

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES FIRST AND SECOND CHRONICLES, EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND ESTHER

KEY STATEMENTS

The intrinsic significance of the twelve historical books
in the Old Testament (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel,
1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther)
is the revelation that God's move in man's history prepares the way
for God to carry out His eternal economy by His becoming a man
that man may become God in life and in nature (but not in the Godhead),
for the producing and building up
of the church as the organic Body of Christ
to consummate the New Jerusalem for His ultimate expression.

Ezra reconstituted the people of Israel with heavenly truths;
in the Lord's recovery we need Ezras, priestly teachers,
who contact God, who are saturated with God, who are one with God,
who are filled with God, and who are skilled in the Word of God—
the kind of person who is qualified to be a teacher in the recovery.

We need to live by Christ and to live out Christ, thus magnifying Christ,
so that we can build up the church as the expression of God;
in order to express God, we need to be daily sanctified and renewed
by the washing of the water in the word
to be presented to Christ, our Bridegroom,
as His pure, glorious, God-expressing bride.

For the building up of the church as the Body of Christ,
there is the need for spiritual warfare carried out
according to four principles—not using fleshly weapons,
keeping the position of ascension,

using spiritual weapons,
which are powerful to overthrow the strongholds of the enemy,
and understanding that prayer is warfare and uttering prayers of warfare
in the heavenly realm and from the throne of God.

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Message One
God's Move in Man's History
for the Carrying Out of His Eternal Economy

EM Hymns: 960

Scripture Reading: Zech. 1:3, 18-21; 2:1-2, 5, 8-9, 11; 6:12-13;
10:1, 3, 8, 12; 11:7; 12:1, 10; 14:5, 9

- Zech 1:3 Therefore say to them, Thus says Jehovah of hosts, Return to Me, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will return to you, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Zech 1:18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there were four horns.
- Zech 1:19 And I said to the angel who spoke with me, What are these? And he said to me, These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.
- Zech 1:20 Then Jehovah showed me four craftsmen.
- Zech 1:21 And I said, What do these come to do? And he spoke, saying, These are the horns that have so scattered Judah that no man lifts up his head, but these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.
- Zech 2:1 Then I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there was a man, and in His hand was a measuring line.
- Zech 2:2 And I said, Where are You going? And He said to me, To measure Jerusalem; to see how great its breadth is and how great its length is.
- Zech 2:5 For I will be her wall of fire round about, declares Jehovah, and I will be the glory within her.
- Zech 2:8 For thus says Jehovah of hosts, After the glory He has sent Me against the nations who plunder you; for he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye.
- Zech 2:9 For I am now waving My hand over them, and they will be plunder for those who served them; and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me.
- Zech 2:11 And many nations will join themselves to Jehovah in that day and will become My people; and I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you.
- Zech 6:12 And speak to him, saying, Thus speaks Jehovah of hosts, saying, Here is a man, whose name is the Shoot; and he will shoot forth from his place and will build the temple of Jehovah.
- Zech 6:13 Indeed, it is He who will build the temple of Jehovah; and He will bear majesty and will sit and rule on his throne; and He will be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace will be between the two of them.
- Zech 10:1 Ask rain of Jehovah / At the time of spring rain, / Of Jehovah who makes the lightning, / And He will give them showers of rain, / To everyone herbage in the field.
- Zech 10:3 My anger is kindled against the shepherds, / And I will punish the male goats; / For Jehovah of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah, / And will make them like His horse of majesty in battle.
- Zech 10:8 I will whistle for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them; / And they will multiply as they have multiplied.
- Zech 10:12 And I will strengthen them in Jehovah, / And they will walk about in His name, / Declares Jehovah.
- Zech 11:7 So I shepherded the flock of slaughter, and thereby the afflicted of the flock. And I took to myself two staffs; one I called Favor, and the other I called Bonds; and I shepherded the flock.
- Zech 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,
- Zech 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they will look upon Me, whom they have pierced; and they will wail over Him with wailing as for an only son and cry bitterly over Him with bitter crying as for a firstborn son.

- Zech 14:5 And you will flee into the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach unto Azel; yes, you will flee, just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah the king of Judah. And Jehovah my God will come, and all the saints with Him.
- Zech 14:9 And Jehovah will be King over all the earth; and in that day Jehovah will be the one God and His name the one name.

I. The intrinsic significance of the twelve historical books in the Old Testament (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther) is the revelation that God's move in man's history prepares the way for God to carry out His eternal economy by His becoming a man that man may become God in life and in nature (but not in the Godhead), for the producing and building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem for His ultimate expression:

- A. We must link the twelve books of history in the Old Testament to God's eternal economy; the Bible actually tells us only one thing—God's eternal economy, which is based upon His good pleasure, the desire of His heart (Eph. 1:4-5, 9-10; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3); these twelve historical books were written in God's divine revelation for our admonition and enlightenment (1 Cor. 10:11).
- Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- 1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
- 1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.
- B. The carrying out of God's eternal economy (with the procedure of His judicial redemption and the goal of His organic salvation) to prepare us to be His bride to bring Him back is the only way to solve the problems of today's world situation; this is the desire of God's heart, and He will accomplish it—Rom. 5:10, 17, 21; 1 Thes. 5:23-24; Phil. 1:3-6.
- Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,
- Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.
- Rom 5:21 In order that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- 1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Thes 5:24 Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it.
- Phil 1:3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you,
- Phil 1:4 Always in my every petition on behalf of you all, making my petition with joy,
- Phil 1:5 For your fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now,
- Phil 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun in you a good work will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus;
- C. The Lord's second coming will resolve all the problems of the world, such as injustice (Isa. 11:4), war (2:4), sickness (Rev. 22:2; Ezek. 47:12), famine (Isa. 35:1, 6), education (2:2-5; 4:2-6; 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Heb. 8:11; Psalms 2:6, 12), sinful establishments (Matt. 13:41-43), the suffering of all creation (Rom. 8:21-22; Isa. 11:6, 9), and earthly governments (Rev. 11:15; Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45).
- Isa 11:4 But He will judge the poor in righteousness, / And decide with equity for the afflicted of the land. / And He will strike the land with the rod of His mouth, / And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.
- 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.
- Ezek 47:12 And on the banks on both sides of the river will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail; but they will bring forth new fruit every month, because the water for them flows out of the sanctuary. And their fruit shall be for food, and their leaves for healing.
- Isa 35:1 The wilderness and the desert will be glad; / And the desert will exult and blossom / Like the rose.
- Isa 35:6 Then the lame will leap like a hart, / And the tongue of the dumb will give a ringing shout; / For water will break forth in the wilderness, / And streams in the desert.
- Isa 2:2 But in the last days / The mountain of the house of Jehovah will be established / On the top of the mountains; / And it will be lifted up above the hills; / And all the nations will stream to it,
- Isa 2:3 And many peoples will come and say, / Come and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, / To the house of the God of Jacob, / That He may instruct us in His ways, / And that we may walk in His paths. / For from Zion will go forth instruction, / And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem;
- Isa 2:4 And He will judge between the nations, / And will decide matters for many peoples. / And they will beat their swords into plowshares, / And their spears into pruning knives; / Nation will not lift up sword against nation, / Nor will they learn war anymore.
- Isa 2:5 House of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah.
- Isa 4:2 In that day the Shoot of Jehovah will be beauty and glory, and the Fruit of the earth, excellence and splendor, to those of Israel who have escaped.
- Isa 4:3 And he who is left over in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been written down in Jerusalem for life;
- Isa 4:4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and has cleansed away the bloodstains of Jerusalem from her midst, by the judging Spirit and the burning Spirit.
- Isa 4:5 Jehovah will create over the entire region of Mount Zion and over all her convocations a cloud of smoke by day, and the brightness of a fiery flame by night; for the glory will be a canopy over all.

Isa 4:6	And there will be a tabernacle as a daytime shade from the heat and as a refuge and a cover from storm and rain.
Isa 11:9	They will not harm nor destroy / In all My holy mountain, / For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah, / As water covers the sea.
Hab 2:14	For the earth will be filled / With the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah / As water covers the sea.
Heb 8:11	And they shall by no means each teach his fellow citizen and each his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all will know Me from the little one to the great one among them.
Psa 2:6	But I have installed My King / Upon Zion, My holy mountain.
Psa 2:12	Kiss the Son / Lest He be angry and you perish from the way; / For His anger may suddenly be kindled. / Blessed are all those who take refuge in Him.
Matt 13:41	The Son of Man will send His angels, and they will collect out of His kingdom all the stumbling blocks and those who practice lawlessness,
Matt 13:42	And will cast them into the furnace of fire. In that place there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.
Matt 13:43	Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
Rom 8:21	In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
Rom 8:22	For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now.
Isa 11:6	And the wolf will dwell with the lamb; / And the leopard will lie down with the kid, / And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; / And a young boy will lead them about.
Rev 11:15	And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.
Dan 2:34	You were watching until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.
Dan 2:35	Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.
Dan 2:44	And in the days of those kings the God of the heavens will raise up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and its reign will not be left to another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms; and it will stand forever.
Dan 2:45	Inasmuch as you saw that out of the mountain a stone was cut without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will happen afterward; and the dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.

II. The book of Zechariah reveals that the crucial point and major content of God's move in man's history are the two comings of Christ for the testimony of Jesus, the building of God:

- A. Zechariah 9 through 11 speaks of Christ's lowly first coming, which was humble and intimate:
 Zech 9~11 be omitted.

1. Christ came in a righteous way with salvation for God's people as a King, but as a lowly King, a humiliated King, riding not on a majestic horse but upon a donkey, even upon a colt of a donkey; this was fulfilled when Jesus Christ came into Jerusalem the last time—Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5-10.

Zech 9:9 Exult greatly, O daughter of Zion; / Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! / Now your King comes to you. / He is righteous and bears salvation, / Lowly and riding upon a donkey, / Even upon a colt, the foal of a donkey,
Matt 21:5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King is coming to you, meek and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, a foal of a beast of burden."
Matt 21:6 And the disciples went and did as Jesus directed them,
Matt 21:7 And led the donkey and the colt. And they put their garments on them, and He sat upon them.
Matt 21:8 And most of the crowd spread their own garments in the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them in the road.
Matt 21:9 And the crowds who went before Him and those who followed cried out, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!
Matt 21:10 And when He entered into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, Who is this?

2. Christ was detested, attacked, rejected, and betrayed by one of His disciples for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave (Zech. 11:8, 12-13; Exo. 21:32); what is prophesied here was fulfilled in the Gospels (Matt. 26:14-15; 27:3-10).

Zech 11:8 Then I destroyed the three shepherds in one month; for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also detested me.
Zech 11:12 And I said to them, If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, do not bother. So they weighed out my wages, thirty pieces of silver.
Zech 11:13 And Jehovah said to me, Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price that I am priced with by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter, into the house of Jehovah.
Exo 21:32 If the ox gores a male servant or a female servant, thirty shekels of silver shall be given to their master, and the ox shall be stoned.
Matt 26:14 At that time one of the twelve, the one called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests
Matt 26:15 And said, What are you willing to give me, and I will deliver Him to you? And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver.
Matt 27:3 Then Judas, who betrayed Him, seeing that He was condemned, regretted and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,
Matt 27:4 Saying, I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said, What is that to us? You see to that yourself!
Matt 27:5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple and departed, and he went away and hanged himself.
Matt 27:6 And the chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is blood money.
Matt 27:7 And after taking counsel, they bought with it the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.
Matt 27:8 Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.
Matt 27:9 At that time what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that had been

- priced, whom they of the sons of Israel had priced,
Matt 27:10 And they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."
3. Christ, the Fellow of Jehovah, came as the God-sent Shepherd to the children of Israel; as a man Christ was both a relative of the children of Israel and a Fellow of Jehovah; He was smitten as the Shepherd, and His disciples were scattered as the sheep—Zech. 13:6-7; John 10:11; Matt. 9:36; 26:31; John 16:32-33.
- Zech 13:6 And someone will say to Him, What are these wounds between Your arms?
And He will say, Those with which I was wounded in the house of those who love Me.
- Zech 13:7 Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, / And against the man who is My Fellow, / Declares Jehovah of hosts. Strike the Shepherd, / That the sheep may be scattered; / And I will turn My hand upon the little ones.
- John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.
- Matt 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.
- Matt 26:31 Then Jesus said to them, You will all be stumbled because of Me this night, for it is written, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."
- John 16:32 Behold, an hour is coming, and has come, that you will be scattered each to his own place and will leave Me alone; yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.
- John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have affliction, but take courage; I have overcome the world.
4. Christ was wounded on the cross in the house of Israel, but He said, "I was wounded in the house of those who love Me"; the children of Israel killed Christ, but in this sweet word Christ counts their action as wounds from those who love Him—Zech. 13:6-7; 12:10; Rev. 1:7; Psalms 22:16.
- Zech 13:6 And someone will say to Him, What are these wounds between Your arms?
And He will say, Those with which I was wounded in the house of those who love Me.
- Zech 13:7 Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, / And against the man who is My Fellow, / Declares Jehovah of hosts. Strike the Shepherd, / That the sheep may be scattered; / And I will turn My hand upon the little ones.
- Zech 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they will look upon Me, whom they have pierced; and they will wail over Him with wailing as for an only son and cry bitterly over Him with bitter crying as for a firstborn son.
- Rev 1:7 Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the land will mourn over Him. Yes, amen.
- Psa 22:16 For dogs surround me; / A company of evildoers encloses me; / They pierce my hands and feet.
5. Christ's side was pierced, and He became an opened fountain for sin and for impurity—Zech. 12:10; 13:1; John 19:34, 37; Matt. 26:28.
- Zech 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they will look upon Me, whom they have pierced; and they will wail over Him with wailing as for an only son and cry bitterly over Him with bitter crying as for a firstborn son.

Zech 13:1 In that day there will be an opened fountain for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.

John 19:37 And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

Matt 26:28 For this is My blood of the covenant, which is being poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

B. Zechariah 12 through 14 speaks of Christ's victorious second coming, which will be with power and authority:

Zech 12~14 be omitted.

1. Christ will come a second time accompanied by His saints, the overcomers—14:5; Joel 3:11; Jude 14.

Zech 14:5 And you will flee into the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach unto Azel; yes, you will flee, just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah the king of Judah. And Jehovah my God will come, and all the saints with Him.

Joel 3:11 Hurry and come, / All you surrounding nations, / And be gathered. / There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!

Jude 14 And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied also of these, saying, Behold, the Lord came with myriads of His saints

2. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east—Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:9-12.

Zech 14:4 And His feet will stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split at its middle toward the east and toward the west into a very great valley, so that half of the mountain will remove to the north and half of it to the south.

Acts 1:9 And when He had said these things, while they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him away from their sight.

Acts 1:10 And while they were looking intently into heaven as He went, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them,

Acts 1:11 Who also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you beheld Him going into heaven.

Acts 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

3. He will fight for the children of Israel, His chosen people, against the nations that besiege them and will save them from destruction—Zech. 14:2-3, 12-15; 12:1-9.

Zech 14:2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city will be captured, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished; and half of the city will go forth into captivity, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

Zech 14:3 Then Jehovah will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights in a day of battle.

Zech 14:12 And this will be the plague with which Jehovah will strike all the peoples who have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are standing on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.

Zech 14:13 And in that day a great panic from Jehovah will be among them; and each will

- seize his neighbor's hand, and his hand will rise up against his neighbor's hand.
- Zech 14:14 And Judah will also fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered together, gold and silver and garments, in great abundance.
- Zech 14:15 And as this plague is, so will the plague be on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey, and all the cattle that are in those camps.
- Zech 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,
- Zech 12:2 I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the surrounding peoples; and when what happens in siege is upon Jerusalem, it will be upon Judah as well.
- Zech 12:3 And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone to all the peoples; all who burden themselves with her will be cut up. Indeed all the nations of the earth will be gathered against her.
- Zech 12:4 In that day, declares Jehovah, I will strike every horse with bewilderment and its rider with madness; and I will open My eyes upon the house of Judah and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.
- Zech 12:5 Then the leaders of Judah will say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem, by Jehovah of hosts their God, are my strength.
- Zech 12:6 In that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a fire pot on wood and like a torch of fire among sheaves, and they will consume all the surrounding peoples on the right and on the left. And Jerusalem will dwell again in her own place, in Jerusalem.
- Zech 12:7 And Jehovah will save the tents of Judah first, so that the beauty of the house of David and the beauty of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.
- Zech 12:8 In that day Jehovah will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of Jehovah before them.
- Zech 12:9 And in that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.
4. At that time the whole house of Israel will look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him; thus, all Israel will be saved—vv. 10-14; Rom. 11:26.
- Zech 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they will look upon Me, whom they have pierced; and they will wail over Him with wailing as for an only son and cry bitterly over Him with bitter crying as for a firstborn son.
- Zech 12:11 In that day there will be great wailing in Jerusalem, like the wailing of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon.
- Zech 12:12 And the land will wail, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;
- Zech 12:13 The family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves;
- Zech 12:14 All the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.
- Rom 11:26 And thus all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come out of

Zion; He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

5. Afterward, He will be the King to reign and rule over the nations; all the people will go up to Jerusalem year after year to worship Him, and all will be sanctified unto Him—Zech. 9:10; 14:16-21.
 - Zech 9:10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim / And the horse from Jerusalem, / And the battle bow will be cut off; / And He will speak peace unto the nations, / And His dominion will be from sea to sea / And from the River unto the ends of the earth.
 - Zech 14:16 And everyone left from all the nations that went forth against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - Zech 14:17 And whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there will be no rain.
 - Zech 14:18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up and enter, there will be no rain upon them; there will be the plague with which Jehovah strikes the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - Zech 14:19 This will be the sin of Egypt and the sin of all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - Zech 14:20 In that day on the horses' bells will be, Holiness to Jehovah; and the pots in the house of Jehovah will be like the basins before the altar.
 - Zech 14:21 Indeed every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holiness to Jehovah of hosts; and all those who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them; and there will never again be a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts in that day.
6. “Jehovah will be King over all the earth; and in that day Jehovah will be the one God and His name the one name”—v. 9; Psa. 72:8; Rev. 11:15.
 - Psa 72:8 And He will have dominion from sea to sea / And from the River unto the ends of the earth.
 - Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

III. The all-inclusive Christ is the history of God's move in man's history in order to gain the building of God for the manifestation of God—Zech. 4:9; 6:12-15; Matt. 16:18; John 1:1, 14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 4:5; 5:6; 21:2:

- Zech 4:9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it; and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you.
- Zech 6:12 And speak to him, saying, Thus speaks Jehovah of hosts, saying, Here is a man, whose name is the Shoot; and he will shoot forth from his place and will build the temple of Jehovah.
- Zech 6:13 Indeed, it is He who will build the temple of Jehovah; and He will bear majesty and will sit and rule on his throne; and He will be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace will be between the two of them.
- Zech 6:14 And the splendid crown will be as a reminder in the temple of Jehovah to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah.
- Zech 6:15 And those who are far off will come and build the temple of Jehovah, and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you. And it will happen, if you fully obey the voice of

- Jehovah your God.
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- A. While Christ is skillfully working to sovereignly control the world situation in human history, He is skillfully working Himself into us in the divine history to make us the masterpiece of His work, the poem of God, a new invention of God, expressing His infinite wisdom and divine design—Acts 5:31; Eph. 2:10.
- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- Eph 2:10 For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we would walk in them.
- B. Christ in His humanity is the Angel of Jehovah, Jehovah Himself as the Triune God, standing with God's people in the lowest part of the valley in their humiliation to care for them, intercede for them, and bring them swiftly out of Babylonian captivity—Zech. 1:7-17; Exo. 3:2, 4-6, 13-15; Isa. 63:9; Deut. 33:27.
- Zech 1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, saying,
- Zech 1:8 I saw during the night, and behold, a man was riding upon a red horse; and He was standing among the myrtle trees that were in the bottoms; and behind Him there were red, reddish-brown, and white horses.
- Zech 1:9 Then I said, What are these, sir? And the angel who spoke with me said to me, I will show you what these are.
- Zech 1:10 And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are those whom Jehovah has sent to go to and fro on the earth.
- Zech 1:11 And they answered the Angel of Jehovah, who was standing among the myrtle trees, and they said, We have gone to and fro on the earth, and indeed all the earth sits still and is quiet.
- Zech 1:12 Then the Angel of Jehovah answered and said, O Jehovah of hosts, how long will You not have compassion on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant for these seventy years?
- Zech 1:13 And Jehovah answered the angel who spoke with me with good words, with comforting words.
- Zech 1:14 So the angel who spoke to me said to me, Cry out, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts: I am greatly jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion;
- Zech 1:15 And I am extremely angry with the nations, who are at ease; for I was only a little angry, but their help increased the affliction.

