloud was **God brooding over His people**. The cloud, therefore, was nothing other than the brooding God. God comes as the wind, but He stays as the cloud. By staying as the cloud, **He covers us, overshadows us, and broods over us to give us the enjoyment of His presence**, thereby producing something of Himself in our daily life. How wonderful! This is the covering God typified by the covering cloud.

Many of us have experienced the Lord as an overshadowing cloud. When you **pray, repenting and confessing your sins**, you may sense that you are **under the covering** of a canopy or of a cloud. It might have been your experience that during your morning revival or during a time of pray-reading the Word, a stormy wind from God came and blew upon you. Then after the blowing of the wind, a cloud came and stayed with you, perhaps for the whole day. Throughout the day you had the sense that something was following you, overshadowing you, covering you, and brooding over you, and **you enjoyed the Lord's presence all day long**.

THE FIRE

Ezekiel saw that the cloud which overshadowed him was covered with **fire** flashing continually. This also is a matter which corresponds to our spiritual experience. When the stormy wind comes from the Lord and the overshadowing presence of the Lord remains, we have the sense that something within us is **shining, searching, and burning**. Under such a shining, enlightening, searching, and burning, **we may realize that we are wrong in certain things**. For example, we may realize that our attitude toward a particular brother is wrong. Under the shining and searching of the Lord's presence, we are exposed, and we condemn ourselves and confess our shortcomings. Then the searching fire will burn away the negative things within us.

The fire seen by Ezekiel signifies God's burning and sanctifying power. **Everything that does not match God's holy nature and disposition must be burned away**. Only what matches His holiness can pass through His holy fire. This can be confirmed by our spiritual experience. The Holy Spirit comes to convict people regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment. Whenever the Holy Spirit touches us and causes us to confess our sins and pray, we will sense the need to be sanctified and to have all the corruption purged out of our being. We will realize that anything that does not match the holiness of God must be burned away. If someone claims to have been visited by God but has no feeling concerning his sins and unholiness, that person has not truly been touched by the Spirit of God. When God visits a person, **His holy fire will come to consume the negative things in him**. This burning fire also causes us to be enlightened. The more the fire of the Holy Spirit burns in us, the more we will be purified and enlightened.

THE GLOWING ELECTRUM

God's intention is not simply to burn us and turn us into ashes. God is a good God with a good purpose. What is His purpose in blowing upon us as the wind, in covering us as the cloud, and in consuming us as the fire? The answer to this question is that **out of the fire appears the glowing electrum**. The burning of the divine fire is for the manifestation of the electrum. When we experience the blowing wind, we enjoy the covering cloud and then we pass through the burning, consuming fire. **The result is the glowing electrum, something shining, lovely, precious, and pleasant**. As the electrum, the Lord Jesus is the One who has redeemed us and who is everything to us. He is our God, our Lamb, our Redeemer, our jasper, and our sardius. If we consider our spiritual experience, we will realize that the One who dwells within us today is the Lamb-God, the One signified by the electrum. (*Life-Study of Ezekiel, chapter 3*)