

Message One
**A Vital Sketch
of the Divine Revelation
in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus,
and Numbers concerning God's Economy
with His Chosen and Redeemed People**

Scripture Reading: Num. 9:15-23; Exo. 33:14; Luke 24:25-27, 44-49;
1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Rom. 15:4; 1 Tim. 1:3-4, 18; 6:3

- I. We may use four slogans to summarize certain crucial aspects of this vital sketch:**
- A. God's chosen and redeemed people are purchased, redeemed, and saved from the bondage of the fall.
 - B. God's chosen and redeemed people are enjoying Christ, receiving revelation, and being built up in the Triune God.
 - C. God's chosen and redeemed people are formed into a priestly army to fight for God and to journey with God.
 - D. God's chosen and redeemed people are possessed by God to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the good land.
- II. These four slogans apply to the saints in both the Old Testament and New Testament, because the New Testament is hidden in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is manifested in the New Testament—Luke 24:25-27, 44-49:**
- A. The saints have been chosen, redeemed, and saved from the bondage of the fall; the saints have been saved from the usurpation of the world and from the bondage of Satan.
 - B. Having been saved, we are now enjoying Christ; like the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, we have also received the divine revelation and are being built up with the processed Triune God, that is, with the Son as the embodiment of the Father and with the Spirit as the realization of the Son.
 - C. Furthermore, we are being formed into a priestly army, which fights for God and journeys with God.
 - D. Finally, we have been prepared by God in every way to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the good land.
- III. The word *economy* is not used in the Old Testament books, but the typology in these books (such as Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers) unveils God's economy:**
- A. God's economy is His household administration to accomplish His plan for the fulfillment of the desire of His heart; this desire is to have a people not only created by Him but also regenerated, sanctified, transformed, and conformed to the image of Christ as the embodiment of the processed Triune God; eventually, this people will be brought into glory, into the corporate expression of the Triune God—1 Tim. 1:3-4, 18; 6:3; cf. 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:6-9; 4:7.
 - B. In the Old Testament we have a picture of God's economy; in the New Testament we have a clear speaking concerning God's economy.
 - C. The history of the children of Israel in the Old Testament is a type of the history of the believers in the New Testament—1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Rom. 15:4.
- IV. God's chosen and redeemed people need to receive the divine revelation concerning God Himself and His economy for their training and building up as His testimony; in Genesis God's people were chosen, and in Exodus they received the divine revelation concerning God and His dwelling place:**

- A. God's chosen people received the divine revelation after their participation in God's initial salvation, as realized in the passover—Exo. 12; 1 Cor. 5:7-8.
- B. God brought the people out of Egypt to the mountain of God, Mount Sinai, and there gave them a full revelation of Himself and His dwelling place; we may say that this revelation contained the “blueprint” for the building of God's dwelling place.
- C. The divine revelation was through the enjoyment of the divine provisions, as tasted in the supply of the heavenly manna and the living water flowing out of the smitten rock—Exo. 16:1—17:7; 1 Cor. 10:3-4.
- D. The divine revelation was also through the experience of being an army that shared in God's fighting against His enemies, as in their fighting against the Egyptians and the Amalekites—Exo. 14; 17:9-16; Gal. 5:16-17; cf. 1 Pet. 2:11.
- E. Eventually, in Exodus 19 God's chosen and redeemed people reached and arrived at the mountain of God; when God sent Moses to rescue the children of Israel out of the hand of Pharaoh, God told Moses that after he had brought the people out of Egypt, they would serve the Lord upon this mountain (3:12), and in Exodus 19 this word was fulfilled:
 - 1. At Mount Sinai God's people received the revelation concerning God Himself so that they might be separated unto Him.
 - 2. The law is a portrait of God, the revelation of God Himself; the law reveals that God is a God of love, light, holiness, and righteousness—chs. 20—24:
 - a. Because the law is such a picture of God, the law was called the Testimony of God (25:16, 21; 31:18), the Ark in which the law was placed was called the Ark of the Testimony (25:22), and the tabernacle was called the Tabernacle of the Testimony (38:21).
 - b. In the Psalms the law is often referred to as the testimony (19:7; 25:10; 119:2); this testimony was a portrait, a picture, of God.
 - c. God's people received the revelation concerning God Himself so that they might be separated unto the holy God as His sanctified people; this matter is given a particular emphasis in the book of Leviticus—11:44.
 - 3. Christ is the reality of the law as the testimony of God; the testimony of God signifies Christ, the embodiment of God (Col. 2:9), as the living portrait of what God is (Psa. 119:2, 9, 11, 14-15, 133):
 - a. The reality of keeping the law is to live God and express God.
 - b. Such a living, a living in the eternal economy of God, is the living of a God-man, a life of continually denying the self and being crucified to live Christ, who is God's testimony, by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ for the enlarged and expanded expression of God—Matt. 16:24; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a; Rom. 8:4.
- F. In addition to receiving the divine revelation concerning God Himself, the children of Israel received the divine revelation concerning God's economy so that they might be built up together with God in His Divine Trinity as His dwelling place on earth for His testimony—Exo. 25—40:
 - 1. That God's people were to be built up together with Him is indicated by the materials that were to be used for the building of the tabernacle:
 - a. The boards of the tabernacle were made of acacia wood overlaid with gold; the boards of acacia wood are a type of God's people, and the gold overlaying the boards is a type of the divine person—26:15-30.
 - b. Thus, the boards of acacia wood overlaid with gold signify God's people being built up together with God to be His dwelling place; from this we see not only

that God's people are the building materials for His dwelling place but also that God Himself is the building material.