- Zech 1:16 Therefore thus says Jehovah, I return to Jerusalem with compassions; My house will be built in it, declares Jehovah of hosts, and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.
- Zech 1:17 Cry out again, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts, My cities will again overflow with good, and Jehovah will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem.
- Exo 3:2 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but the thornbush was not consumed.
- Exo 3:4 And when Jehovah saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the midst of the thornbush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am.
- Exo 3:5 And He said, Do not come near here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.
- Exo 3:6 And He said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
- Exo 3:13 Then Moses said to God, If I come to the children of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they say to me, What is His name? what shall I say to them?
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 3:15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.
- Isa 63:9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, / And the Angel of His presence saved them; / In His love and in His mercy / He redeemed them, / And He bore them up and carried them / All the days of old.
- Deut 33:27 The God of old is your habitation, / And underneath are eternal arms. / And He drove out the enemy before you / And said, Destroy!
- C. Christ is the last Craftsman used by God to break the four horns; the four horns are the four kingdoms with their kings—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and the Roman Empire—also signified by the great human image with four sections in Daniel 2:31-33, the four stages of locusts in Joel 1:4, and the four beasts in Daniel 7:3-8, that damaged and destroyed the chosen people of God—Zech. 1:18-21:
- Dan 2:31 You, O king, were watching, and there was a single great image. This image, large and its brightness surpassing, stood opposite you; and its appearance was frightful.
- Dan 2:32 Concerning this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its abdomen and its thighs of bronze,
- Dan 2:33 Its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.
- Joel 1:4 What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; / And what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has eaten; / And what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust has eaten.
- Dan 7:3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.
- Dan 7:4 The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were plucked and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man; and a man's heart was given to it.
- Dan 7:5 And there was another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and they said thus to it, Arise, devour much flesh.

Dan 7:6 After this I watched and there was another beast, like a leopard; and it had four wings of a bird on its back; and the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Dan 7:7 After this I watched in the night visions, and there was a fourth beast, dreadful and frightful and exceedingly strong; and it had large iron teeth; it devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

Dan 7:8 I was considering the horns; then there was another horn, a small one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted from before it. And there were eyes like the eyes of a man in this horn and a mouth speaking great things.

Zech 1:18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there were four horns.

Zech 1:19 And I said to the angel who spoke with me, What are these? And he said to me, These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

Zech 1:20 Then Jehovah showed me four craftsmen.

Zech 1:21 And I said, What do these come to do? And he spoke, saying, These are the horns that have so scattered Judah that no man lifts up his head, but these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

1. The four craftsmen are the skills used by God to destroy these kingdoms with their kings; each of the first three kingdoms (Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece) was taken over in a skillful way by the kingdom that followed it—Dan. 5; 8:3-7.

Dan 5 be omitted.

Dan 8:3 Then I lifted my eyes, and I looked, and there was a ram, standing before the river, and he had two horns. And the two horns were high, but one was higher than the other; and the higher one came up last.

Dan 8:4 I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward; and no beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could deliver from his power; but he did as he pleased, and he became great.

Dan 8:5 And while I considered this, there was a male goat, coming from the west over the face of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

Dan 8:6 And he came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran toward him in his mighty wrath.

Dan 8:7 And I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and broke his two horns; and the ram had no strength to withstand him, but the goat threw him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was none to deliver the ram from his power.

2. The fourth Craftsman will be Christ as the stone cut out without hands, who will crush the restored Roman Empire and thereby crush the great human image as the totality of human government at His coming back—2:31-35.

Dan 2:31 You, O king, were watching, and there was a single great image. This image, large and its brightness surpassing, stood opposite you; and its appearance was frightful.

Dan 2:32 Concerning this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its abdomen and its thighs of bronze,

Dan 2:33 Its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

Dan 2:34 You were watching until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

Dan 2:35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at

once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

3. This stone signifies not only the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ, Christ with His “mighty ones”—Joel 3:11.

Joel 3:11 Hurry and come, / All you surrounding nations, / And be gathered. / There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!

- D. The corporate Christ, Christ with His overcoming bride, will come as a stone to crush the aggregate of human government in order to bring in God’s kingdom—Dan. 2:34-35; Joel 3:11; Rev. 19:11-21; cf. Gen. 1:26.

Dan 2:34 You were watching until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

Dan 2:35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Joel 3:11 Hurry and come, / All you surrounding nations, / And be gathered. / There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.

Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,

Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.

Rev 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.

Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Him who sits on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the

earth.

- E. Whereas Daniel 2 speaks of Christ coming as a stone cut out without hands, Revelation 19 speaks of Christ coming as the One who has His bride as His army.

Dan 2 be omitted.

Rev 19 be omitted.

IV. Ephesians 5 and 6 reveal that the church is both the bride and the warrior; in Revelation 19 we also have these two aspects of the church—Eph. 5:25-27; 6:10-20; Rev. 19:7-9, 11, 14:

Eph 5, 6 be omitted.

Rev 19 be omitted.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.

Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

- A. To be the bride in the divine history, God's move in man's history, we need the beautifying

word of God, and to be the warrior in the divine history, God's move in man's history, we need the slaying word of God—Eph. 5:26; 6:17-18; cf. 2 Tim. 3:16.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

- B. On the day of His wedding, Christ will marry His bride, the overcomers, who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years—cf. Dan. 7:25; 6:10; Eph. 6:12.

Dan 7:25 And he will speak things against the Most High and wear out the saints of the Most High; and his intention will be to change the times and the law; and they will be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.
Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.
Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

- C. Before Christ descends to earth to deal with Antichrist and the totality of human government, He will have a wedding, uniting His overcomers to Himself as one entity—Rev. 19:7-9.

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.

- D. Thus, Christ as the Spirit, the processed and consummated Triune God, marries the church as the bride, the processed and transformed tripartite man—22:17a.

Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! ...

- E. After His wedding He will come with His newly married bride to destroy Antichrist, who with his army will fight against God directly—19:11, 14:

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

1. The Lord Jesus, the Word of God, will slay Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, by the breath of His mouth, and He will bring Antichrist to nothing by the manifestation of His coming—vv. 11-15; 2 Thes. 2:2-8.

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.

- Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- 2 Thes 2:2 That you be not quickly shaken in mind nor alarmed, neither by a spirit nor by word nor by a letter as if by us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
- 2 Thes 2:3 Let no one deceive you in any way, because it will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition,
- 2 Thes 2:4 Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or an object of worship, so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth, saying that he is God.
- 2 Thes 2:5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I said these things to you?
- 2 Thes 2:6 And now you know that which restrains, so that he might be revealed in his own time.
- 2 Thes 2:7 For it is the mystery of lawlessness that is now operating, but only until the one now restraining goes out of the way.
- 2 Thes 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord Jesus will slay by the breath of His mouth and bring to nothing by the manifestation of His coming),
2. Out of Christ's mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations—Rev. 19:15; 1:16; 2:12, 16.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- Rev 1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.
- Rev 2:12 And to the messenger of the church in Pergamos write: These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:
- Rev 2:16 Repent therefore; but if not, I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war with them with the sword of My mouth.
- F. After crushing the human government, God will have cleared up the entire universe; then the corporate Christ, Christ with His overcomers, will become a great mountain to fill the whole earth, making the whole earth God's kingdom—Dan. 2:35, 44; 7:22, 27; Rev. 11:15.
- Dan 2:35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.
- Dan 2:44 And in the days of those kings the God of the heavens will raise up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and its reign will not be left to another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms; and it will stand forever.
- Dan 7:22 Until the Ancient of Days came; and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.
- Dan 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; His kingdom is an

eternal kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.

Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

V. The way to fulfill God's move in man's history for the carrying out of His eternal economy is by exercising our spirit to experience and enjoy Christ as the sevenfold intensified Spirit—1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10; 4:5; 5:6; Zech. 3:9; 4:10:

Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
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 17:3 And he carried me away in spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.
Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua-upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.
Zech 4:10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel; they are the eyes of Jehovah running to and fro on the whole earth.

A. Zechariah 1:3 says, "Return to Me, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will return to you, says Jehovah of hosts"; we need to exercise our spirit to return to the Lord with all our heart; this establishes the principle that we must return to the Lord first, and then the Lord will return to us—Jer. 24:7; Hosea 6:1-3; 14:1-5; Joel 2:13; Luke 15:17-24.

Jer 24:7 And I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am Jehovah; and they will be My people, and I will be their God; for they will return to Me with their whole heart.
Hosea 6:1 Come and let us return to Jehovah; / For He has torn us, but He will heal us, / And He has stricken us, but He will bind us up.
Hosea 6:2 He will enliven us after two days; / On the third day He will raise us up, / And we will live in His presence.
Hosea 6:3 Therefore let us know, let us pursue knowing Jehovah: / His going forth is as sure as the dawn, / And He will come to us as the rain, / As the late rain which waters the earth.
Hosea 14:1 Return, O Israel, / To Jehovah your God, / For you have fallen by your iniquity.
Hosea 14:2 Take words with you, / And return to Jehovah; / Say to Him, / Forgive all iniquity, / And take us graciously; / Thus we will render our lips as bulls.
Hosea 14:3 Assyria will not save us; / We will not ride upon horses. / Neither will we say again to the work of our hands, Our God! / Because in You the orphan finds compassion.
Hosea 14:4 I will heal their apostasy; / I will love them freely; / For My anger has turned away from him.

Hosea 14:5 I will be like the dew to Israel; / He will bud like the lily / And will send forth his roots like the trees of Lebanon.

Joel 2:13 And rend your hearts, / And not your garments, / And turn to Jehovah your God, / For He is gracious and compassionate, / Long-suffering and abundant in lovingkindness / And repentant of evil.

Luke 15:17 But when he came to himself, he said, How many of my father's hired servants abound in bread, but I am perishing here in famine!

Luke 15:18 I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.

Luke 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.

Luke 15:20 And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately.

Luke 15:21 And the son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

Luke 15:22 But the father said to his slaves, Bring out quickly the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.

Luke 15:23 And bring the fattened calf; slaughter it, and let us eat and be merry,

Luke 15:24 Because this son of mine was dead and lives again; he was lost and has been found. And they began to be merry.

B. Zechariah 12:1 says, “The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him”:

1. In His creation God made three crucial, equally important items—the heavens, the earth, and the spirit of man.
2. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, worship God, live God, fulfill God’s purpose for God, and be one with God—v. 1.

Zech 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,

3. The central government and most prominent part of man’s being should be his spirit; a man who is ruled and controlled by his spirit is a spiritual man—1 Cor. 2:14-15; 3:1; 14:32; John 3:6; Eph. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:4; Dan. 6:3, 10.

1 Cor 2:14 But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know them because they are discerned spiritually.

1 Cor 2:15 But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

1 Cor 3:1 And I, brothers, was not able to speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to fleshy, as to infants in Christ.

1 Cor 14:32 And the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

1 Pet 3:4 But the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptible adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, which is very costly in the sight of God.

- Dan 6:3 Then this Daniel distinguished himself among the chief ministers and satraps because in him there was an excellent spirit, and the king considered setting him over the whole kingdom.
- Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.
4. Zechariah charges us to pay full attention to our human spirit, that we may receive the Christ revealed in this book and may understand all that is revealed therein concerning Him—Gen. 2:7; John 4:24; Phil. 4:23.
- Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.
- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
- Phil 4:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
- C. We need to enjoy Christ as the sevenfold intensified Spirit in the following aspects:
1. Christ is a man with a measuring line in His hand, measuring God's people in order to test, judge, examine, and possess them for His kingdom—Zech. 2:1-2; Ezek. 40:3; 47:1-5; Psa. 139:23-24.
- Zech 2:1 Then I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there was a man, and in His hand was a measuring line.
- Zech 2:2 And I said, Where are You going? And He said to me, To measure Jerusalem; to see how great its breadth is and how great its length is.
- Ezek 40:3 And He brought me there, and there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring reed in His hand, standing in the gate.
- Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.
- Ezek 47:2 Then He brought me out by the way of the north gate and led me around on the way outside to the outer gate, on the way to the gate that faces east; and there the water was running out on the south side.
- Ezek 47:3 When the man went out to the east with the line in His hand, He measured a thousand cubits; and He led me through the water, water that was to the ankles.
- Ezek 47:4 Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the knees. Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the loins.
- Ezek 47:5 Then He measured a thousand cubits, and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.
- Psa 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; / Try me, and know my anxious thoughts;
- Psa 139:24 And see if there is some harmful way in me, / And lead me on the eternal way.
2. "I will be her wall of fire round about, declares Jehovah, and I will be the glory within her"—Zech. 2:5:

- a. That the wall of the city of Jerusalem and the glory within her will be Jehovah Himself indicates that Jehovah as Christ will be the protection of Jerusalem at her circumference and her glory at her center; this shows the centrality and universality of Christ in God's economy.
 - b. Today Christ is the glory in the center of the church, and He is also the fire burning around the circumference of the church for her protection; in the New Jerusalem the Triune God in Christ will be the glory at its center (Rev. 21:23; 22:1, 5), and this glory will shine through the transparent wall of the city to be its protection of fire (21:11, 18a, 24).
 - 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.
 - 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 22:5 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 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
 - Rev 21:18a And the building work of its wall was jasper; ...
 - Rev 21:24 And the nations will walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.
3. Christ is the One sent by Jehovah of hosts and is also the Sender, Jehovah of hosts, for the care of His people, who are very dear to Him; whoever touches them touches the pupil of His eye—Zech. 2:8-9, 11; cf. John 14:26; 15:26.
 - Zech 2:8 For thus says Jehovah of hosts, After the glory He has sent Me against the nations who plunder you; for he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye.
 - Zech 2:9 For I am now waving My hand over them, and they will be plunder for those who served them; and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me.
 - Zech 2:11 And many nations will join themselves to Jehovah in that day and will become My people; and I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you.
 - John 14:26 But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and remind you of all the things which I have said to you.
 - John 15:26 But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;
 4. Christ came as a Shepherd, shepherding the flock with two staffs—one is called Favor (grace), and the other is called Bonds (binding); grace is for our being mingled with God, and binding is for our being bound into oneness—Zech. 11:7; 2:1-2, 5, 8-9, 11; John 21:15-17:
 - Zech 11:7 So I shepherded the flock of slaughter, and thereby the afflicted of the flock. And I took to myself two staffs; one I called Favor, and the other I called Bonds; and I shepherded the flock.
 - Zech 2:1 Then I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there was a man, and in His hand was a measuring line.
 - Zech 2:2 And I said, Where are You going? And He said to me, To measure Jerusalem;

- to see how great its breadth is and how great its length is.
- Zech 2:5 For I will be her wall of fire round about, declares Jehovah, and I will be the glory within her.
- Zech 2:8 For thus says Jehovah of hosts, After the glory He has sent Me against the nations who plunder you; for he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye.
- Zech 2:9 For I am now waving My hand over them, and they will be plunder for those who served them; and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me.
- Zech 2:11 And many nations will join themselves to Jehovah in that day and will become My people; and I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- a. While the Lord is so favorable to us, we should ask Him to send us even more favor, more grace, more “rain”—Zech. 10:1; 12:10; Ezek. 34:26.
- Zech 10:1 Ask rain of Jehovah / At the time of spring rain, / Of Jehovah who makes the lightning, / And He will give them showers of rain, / To everyone herbage in the field.
- Zech 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they will look upon Me, whom they have pierced; and they will wail over Him with wailing as for an only son and cry bitterly over Him with bitter crying as for a firstborn son.
- Ezek 34:26 And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in their season; there will be showers of blessing.
- b. After being visited by the Lord as the Shepherd, every weak sheep among God’s people becomes a horse of majesty—Zech. 10:3; cf. 9:13, 16; Dan. 11:32b.
- Zech 10:3 My anger is kindled against the shepherds, / And I will punish the male goats; / For Jehovah of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah, / And will make them like His horse of majesty in battle.
- Zech 9:13 For I will bend Judah for Myself, / And I will fill a bow with Ephraim; / And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, / Against your sons, O Javan; / And I will make you like a warrior’s sword.
- Zech 9:16 And Jehovah their God will save them in that day as the flock of His people, / For they will be like the stones of a crown, sparkling in His land.
- Dan 11:32b ... But the people who know their God will show strength and take action.
- c. Often during our time of morning revival, the Lord whistles to us, calling us and gathering us to Him; the Lord’s whistling is not shrill but mild and gentle, somewhat like the singing of a bird—Zech. 10:8.
- Zech 10:8 I will whistle for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them; / And

they will multiply as they have multiplied.

- d. The Lord strengthens us in Himself so that we may walk about in His name—v. 12; Col. 3:17.

Zech 10:12 And I will strengthen them in Jehovah, / And they will walk about in His name, / Declares Jehovah.

Col 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

VI. With God's move, as the divine history, in man's history, there is the new creation—the new man with a new heart, a new spirit, a new life, a new nature, a new history, and a new consummation; we praise the Lord that we are in the divine history, experiencing and enjoying the mysterious, divine things for our organic salvation, so that we may make ourselves ready to become His overcoming bride to bring Him back—*Hymns*, #16; Rom. 5:10, 17-18, 21; 6:4; Ezek. 36:26; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Matt. 5:8; Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:26-27; 6:17-18; Rev. 19:7; Matt. 24:44; 25:10.

Hymns #16

1 Our Father, as the evergreen, Thou art forever new;
Thou art the ever living Lord, Thy freshness as the dew.

Chorus

O Father, Thou art unchanging, Thou never hast grown old;
Thru countless ages, ever fresh, Thy newness doth unfold.
2 O Thou art God, and Thou art "new"; Without Thee all is worn,
But all with Thee is ever fresh, Though many years have gone.
3 Each blessing Thou hast given us Thy newness doth contain;
Thy covenant, Thy ways are new, And ever thus remain.
4 Now we Thy new creation are- New spirit and new heart;
We're daily from the old renewed, New life Thou dost impart.
5 The earth and heavens will be new And Thy new city share;
New fruits each month will be supplied, For all is newness there.
6 O Father, Thou art ever new, And all is new in Thee;
We sing the new eternal song, New praise we give to Thee.

Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:18 So then as it was through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also it was through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.

Rom 5:21 In order that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

Ezek 36:26 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

2 Cor 3:16 But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
 2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
 2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
 Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
 Titus 3:5 Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit,
 Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
 Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
 Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
 Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
 Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
 Matt 24:44 For this reason you also be ready, because at an hour when you do not expect it, the Son of Man is coming.
 Matt 25:10 And as they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was shut.

