

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying Message Eleven : The Intrinsic Significance of Ezra's Ministry and Nehemiah's Leadership— to Build Up the Church as the House of God and the Kingdom of God by Living Out and Working Out the New Jerusalem

I. Overview:

The intrinsic significance of Ezra's ministry is embodied in the words purification, education, and reconstitution; the intrinsic significance of Nehemiah's leadership is embodied in the words separation, protection, and expression. We need to cooperate with the Lord in His heavenly ministry to live and serve God according to the vision of the age in the ministry of the age to live out and work out the New Jerusalem. The building work of its wall was jasper and the city was pure gold. The building work is God's unique work for our reconstitution with the Triune God. We need to stay in the process of being purified from all mixture, taking the interests of the Lord as our unique goal. We can be purified through the process of God's enlightenment, exposure, and judgment, through the termination and elimination of the cross, through the cleansing and washing of the blood, and through the flowing and saturating of the Spirit. We need to be educated to educate others with the truth for God's testimony, His corporate expression. We can build up the wall through the overcoming blood of the Lamb, applied to us through our repenting, confessing our sins. We must build up the wall to protect the church by fighting the battle in the Body.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the appearance of God and the holy city being like jasper.

God sitting on His throne looks like jasper, and the entire wall of the New Jerusalem is built with jasper. Also, the first foundation of the wall is jasper. Jasper, according to Revelation 21:11, is a most precious stone. Its color must be dark green, which signifies life in its richness. Jasper is the appearance of God, which will also be the appearance of the holy city, New Jerusalem.

B. Describe the wall of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:12 tells us that the wall is great and high for separation unto God and for the protection of God's interest. The height of the wall is one hundred forty-four cubits. Also, the wall is twelve thousand stadia long. Our great wall, which is in the book of Revelation, is built with jasper, and this jasper is as clear as crystal. The wall implies transformation, building, the image of God, the expression of God, the testimony of Jesus, separation, and protection.

Day 2 —

A. Expound God's Word making us to be sanctified.

Today God is in His word. This word contains the reality of God, which is God Himself. God Himself as this reality has a special function, which is to sanctify us. Those of us who read God's Word frequently have this experience. Whether or not we understand the Bible, as long as we read a little of God's Word in the morning and consider this Word a little during the day, we are sanctified.

B. Explain that the world is very mixed, but God's word sanctifies us.

The world is very mixed. But God's word of reality sanctifies us and makes us pure. The result of this purity is holiness. The more a person is in the word of God, the purer he becomes. A man who is not in God's word but is in the world is complicated and impure. However, if we have God's word within, this word with God's reality will do a sanctifying work within us.

Day 3 —

A. Why do we need to link God's economy in studying the books of history in the Old Testament?

In His economy God chose Israel, established them as a people, formed them as a nation, and gave them the law. How can we link this with God's economy? God's economy is God becoming a man that man may become God in life and in nature (but not in the Godhead) to produce the organic Body of Christ, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem.

B. Expound that in typology, to keep the law means to express God.

The law is linked to God's economy because the law was given as God's portrait, God's picture, God's image, and God's testimony. As God's testimony, the law is a type of Christ, who, being the image of God, is God's portrait, God's picture, God's testimony. In typology, to keep the law means to express God. Keeping the law by not killing is the living of a God-man.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the production and the constitution of the precious stones.

The precious stones are not only produced by the transforming work of the Lord the Spirit but also constituted with the unsearchable riches of Christ. Grace is just Christ, the embodiment of Christ. Hence, to be constituted with grace is to be constituted with Christ as the constituent of the New Jerusalem. The more we experience Christ and gain Christ, the more we participate in the divine element of Christ, and the more we become constituents of the New Jerusalem.

B. Explain that we should do only one work, which is the work of the New Jerusalem.

We should do only one work, which is to make God's chosen people regenerated ones, sanctified ones, renewed ones, transformed ones, conformed ones, and glorified ones. All those who will be in the New Jerusalem are this kind of people. In this way we go up level by level until we reach the highest point, where we become the same. There is no more flesh and no more natural being. All are in the spirit. All are in the kingdom of the heavens, and all are beings of the New Jerusalem.

Day 5 —

A. Expound the open manna and the hidden manna.

Manna is a type of Christ as the heavenly food that enables God's people to go His way. A portion of manna was preserved in a golden pot concealed in the Ark. The open manna was for the Lord's people to enjoy in a public way; the hidden manna, signifying the hidden Christ, is a special portion reserved for His overcoming seekers, who overcome the degradation of the worldly church.

B. Explain that Zechariah 5:5-11 describes the vision of the measuring vessel.

The measuring vessel is a container able to hold one ephah, used for purchasing and selling in business. Verse 7 reveals that the woman sitting within the vessel signifies the wickedness contained in commerce. The vision in Zechariah 5 corresponds to that of Babylon the Great in Revelation 18. These visions in the sight of God that the wickedness contained in commerce is a kind of idolatry and fornication. Business is an adulterous woman desirous of making money.

Day 6 —

A. Expound that spiritual warfare is a matter of the Body in the Ephesians 6.

The church is the Body of Christ. This Body renders supply and also renders protection to every member. This is especially important when it comes to the matter of spiritual warfare. Ephesians 6 we see that spiritual warfare is something that is related to the church, not to individuals. Satan is not afraid of individuals. He is afraid of the church. We must meet the devil on the ground of the Body.

B. Explain the application of the whole armor of God.

The Body of Christ puts on the whole armor of God. In the Body every member has its specialty, and all these specialties combined together form the whole armor of God. Hence, the whole armor is for the whole church, not for individuals. One function of the Body of Christ is to protect all the members. We need the covering of the Body; otherwise, we will be constantly exposed to the enemy.

III. Conclusion:

In order to have a genuine building, we really need to be dealt with. First King 6: 7 tells us that the temple was built of finished stone, cut at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor ax nor any iron tool was heard in the temple while the temple was being built. Our natural man is like a wild stone quarried from a mountain. He has edges and angles. He is easy to encounter or be touched. The church life is like a quarry. Because of the nature, the old man, the self, the flesh, and the personality, we will always experience the sound of various iron tools. It is not wise to deal with people by blaming them. Rebuke, even with good intentions, often stirs up hatred. The only way to deal with people is to receive God's grace so that we can minister the riches of Christ to them. The more we grow in life, the more we free from our nature and self, and as a result, we will be built up spontaneously.