

Message Two

Living in the Reality of the New Creation

Scripture Reading: Isa. 40:3-5, 28-31

- I. **The first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah, corresponding to the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, focus mainly on the old creation, whereas the last twenty-seven chapters, corresponding to the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, center on the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15:**
 - A. Isaiah 40 reveals the announcing of the gospel (corresponding to the four Gospels—Isa. 40:1-5), salvation through regeneration (corresponding to the Acts—Isa. 40:6-8), and transformation (corresponding to the Epistles—Isa. 40:28-31); this is the revelation of God becoming a man through incarnation so that man might become God (in life and in nature but not in the Godhead) through regeneration and transformation as the content of God’s eternal economy.
 - B. Both Isaiah 40 and the New Testament begin with the coming of John the Baptist, who ushered in the expected Christ for the initiation of the new creation—vv. 3-5; Mark 1:1-11.
 - C. The old creation does not have the divine life and nature, but the new creation, constituted of the believers, who are born of God, does (John 1:13; 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:4); hence, the believers are a new creation (Gal. 6:15), not according to the old nature of the flesh but according to the new nature of the divine life (Rom. 6:4; 7:6).
- II. **John the Baptist is typified by Elijah (Luke 1:17), who is a type of the Old Testament age with the Old Testament economy, and the Lord Jesus is typified by Elisha, who is a type of the New Testament age with the New Testament economy (4:27); according to 2 Kings 2:1-15, the age was changed to the new creation by passing through four places—Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and the river Jordan:**
 - A. Gilgal was a place where God’s people were circumcised to deal with their flesh—Josh. 5:2-9; Col. 2:11; John 3:6; Gal. 5:16-17, 24-25.
 - B. Bethel is the place to give up the world and turn to God absolutely, taking God as everything—Gen. 12:8; 13:3-4.

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- C. Jericho, the first city that Joshua and the people of Israel had to defeat when they entered into the good land, signifies God's enemy, Satan—Josh. 6:1-27; Eph. 6:12; Rom. 16:20.
- D. The river Jordan, where the New Testament baptism began, signifies death—Matt. 3:5-6, 15-17:
 - 1. To cross the river Jordan, Elijah struck the water with his mantle, which typifies the outpoured Spirit, the Spirit of power—2 Kings 2:8; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8.
 - 2. The Spirit of power dealt with the river of death so that the way was open for Elijah and Elisha to cross over.
- E. All this signifies that in order for us to be raptured like Elijah or receive the power of the Spirit like Elisha, and in order for the age to be changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament in our experience, we must deal with our flesh by the Spirit of life (Gal. 5:16-17, 24), give up the world and turn to God by the love of the Father (1 John 2:15-17), defeat Satan through the word of the Son (Rev. 12:11; Matt. 4:4), and pass through death to die to the self by the power of resurrection for the Body of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:10; Matt. 16:24).
- F. Furthermore, we must “tear our clothes into two pieces” (2 Kings 2:12), indicating that we no longer treasure what we are or what we can do (cf. Matt. 16:24); through all these steps we enter into a new age of the new creation, the age of God's New Testament economy in grace, which is God doing everything for us by giving Himself to us as our enjoyment (John 1:1, 14-17).

III. John was born a priest, but instead of serving with Zachariah in the temple, he stayed in a wild place, wore wild clothing, ate wild food, and did a wild work; he denied the entire Old Testament priesthood, but his work was the beginning of the priesthood in the New Testament for the new creation—Mark 1:1-4:

- A. The first New Testament priest of the gospel of God was John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Lord Jesus—cf. Rom. 15:16.
- B. He preached the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins as the gospel of Jesus Christ; his ministry was “the

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beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”—
Mark 1:1.

- C. He did not offer bulls and goats as sacrifices (Heb. 10:1-4), but he offered sinners saved through his preaching as sacrifices (Mark 1:5).
- D. The New Testament priesthood offers sinners saved into Christ as the main sacrifices; they are offered to God in Christ, with Christ, and one with Christ as the very enlargement of Christ to be a part of the new creation—1 Pet. 2:5; Rom. 15:16; 12:1; Col. 1:28-29.

IV. Isaiah 40:28-31 reveals a regenerated and transformed person who is one with the eternal God and absolutely in the new creation—“Do you not know, / Or have you not heard, / That the eternal God, Jehovah, / The Creator of the ends of the earth, / Does not faint and does not become weary? / There is no searching out of His understanding. / He gives power to the faint, / And to those who have no vigor He multiplies strength. / Although youths will faint and become weary, / And young men will collapse exhausted; / Yet those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; / They will mount up with wings like eagles; / They will run and will not faint; / They will walk and will not become weary”:

- A. Isaiah 40 presents a comparison between Hezekiah, a godly man who was still in the old creation (chs. 36—39), and a regenerated and transformed person in the new creation; the apostle Paul is the best representative of the kind of person described in Isaiah 40.
- B. The Lord gives power to the faint, and to those who have no vigor He multiplies strength—v. 29; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:12-13; 2 Tim. 2:1-2; 4:7.
- C. To wait on the eternal God means that we terminate ourselves, that is, that we stop ourselves with our living, our doing, and our activity, and receive God in Christ as our life, our person, and our replacement—Isa. 8:17; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 12:2; Col. 4:2.
- D. Such a waiting one will be renewed and strengthened to such an extent that he will mount up with wings like eagles; as a

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transformed person, he will not only walk and run but also soar in the heavens, far above every earthly frustration.

- E. An eagle signifies the powerful, transcendent God, and its wings signify the resurrection power of Christ (the grace, strength, and power of God applied to us)—Exo. 19:4; 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:7; 12:9:
1. The eagle's wings are the means by which the four living creatures are coordinated and move as one (Ezek. 1:11); this signifies that our coordination is not in ourselves but in God and by the divine power, the divine strength, and the divine grace.
 2. The wings of an eagle are not only for moving but also for protection; whatever we do and whatever we are must be by the grace of the Lord and the power of the Lord; at the same time, we are under the overshadowing, the covering, of the Lord's grace and the Lord's power—Psa. 17:8; 57:1; 63:7; 91:4; 2 Cor. 12:9b.
 3. The using of two wings to cover the living creatures indicates that in the coordination we should not display ourselves but should hide ourselves under the Lord's grace—3:5-6; 12:9; Phil. 3:3.
- F. May we all be like Paul, who was absolutely in the new creation; with him, the old creation had been terminated, fired, and replaced, and now the new creation is here with Christ—Gal. 2:20; 6:15-18; cf. Rom. 6:4; 7:6.