Message Two

Crucial Aspects of Living in the Good Land after Returning from Captivity in Babylon

RK *Hymns*: 124, 783 (tune 769)

Scripture Reading: 1 Chron. 4:10; 9:1; 16:8-12, 16-18; 29:10-20;
2 Chron. 20:15-22; 36:22-23

- 1 Chron 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would richly bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand would be with me, and that You would so keep me from evil that it would not grieve me! And God caused what he had requested to come to pass.
- 1 Chron 9:1 So all Israel was enrolled by genealogy, and they are now written in the book of the kings of Israel; and Judah was carried away captive to Babylon for their unfaithfulness.
- 1 Chron 16:8 Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name; / Make known His deeds among the peoples.
- 1 Chron 16:9 Sing to Him; sing psalms to Him; / Muse upon all His wondrous deeds.
- 1 Chron 16:10 Glory in His holy name; / Let the heart of those who seek Jehovah rejoice.
- 1 Chron 16:11 Seek Jehovah and His strength; / Seek His face continually.
- 1 Chron 16:12 Remember His wondrous deeds, which He has done, / His signs and the judgments of His mouth,
- 1 Chron 16:16 The covenant that He made with Abraham, / And His oath unto Isaac.
- 1 Chron 16:17 And He confirmed it unto Jacob as a statute, / Unto Israel as an eternal covenant,
- 1 Chron 16:18 Saying, To you I will give the land of Canaan, / The portion of your inheritance;
- 1 Chron 29:10 And David blessed Jehovah in the sight of all the assembly. And David said, You are blessed, O Jehovah, God of Israel, our father, from eternity to eternity.
- 1 Chron 29:11 Yours, O Jehovah, is the greatness and the power and the splendor and the victory and the majesty, indeed all that is in heaven and on earth; Yours, O Jehovah, is the kingdom, and You are exalted as Head over all.
- 1 Chron 29:12 Both riches and glory proceed from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand are power and might, and it is in Your hand to make great and to give strength to all.
- 1 Chron 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.
- 1 Chron 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have strength to offer so willingly in this way? For all things are from You, and from Your hand we have given to You.
- 1 Chron 29:15 For we are strangers before You and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days upon earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.
- 1 Chron 29:16 O Jehovah our God, as for all this abundance that we have prepared for building You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours.
- 1 Chron 29:17 I know also, O my God, that You try the heart and take pleasure in uprightness. I, in the uprightness of my heart, have offered willingly all these things; and now I have seen with joy Your people, who are present here, offering willingly to You.
- 1 Chron 29:18 O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of Your people's heart and establish their heart toward You.
- 1 Chron 29:19 And to Solomon my son give a wholeness of heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes, and to do all and build the palace for which I have prepared these things.
- 1 Chron 29:20 Then David said to all the assembly, Bless Jehovah your God. And all the assembly blessed Jehovah, the God of their fathers; and they bowed down and paid homage to Jehovah and the king.
- 2 Chron 20:15 And he said, Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat. Thus says Jehovah to you, Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for

the battle is not yours but God's.

- 2 Chron 20:16 Tomorrow go down against them. They are coming up at the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the river valley before the wilderness of Jeruel.
- 2 Chron 20:17 It is not for you to fight in this battle. Station yourselves; stand and see the salvation of Jehovah among you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid nor dismayed. Tomorrow go out to meet them, for Jehovah is with you.
- 2 Chron 20:18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before Jehovah to worship Jehovah.
- 2 Chron 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, rose up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.
- 2 Chron 20:20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed.
- 2 Chron 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever.
- 2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.
- 2 Chron 36:22 And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- 2 Chron 36:23 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up!

I. The history of the people of Israel is a type, typifying the New Testament believers and therefore typifying the church—2 Chron. 36:22-23; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11.

- 2 Chron 36:22 And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- 2 Chron 36:23 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up!
- 1 Cor 10:6 Now these things occurred as examples to us, that we should not be ones who lust after evil things, even as they also lusted.
- 1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.

II. Judah was carried away captive to Babylon because of unfaithfulness; thus, those who returned from captivity were to be faithful to God—1 Chron. 9:1; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 7:25; 2 Tim. 2:13; Rev. 17:14:

- 1 Chron 9:1 So all Israel was enrolled by genealogy, and they are now written in the book of the kings of Israel; and Judah was carried away captive to Babylon for their unfaithfulness.

- 1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
- 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
- 1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.
- 2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
- Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.
- A. God is faithful in fulfilling His economy and in leading us into His economy—Lam. 3:23b.
 Lam 3:23b ... Great is Your faithfulness.
- B. As the faithful God, God cannot deny Himself; He cannot deny, go against, His own being—2 Tim. 2:13.
 2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
- C. When He, with His attribute of faithfulness, is wrought into us, He becomes us, and we become Him in His attribute of faithfulness—1 Cor. 7:25; 2 Tim. 2:13:
 1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.
 2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
1. Just as God cannot deny His own being, we, having been constituted with Him, cannot deny our own being—cf. Eph. 3:16-17.
 Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
 2. It is in this way that we can, and will, become faithful as stewards of the mysteries of God—1 Cor. 4:1-2.
 1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
 3. Because we are constituted with the faithful God, we must be faithful to Him; our being, our constitution, does not allow us to be otherwise.
- D. For us to be faithful, trustworthy, means to fulfill the stewardship that the Lord has apportioned to us—vv. 1-2; 7:25; 1 Tim. 1:12.
 1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
 1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.
 1 Tim 1:12 I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry,
- E. When the Lord comes for the battle at Armageddon, He will be the Lord of lords and the King of kings, and the overcomers who are with Him will be “the called and chosen and faithful”—Rev. 17:14; 19:11-21.
 Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and

- faithful, will also overcome them.
- Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
- Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.
- Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
- Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,
- Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.
- Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.
- Rev 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.
- Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Him who sits on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

III. All those who returned to the good land from captivity in Babylon were commanded to know, obey, and worship Jehovah—1 Chron. 16:8-14:

- 1 Chron 16:8 Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name; / Make known His deeds among the peoples.
- 1 Chron 16:9 Sing to Him; sing psalms to Him; / Muse upon all His wondrous deeds.
- 1 Chron 16:10 Glory in His holy name; / Let the heart of those who seek Jehovah rejoice.
- 1 Chron 16:11 Seek Jehovah and His strength; / Seek His face continually.
- 1 Chron 16:12 Remember His wondrous deeds, which He has done, / His signs and the judgments of His mouth,
- 1 Chron 16:13 O seed of Israel His servant, / O children of Jacob, His chosen ones.
- 1 Chron 16:14 He is Jehovah our God; / His judgments are in all the earth.
- A. *God* implies God's power and His relationship with creatures; *Jehovah God* denotes God having a relationship with man.
- B. Jehovah God is not only the One who is powerful but also the One who draws near to man—Gen. 2:4, 8, 15-16, 18-19, 21-22.
- Gen 2:4 These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created. When Jehovah God made earth and heaven,
- Gen 2:8 And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed.

- Gen 2:15 And Jehovah God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.
- Gen 2:16 And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely,
- Gen 2:18 And Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart.
- Gen 2:19 Now Jehovah God had formed from the ground every animal of the field and every bird of heaven. And He brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called any living animal, that was its name.
- Gen 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
- Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- C. *Jehovah* means “I am who I am,” indicating that Jehovah is the self-existing and ever-existing eternal One, the One who was in the past, who is in the present, and who will be in the future forever—Exo. 3:14; Rev. 1:4.
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- D. Jehovah is the only One who is—Heb. 11:6:
- Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
1. This unique One who has being is the great “To Be”; the verb *to be* can be applied only to God and not to us.
 2. God is the universal To Be, the genuine being; only God is I Am; only He has being.
- E. *Jehovah* is God’s name for existence and fulfillment—Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Exo. 3:14; 6:6-8.
- Gen 17:1 And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him, I am the All-sufficient God; / Walk before Me, and be perfect.
- Gen 28:3 And may the All-sufficient God bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.
- Gen 35:11 And God said to him, I am the All-sufficient God: / Be fruitful and multiply; / A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, / And kings shall come forth from your loins.
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 6:6 Therefore say to the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.
- Exo 6:7 And I will take you to Myself as My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am Jehovah your God, the One who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
- Exo 6:8 And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you as a possession. I am Jehovah.

- F. Because Jehovah exists eternally and because He is the reality of the verb *to be*, He will fulfill whatever He has spoken—John 8:28-29.
- John 8:28 Jesus therefore said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and that I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.
- John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.
- G. In the Lord's recovery today, we are in the stage of fulfillment; we are experiencing God as Jehovah, the great I Am—Exo. 3:14-16; John 8:24, 28.
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 3:15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.
- Exo 3:16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.
- John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins.
- John 8:28 Jesus therefore said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and that I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.

IV. The returning of the children of Israel to the good land signifies the returning of Christians from division to the ground of the church, the ground of oneness—2 Chron. 36:22-23; cf. Deut. 12:1-32:

- 2 Chron 36:22 And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- 2 Chron 36:23 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up!
- Deut 12:1 These are the statutes and the ordinances that you shall be certain to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.
- Deut 12:2 You shall completely destroy all the places where the nations whom you will dispossess have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree.
- Deut 12:3 And you shall tear down their altars and crush their pillars; and their Asherahs you shall burn with fire, and the idols of their gods you shall cut down; and you shall destroy their name from that place.
- Deut 12:4 You shall not do so to Jehovah your God.
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the

heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;

Deut 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.

Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;

Deut 12:9 For until now you have not come to the rest and to the inheritance that Jehovah your God is giving you.

Deut 12:10 But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance, and when He gives you rest from all your enemies surrounding you so that you dwell securely;

Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.

Deut 12:12 And you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, you and your sons and daughters, and your male servants and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.

Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;

Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

Deut 12:15 Yet you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, in all that your soul desires, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat it as the gazelle and the deer are eaten.

Deut 12:16 However, you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water.

Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;

Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.

Deut 12:19 Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite all your days upon the earth.

Deut 12:20 When Jehovah your God enlarges your territory, as He has promised you, and you say, I will eat meat, because your soul desires to eat meat, you may eat meat according to all that your soul desires.

Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;

Deut 12:22 Indeed, as the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you may eat it; the unclean and the clean may eat it alike.

Deut 12:23 But make sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh.

Deut 12:24 You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water.

Deut 12:25 You shall not eat it, so that it may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of Jehovah.

Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;

- Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
- Deut 12:28 Keep and listen to all these words which I am commanding you so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of Jehovah your God.
- Deut 12:29 When Jehovah your God cuts off the nations before you, which you are entering to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land,
- Deut 12:30 Be careful that you are not ensnared in following them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not seek after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods, so that I also may do likewise?
- Deut 12:31 You shall not do so for Jehovah your God, for every abomination to Jehovah, which He hates, they have done to their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burned with fire to their gods.
- Deut 12:32 The whole thing that I am commanding you, you shall be certain to do; you shall not add to it, nor shall you take away from it.

A. The local ground of the church is basically the unique oneness of the Body of Christ practiced in the local churches—Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27.

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

B. According to the divine revelation in the New Testament, the ground of the church is constituted of three crucial elements:

1. The first element of the constitution of the church ground is the unique oneness of the universal Body of Christ, which is called “the oneness of the Spirit” (Eph. 4:3)—the oneness for which the Lord prayed in John 17.

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

John 17 be omitted.

2. The second element of the church ground is the unique ground of the locality in which a local church is established and exists—Rev. 1:11; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.

Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Acts 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church and had prayed with fastings, they committed them to the Lord into whom they had believed.

Titus 1:5 For this cause I left you in Crete, that you might set in order the things which I have begun that remain and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you:

3. The third element of the church ground is the reality of the Spirit of oneness, that is, the reality of the Spirit, who is the living reality of the Divine Trinity—1 John 5:6; John 16:13.

1 John 5:6 This is He who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ; not in the water only, but in the water and in the blood; and the Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the reality.

John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He

will declare to you the things that are coming.

C. The ground of the church is intrinsically related to life—Psa. 133:1, 3; 36:8-9.

Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!

Psa 133:3 Like the dew of Hermon / That came down upon the mountains of Zion. / For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.

Psa 36:8 They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, / And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures.

Psa 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; / In Your light we see light.

V. The children of Israel who returned to the good land were told to remember the covenant that God made with Abraham—1 Chron. 16:15-18; Gen. 15:7-21:

1 Chron 16:15 Remember His covenant forever, / The word that He commanded to a thousand generations,

1 Chron 16:16 The covenant that He made with Abraham, / And His oath unto Isaac.

1 Chron 16:17 And He confirmed it unto Jacob as a statute, / Unto Israel as an eternal covenant,

1 Chron 16:18 Saying, To you I will give the land of Canaan, / The portion of your inheritance;

Gen 15:7 Then He said to him, I am Jehovah who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to inherit it.

Gen 15:8 And he said, O Lord Jehovah, how will I know that I will inherit it?

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

Gen 15:10 And he brought Him all these and cut them in two in the middle and laid the half of each opposite the other, but the birds he did not cut in two.

Gen 15:11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

Gen 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, behold, a terror and great darkness fell upon him.

Gen 15:13 And He said to Abram, Know assuredly that your seed will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and they will serve them; and they will afflict them four hundred years.

Gen 15:14 But I will also judge that nation, whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.

Gen 15:15 But as for you, you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age.

Gen 15:16 And in the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

Gen 15:17 And when the sun went down and it was dark, there came a smoking furnace and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces.

Gen 15:18 On that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your seed do I give this land, / From the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates:

Gen 15:19 The land of the Kenites and the Kenizzites and the Kadmonites

Gen 15:20 And the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaim

Gen 15:21 And the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites and the Jebusites.

A. Abraham believed God for His promise concerning the seed, but he lacked the faith to believe God for the promise of the good land—vv. 6-8.

Gen 15:6 And he believed Jehovah, and He accounted it to him as righteousness.

Gen 15:7 Then He said to him, I am Jehovah who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to inherit it.

Gen 15:8 And he said, O Lord Jehovah, how will I know that I will inherit it?

B. In order to strengthen Abraham's faith, God was compelled to confirm His promise to

Abraham by making a covenant with him—vv. 9-21:

- Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
- Gen 15:10 And he brought Him all these and cut them in two in the middle and laid the half of each opposite the other, but the birds he did not cut in two.
- Gen 15:11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.
- Gen 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, behold, a terror and great darkness fell upon him.
- Gen 15:13 And He said to Abram, Know assuredly that your seed will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and they will serve them; and they will afflict them four hundred years.
- Gen 15:14 But I will also judge that nation, whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.
- Gen 15:15 But as for you, you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age.
- Gen 15:16 And in the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.
- Gen 15:17 And when the sun went down and it was dark, there came a smoking furnace and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces.
- Gen 15:18 On that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your seed do I give this land, / From the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates:
- Gen 15:19 The land of the Kenites and the Kenizzites and the Kadmonites
- Gen 15:20 And the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaim
- Gen 15:21 And the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites and the Jebusites.

1. The covenant God made with Abraham was a covenant of promise that would be fulfilled through God's power in His grace—John 1:14, 17.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.

2. The new testament is a continuation of this covenant—Gal. 3:17; 4:22-26.

Gal 3:17 And I say this: A covenant previously ratified by God, the law, having come four hundred and thirty years after, does not annul so as to make the promise of none effect.

Gal 4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one of the maidservant and one of the free woman.

Gal 4:23 However the one of the maidservant was born according to the flesh, but the one of the free woman was born through promise.

Gal 4:24 These things are spoken allegorically, for these women are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, bringing forth children unto slavery, which is Hagar.

Gal 4:25 Now this Hagar is Sinai the mountain in Arabia and corresponds to the Jerusalem which now is, for she is in slavery with her children.

Gal 4:26 But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother;

- C. God made His covenant with Abraham through the crucified and resurrected Christ—Gen. 15:9; Rom. 6:5-6, 9:

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

Rom 6:5 For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will

- also be in the likeness of His resurrection,
- Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
- Rom 6:9 Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; death lords it over Him no more.
1. The three kinds of slain cattle signify Christ in His humanity being crucified for us, and the two living birds signify Christ in His divinity being the living, resurrected One—Gen. 15:9; John 11:25; Rev. 1:18.

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

Rev 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
 2. The heifer was for a peace offering, the female goat was for a sin offering, and the ram was for a burnt offering—Gen. 15:9; Lev. 3:1; 4:28; 5:6; 1:10.

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

Lev 3:1 And if his offering is a sacrifice of peace offerings, if he presents it from the herd, whether male or female, he shall present it without blemish before Jehovah.

Lev 4:28 If his sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a female goat, without blemish, for his sin which he has committed.

Lev 5:6 And he shall bring his trespass offering to Jehovah for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a sheep or a goat, as a sin offering; and the priest shall make expiation for him on account of his sin.

Lev 1:10 And if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall present it, a male without blemish.
 3. In typology, the turtledove signifies a suffering life, and the young pigeon signifies a believing life, a life of faith; these are two characteristics of the Lord's life on earth—Gen. 15:9.

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
 4. Since two is the number of testimony, the two living birds bear testimony of Christ as the One living in us and for us—v. 9; John 14:19-20; Gal. 2:20.

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

John 14:19 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

VI. As believers in Christ, we need to have prayers that express God's will and our desire to have our personal spiritual border to be enlarged—1 Chron. 29:10-20; 4:10:

- 1 Chron 29:10 And David blessed Jehovah in the sight of all the assembly. And David said, You are blessed, O Jehovah, God of Israel, our father, from eternity to eternity.
- 1 Chron 29:11 Yours, O Jehovah, is the greatness and the power and the splendor and the victory and the majesty, indeed all that is in heaven and on earth; Yours, O Jehovah, is the kingdom, and You are exalted as Head over all.
- 1 Chron 29:12 Both riches and glory proceed from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand are power and might, and it is in Your hand to make great and to give strength to all.
- 1 Chron 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.
- 1 Chron 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have strength to offer so willingly in this way? For all things are from You, and from Your hand we have given to You.
- 1 Chron 29:15 For we are strangers before You and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days upon earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.
- 1 Chron 29:16 O Jehovah our God, as for all this abundance that we have prepared for building You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours.
- 1 Chron 29:17 I know also, O my God, that You try the heart and take pleasure in uprightness. I, in the uprightness of my heart, have offered willingly all these things; and now I have seen with joy Your people, who are present here, offering willingly to You.
- 1 Chron 29:18 O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of Your people's heart and establish their heart toward You.
- 1 Chron 29:19 And to Solomon my son give a wholeness of heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes, and to do all and build the palace for which I have prepared these things.
- 1 Chron 29:20 Then David said to all the assembly, Bless Jehovah your God. And all the assembly blessed Jehovah, the God of their fathers; and they bowed down and paid homage to Jehovah and the king.
- 1 Chron 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would richly bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand would be with me, and that You would so keep me from evil that it would not grieve me! And God caused what he had requested to come to pass.

A. In the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will; God wants man's will to be joined to Him and wants man to be one with Him so that man may express and echo His will back to Him in prayer for His good pleasure—Matt. 6:10; 7:21:

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

Matt 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.

1. The real meaning of prayer consists of four steps:

a. God intends to do something according to His will—6:10.

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

b. He reveals His will to us through the Spirit for us to know His will.

c. We return and echo His will back to Him through prayer—John 15:7.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

d. God accomplishes His work according to His will—Rev. 4:11.

Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.