2. In the tabernacle we can see a picture of the Divine Trinity:
 - a. The Ark, the table of the bread of the Presence, and the incense altar all signify Christ the Son.
 - b. The Father is signified by the gold, for in typology gold signifies the divine nature of God.
 - c. The Spirit is signified by the oil in the seven lamps in the lampstand; if the lamps had no oil, they would be useless, and there would not be any light in the tabernacle.
 - d. Also, the lampstand, which was a single entity, signifies the Triune God:
 - (1) The gold signifies the Father, the form signifies the Son, and both the lamps and the oil signify the Spirit.
 - (2) This is a revelation of God's people being built up with the Triune God to be His dwelling place on earth.
 3. The forty-eight boards of the tabernacle correspond to the forty-eight cities given to the Levites; six of these cities were to be cities of refuge; the most striking point regarding the cities of refuge is that they were enterable—Num. 35:6-7, 9-34:
 - a. Eventually, these forty-eight cities of the Levites will consummate in a unique city—the New Jerusalem; the tabernacle revealed in Exodus is a miniature of this unique city.
 - b. In the New Testament, God's testimony is the church, the Body of Christ, and in eternity this testimony will consummate in the New Jerusalem, which is also called a tabernacle—Rev. 1:2, 9; 19:10; 21:3.
 - c. In the Old Testament, the tabernacle was with the children of Israel, and in the New Testament the tabernacle is first Christ (John 1:14) and then the church as the enlargement of Christ; in eternity there will be the ultimate, consummate tabernacle, the New Jerusalem; in each case the striking point is that the tabernacle is enterable; Hallelujah, the Triune God is enterable!
- G. In the book of Leviticus, God trained His people to worship and partake of Him and to live a holy, clean, and rejoicing life.

V. The central thought of Numbers is that Christ is the meaning of life, the testimony, the center of God's people, and the Leader, the way, and the goal of their journey and fighting:

- A. The entire Bible shows us one thing—God's intention is to have a people formed into an army to take Christ as their meaning of life, testimony, center, Leader, way, and goal and to proceed on and fight for God so that He may have a people built up as His kingdom and His house, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem—Gen. 1:26-28; Exo. 12:41, 51; 13:18; Matt. 16:16-19; Eph. 6:10-12; Rev. 17:14; 19:11-16; 21:2, 10-11.
- B. The book of Numbers as a whole reveals the need for God's chosen and redeemed people to be formed into an army to carry out the holy war—1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:3-4:
 1. In order to be formed into a holy army, God's people first had to be numbered according to their maturity in life—Num. 1:3, 18.
 2. God's chosen and redeemed people were also built up into one body—vv. 44-46.
 3. Then God's people journeyed with God:
 - a. In their journey with God, the children of Israel had the presence of God, signified by the cloud in the day and by the fire in the cloud at night—Exo. 33:14; 40:36-38; Num. 9:15-23.

- b. As the children of Israel journeyed with God, the Angel of Jehovah took the lead (Exo. 32:34); the title *the Angel of Jehovah* is a particular title of Christ in the Old Testament, as revealed in Exodus 3:2-6.
 - c. In their journey the children of Israel were moving, walking, and living with Jehovah, the Triune God.
 - d. God's chosen and redeemed people passed through the great and terrible wilderness with all kinds of trials, sufferings, and divine care, supplies, and discipline—Deut. 1:19; 8:2-5.
 - e. On their journey through the wilderness, the children of Israel passed through forty-two stations to enter into rest in the good land promised by God—Num. 33:1-49; Josh. 1:2.
4. As a priestly army, God's chosen and redeemed people fought together with God and for God—Num. 4:23, 30, 35; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9:
 - a. In their fighting together with God and for God, the children of Israel defeated the king of Arad and destroyed his people; by doing this, they overcame the first enemy among the Canaanites—Num. 21:1-3.
 - b. God's people also defeated Sihon the king of the Amorites with his people and Og the king of Bashan with his people; this means that they overcame Canaan's two "gate guards"—vv. 21-35.
 - c. The children of Israel also defeated the Midianites with their five kings; by defeating them, the people overcame Canaan's gate army—31:1-12.
 - d. The kings defeated by God's chosen and redeemed people signify the spiritual powers, rulers, and authorities in the air, whom we must defeat—Eph. 6:10-20.
 - e. The fighting of God's people against the kings was for the entrance into the God-promised good land that the kingdom of God might be spread and established there.
 5. As the priestly army carrying out God's holy war, God's chosen and redeemed people bore with them God's dwelling, the Tabernacle of the Testimony, with the Ark of the Testimony.
 6. The key words in Exodus are *redemption, leading, revelation, and building*; the key words in Leviticus are *fellowship, service, and holiness*; and the key words in Numbers are *formation, journeying, and fighting*.
 7. The book of Numbers is a record of God's chosen and redeemed people being formed into a priestly army to fight for God and to journey with God so that they may be prepared by God to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the good land.