2. Only prayers that are initiated by God and echo what He has initiated have any spiritual value; we must learn to pray this kind of prayer—Eph. 6:18; 1 John 5:14-16a.
 - Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
 - 1 John 5:14 And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
 - 1 John 5:15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.
 - 1 John 5:16a If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death....
- B. Jabez called on God to enlarge his border; the enlarging of the border of the good land in his prayer signifies the enlarging of the border of gaining Christ and the enjoyment of Christ, who is the reality of the good land—1 Chron. 4:10; cf. Phil. 3:8-14.
 - 1 Chron 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would richly bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand would be with me, and that You would so keep me from evil that it would not grieve me! And God caused what he had requested to come to pass.
 - Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
 - Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
 - Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
 - Phil 3:11 If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.
 - Phil 3:12 Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
 - Phil 3:13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,
 - Phil 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

VII. From 2 Chronicles 20:15-22 we can learn to engage in spiritual warfare by praising the Lord:

- 2 Chron 20:15 And he said, Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat. Thus says Jehovah to you, Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.
- 2 Chron 20:16 Tomorrow go down against them. They are coming up at the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the river valley before the wilderness of Jeruel.
- 2 Chron 20:17 It is not for you to fight in this battle. Station yourselves; stand and see the salvation of Jehovah among you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid nor dismayed. Tomorrow go out to meet them, for Jehovah is with you.
- 2 Chron 20:18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before Jehovah to worship Jehovah.
- 2 Chron 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, rose up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.
- 2 Chron 20:20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as

- they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed.
- 2 Chron 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever.
- 2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.
- A. In 2 Chronicles 20:15 Jehovah said to King Jehoshaphat, “Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s,” and in verse 17a, “It is not for you to fight in this battle”:
- Many of the serving ones praised Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice—v. 19.
2 Chron 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, rose up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.
 - When they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the enemies, and they were struck—v. 22.
2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.
- B. Praise is the highest work carried out by God’s children—Psa. 119:164; Heb. 13:15:
Psa 119:164 Seven times a day I praise You / For Your righteous ordinances.
Heb 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.
- The highest expression of a saint’s spiritual life is his praise to God—Psa. 146:2; Heb. 13:15; Rev. 5:9-13; 19:1-6:
Psa 146:2 I will praise Jehovah while I live; / I will sing psalms to my God while I yet have being.
Heb 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.
Rev 5:9 And they sing a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
Rev 5:10 And have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth.
Rev 5:11 And I saw, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and of the living creatures and of the elders, and their number was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands,
Rev 5:12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who has been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.
Rev 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea and all things in them, I heard saying, To Him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever.
Rev 19:1 After these things I heard as it were a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven,

saying, Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the power are of our God.

Rev 19:2 For true and righteous are His judgments; for He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He avenged the blood of His slaves at her hand.

Rev 19:3 And a second time they said, Hallelujah! And her smoke goes up forever and ever.

Rev 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who sits upon the throne, saying, Amen, Hallelujah!

Rev 19:5 And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His slaves and those who fear Him, the small and the great.

Rev 19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

a. The Christian life soars through praise—Acts 16:19-34.

Acts 16:19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit had gone out, they laid hold of Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.

Acts 16:20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, are throwing our city into confusion,

Acts 16:21 And they are announcing customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to accept or do.

Acts 16:22 And the crowd rose up together against them, and the magistrates tore off their garments and ordered some to beat them with rods.

Acts 16:23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them securely,

Acts 16:24 Who, having received such a charge, threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks.

Acts 16:25 And about midnight Paul and Silas, while praying, sang hymns of praise to God; and the prisoners were listening to them.

Acts 16:26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken. And instantly all the doors were opened and everyone's bonds were unfastened.

Acts 16:27 And the jailer, waking up out of his sleep and seeing the doors of the prison opened, drew his sword and was about to do away with himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

Acts 16:28 But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, Do no harm to yourself, for we are all here.

Acts 16:29 And the jailer asked for lights and rushed in; and trembling, he fell down before Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:30 And leading them outside, he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.

Acts 16:32 And they spoke the word of God to him together with all those in his house.

Acts 16:33 And he took them with him in that very hour of the night and washed their wounds. And he was baptized immediately, he and all his household.

Acts 16:34 And he brought them up into his house and set a table before them; and he exulted because he had believed in God with all his household.

b. To praise is to transcend everything to touch the Lord—Rev. 14:1-3; 15:2-4.

Rev 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harp-singers playing on their harps.

Rev 14:3 And they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been purchased from the earth.

Rev 15:2 And I saw as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire and those who come away victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name standing on the glassy sea, having harps of God.

Rev 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty! Righteous and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!

Rev 15:4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous judgments have been manifested.

2. Spiritual victory does not depend on warfare—it depends on praise—2 Chron. 20:20-22.

2 Chron 20:20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed.

2 Chron 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever.

2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.

- C. In the church life and in our personal life, we need to offer consummate praise to God—Psa. 22:22b; Heb. 2:12b.

Psa 22:22b ... In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.

Heb 2:12b ... in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You."

- D. Through the Christ whom we have experienced and enjoyed, we need to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually—13:15.

Heb 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.

- E. "I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart; / And I will glorify Your name forever"—Psa. 86:12.

Message Three

The Rebuilding of the Altar of God— the Altar of Burnt Offering

BD/RS *Hymns*: 195, 1138

Scripture Reading: Lev. 1:3-11, 13-14, 17; 6:9, 12a, 13; Num. 28:2;

Ezra 1:2-3, 5; 3:2-3, 6a; Psalms 43:4a; Eph. 5:2; Rom. 12:1

- Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.
- Lev 1:4 And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.
- Lev 1:5 And he shall slaughter the young bull before Jehovah; and Aaron's sons the priests shall present the blood and sprinkle the blood on and around the altar that is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.
- Lev 1:6 And he shall skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces.
- Lev 1:7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and arrange the wood in order on the fire.
- Lev 1:8 Then Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that is on the fire which is on the altar;
- Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 1:10 And if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall present it, a male without blemish.
- Lev 1:11 And he shall slaughter it on the side of the altar northward before Jehovah, and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle its blood on and around the altar.
- Lev 1:13 But the inward parts and the legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall present the whole and burn it on the altar; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 1:14 And if his offering to Jehovah is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall present his offering of turtledoves or of young pigeons.
- Lev 1:17 Then he shall tear it open by its wings without dividing it, and the priest shall burn it on the altar on the wood that is on the fire; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 6:9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.
- Lev 6:12a And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it must not go out. ...
- Lev 6:13 Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.
- Num 28:2 Command the children of Israel and say to them, My offering, My food for My offerings by fire of a satisfying fragrance to Me, you shall be careful to present to Me at its appointed time.
- Ezra 1:2 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
- Ezra 1:3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel-He is God-who is in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 1:5 Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites rose up, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred up to go up to build the house of Jehovah, which is in Jerusalem.

- Ezra 3:2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up, along with his brothers the priests and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers, and they built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings upon it, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.
- Ezra 3:3 And they set up the altar upon its bases, for fear was upon them because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to Jehovah, burnt offerings of the morning and evening.
- Ezra 3:6a From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer up burnt offerings to Jehovah; ...
- Psa 43:4a And I will go to the altar of God, / To God my exceeding joy;...
- Eph 5:2 And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.
- Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

I. “They built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings upon it, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God”—Ezra 3:2b:

- A. For the recovery of the house we need the recovery of the altar—1:2-3, 5; 3:2-3:

- Ezra 1:2 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
- Ezra 1:3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel-He is God-who is in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 1:5 Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites rose up, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred up to go up to build the house of Jehovah, which is in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 3:2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up, along with his brothers the priests and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers, and they built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings upon it, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.
- Ezra 3:3 And they set up the altar upon its bases, for fear was upon them because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to Jehovah, burnt offerings of the morning and evening.

1. The first thing to be recovered for the church life is the altar—Rom. 12:1:

Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

 - a. Before we can have the church life, we must put everything on the altar—Psa. 43:4a.

Psa 43:4a And I will go to the altar of God, / To God my exceeding joy; ...
 - b. We must put all that we have, all that we are, and all that we can do on the altar for God's satisfaction; this is the start of the church life.
2. The problem is that we have come back from Babylon to Jerusalem, yet at Jerusalem we may still keep many things for our own interests; we may not offer everything on the altar for God's interests and for God's satisfaction—Rom. 12:1:

Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

- a. We should not come back to Jerusalem yet maintain our life as it was in Babylon.
 - b. The life in Jerusalem must be absolutely for the Lord's interests.
- B. The altar of burnt offering typifies the cross of Christ—Exo. 27:1; 40:6; Heb. 13:10:
 - Exo 27:1 And you shall make the altar of acacia wood, a length of five cubits and a width of five cubits; the altar shall be square; and three cubits, its height.
 - Exo 40:6 And you shall put the altar of burnt offering before the entrance of the tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting.
 - Heb 13:10 We have an altar from which they who are serving the tabernacle have no right to eat.
- 1. In His economy God gives us one person—Christ—and one way—the cross—1 Cor. 2:2:
 - 1 Cor 2:2 For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.
 - a. The cross is the center of God's operation in His economy—Gal. 1:4; 2:19-21; 3:1, 13; 5:24; 6:14.
 - Gal 1:4 Who gave Himself for our sins that He might rescue us out of the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father,
 - Gal 2:19 For I through law have died to law that I might live to God.
 - Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 - Gal 2:21 I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness is through law, then Christ has died for nothing.
 - Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed crucified?
 - Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, "Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree";
 - Gal 5:24 But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.
 - Gal 6:14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
 - b. God governs everything by the cross and deals with everything by the cross—Col. 1:20-22; 2:11-15.
 - Col 1:20 And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross—through Him, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens.
 - Col 1:21 And you, though once alienated and enemies in your mind because of your evil works,
 - Col 1:22 He now has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and without reproach before Him;
 - Col 2:11 In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ,
 - Col 2:12 Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised

- Him from the dead.
- Col 2:13 And you, though dead in your offenses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our offenses;
- Col 2:14 Wiping out the handwriting in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.
- Col 2:15 Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it.
2. The cross is the base, the ground, of all spiritual experiences; all spiritual experience begins from the cross—Gal. 2:20; 6:14; 1 Cor. 2:2:
- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- Gal 6:14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
- 1 Cor 2:2 For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.
- a. In order to progress spiritually, we need to pass through the cross daily—Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Luke 14:27.
- Matt 10:38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
- Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
- Luke 14:27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.
- b. If we want to have a proper church life, we need to experience the cross—Eph. 2:14-16.
- Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,
- Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,
- Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
- c. Through the cross we need to become nothing, to have nothing, and to be able to do nothing; otherwise, what we are, what we have, and what we can do will become a substitute for Christ—1 Cor. 1:17-18, 23.
- 1 Cor 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to announce the gospel, not in wisdom of speech that the cross of Christ may not be made void.
- 1 Cor 1:18 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- 1 Cor 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness,

II. “They began to offer up burnt offerings to Jehovah”—Ezra 3:6a:

- A. The burnt offering signifies Christ’s being absolute for God’s satisfaction—Lev. 1:3-9:
- Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without

- blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.
- Lev 1:4 And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.
- Lev 1:5 And he shall slaughter the young bull before Jehovah; and Aaron's sons the priests shall present the blood and sprinkle the blood on and around the altar that is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.
- Lev 1:6 And he shall skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces.
- Lev 1:7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and arrange the wood in order on the fire.
- Lev 1:8 Then Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that is on the fire which is on the altar;
- Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
1. The burnt offering, which was wholly for God's satisfaction, typifies Christ as God's pleasure and satisfaction—Eph. 5:2.

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.
 2. The burnt offering typifies Christ not only in His living a life that is perfect and absolute for God but also in His being the life that enables God's people to have such a living—John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 7:18; 8:29; 14:24; 2 Cor. 5:15; Gal. 2:19-21.

John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 7:18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him.

John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

John 14:24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

2 Cor 5:15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

Gal 2:19 For I through law have died to law that I might live to God.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Gal 2:21 I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness is through law, then Christ has died for nothing.
 3. The burnt offering is Christ Himself, and we are one with Him; thus, the burnt offering is also our oneness with Christ—1 Cor. 6:17.

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- B. The burnt offering is for God's food that God may enjoy it and be satisfied—Num. 28:2:
- Num 28:2 Command the children of Israel and say to them, My offering, My food for My

offerings by fire of a satisfying fragrance to Me, you shall be careful to present to Me at its appointed time.

1. Although God is almighty, He cannot provide Himself something to eat; His food must come from His people—v. 2.
Num 28:2 Command the children of Israel and say to them, My offering, My food for My offerings by fire of a satisfying fragrance to Me, you shall be careful to present to Me at its appointed time.
 2. Christ is God's food, but He is not God's food in a direct way; rather, Christ is God's food served to God by us.
- C. The Hebrew word translated "burnt offering" literally means "that which goes up" and denotes something that is ascending to God; this ascending refers to Christ—Lev. 1:3, 10, 14:
- Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.
- Lev 1:10 And if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall present it, a male without blemish.
- Lev 1:14 And if his offering to Jehovah is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall present his offering of turtledoves or of young pigeons.
1. The only thing that can ascend to God from the earth is the life lived by Christ, for He is the unique person to live a life that is absolutely for God—John 6:38:
John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
 - a. Christ as our burnt offering is completely for God, absolutely for God—4:34; 5:30; Heb. 10:8-10.
John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
Heb 10:8 Saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You did not desire nor delight in" (which are offered according to the law),
Heb 10:9 He then has said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first that He may establish the second,
Heb 10:10 By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
 - b. Whatever the Lord Jesus was, whatever He spoke, and whatever He did was absolutely for God—John 6:38; 5:17, 36, 45; 8:28; 10:25; 12:49-50.
John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father is working until now, and I also am working.
John 5:36 But I have the testimony which is greater than that of John, for the works which the Father has given Me to finish, the works themselves which I do, testify concerning Me that the Father has sent Me.
John 5:45 Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; there is one who accuses you: Moses, in whom you have set your hope.

- John 8:28 Jesus therefore said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and that I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.
- John 10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe. The works which I do in My Father's name, these testify concerning Me;
- John 12:49 For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father who sent Me, He Himself has given Me commandment, what to say and what to speak.
- John 12:50 And I know that His commandment is eternal life. The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father has said to Me, so I speak.
2. By laying our hands on Christ as the burnt offering, we are joined to Him—Lev. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:17.

Lev 1:4 And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
 3. As Christ lives in us, He repeats in us the life He lived on the earth, the life of the burnt offering—Gal. 2:20.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- D. The burnt offering is “a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah”—Lev. 1:9, 13, 17:
- Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 1:13 But the inward parts and the legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall present the whole and burn it on the altar; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 1:17 Then he shall tear it open by its wings without dividing it, and the priest shall burn it on the altar on the wood that is on the fire; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
1. The Hebrew words translated “satisfying fragrance” literally mean “savor of rest or satisfaction”—v. 9.

Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
 2. The satisfying fragrance is a savor that brings satisfaction, peace, and rest; such a satisfying fragrance is an enjoyment to God.
 3. Because Christ lived a life that was absolutely for God’s satisfaction, His living was a satisfying fragrance, a sweet savor ascending to God for His pleasure and satisfaction—Eph. 5:2.

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

III. In Leviticus the first offering that is mentioned is not the sin offering or the trespass offering but the burnt offering—1:3:

- Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before

Jehovah.

- A. We need Christ first as our burnt offering because our first situation before God, our first problem related to God, is not a matter of trespasses but of not being for God:
1. God created us to be His expression and His representation—Gen. 1:26.
Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
 2. God created us that we might be for Him; He did not create us for ourselves, but as fallen human beings, we live for ourselves, not for Him.
- B. The burnt offering means that as those who were created by God for the purpose of expressing and representing Him, we should be for nothing other than God—vv. 27-28; cf. Psa. 73:25; Mark 12:30.
- Gen 1:27 And God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
- Gen 1:28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.
- Psa 73:25 Whom do I have in heaven but You? / And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth.
- Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."
- C. We need to realize that we are not absolutely for God and that of ourselves we cannot be absolute; therefore, we need to take Christ as our burnt offering—Lev. 1:3-4.
- Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.
- Lev 1:4 And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.

IV. To live a life of the continual burnt offering is to be a living sacrifice—Rom. 12:1:

- Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
- A. The burnt offering is a type of our consecration, of our offering ourselves to God as a living sacrifice; the meaning of consecration is to offer ourselves to God as a living sacrifice—Lev. 1:3-4, 8-9; 6:9, 12a, 13; Rom. 12:1.
- Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.
- Lev 1:4 And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.
- Lev 1:8 Then Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that is on the fire which is on the altar;
- Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to

Jehovah.

Lev 6:9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.

Lev 6:12a And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it must not go out. ...

Lev 6:13 Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

B. The daily burnt offering in the Old Testament typifies that, in the New Testament, we who belong to God should offer ourselves daily to God—Num. 28:3-8.

Num 28:3 And you shall say to them, This is the offering by fire which you shall present to Jehovah: two male lambs a year old without blemish each day as a continual burnt offering.

Num 28:4 One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight;

Num 28:5 Also a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a meal offering, mingled with the fourth of a hin of beaten oil.

Num 28:6 It is a continual burnt offering, which was set up on Mount Sinai for a satisfying fragrance, an offering by fire to Jehovah.

Num 28:7 And its drink offering shall be the fourth of a hin for the one lamb; in the sanctuary you shall pour out a drink offering of strong drink to Jehovah.

Num 28:8 And the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; you shall offer it with the meal offering and its drink offering as in the morning, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

C. Today, in our Christian life and church life, there is the need for the continual burnt offering—Lev. 1:3-4, 8-9; 6:9, 12a, 13.

Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.

Lev 1:4 And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.

Lev 1:8 Then Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that is on the fire which is on the altar;

Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

Lev 6:9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.

Lev 6:12a And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it must not go out. ...

Lev 6:13 Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

V. We need to worship God the Father with Christ as the burnt offering for God's satisfaction to fulfill His desire—1:3, 9b; Num. 28:2; John 4:23-24:

Lev 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.

Lev 1:9b ... Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

- Num 28:2 Command the children of Israel and say to them, My offering, My food for My offerings by fire of a satisfying fragrance to Me, you shall be careful to present to Me at its appointed time.
- John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.
- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
- A. God wants us to worship Him with Christ as the reality of all the offerings; the offerings are for pleasing God and making Him happy—vv. 23-24.
- John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.
- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
- B. Proper worship is a matter of satisfying God with Christ as the burnt offering—1 Pet. 2:5; John 4:34; 5:30; 8:29:
- 1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
- John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
- John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.
1. When we worship the Father with Christ as the reality of the burnt offering, a fragrance well pleasing to God will ascend to Him for His satisfaction—Lev. 1:9; John 4:23-24.
- Lev 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.
- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
2. Since God is satisfied with our offering to Him Christ as the reality of the burnt offering, He will render His sweet acceptance to us; this is the significance of the burnt offering—Num. 28:2.
- Num 28:2 Command the children of Israel and say to them, My offering, My food for My offerings by fire of a satisfying fragrance to Me, you shall be careful to present to Me at its appointed time.

Message Four

**The Recovery of the Building of the House of God
through the Divine Encouragement
of the Prophets of God**

MC Hymns: 1254, 1122

Scripture Reading: Ezra 5:1-2; Hag. 1:2-5, 7-8, 9b, 14;
2:6-7, 9a, 23; Zech. 3:9; 4:2-7, 11-14

- Ezra 5:1 Now the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.
- Ezra 5:2 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God, which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them.
- Hag 1:2 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, saying, This people says, The time has not come, the time for the house of Jehovah to be built.
- Hag 1:3 Then the word of Jehovah came through Haggai the prophet, saying,
- Hag 1:4 Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled-up houses, while this house lies waste?
- Hag 1:5 Now therefore thus says Jehovah of hosts, Consider your ways.
- Hag 1:7 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, Consider your ways.
- Hag 1:8 Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it and will be glorified, says Jehovah.
- Hag 1:9b ... Because of My house that lies waste while you each run to your own house.
- Hag 1:14 And Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of Jehovah of hosts their God,
- Hag 2:6 For thus says Jehovah of hosts, Yet once more-it is but a little while-I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land;
- Hag 2:7 And I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come; and I will fill this house with glory, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Hag 2:9a The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former, says Jehovah of hosts; ...
- Hag 2:23 In that day, declares Jehovah of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant, declares Jehovah, and make you as a signet; for I have chosen you, declares Jehovah of hosts.
- Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua-upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.
- Zech 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see that there is a lampstand all of gold, with its bowl on top of it and its seven lamps upon it, with seven pipes for each of the lamps on top of it;
- Zech 4:3 And there are two olive trees beside it, one to the right of the bowl and one to the left.
- Zech 4:4 And I answered and spoke to the angel who spoke with me, saying, What are these, sir?
- Zech 4:5 And the angel who spoke with me answered and said to me, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.
- Zech 4:6 And he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Zech 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he will bring forth the topstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it.
- Zech 4:11 Then I answered and said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?
- Zech 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the

side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?

Zech 4:13 And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.

Zech 4:14 And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

I. In the rebuilding of the recovered temple as the house of God, both Joshua (representing the priesthood) and Zerubbabel (representing the kingship) became somewhat weak and discouraged; therefore, God used the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to speak for Him in order to strengthen, assist, and encourage Joshua and Zerubbabel—Ezra 5:1-2; cf. 1 Cor. 14:3.

Ezra 5:1 Now the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.

Ezra 5:2 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God, which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them.

1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.

II. The central thought of Haggai's prophecy is that the building of the house of God, the temple of God, is related to the welfare of God's people today and to the coming of the millennial kingdom with its Messiah in the age of restoration—Hag. 1:2-5, 7-8, 9b, 14; 2:6-9, 20-23; Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:20-21:

Hag 1:2 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, saying, This people says, The time has not come, the time for the house of Jehovah to be built.

Hag 1:3 Then the word of Jehovah came through Haggai the prophet, saying,

Hag 1:4 Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled-up houses, while this house lies waste?

Hag 1:5 Now therefore thus says Jehovah of hosts, Consider your ways.

Hag 1:7 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, Consider your ways.

Hag 1:8 Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it and will be glorified, says Jehovah.

Hag 1:9b ... Because of My house that lies waste while you each run to your own house.

Hag 1:14 And Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of Jehovah of hosts their God,

Hag 2:6 For thus says Jehovah of hosts, Yet once more-it is but a little while-I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land;

Hag 2:7 And I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come; and I will fill this house with glory, says Jehovah of hosts.

Hag 2:8 The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, declares Jehovah of hosts.

Hag 2:9 The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former, says Jehovah of hosts; and in this place I will give peace, declares Jehovah of hosts.

Hag 2:20 And the word of Jehovah came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying,

Hag 2:21 Speak to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth.

Hag 2:22 And I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms and will destroy the strength of the

- kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, each by the sword of his brother.
- Hag 2:23 In that day, declares Jehovah of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant, declares Jehovah, and make you as a signet; for I have chosen you, declares Jehovah of hosts.
- Matt 19:28 And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that you who have followed Me, in the restoration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Acts 3:20 So that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that He may send the Christ, who has been previously appointed for you, Jesus,
- Acts 3:21 Whom heaven must indeed receive until the times of the restoration of all things, of which God spoke through the mouth of His holy prophets from of old.
- A. In the Old Testament the house of Jehovah, or the temple, was first a type of Christ as the house of God individually, and then a type of the church, the Body, the enlarged Christ, as God's house corporately—John 2:19-21; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- John 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.
- John 2:20 Then the Jews said, This temple was built in forty-six years, and You will raise it up in three days?
- John 2:21 But He spoke of the temple of His body.
- 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
- B. Because the house of Jehovah is a type of the church, Haggai's prophecy refers to us, the New Testament believers, since we are the reality of the type.
- C. Haggai's speaking to Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest was to strengthen and encourage them and the people for the rebuilding of the temple as God's house—Ezra 5:1; Hag. 1:1.
- Ezra 5:1 Now the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.
- Hag 1:1 In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of Jehovah came through Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and unto Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,
- D. The self-serving and God-neglecting returned captives were taking care of their houses but not Jehovah's house (v. 4); the word *run* in verse 9 indicates that the people were busy caring for their own houses.
- Hag 1:4 Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled-up houses, while this house lies waste?
- Hag 1:9 You looked for much, and yet it amounted to little; and when you brought it home, I blew on it. Why? declares Jehovah of hosts. Because of My house that lies waste while you each run to your own house.
- E. Haggai 1:6 indicates that if we neglect the church, we will have no real enjoyment or satisfaction; regarding the recovery of the building of God's house, we cannot be neutral; we must be absolute, either taking care of our houses first or taking care of the Lord's house first—Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:57-62; Phil. 2:20-21.

- Hag 1:6 You have sown much, but you bring in little; you eat, but there is no satisfaction; you drink, but there is no being filled with drink; you dress yourselves, but there is no warmth in doing so; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put them into a bag with holes.
- Matt 6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- Luke 9:57 And as they went along the road, someone said to Him, I will follow You wherever You go.
- Luke 9:58 And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven have roosts, but the Son of Man does not have a place where He may lay His head.
- Luke 9:59 And He said to another, Follow Me. But he said, Lord, permit me to go first and bury my father.
- Luke 9:60 But He said to him, Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and announce the kingdom of God everywhere.
- Luke 9:61 And another also said, I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say farewell to those in my house.
- Luke 9:62 But Jesus said to him, No one who puts his hand on the plow and looks behind is fit for the kingdom of God.
- Phil 2:20 For I have no one like-souled who will genuinely care for what concerns you;
- Phil 2:21 For all seek their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus.
- F. For the recovery of the building of God's house, God's elect were stirred up in their spirit and came and did work in the house of Jehovah; in our response to the Lord's charge, we all should be occupied by the Lord Jesus in the work of preaching the gospel, feeding the new believers, and taking care of others for the building up of the Lord's house, the church as the Body of Christ—Hag. 1:14; 2:7a; John 21:15-17.
- Hag 1:14 And Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of Jehovah of hosts their God,
- Hag 2:7a And I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come; ...
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- G. "I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come"—Hag. 2:7a:
1. This refers to Christ, who is the Desire of all the nations; even though the nations do not know Christ, they still desire Christ; for the nations to desire such things as light, love, joy, and righteousness, the reality of which is Christ, means that, unconsciously, they desire Christ—Mal. 3:1b.
 Mal 3:1b ... And the Angel of the covenant, whom you desire, He will come, says Jehovah of hosts.
 2. The coming of Christ as the Desire of all the nations depends on the return of God's people from their captivity in Babylon and the recovery of the building of God's

house—1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5.

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

H. “I will fill this house with glory...The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former”—Hag. 2:7b, 9a:

1. The glory of God, the expression of God, is in the building of God, the house of Jehovah—Exo. 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chron. 3:1; 5:1-2, 13-14; Eph. 3:21; Rev. 21:10-11.

Exo 40:34 Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.

Exo 40:35 And Moses was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud settled on it and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.

1 Kings 8:10 And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah;

1 Kings 8:11 And the priests were not able to stand and minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah.

2 Chron 3:1 And Solomon began to build the house of Jehovah in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where He had appeared to David his father, at the place that David prepared, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

2 Chron 5:1 Thus all the work that Solomon did for the house of Jehovah was finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had sanctified, even the silver and the gold and all the vessels, and he put them in the treasuries of the house of God.

2 Chron 5:2 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the children of Israel, to Jerusalem in order to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah from the city of David, which is Zion.

2 Chron 5:13 And when the trumpeters and the singers were one to make themselves heard with one voice in praising and in giving thanks to Jehovah, and when they lifted up their voice with trumpets and with cymbals and with musical instruments in praise to Jehovah, saying, For He is good, for His lovingkindness is forever; then the house, the house of Jehovah, was filled with a cloud.

2 Chron 5:14 And the priests were not able to stand and minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of God.

Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

2. In a vision of God, Ezekiel saw the glory of Jehovah return to the house of Jehovah and fill the house (Ezek. 43:1-5); the glory of Jehovah returned to the house because the building of the house was completed (vv. 2, 5); this indicates that in order for the

God of glory to dwell in the church, the church must be built up to become the dwelling place of God (Eph. 2:21-22; 3:14-21).

- Ezek 43:1 Then He brought me to the gate, that is, the gate that faces toward the east.
- Ezek 43:2 And the glory of the God of Israel was there, coming from the way of the east, and His voice was like the sound of many waters, and the earth was illuminated with His glory.
- Ezek 43:3 And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, that is, like the vision that I had seen when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I had seen by the river Chebar. And I fell on my face.
- Ezek 43:4 And the glory of Jehovah came into the house through the gate which faced toward the east.
- Ezek 43:5 And the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court, and just then the glory of Jehovah filled the house.
- Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,
- Eph 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

3. Ezekiel saw that the river of water of life flowing forth out of the house of God was toward the east, the direction of God's glory (Ezek. 47:1; 43:2); if we do not care for the glory of God, the flow in us will be limited.

- Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.
- Ezek 43:2 And the glory of the God of Israel was there, coming from the way of the east, and His voice was like the sound of many waters, and the earth was illuminated with His glory.

4. In the church life the first consideration we should have is the Lord's glory; the decisions in the church life must be made primarily according to the Lord's glory—Eph. 3:21; 4:20; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Jude 24-25.

- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
- Eph 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
- 1 Pet 4:10 Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

- 1 Pet 4:11 If anyone speaks, as speaking oracles of God; if anyone ministers, as ministering out of the strength which God supplies; that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.
- Jude 24 But to Him who is able to guard you from stumbling and to set you before His glory without blemish in exultation,
- Jude 25 To the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, might, and authority before all time and now and unto all eternity. Amen.
5. The glorification of God is the purpose of our service; the highest service that we can render to God is for us to glorify God by living the life of a God-man (Isa. 43:7; John 7:16-18; 17:1-4; Rom. 9:21, 23; Phil. 1:19-21a; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 10:31); this is so that we may express God in a corporate, built-up way and enter into the oneness in the divine glory (John 17:22-24).
- Isa 43:7 Everyone who is called by My name, / Whom I have created, formed, and even made for My glory.
- John 7:16 Jesus therefore answered them and said, My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.
- John 7:17 If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.
- John 7:18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him.
- John 17:1 These things Jesus spoke, and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You;
- John 17:2 Even as You have given Him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.
- John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Him whom You have sent, Jesus Christ.
- John 17:4 I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do.
- Rom 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?
- Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,
- Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
- Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
- 1 Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
- 1 Cor 6:20 For you have been bought with a price. So then glorify God in your body.
- 1 Cor 10:31 Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
- John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;
- John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

John 17:24 Father, concerning that which You have given Me, I desire that they also may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

- I. Jehovah's making Zerubbabel as a signet ring (Hag. 2:23) indicates that Jehovah regarded him as His representative and that He loved him and trusted him; in this matter Zerubbabel is a type of Christ, and He is the One whom God loves and trusts (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 3:35; 17:2); as such a person, Christ is qualified to take care of the building of God's house, the church (Matt. 16:18).

Hag 2:23 In that day, declares Jehovah of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant, declares Jehovah, and make you as a signet; for I have chosen you, declares Jehovah of hosts.

Matt 3:17 And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.

Matt 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!

John 3:35 The Father loves the Son and has given all into His hand.

John 17:2 Even as You have given Him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.

Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

III. The book of Zechariah reveals that the seven lamps of the lampstand (4:2; Rev. 4:5) are the seven Spirits of God, the sevenfold intensified Spirit (1:4), as the seven eyes of Jehovah (Zech. 4:10), the seven eyes of the redeeming Lamb (Rev. 5:6), and the seven eyes of the building stone (Zech. 3:9) for the full expression of the Triune God and the rebuilding of the house of God:

Zech 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see that there is a lampstand all of gold, with its bowl on top of it and its seven lamps upon it, with seven pipes for each of the lamps on top of it;

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Zech 4:10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel; they are the eyes of Jehovah running to and fro on the whole earth.

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua-upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

- A. The stone set before Joshua in Zechariah 3:9 typifies Christ as the stone for God's building (Psa. 118:22; Matt. 21:42); Jehovah's engraving of the stone indicates that when Christ was dying on the cross, He was engraved, cut, by God; Jehovah's removing the iniquity of the

land in one day indicates that the Christ on whom God has worked will remove the sin of the land of Israel in one day, the day of His crucifixion; through His death on the cross, Christ, the Lamb of God, took away the sin of the world (1 Pet. 2:24; John 1:29):

Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua-upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

Psa 118:22 The stone which the builders rejected / Has become the head of the corner.

Matt 21:42 Jesus said to them, Have you never read in the Scriptures, "The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes"?

1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

1. The stone, Jehovah, and the Lamb are one; Christ is the redeeming Lamb and the building stone, and He is also Jehovah; Christ is the Lamb-stone—the Lamb for redemption and the stone for building—Rev. 5:6; Zech. 3:9.

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua-upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

2. In God's building Christ is the foundation stone to uphold the building, the cornerstone to join together the Gentile and Jewish members of His Body, and the topstone of grace to consummate everything in God's building—Isa. 28:16; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6; Zech. 4:7.

Isa 28:16 Therefore thus says / The Lord Jehovah: / Indeed I lay a stone in Zion as a foundation, / A tested stone, / A precious cornerstone as a foundation firmly established; / He who believes will not hasten away.

1 Cor 3:11 For another foundation no one is able to lay besides that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Eph 2:20 Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone;

1 Pet 2:6 For it is contained in Scripture: "Behold, I lay in Zion a cornerstone, chosen and precious; and he who believes on Him shall by no means be put to shame."

Zech 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he will bring forth the topstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it.

3. The fact that Christ, the Lamb of God, is the building stone with seven eyes reveals that the seven eyes of Christ are for God's building—John 1:29; Zech. 3:9; Rev. 5:6.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua-upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the

midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

4. Christ is the building stone with seven eyes, the seven Spirits, to transfuse Himself into us in order to transform us into precious materials for God's building; as the Lord looks at us, His seven eyes transfuse Himself into us—Zech. 3:9; 1 Cor. 3:12a; Rev. 3:1; 5:6.

Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua—upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

1 Cor 3:12a But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, ...

Rev 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

- B. For the completion of God's building, the sevenfold intensified Spirit is the eyes of Christ as the redeeming Lamb and the building stone to observe and search us and to infuse and transfuse us with Christ's essence, riches, and burden for God's building—Zech. 3:9; 4:7; Rev. 1:14; 5:6:

Zech 3:9 For here is the stone that I have set before Joshua—upon one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, declares Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

Zech 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he will bring forth the topstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it.

Rev 1:14 And His head and hair were as white as white wool, as snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire;

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

1. The seven eyes of the Lamb infuse us with Christ as the judicial Redeemer, and the seven eyes of the stone infuse us with Christ as the organic Savior for God's economical move on earth through His judicial redemption and by His organic salvation for the goal of His building—John 1:29; Acts 4:11-12; Rom. 5:10.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Acts 4:11 This is the stone which was considered as nothing by you, the builders, which has become the head of the corner.

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved.

Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

2. Within us we have two lamps—the sevenfold intensified Spirit of God within our spirit (Prov. 20:27; Rev. 4:5; 1 Cor. 6:17); in order to be transformed, we must fully

open to the Lord in prayer to allow the lamp of the Lord with the seven lamps of fire to search all the chambers of our soul, shining on and enlightening our inward parts to supply them with life.

Prov 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

3. The one who experiences the greatest amount of transformation is the one who is fully open to the Lord; by the operation of the sevenfold intensified Spirit within Christ's seeking believers, they are intensified to become the overcomers to build up the Body of Christ, which consummates the New Jerusalem.

- C. In His resurrection Christ, as the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit (15:45b; John 6:63a; 2 Cor. 3:6b), who is also the sevenfold intensified Spirit; this Spirit is the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2); hence, the function of the seven Spirits is to impart the divine life into God's people for the building up of God's eternal habitation, the New Jerusalem.

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

John 6:63a It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; ...

2 Cor 3:6b ... for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

- D. The sevenfold intensified Spirit is the seven lamps of fire to burn, enlighten, expose, search, judge, purify, and refine us to produce the golden lampstands for the fulfillment of God's New Testament economy—Rev. 4:5; 1:2, 4, 9-12, 20.

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev 1:2 Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev 1:9 I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,

Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

- E. The two olive trees on the two sides of the lampstand signify Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor at the time, who were the two sons of oil, filled with the Spirit of Jehovah for the rebuilding of God's temple—Zech. 4:1-6, 11-14:

- Zech 4:1 Then the angel who spoke with me returned and roused me as a man is roused from his sleep.
- Zech 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see that there is a lampstand all of gold, with its bowl on top of it and its seven lamps upon it, with seven pipes for each of the lamps on top of it;
- Zech 4:3 And there are two olive trees beside it, one to the right of the bowl and one to the left.
- Zech 4:4 And I answered and spoke to the angel who spoke with me, saying, What are these, sir?
- Zech 4:5 And the angel who spoke with me answered and said to me, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.
- Zech 4:6 And he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Zech 4:11 Then I answered and said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?
- Zech 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?
- Zech 4:13 And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.
- Zech 4:14 And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.
1. The two sons of oil also typify the two witnesses, Moses and Elijah, in the last three and a half years of the present age, who will be witnesses of God in the great tribulation for the strengthening of God's peoples—the Israelites and the believers in Christ—Rev. 11:3-12; 12:17.
- Rev 11:3 And I will cause My two witnesses to prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.
- Rev 11:4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth.
- Rev 11:5 And if anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone desires to harm them, thus must he be killed.
- Rev 11:6 These have the authority to shut heaven that no rain may fall during the days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters to turn them into blood and to smite the earth with every plague as often as they desire.
- Rev 11:7 And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who comes up out of the abyss will make war with them and will overcome them and kill them.
- Rev 11:8 And their corpses will be on the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.
- Rev 11:9 And those of the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations see their corpses for three and a half days, and they will not allow their corpses to be placed in a tomb.
- Rev 11:10 And those who dwell on the earth rejoice over them and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.
- Rev 11:11 And after the three and a half days, the breath of life out of God entered into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those beholding them.
- Rev 11:12 And they heard a loud voice out of heaven saying to them, Come up here. And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them.

Rev 12:17 And the dragon became angry with the woman and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.

2. In principle, all the believers in Christ should be sons of fresh oil, those who are filled with the fresh, present, and consummated Spirit as the oil of gladness, to flow out the Spirit into the lampstand for its shining testimony, the testimony of Jesus—1:12, 20; Psa. 45:7; 46:4; 92:10; John 7:38:

Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,

Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Psa 45:7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; / Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You / With the oil of gladness above Your companions.

Psa 46:4 There is a river whose streams gladden the city of God, / The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.

Psa 92:10 But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; / I am anointed with fresh oil.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

- a. The church as the lampstand is the solid embodiment of the Triune God with the sevenfold intensified Spirit as the oil of God in His divine nature.
- b. The oil itself is gold (Zech. 4:12), which means that the gold flows as oil; when more oil is added into the lampstand, that means more gold is added.

Zech 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?

- c. Day by day we need to pay the price to gain more gold, more of God in His divine nature, so that we can become a pure golden lampstand for the building of the golden New Jerusalem—2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:18; 1:20; 21:18; Matt. 25:8-9.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.

Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Matt 25:8 And the foolish said to the prudent, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.

Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.

- d. As we apply this matter to our experience today, we see that the Spirit who

flows out of us is God, and God is gold; thus, when we minister Christ to others, supplying them with oil, we are actually supplying them with God; God is flowing out from us into them—Zech. 4:12-14; John 7:37-39; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8.

Zech 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?

Zech 4:13 And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.

Zech 4:14 And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

2 Cor 3:3 Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.

2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor 3:8 How shall the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory?

e. We all should be olive trees, emptying God from ourselves into others; in this way oil will be provided to the needy by those who are olive trees out of which God is flowing—Rom. 11:17; Luke 10:34; cf. John 7:37-39.

Rom 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a fellow partaker of the root of fatness of the olive tree,

Luke 10:34 And he came to him and bound up his wounds and poured oil and wine on them. And placing him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him.

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Message Five
**Ezra, a Priestly Scribe,
and the Need for Ezras—
Those Skilled in the Word of God**

RS/BD *Hymns*: 799, 806

Scripture Reading: Ezra 7:6, 11-12, 21; 8:21-23;
Neh. 8:1-9, 11-13; 12:26

- Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request according to the hand of Jehovah his God upon him.
- Ezra 7:11 Now this is the copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a scribe of the words of the commandments of Jehovah and of His statutes for Israel:
- Ezra 7:12 Artaxerxes, the king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace. And now
- Ezra 7:21 And I, even I, Artaxerxes the king, make a decree to all the treasurers who are in the province beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, requires of you, it shall be done with all diligence,
- Ezra 8:21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a straight way for ourselves and for our little ones and for all our possessions.
- Ezra 8:22 For I was ashamed to ask for troops and horsemen from the king to help us against the enemy in the way because we had spoken to the king, saying, The hand of our God is for good upon all those who seek Him, but His power and His wrath is against all those who forsake Him.
- Ezra 8:23 So we fasted and sought our God for this, and He was entreated by us.
- Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
- Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiyah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishaiah and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.
- Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
- Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.
- Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do

- not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.
- Neh 8:11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Be quiet, for the day is holy; and do not be grieved.
- Neh 8:12 And all the people went their way to eat and to drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.
- Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.
- Neh 12:26 These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

I. Ezra was a priest and also a scribe; thus, he was not a letter scribe but a priestly scribe—Ezra 7:6, 11-12, 21; Neh. 8:1-2, 8-9, 11-12; 12:26:

- Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request according to the hand of Jehovah his God upon him.
- Ezra 7:11 Now this is the copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a scribe of the words of the commandments of Jehovah and of His statutes for Israel:
- Ezra 7:12 Artaxerxes, the king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace. And now
- Ezra 7:21 And I, even I, Artaxerxes the king, make a decree to all the treasurers who are in the province beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, requires of you, it shall be done with all diligence,
- Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
- Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.
- Neh 8:11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Be quiet, for the day is holy; and do not be grieved.
- Neh 8:12 And all the people went their way to eat and to drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.
- Neh 12:26 These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.
- A. A priest is one who is mingled with the Lord and saturated with the Lord; Ezra was this kind of person—Ezra 8:21-23.
- Ezra 8:21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a straight way for ourselves and for our little ones and for all our possessions.
- Ezra 8:22 For I was ashamed to ask for troops and horsemen from the king to help us against the enemy in the way because we had spoken to the king, saying, The hand of our God is for good upon all those who seek Him, but His power and His wrath is against all those who forsake Him.
- Ezra 8:23 So we fasted and sought our God for this, and He was entreated by us.
- B. Ezra was a man who trusted in God, who was one with God, who was skilled in the word of

God, and who knew God's heart, God's desires, and God's economy—7:6, 11-12, 21.

Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request according to the hand of Jehovah his God upon him.

Ezra 7:11 Now this is the copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a scribe of the words of the commandments of Jehovah and of His statutes for Israel:

Ezra 7:12 Artaxerxes, the king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace. And now

Ezra 7:21 And I, even I, Artaxerxes the king, make a decree to all the treasurers who are in the province beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, requires of you, it shall be done with all diligence,

- C. As a priestly scribe, Ezra was one with the Lord by contacting Him continually—Neh. 8:1-2, 8-9, 11-12; 12:26.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Be quiet, for the day is holy; and do not be grieved.

Neh 8:12 And all the people went their way to eat and to drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

Neh 12:26 These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

- D. Ezra spoke nothing new; what he spoke had been spoken by Moses—Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:14; 2 Pet. 1:12.

Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request according to the hand of Jehovah his God upon him.

Neh 8:14 And they found it written in the law that Jehovah had commanded through Moses that the children of Israel dwell in booths during the feast in the seventh month,

2 Pet 1:12 Therefore I will be ready always to remind you concerning these things, even though you know them and have been established in the present truth.

- E. The priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe in order to gain insight into the words of the law; in Nehemiah 8:13 *insight* refers to apprehending the intrinsic significance.

Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.

II. Ezra reconstituted the people of Israel by educating them with the heavenly truths so that Israel could become God's testimony—vv. 1-3, 5-6, 8, 13-18:

- Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
- Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
- Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.
- Neh 8:14 And they found it written in the law that Jehovah had commanded through Moses that the children of Israel dwell in booths during the feast in the seventh month,
- Neh 8:15 And that they publish and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, Go out to the mountain and bring olive branches and wild olive branches and myrtle branches and palm branches and branches of other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written.
- Neh 8:16 So the people went out and brought them, and all made booths for themselves on their roofs and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God and in the open area before the Water Gate and in the open area before the Gate of Ephraim.
- Neh 8:17 And all the assembly of those who returned from the captivity made booths and dwelt in the booths, for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the children of Israel had not done so; and there was very great rejoicing.
- Neh 8:18 And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they held the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

- A. God's intention with Israel was to have on earth a divinely constituted people to be His testimony—a people reconstituted with the word of God—Isa. 49:6; 60:1-3; Col. 3:16.

Isa 49:6 He says, It is too small a thing that You would be My Servant / To raise up the tribes of Jacob / And bring back the preserved of Israel; / I will also set You as a light of the nations / That You may be My salvation unto the ends of the earth.

Isa 60:1 Arise! Shine! For your light has come, / And the glory of Jehovah has risen upon you.

Isa 60:2 For, behold, the darkness will cover the earth, / And deep darkness the peoples; / But Jehovah will rise upon you, / And His glory will be seen upon you.

Isa 60:3 And nations will come to your light, / And kings to the brightness of your rising.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.

- B. After the return from captivity, the people of Israel were still unruly, for they had been born and raised in Babylon and had become Babylonian in their constitution:

1. The Babylonian element had been wrought into them and constituted into their being—Zech. 3:3-5.
 - Zech 3:3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and was standing before the Angel.
 - Zech 3:4 And He answered and spoke to those standing before Him, saying, Remove the filthy garments from him. Then He said to him, See, I hereby make your iniquity pass from you and clothe you with stately robes.
 - Zech 3:5 And He said, Let them put a clean turban upon his head. And they put the clean turban upon his head and clothed him with garments while the Angel of Jehovah stood by.
2. After they returned to the land of their fathers to be citizens of the nation of Israel, they needed to be reconstituted with the word of God—Neh. 8:1-3, 5-6, 8, 13.
 - Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
 - Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
 - Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
 - Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
 - Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.
 - Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
 - Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.
- C. There was the need of teaching and reconstitution to bring the people of God into a culture that was according to God, a culture that expressed God; this kind of culture requires a great deal of education—v. 8.
 - Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- D. For the reconstituting of God's people, Ezra was very useful, for he bore the totality of the heavenly and divine constitution and culture, and he was one through whom the people could be reconstituted with the word of God—vv. 1-2.
 - Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
 - Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- E. Ezra brought the people back to the Word of God so that they might be re-educated and reconstituted with the heavenly truths in the divine Word.

- F. In order to reconstitute the people of God, there was the need to educate them with the word that comes out of the mouth of God and that expresses God—Psa. 119:2, 9, 105, 130, 140:
- Psa 119:2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, / Who seek Him with all their heart.
- Psa 119:9 With what should a young man keep his way pure? / By guarding it according to Your word.
- Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet / And a light to my path.
- Psa 119:130 The opening of Your words gives light, / Imparting understanding to the simple.
- Psa 119:140 Your word is very pure, / And Your servant loves it.
1. To reconstitute the people of God is to educate them by putting them into the word of God so that they may be saturated with the word—Col. 3:16.
- Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.
2. As the word of God works within us, the Spirit of God, who is God Himself, through the word spontaneously dispenses God's nature with God's element into our being; in this way we are reconstituted—2 Tim. 3:16-17.
- 2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
- 2 Tim 3:17 That the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.
- G. As a result of being reconstituted through the ministry of Ezra, Israel (in type) became a particular nation, a nation sanctified and separated unto God, expressing God—Isa. 49:6; 60:1-3; Zech. 4:2:
- Isa 49:6 He says, It is too small a thing that You would be My Servant / To raise up the tribes of Jacob / And bring back the preserved of Israel; / I will also set You as a light of the nations / That You may be My salvation unto the ends of the earth.
- Isa 60:1 Arise! Shine! For your light has come, / And the glory of Jehovah has risen upon you.
- Isa 60:2 For, behold, the darkness will cover the earth, / And deep darkness the peoples; / But Jehovah will rise upon you, / And His glory will be seen upon you.
- Isa 60:3 And nations will come to your light, / And kings to the brightness of your rising.
- Zech 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see that there is a lampstand all of gold, with its bowl on top of it and its seven lamps upon it, with seven pipes for each of the lamps on top of it;
1. The returned captives were reconstituted personally and corporately to become God's testimony.
 2. They were transfused with the thought of God, with the considerations of God, and with all that God is; this made them God's reproduction.
 3. By this kind of divine constitution, everyone became God in life and in nature; as a result, they became a divine nation expressing the divine character—1 Pet. 2:9.
- 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

III. In the Lord's recovery we need Ezras, priestly teachers who contact God, who are saturated with God, who are one with God, who are mingled with God, who are filled with God, and who are skillful in the Word of God; this is the

kind of person who is qualified to be a teacher in the recovery—Matt. 13:52; 2 Cor. 3:5-6; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11:

- Matt 13:52 And He said to them, For this reason every scribe disciplined to the kingdom of the heavens is like a householder who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old.
- 2 Cor 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God,
- 2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- 1 Tim 2:7 For which I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I speak the truth; I do not lie), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.
- 2 Tim 1:11 For which I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.

A. The Lord Jesus taught the people in order to bring them out of the satanic darkness into the divine light—Mark 6:6; cf. Acts 26:18:

- Mark 6:6 And He marveled because of their unbelief; and He went around the villages in a circuit, teaching.
- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

1. Man's fall into sin broke his fellowship with God, making all men ignorant of the knowledge of God, with such ignorance issuing in darkness and death—Eph. 4:17-18.

- Eph 4:17 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind,
- Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

2. The Lord as the light of the world came as a great light to shine on the people who were sitting in the shadow of death—John 8:12; Matt. 4:12-16.

- John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
- Matt 4:12 Now when He heard that John was delivered up, He withdrew into Galilee.
- Matt 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is beside the sea in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali,
- Matt 4:14 In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying,
- Matt 4:15 "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:
- Matt 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen."

3. The Lord's teaching released the word of light that those in darkness and death might receive the light of life—John 1:4.

- John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

B. Teaching equals revelation, which is the opening of the veil—1 Tim. 2:7; Eph. 3:3-4, 9:

- 1 Tim 2:7 For which I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I speak the truth; I do not lie), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.
- Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

1. To teach is to roll away the veil; as we are teaching others, we should be taking away the veil so that they may see something of the Triune God.

2. When we speak something in the church meeting, our speaking should be the rolling away of the veil; this means that our teaching should present a revelation—1 Tim. 4:6.

1 Tim 4:6 If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed.

3. Today's Ezras should labor to constitute God's people by educating them with the truth so that they may be God's testimony, His corporate expression, on the earth—Neh. 8:1-8, 13; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 1 Tim. 3:15.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.

2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.

2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

C. The recovery has the highest truth—the truth that is the consummation of the truths

recovered during the past centuries—2:4; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15:

1 Tim 2:4 Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.

2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.

1. The greatest need that must be met is to bring the saints in the Lord's recovery into the truth to carry the recovery on—1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15.

1 Tim 2:4 Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.

2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.

2. We have both the objective truths and the subjective truths in the Holy Scriptures—Luke 24:39; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:34, 10; Col. 3:1; 1:27.

Luke 24:39 See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you behold Me having.

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Col 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

3. In our study of the Bible, we should not pay attention merely to the "branches" but go deeply into the "roots" and the "trunk."

4. We need to see the crystallized significances of the steps of God's economy and of the Body of Christ—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

- D. To be constituted with the truth is to have the truth wrought into us to become our intrinsic being, our organic constitution—2 John 2:

2 John 2 For the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:

1. The intrinsic element of the divine revelation must be wrought into and constituted into our being—Col. 3:16.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing

- with grace in your hearts to God.
2. Once the truth gets into us through our understanding, it remains in our memory, and then we retain the truth in our memory, causing us to have an accumulation of the truth—1 Pet. 1:13; 2 Pet. 1:15; 3:1.
 - 1 Pet 1:13 Therefore girding up the loins of your mind and being sober, set your hope perfectly on the grace being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - 2 Pet 1:15 Moreover I will also be diligent that you may be able, after my exodus, to bring these things to mind at all times.
 - 2 Pet 3:1 This second letter, beloved, I now write to you; in them both I stir up your sincere mind with a reminder,
 3. After the truth gets into our memory, it becomes a constant and long-term nourishment; then we have an accumulation of the truth, and we are under the constant nourishment—Col. 3:16, 4; 1 Tim. 4:6.
 - Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.
 - Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 - 1 Tim 4:6 If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed.
- E. All the saints in the Lord's recovery should be trained in the divine revelation—2 Tim. 2:2, 15:
- 2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.
 - 2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.
1. Nearly all the crucial revelations in the Bible have been covered in the ministry of Brother Nee and Brother Lee; we should pay our attention to these pure and healthy things and not waste our time collecting "poisonous gourds"—2 Kings 4:38-41.
 - 2 Kings 4:38 Then Elisha returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land. And the sons of the prophets sat before him. And he said to his attendant, Put on the big pot, and boil some stew for the sons of the prophets.
 - 2 Kings 4:39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs. And he found a wild vine and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds. And he came and cut them up into the pot of stew, though they did not know what they were.
 - 2 Kings 4:40 And they poured out the stew for the men to eat. And while they were eating some of the stew, they cried out and said, O man of God, there is poison in the pot. And they were not able to eat it.
 - 2 Kings 4:41 And he said, Then bring some flour. And he threw it into the pot and said, Pour it out for the people that they may eat. And there was nothing harmful in the pot.
 2. We all need to be helped through the Life-studies and the Recovery Version with the footnotes to see the intrinsic significance of the word of the Bible—Neh. 8:8, 13.
 - Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
 - Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the

priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.

Message Six
**The Intrinsic Significance of the Purification
of the Returned Captives**

RA Hymns: 1122, 744

Scripture Reading: Ezra 9:1—10:44; Neh. 13:23-30a;
Matt. 5:8; Rev. 21:18b, 21b; 22:4

- Ezra 9:1 Now when these things had been completed, the officials approached me, saying, The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.
- Ezra 9:2 For they have taken some of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this unfaithfulness.
- Ezra 9:3 And when I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled out hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled.
- Ezra 9:4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of those of the captivity was gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening meal offering.
- Ezra 9:5 And at the time of the evening meal offering I rose up from my affliction, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to Jehovah my God.
- Ezra 9:6 And I said, O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have multiplied over our head, and our guilt has increased up to the heavens.
- Ezra 9:7 Since the days of our fathers up to this day we have been exceedingly guilty; and because of our iniquities we, our kings and our priests, have been delivered up into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder, and to shamefacedness, as it is this day.
- Ezra 9:8 And now for a brief moment favor has been shown by Jehovah our God to leave us a remnant to escape and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a little reviving in our bondage.
- Ezra 9:9 For we are slaves, yet our God has not forsaken us in our bondage but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to raise up the house of our God and to repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 9:10 And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments,
- Ezra 9:11 Which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, The land which you are entering to possess is a land unclean with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations, with which they have filled it from one end to another, and with their defilement.
- Ezra 9:12 Now therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, nor seek their peace or their prosperity forever; that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.
- Ezra 9:13 And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that You our God have punished us less than our iniquities deserve and have given us those who have escaped as this,
- Ezra 9:14 Shall we again break Your commandments and intermarry with the peoples that do these abominations? Will You not be angry with us until You have consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor any who escape?
- Ezra 9:15 O Jehovah the God of Israel, You are righteous; for we have been left a remnant of those who have escaped, as it is this day. Here we are before You in our guilt, although none can stand before You because of this.
- Ezra 10:1 Now while Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and throwing himself down before the

house of God, a very large gathering of men and women and children was gathered together to him out of Israel; for the people wept very bitterly.

Ezra 10:2 And Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said to Ezra, We have acted unfaithfully against our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, yet now there is hope for Israel concerning this.

Ezra 10:3 Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives and those born of them according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the law.

Ezra 10:4 Arise, for the matter is your responsibility, but we are with you; be strong, and do it.

Ezra 10:5 Then Ezra arose and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do according to this word; so they swore.

Ezra 10:6 Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib; and when he came there, he ate no bread and drank no water, for he was mourning because of the unfaithfulness of those of the captivity.

Ezra 10:7 And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together to Jerusalem;

Ezra 10:8 And that whoever did not come within three days, according to the counsel of the leaders and the elders, all his possessions should be forfeited, and he himself should be separated from the congregation of the captivity.

Ezra 10:9 Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together to Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month, and all the people sat in the open square in front of the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain.

Ezra 10:10 And Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, You have acted unfaithfully and have married foreign women to increase the guilt of Israel.

Ezra 10:11 Now therefore make confession to Jehovah the God of your fathers, and do His will, and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign women.

Ezra 10:12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, It is so; we must do as you have said.

Ezra 10:13 But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain, and we are not able to stand outside; neither is this a task for one day or two, for we have transgressed greatly in this matter.

Ezra 10:14 Let our leaders represent the whole congregation, and let all those who are in our cities who have married foreign women come at appointed times and with them the elders of every city and their judges, until the fierce anger of our God is turned away from us on account of this matter.

Ezra 10:15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah stood up against this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supported them.

Ezra 10:16 And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain heads of fathers' houses were set apart according to their fathers' houses, all of them by name; and they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter.

Ezra 10:17 And they finished with all the men who had married foreign women by the first day of the first month.

Ezra 10:18 And among the sons of the priests who had married foreign women there were found of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah and Eliezer and Jarib and Gedaliah.

Ezra 10:19 And they pledged that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their guilt.

Ezra 10:20 And of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

Ezra 10:21 And of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uziah.

Ezra 10:22 And of the sons of Pashhur: Eliezer, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa.

Ezra 10:23 And of the Levites: Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and

Eliezer.

Ezra 10:24 And of the singers: Eliashib. And of the gatekeepers: Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

Ezra 10:25 And of Israel: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, and Izziah, and Malchijah, and Mijamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.

Ezra 10:26 And of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Elijah.

Ezra 10:27 And of the sons of Zattu: Eliezer, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.

Ezra 10:28 And of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, Athlai.

Ezra 10:29 And of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, Jeremoth.

Ezra 10:30 And of the sons of Pahath-moab: Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.

Ezra 10:31 And of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

Ezra 10:32 Benjamin, Malluch, Shemariah.

Ezra 10:33 Of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, Shimei.

Ezra 10:34 Of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, and Uel,

Ezra 10:35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi,

Ezra 10:36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

Ezra 10:37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu,

Ezra 10:38 And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,

Ezra 10:39 And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah,

Ezra 10:40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

Ezra 10:41 Azarel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,

Ezra 10:42 Shallum, Amariah, Joseph.

Ezra 10:43 Of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, and Joel, Benaiah.

Ezra 10:44 All these had taken foreign wives; and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

Neh 13:23 In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab;

Neh 13:24 And as for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod; and none of them could speak the language of Judah, but they spoke the language of the respective peoples.

Neh 13:25 And I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them swear by God, saying, You shall not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.

Neh 13:26 Did not Solomon the king of Israel sin in these matters? And among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; yet the foreign wives caused even him to sin.

Neh 13:27 Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God in marrying foreign women?

Neh 13:28 And one of the sons of Joiada the son of Eliashib the high priest was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I chased him away from me.

Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

Neh 13:30a Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. ...

Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Rev 21:18b ... and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Rev 21:21b ... And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Rev 22:4 And they will see His face, and His name will be on their forehead.

I. The Lord's recovery is unique, and it must be absolutely pure, single, and holy, without any mixture; thus, we need Ezras and Nehemiahs to carry out a purifying work; in all the steps of the Lord's recovery, there is the need of

purification:

- A. Ezra purified the recovery by causing “the holy seed” to be separated from anything heathen—Ezra 9:1—10:44:

Ezra 9:1~10:44 be omitted.

1. Before Ezra arrived, there was mixture because some of the Israelites had married heathen wives and had children born of this mixture; this is a type, which we should apply spiritually, not literally.
2. In the Lord’s recovery there is the need of purification to separate “the holy seed” from anything that is heathen—9:1-2:

Ezra 9:1 Now when these things had been completed, the officials approached me, saying, The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

Ezra 9:2 For they have taken some of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this unfaithfulness.

- a. The Lord’s recovery is the holy seed; we must be so pure that the holy seed will never be mingled with anything heathen.
- b. When the recovery is holy, we will see the Lord’s blessing—Ezek. 34:26.

Ezek 34:26 And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in their season; there will be showers of blessing.

- B. After the building up of the house, we need purification (seen under Ezra’s leadership), and after the building up of the city, we need to be purified again (seen with Nehemiah’s absoluteness)—Ezra 9:1-2; 10:1-44; Neh. 13:1-30a.

Ezra 9:1 Now when these things had been completed, the officials approached me, saying, The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

Ezra 9:2 For they have taken some of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this unfaithfulness.

Ezra 10:1~44 be omitted.

Neh 13:1 On that day they read in the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and it was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should enter the assembly of God forever,

Neh 13:2 For they did not meet the children of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them; yet our God turned the curse into a blessing.

Neh 13:3 And when they heard the law, they separated all the mixed multitude from Israel.

Neh 13:4 Now before this, Eliashib the priest, who had been appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, because he was related to Tobiah,

Neh 13:5 Had prepared for him a large chamber where previously they had put the meal offering, the frankincense, and the vessels, as well as the tithes of the grain, the new

wine, and the fresh oil, as commanded for the Levites and the singers and the gatekeepers, and the heave offerings for the priests.

Neh 13:6 But during all this time I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king of Babylon I went to the king; then after some time I asked leave from the king.

Neh 13:7 And I came to Jerusalem and perceived the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

Neh 13:8 And it grieved me much; therefore I cast all the household utensils of Tobiah out of the chamber.

Neh 13:9 Then I gave commands, and they purified the chambers; and I returned the vessels of the house of God, the meal offering, and the frankincense there.

Neh 13:10 I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them and thus the Levites and the singers, who performed the service, had gone back, each to his own fields.

Neh 13:11 So I contended with the rulers and said, Why has the house of God been forsaken? Then I gathered them together and set them in their stations.

Neh 13:12 And all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil to the storehouses.

Neh 13:13 And I appointed treasurers over the storehouses, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were counted faithful, and it was their charge to distribute to their brothers.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Neh 13:15 In those days I saw some in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on their donkeys, as well as wine, grapes and figs, and every kind of load, and they were bringing them into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; and I protested on the day that they sold food.

Neh 13:16 And Tyrians who dwelt there were also bringing in fish and every kind of merchandise, and selling it on the Sabbath to the children of Judah and in Jerusalem.

Neh 13:17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah and said to them, What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day?

Neh 13:18 Did not your fathers act this way, and did not our God bring all this trouble upon us and upon this city? But you bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath.

Neh 13:19 And when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors be shut and commanded that they not be opened until after the Sabbath; and I set some of my servants at the gates so that no load could enter on the Sabbath day.

Neh 13:20 Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem once or twice.

Neh 13:21 But I testified against them and said to them, Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath.

Neh 13:22 And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and that they should come and keep the gates, in order to sanctify the Sabbath day. For this also remember me, O my God, and spare me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness.

Neh 13:23 In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab;

- Neh 13:24 And as for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod; and none of them could speak the language of Judah, but they spoke the language of the respective peoples.
- Neh 13:25 And I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them swear by God, saying, You shall not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.
- Neh 13:26 Did not Solomon the king of Israel sin in these matters? And among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; yet the foreign wives caused even him to sin.
- Neh 13:27 Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God in marrying foreign women?
- Neh 13:28 And one of the sons of Joiada the son of Eliashib the high priest was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I chased him away from me.
- Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.
- Neh 13:30a Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. ...
- C. In the local churches we must be thoroughly purified of all mixture; anything common and anything contradictory to the heavenly nature of the Lord's recovery must be purged out—2 Tim. 2:19-22.
- 2 Tim 2:19 However the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, The Lord knows those who are His, and, Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.
- 2 Tim 2:20 But in a great house there are not only gold and silver vessels but also wooden and earthen; and some are unto honor, and some unto dishonor.
- 2 Tim 2:21 If therefore anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared unto every good work.
- 2 Tim 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

II. Babylon is a mixture of the things of God with the things of idols, and the principle of Babylon is the principle of mixing the things of man with the Word of God and the things of the flesh with the things of the Spirit—2 Chron. 36:6-7; Ezra 1:11; Rev. 17:3-5:

- 2 Chron 36:6 Against him Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up and bound him in bronze fetters to carry him to Babylon.
- 2 Chron 36:7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried away some of the vessels of the house of Jehovah to Babylon and put them in his temple in Babylon.
- Ezra 1:11 There were five thousand four hundred vessels of gold and silver in all. Sheshbazzar brought up all of them with those of the captivity who were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem.
- Rev 17:3 And he carried me away in spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.
- Rev 17:4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication.
- Rev 17:5 And on her forehead there was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

- A. Anything that is a part of Babylon is abominable in the sight of God, and anything Babylonian gives Satan the ground to defeat the people of God—Josh. 7:1-21.

Josh 7:1 But the children of Israel acted unfaithfully in that which was devoted to destruction, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of that which was devoted to destruction; and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the children of Israel.

Josh 7:2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, east of Bethel; and he spoke to them, saying, Go up and spy out the land. So the men went up and spied out Ai.

Josh 7:3 And they returned to Joshua and said to him, Not all the people need go up; let about two or three thousand men go up and strike Ai. Do not make all the people labor there, for the enemies are few.

Josh 7:4 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled before the men of Ai.

Josh 7:5 And the men of Ai struck some of them, about thirty-six men; and they pursued them from before the gate unto Shebarim and struck them on the slope. And the heart of the people melted and became like water.

Josh 7:6 And Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the ground upon his face before the Ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads.

Josh 7:7 And Joshua said, Ah, Lord Jehovah! Why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all? To give us over into the hand of the Amorites and cause us to perish? If only we had been content to dwell across the Jordan!

Josh 7:8 O Lord, what can I say after Israel has turned its back before its enemies?

Josh 7:9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and they will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. Then what will You do for Your great name?

Josh 7:10 Then Jehovah said to Joshua, Rise up! Why have you fallen upon your face?

Josh 7:11 Israel has sinned. Indeed they have trespassed My covenant, which I commanded them; indeed they have taken of that which was devoted to destruction; indeed they have stolen; indeed they have been deceptive; indeed they have put it among their goods.

Josh 7:12 Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.

Josh 7:13 Rise up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, There is something devoted to destruction among you, O Israel; you will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove that which was devoted to destruction from among you.

Josh 7:14 Therefore in the morning you shall be brought near by your tribes; and the tribe which Jehovah takes shall draw near family by family; and the family which Jehovah takes shall draw near house by house; and the house which Jehovah takes shall draw near warrior by warrior.

Josh 7:15 And he who is taken with that which was devoted to destruction shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has trespassed the covenant of Jehovah and because he has committed folly in Israel.

Josh 7:16 So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel near by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken.

- Josh 7:17 And he brought the family of Judah near, and the family of the Zerahites was taken. And he brought the family of the Zerahites near warrior by warrior, and Zabdi was taken.
- Josh 7:18 And he brought the house of Zabdi near warrior by warrior, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.
- Josh 7:19 And Joshua said to Achan, My son, give glory to Jehovah the God of Israel, and make confession to Him. And tell me what you have done; do not hide anything from me.
- Josh 7:20 Then Achan answered Joshua and said, It is true; I have sinned against Jehovah the God of Israel; and this is what I did:
- Josh 7:21 When I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle of Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And now they are hidden in the earth in my tent, with the silver under it.
- B. God hates the principle of Babylon more than anything else; only when we judge everything Babylonian in us can we confess that we too hate the principle of Babylon.

III. In Acts 21 and in the book of James, there is mixture; James mixed the Old Testament with the New Testament, the new dispensation with the old, the new people of God with the old, and the new man with the old man—James 1:1, 17-18; 2:1-4, 8-12; 3:2; 4:11-12; 5:10-11:

- Acts 21 be omitted.
- James 1:1 James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the dispersion: Rejoice!
- James 1:17 All good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variation or shadow cast by turning.
- James 1:18 He brought us forth by the word of truth, purposing that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.
- James 2:1 My brothers, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory with respect of persons.
- James 2:2 For if there comes into your synagogue a man with gold rings in splendid clothing, and there also comes in a poor man in filthy clothing,
- James 2:3 And you look upon the one wearing the splendid clothing and say, You sit here in a good place, and to the poor man you say, You stand there, or sit under my footstool;
- James 2:4 Have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil reasonings?
- James 2:8 If indeed you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;
- James 2:9 But if you respect persons, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.
- James 2:10 For whoever keeps the whole law yet stumbles in one point has become guilty of all.
- James 2:11 For He who said, Do not commit adultery, also said, Do not murder. Now if you do not commit adultery, but you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.
- James 2:12 So speak and so do as those who are to be judged by the law of freedom.
- James 3:2 For in many things we all stumble. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.
- James 4:11 Do not speak against one another, brothers. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.
- James 4:12 One is Lawgiver and Judge, who is able to save and destroy. But who are you who judge your neighbor?

- James 5:10 As an example, brothers, of suffering evil and of long-suffering, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord.
- James 5:11 Behold, we call those who endured blessed. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen his end from the Lord, that the Lord is very tenderhearted and compassionate.
- A. Acts 21 exposes the terrible mixture in the church in Jerusalem; the Jewish believers still kept the law of Moses, remained in the Old Testament dispensation, and were strongly under the Judaic influence, mixing God's New Testament economy with the outdated Old Testament economy—vv. 18-21.
- Acts 21 be omitted.
- Acts 21:18 And on the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.
- Acts 21:19 And having greeted them, he related one by one the things which God did among the Gentiles through his ministry.
- Acts 21:20 And when they heard it, they glorified God and said to him, You observe, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews who have believed; and all are zealous for the law.
- Acts 21:21 And they have been informed concerning you that you are teaching all the Jews throughout the nations apostasy from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, nor to walk according to the customs.
- B. They were unaware that the dispensation of law was altogether over, that the dispensation of grace should be fully honored, and that any disregard of the distinction between these two dispensations would be against God's dispensational administration and would be a great damage to God's economical plan for the building up of the church as the expression of Christ—John 1:16-17; Rev. 2:9.
- John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.
- John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.
- Rev 2:9 I know your tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander from those who call themselves Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.
- C. The law makes demands on man according to what God is; grace supplies man with what God is to meet what God demands; grace is God enjoyed by man—John 1:16-17; Gal. 6:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; 12:9; 1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 3:2; 4:29; 6:24.
- John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.
- John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.
- Gal 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- 2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.
- 1 Pet 4:10 Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.
- Eph 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

IV. A great problem among God's children is the mixture of the self with the spirit—Heb. 4:12:

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- A. This mixture disqualifies many from serving God, for in their spirit there is much mixture, which is displeasing to God—2 Tim. 1:3.

2 Tim 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day,

- B. The spirit in our innermost part is pure and undefiled; however, when the spirit comes forth and passes through the soul and the body, it may become contaminated by filthiness and corruption—2 Cor. 7:1.

2 Cor 7:1 Therefore since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

- C. Dealing with the spirit emphasizes dealing with impure motives and intentions and other mixtures within us—1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Tim. 1:7.

1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

V. We need to be pure in heart, in conscience, and in spirit:

- A. Those who are pure in heart will see God—Matt. 5:8; Job 42:5; Rev. 22:4:

Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Job 42:5 I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, / But now my eye has seen You;

Rev 22:4 And they will see His face, and His name will be on their forehead.

1. To be pure in heart is to be single in purpose, to have the single goal of accomplishing God's will for God's glory—1 Cor. 10:31.

1 Cor 10:31 Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

2. A pure heart is a heart that takes the Lord as the unique goal—1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; Psa. 73:1.

1 Tim 1:5 But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith;

2 Tim 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Psa 73:1 Surely God is good to Israel, / To those who are pure in heart.

3. In the New Testament sense, seeing God equals gaining God, and to gain God is to receive God in His element, life, and nature so that we may be constituted with God; seeing God transforms us, because in seeing God we receive His element into us, and our old element is discharged—2 Cor. 3:18.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

4. To see God is to be transformed into the glorious image of Christ, the God-man, so that we may express God in His life and represent Him in His authority—1 John 3:1-3; Gen. 1:26.
 - 1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
 - 1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.
 - 1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, even as He is pure.
 - Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
5. We should be pure in heart and single for the Lord's recovery; only then will we be a help to the recovery—1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 1:22.
 - 1 Tim 1:5 But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith;
 - 2 Tim 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.
 - 1 Pet 1:22 Since you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned brotherly love, love one another from a pure heart fervently,
- B. We need to have not only a good conscience but also a pure conscience—Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:3:
 - Acts 23:1 And Paul, looking intently at the Sanhedrin, said, Men, brothers, I have conducted myself in all good conscience before God until this day.
 - Acts 24:16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.
 - 1 Tim 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
 - 2 Tim 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day,
 1. A good conscience is a conscience without offense toward God and man—Acts 23:1; 24:16.
 - Acts 23:1 And Paul, looking intently at the Sanhedrin, said, Men, brothers, I have conducted myself in all good conscience before God until this day.
 - Acts 24:16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.
 2. A pure conscience is a conscience purified of any mixture; such a conscience testifies that, like Paul, we are seeking only God and His will—2 Tim. 1:3.
 - 2 Tim 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day,
- C. The first qualification in the work is purity of spirit—2 Cor. 6:4a, 6:
 - 2 Cor 6:4a But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, in much endurance, ...
 - 2 Cor 6:6 In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love,
 1. It is very difficult to find a person whose spirit is pure (7:1); pureness is the

prerequisite in the leadership and a basic condition of our service (1 Tim. 3:9; 1:5); the problem of mixture is the greatest problem among workers; impureness is often the source of misunderstanding and suspicion (2 Tim. 1:3; 1 Tim. 3:9; Titus 1:15).

2 Cor 7:1 Therefore since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

1 Tim 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

1 Tim 1:5 But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith;

2 Tim 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day,

Titus 1:15 All things are pure to the pure; yet to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

2. We need to deal completely with all the mixture in our spirit so that when our spirit is released, it will not be dangerous or cause trouble to others.
3. If we want to be used by God, our spirit must be released, and our spirit must be pure—2 Cor. 6:4a, 6.

2 Cor 6:4a But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, in much endurance, ...

2 Cor 6:6 In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love,

VI. The city of New Jerusalem is pure gold, like clear glass, and the street of the city is pure gold, like transparent glass—Rev. 21:18b, 21b:

Rev 21:18b ... and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Rev 21:21b ... And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

- A. Gold signifies the nature of God; the city's being pure gold indicates that the city is of the divine nature and takes the divine nature as its element—v. 18b.

Rev 21:18b ... and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

- B. The pure gold of the street and the city is like clear glass, signifying that the entire city is transparent and not in the least opaque—v. 21b:

Rev 21:21b ... And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

1. If we take God's nature as our unique way, we will be pure, without any mixture, and transparent, without any opaqueness.
2. If we are infused and saturated with the life-giving Spirit, our inner being will become transparent and crystal clear—2 Cor. 3:8-9, 18.

2 Cor 3:8 How shall the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory?

2 Cor 3:9 For if there is glory with the ministry of condemnation, much more the ministry of righteousness abounds with glory.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

- C. If we want to have the real church life, the church herself must be pure gold, that is, altogether of the divine nature; here we need the work of the cross to purge us and to purify us—Rev. 1:11, 20.

Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus

and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

- D. The difference between apostate Christendom and the genuine church is that one is a mixture and the other is pure; the local churches, like the New Jerusalem, should be crystal clear, without any mixture—22:1.

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.

Message Seven
**Nehemiah—a Pattern of One
Who Has Dispensational Value to God**

EM Hymns: 877, 893

Scripture Reading: Rev. 12:1-14; Neh. 1:1-11; 2:9-20;
4:4-5, 9; 5:10, 14-19; 8:1-10; 13:14, 29-31

- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:3 And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold, there was a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.
- Rev 12:4 And his tail drags away the third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, so that when she brings forth he might devour her child.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev 12:12 Therefore be glad, O heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has come down to you and has great rage, knowing that he has only a short time.
- Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child.
- Rev 12:14 And to the woman there were given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent.
- Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital,
- Neh 1:2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and some men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped, who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
- Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.
- Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,
- Neh 1:5 And said, I beseech You, O Jehovah the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps

covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments:

- Neh 1:6 Let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant, which I pray before You now day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Your servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Indeed, I and the house of my father have sinned;
- Neh 1:7 We have been most corrupt toward You and have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances that You commanded Moses Your servant.
- Neh 1:8 Remember now the word that You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples;
- Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.
- Neh 1:10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.
- Neh 1:11 I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man. Now I was cupbearer to the king.
- Neh 2:9 So I went to the governors beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of the army and horsemen.
- Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.
- Neh 2:11 Thus I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.
- Neh 2:12 And I arose at night, I and some few men with me. And I told no man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. And there was no animal with me except the animal I rode on.
- Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had been consumed with fire.
- Neh 2:14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass through.
- Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.
- Neh 2:16 And the rulers did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing; and I had not as yet told it to the Jews and the priests and the nobles and the rulers and the rest who were to do the work.
- Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.
- Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.
- Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?
- Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.
- Neh 4:4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them as spoil in the land of captivity;
- Neh 4:5 And do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out before You, for they made provocations before the builders.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.

Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.

Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.

Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the

Levites, each in his work,
 Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

I. God's desire is to end this age and bring in the age of the kingdom; in order for God to accomplish this, He must have His dispensational instrument:

A. All of us should look to the Lord and pray that we will have dispensational value to God; we need to ask ourselves what we are doing to close this dispensation and to bring in the next age, the kingdom age; this is a special time, so there is the need of special believers to do a special work.

B. Those who can only say, "Go," but not "Come," will have no effect; that is, they will have no dispensational value to God—cf. Heb. 10:22:

Heb 10:22 Let us come forward to the Holy of Holies with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

1. The writer of Hebrews did not tell the believers to go forward but to come forward; this means that the writer was in a particular place and that he wanted his readers to come forward to the place where he was.

2. We need to come forward to three things: to the Holy of Holies, to the throne of grace, and to God Himself; do not shrink backward—come forward—v. 22; 4:16; 7:25; 11:6.

Heb 10:22 Let us come forward to the Holy of Holies with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

3. God is on the throne of grace, and the throne of grace is in the Holy of Holies; at the time of the writing of the book of Hebrews, the writer was there in the Holy of Holies, calling the Hebrew believers to come forward.

C. The rapture of the man-child to heaven, the casting of Satan to earth, and the declaration in heaven that the kingdom has come signify that God's gaining of the man-child is His greatest dispensational move, because it brings an end to the church age and introduces the kingdom age—Rev. 12:5, 9-10; 11:15.

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

- Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.
- D. The rapture of the man-child to the throne of God will be before the one thousand two hundred and sixty days, which is the time of the great tribulation of three and a half years (forty-two months)—12:1-14; 13:5; 11:2.
- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:3 And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold, there was a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.
- Rev 12:4 And his tail drags away the third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, so that when she brings forth he might devour her child.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev 12:12 Therefore be glad, O heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has come down to you and has great rage, knowing that he has only a short time.
- Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child.
- Rev 12:14 And to the woman there were given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent.
- Rev 13:5 And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and authority was given to him to act for forty-two months.
- Rev 11:2 And the court which is outside the temple cast out and do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.
- E. We live in the most privileged time in which we can do the most for God; God as light will show us the way, but the indwelling Christ as our strength and power will enable us to walk the road; a great price must be paid in order to be used now—3:18.
- Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be

manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.

II. Because the church has not attained to God's purpose, God will choose a group of overcomers who will attain to His purpose and fulfill His demand; this is the principle of the man-child—12:1-2, 5, 10-11; 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21:

- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
- Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.
- 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.

- A. The universal bright woman represents the totality of God's people, and ultimately, the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15 is enlarged to include the overcoming believers, the stronger part of God's people, signified by the man-child—Rev. 12:1-2, 5, 10-11.

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity / Between you and the woman / And between your seed and her seed; / He will bruise you on the head, / But you will bruise him on the heel.

Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;

Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring

- forth.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- B. The resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit is the transfigured descendant of the woman, the seed of the woman, dispensed into us to bruise the serpent's head in us and make us the corporate seed of the woman, the overcoming man-child, to carry out God's judgment on the ancient serpent and to be God's dispensational instrument to change the age and usher in the manifestation of God's kingdom—v. 5.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- C. Psalm 2:8-9, Revelation 2:26-27, and Revelation 12:5 indicate that the Lord Jesus as God's Anointed, the overcomers in the churches, and the man-child will rule the nations with an iron rod, thus proving that the Lord Jesus, the overcomers, and the man-child are one; the Lord as the leading Overcomer (3:21) is the Head, center, reality, life, and nature of the man-child, and the man-child, as the following overcomers, is the Lord's Body.
- Psa 2:8 Ask of Me, / And I will give the nations as Your inheritance / And the limits of the earth as Your possession.
- Psa 2:9 You will break them with an iron rod; / You will shatter them like a potter's vessel.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- 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.
- D. Through the Lord's death on the cross, Satan, the old serpent, was judged, cast out (John 12:31; 16:11); that judgment and sentence will ultimately be carried out and executed by the overcomers as the man-child, the corporate seed of the woman; the war waged by the overcoming believers against Satan is actually the executing of the Lord's judgment upon him for him to eventually be cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-9).
- John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.
- John 16:11 And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- E. The man-child consists of the overcomers who stand on behalf of the church, take the position that the whole church should take, and do the work for the church—2:7b, 11b, 17b,

26-28; 3:5, 12, 21; 12:5, 11:

- Rev 2:7b ...To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 2:11b ... He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
- Rev 2:17b ... To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- 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.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
1. All of God's people should have a part in His eternal purpose, but not all assume their rightful responsibility; therefore, God chooses a group from among them—the man-child brought forth by the woman.
 2. In the Bible the stronger ones among God's people are considered a collective unit fighting the battle for God and bringing God's kingdom down to earth—Rev. 12:5, 10-11.

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
 3. God will use the man-child to fulfill His economy and to accomplish His purpose—1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11.

1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

2 Tim 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages

Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure,

- which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
4. God needs the man-child to defeat His enemy and to bring in His kingdom so that His eternal purpose may be accomplished; the Lord's recovery is the practicality of God's economy today, and His economy can be carried out only by the man-child—Rev. 12:10.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- F. The rapture of the man-child is a transaction that causes Satan to have no more position in heaven; we must be raptured to fulfill God's need by executing His judgment upon His enemy—vv. 5, 7-10.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- G. Those who constitute the man-child overcome the devil (the accuser, the slanderer), who is Satan, the adversary of God, because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they love not their soul-life even unto death—vv. 10-11.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- H. The entire being of the man-child is saturated and permeated with the element of Christ, because they are daily strengthened into their inner man so that Christ may build Himself into their hearts, they are being nourished with the unsearchable riches of Christ, and they put on Christ as the whole armor of God—Eph. 3:16-18, 8; 6:10-11.
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the

Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
 Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
 Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

III. When Israel was taken into captivity for seventy years, God still had a dispensational move because of Nehemiah, who was a true overcomer; he is a pattern of someone who has dispensational value to God—Neh. 1:1-11; 2:9-20; 4:4-5, 9; 5:10, 14-19; 8:1-10; 13:14, 29-31:

Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachabiah. Now in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital,
 Neh 1:2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and some men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped, who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
 Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.
 Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,
 Neh 1:5 And said, I beseech You, O Jehovah the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments:
 Neh 1:6 Let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant, which I pray before You now day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Your servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Indeed, I and the house of my father have sinned;
 Neh 1:7 We have been most corrupt toward You and have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances that You commanded Moses Your servant.
 Neh 1:8 Remember now the word that You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples;
 Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.
 Neh 1:10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.
 Neh 1:11 I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man. Now I was cupbearer to the king.
 Neh 2:9 So I went to the governors beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of the army and horsemen.
 Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.
 Neh 2:11 Thus I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.
 Neh 2:12 And I arose at night, I and some few men with me. And I told no man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. And there was no animal with me except the animal I rode on.
 Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had

been consumed with fire.

Neh 2:14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass through.

Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.

Neh 2:16 And the rulers did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing; and I had not as yet told it to the Jews and the priests and the nobles and the rulers and the rest who were to do the work.

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

Neh 4:4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them as spoil in the land of captivity;

Neh 4:5 And do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out before You, for they made provocations before the builders.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.

Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.

Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.

Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until

midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiyah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,

Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

A. The crucial point in the book of Nehemiah is that the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem with its wall was both a continual recovery among His elect for His testimony as the accomplishment of God's economy and a safeguard and protection for the house of God within the city:

1. This signifies that the house of God as His dwelling and home on the earth needs His kingdom to be established as a realm to safeguard His interest on the earth for His administration to carry out His economy—cf. Rom. 14:17.
Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
2. The rebuilding of the house of God typifies God's recovery of the degraded church, and the rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem typifies God's recovery of His kingdom; the building of God's house and His kingdom go together—Matt. 16:18-19.
Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

- B. When we realize and enjoy Christ as our life, we have the church as the house of God; if we go further and realize His headship, the house will be enlarged to be the city, the kingdom of God—Eph. 1:10, 22-23; 4:15; Rev. 22:1.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- 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.
- C. Nehemiah shows the need for us to have the proper aggressiveness in the Lord's recovery today:
1. The leaders of the Moabites and Ammonites were greatly displeased about Nehemiah's seeking the good of the children of Israel; these descendants of the impure increase of Lot hated and despised the children of Israel—Neh. 2:10, 19; cf. Ezek. 25:3, 8.
- Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.
- Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?
- Ezek 25:3 And you shall say to the children of Ammon, Hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because you said, Aha! against My sanctuary when it was desecrated, and against the land of Israel when it was desolated, and against the house of Judah when it went off into exile;
- Ezek 25:8 Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because Moab has said, Look, the house of Judah is just like all the other nations!
2. In relation to the mocking, despising, and reproach of these opposers, Nehemiah was very pure and aggressive, not cowardly—Neh. 2:17-20; 4:1-23; cf. Acts 4:29-31; 1 Thes. 2:2; 2 Tim. 1:7-8.
- Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.
- Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.
- Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?
- Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.
- Neh 4:1 And when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he became angry and was greatly enraged; and he mocked the Jews.

Neh 4:2 And he spoke to his brothers and the army of Samaria and said, What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the dust heaps, though they are burned?

Neh 4:3 And Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, Even their stone wall that they are building, if a fox were to go up on it, he would breach it.

Neh 4:4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them as spoil in the land of captivity;

Neh 4:5 And do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out before You, for they made provocations before the builders.

Neh 4:6 So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a heart to work.

Neh 4:7 And when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem was advancing, that the breaches were beginning to be closed up, they became very angry;

Neh 4:8 And all of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion in it.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 4:10 And Judah said, / The strength of the burden bearers fails, / And the debris is great; / And we are not able / To build the wall.

Neh 4:11 And our adversaries said, They will not know, nor even see, until we come into their midst and slay them and cause the work to stop.

Neh 4:12 And when the Jews who dwelt near them came, they said to us ten times, They will come up against us from all the places that you turn to.

Neh 4:13 So I set men in the lowest places behind the wall, on the exposed areas, and I set the people by families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

Neh 4:14 And when I saw the situation, I rose up and said to the nobles and the rulers and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them; remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.

Neh 4:15 And when our enemies heard that their counsel was known to us and that God frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each man to his work.

Neh 4:16 And from that day half of my servants labored in the work, and half of them held the spears and the shields and the bows and the armor; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.

Neh 4:18 And as for the builders, each had his sword strapped to his side, and so they built; and he who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.

Neh 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.

Neh 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.

Neh 4:22 I also said to the people at that time, Let every man and his servant spend the nights inside Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and work by day.

- Neh 4:23 So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each had his weapon at his right hand.
- Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings and grant Your slaves to speak Your word with all boldness,
- Acts 4:30 While stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may take place through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.
- Acts 4:31 And when they had so besought, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.
- 1 Thes 2:2 But having suffered previously and having been outrageously treated, even as you know, in Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggle.
- 2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.
- 2 Tim 1:8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me His prisoner; but suffer evil with the gospel according to the power of God;
3. The aggressive ones receive help from God; like Nehemiah, the apostle Paul was allied with God and realized God's assistance in this alliance—Acts 26:21-22.

Acts 26:21 Because of these things certain Jews seized me while I was in the temple and tried to slay me.

Acts 26:22 Having therefore obtained the help which is from God, I have stood unto this day, testifying both to small and great, saying nothing apart from the things which both the prophets and Moses have said would take place,
 4. Nehemiah's aggressiveness, as a virtue in his human conduct, shows that our natural capacity, ability, and virtues must pass through the cross of Christ and be brought into resurrection, into the Spirit as the consummation of the Triune God, to be useful to God in the accomplishing of His economy.
- D. Nehemiah did not live in his natural man but in resurrection; he was aggressive, but his aggressiveness was accompanied by other characteristics:
1. In his relationship with God, he was one who loved God and also loved God's interests on the earth, including the Holy Land (signifying Christ), the holy temple (signifying the church), and the holy city (signifying the kingdom of God)—1 Kings 8:48; cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

1 Kings 8:48 And if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;

2 Tim 3:1 But know this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

2 Tim 3:2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2 Tim 3:3 Without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, not lovers of good,

2 Tim 3:4 Traitors, reckless, blinded with pride, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

2 Tim 3:5 Having an outward form of godliness, though denying its power; from these also turn away.

2. As a person who loved God, Nehemiah prayed to God to contact Him in fellowship; for the rebuilding of the wall, Nehemiah stood on God's word and prayed according to it—Neh. 1:1-11; 2:4; 4:4-5, 9.

Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachabiah. Now in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital,

Neh 1:2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and some men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped, who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.

Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,

Neh 1:5 And said, I beseech You, O Jehovah the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments:

Neh 1:6 Let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant, which I pray before You now day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Your servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Indeed, I and the house of my father have sinned;

Neh 1:7 We have been most corrupt toward You and have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances that You commanded Moses Your servant.

Neh 1:8 Remember now the word that You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples;

Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.

Neh 1:10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.

Neh 1:11 I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man. Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Neh 2:4 And the king said to me, What do you request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

Neh 4:4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them as spoil in the land of captivity;

Neh 4:5 And do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out before You, for they made provocations before the builders.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.
3. Nehemiah trusted in God and even became one with God; as a result, he became the representative of God—5:19; cf. 2 Cor. 5:20.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

2 Cor 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.
4. In his relationship with the people, Nehemiah was unselfish, without any self-seeking or self-interest; he was always willing to sacrifice what he had for the people and for

the nation—Neh. 5:10, 14-19.

- Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.
- Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.
- Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.
- Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.
- Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.
- Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.
- Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

- E. Nehemiah, as the governor, in the position of a king, was a man with a pure heart for the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall in carrying out God's economy; he was a pattern of what a leader among God's people should be—cf. 1 Tim. 3:2-7; 1 Pet. 5:1-3:

- 1 Tim 3:2 The overseer then must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, of a sober mind, orderly, hospitable, apt to teach;
- 1 Tim 3:3 Not an excessive drinker; not a striker, but forbearing; not contentious; not fond of money;
- 1 Tim 3:4 One who manages well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity
- 1 Tim 3:5 (But if one does not know how to manage his own house, how will he care for the church of God?);
- 1 Tim 3:6 Not a new convert, lest being blinded with pride he fall into the judgment suffered by the devil.
- 1 Tim 3:7 And he also must have a good testimony from those outside, that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
- 1 Pet 5:1 Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed:
- 1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;
- 1 Pet 5:3 Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock.

1. Unlike many of the kings of Israel and Judah, he was not selfish, did not seek his own interests, and was not indulgent in sexual lust.
2. As the commander in chief, Nehemiah was among those who were ready to fight against the enemy, and he took part in the night watch; he did not leave these matters to others but participated in them himself—Neh. 4:9-23.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

- Neh 4:10 And Judah said, / The strength of the burden bearers fails, / And the debris is great; / And we are not able / To build the wall.
- Neh 4:11 And our adversaries said, They will not know, nor even see, until we come into their midst and slay them and cause the work to stop.
- Neh 4:12 And when the Jews who dwelt near them came, they said to us ten times, They will come up against us from all the places that you turn to.
- Neh 4:13 So I set men in the lowest places behind the wall, on the exposed areas, and I set the people by families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.
- Neh 4:14 And when I saw the situation, I rose up and said to the nobles and the rulers and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them; remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.
- Neh 4:15 And when our enemies heard that their counsel was known to us and that God frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each man to his work.
- Neh 4:16 And from that day half of my servants labored in the work, and half of them held the spears and the shields and the bows and the armor; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.
- Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.
- Neh 4:18 And as for the builders, each had his sword strapped to his side, and so they built; and he who sounded the trumpet was beside me.
- Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.
- Neh 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.
- Neh 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.
- Neh 4:22 I also said to the people at that time, Let every man and his servant spend the nights inside Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and work by day.
- Neh 4:23 So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each had his weapon at his right hand.
3. He and his brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor for twelve years because of the fear of God—5:14-15.
- Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.
- Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.
4. He applied himself to work on the city wall without any kind of payment; instead of being self-seeking, he fed others for the purpose of building up the wall—vv. 16-18.
- Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.
- Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides

those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.

Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.

- F. Although Nehemiah was the ruler, he was altogether not ambitious; this is indicated by the fact that in reconstituting the nation, he recognized his need of Ezra for the reconstitution of the people of God with the word of God—8:1-10; Phil. 2:3-4.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

Phil 2:3 Doing nothing by way of selfish ambition nor by way of vainglory, but in lowliness of mind considering one another more excellent than yourselves;

Phil 2:4 Not regarding each his own virtues, but each the virtues of others also.

- G. Nehemiah was the perfect leader, the best leader in human history and the best example of what an elder should be; it is surely worthwhile for us, especially the leading ones in the churches, to consider his example so that we may be a pattern of gaining God and flowing out God to others in order to turn the age—Neh. 5:19; 13:14.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Message Eight
**Building the Wall of the City
for the Protection of the Church as the House of God**

MC Hymns: 840

Scripture Reading: Neh. 1:3; 2:9-20

- Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.
- Neh 2:9 So I went to the governors beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of the army and horsemen.
- Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.
- Neh 2:11 Thus I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.
- Neh 2:12 And I arose at night, I and some few men with me. And I told no man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. And there was no animal with me except the animal I rode on.
- Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had been consumed with fire.
- Neh 2:14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass through.
- Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.
- Neh 2:16 And the rulers did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing; and I had not as yet told it to the Jews and the priests and the nobles and the rulers and the rest who were to do the work.
- Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.
- Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.
- Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?
- Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

I. The book of Ezra is a history of the return of Israel's captivity and the rebuilding of the temple; the book of Nehemiah is a history of the rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem—Neh. 2:17-20:

- Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.
- Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

A. The city of Jerusalem was a safeguard and protection for the house of God, which was in the city—v. 13:

Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had been consumed with fire.

1. This signifies that the house of God as His dwelling and home on the earth needs His kingdom to be established as a realm to safeguard His interests on the earth for His administration that He may carry out His economy—v. 15.

Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.

2. The rebuilding of the house of God typifies God's recovery of the degraded church, and the rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem typifies God's recovery of His kingdom—vv. 17-20.

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

B. God's building of His house and His building of the kingdom go together—Matt. 16:18-19.

Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

II. The first section of the book of Nehemiah, chapters 1 through 7, is on the rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem under Nehemiah:

Neh 1~7 be omitted.

A. Nehemiah received the report that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and the gates had been burned with fire—1:3b.

Neh 1:3b ... and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.

B. Nehemiah 2:9-16 speaks of Nehemiah's journey to Jerusalem and his personal observation of the condition of the wall of the city of Jerusalem.

Neh 2:9 So I went to the governors beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of the army and horsemen.

Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.

Neh 2:11 Thus I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

Neh 2:12 And I arose at night, I and some few men with me. And I told no man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. And there was no animal with me except the animal I rode on.

Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had been consumed with fire.

Neh 2:14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass through.

Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.

Neh 2:16 And the rulers did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing; and I had not as yet told it to the Jews and the priests and the nobles and the rulers and the rest who were to do the work.

C. Nehemiah 2:17-20 is a word concerning the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem:

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

1. The temple is the place of the Lord's presence, where we meet and serve the Lord, but it needs protection.
2. The wall of the city is the defense to the temple; without the wall of the city, there is no protection.
3. The wall of the city is not only for protection but also for separation.
4. The book of Nehemiah tells us that we all must build up our part of the wall; everyone should build up his own part—4:6, 19.

Neh 4:6 So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a heart to work.

Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.

D. We need to intrinsically follow Nehemiah's pattern to "build up the wall," to build up the church as the kingdom of God, for the protection of the church as the house of God, His dwelling place—2:4, 10, 17-20; Eph. 2:21-22.

Neh 2:4 And the king said to me, What do you request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

- Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.
- Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.
- Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.
- Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?
- Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.
- Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

III. The purpose of the building of the wall is to bring us all into the proper order in life under the headship of Christ—1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 2:19:

- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
- A. Christ is both the Head of the Body, the church, corporately and of all the believers individually; He is the Head of every one of us directly—1:18; 1 Cor. 11:3.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- 1 Cor 11:3 But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ.
- B. The church life is a life of being headed up under the unique headship of Christ—Eph. 1:10, 22-23; 4:15-16; Col. 2:19.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

- C. If we honor the unique headship of Christ, then in the Lord's recovery the church will be not only the house but also the city—Heb. 11:10; Ezra 1:2-3; Neh. 1:9; 2:5, 17; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 21:2, 10-11:

Heb 11:10 For he eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

Ezra 1:2 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Ezra 1:3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel-He is God-who is in Jerusalem.

Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.

Neh 2:5 And I said to the king, If it please the king and if your servant has found favor before you, that you would send me to Judah to the city of my fathers' graves that I may rebuild it.

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

1. The church as the house is mainly with Christ as life, and the church as the city is mainly with Christ as the Head—1 Tim. 3:15; Matt. 5:14; Col. 3:4; 1:18:

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

Matt 5:14 You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city situated upon a mountain to be hidden.

Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

- a. When we experience and enjoy Christ as life, we have the church as the house; when we realize the unique headship of Christ, the church will be enlarged as the city, which signifies the kingdom of God—Matt. 16:18-19.

Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

- b. The church as the city is built not only with Christ as life but also with the headship of Christ; thus, Christ must be not only our life but also our Head—Col. 3:4; 1:18; 2:19.
 - Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 - Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
 - Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
2. If we honor the unique headship of Christ, the church will be enlarged from the house to the city for the King and His kingdom—Psa. 48:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-13, 27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15-16; Rev. 21:2, 10-11, 14; 11:15.
 - Psa 48:1 Great is Jehovah, / And much to be praised / In the city of our God, / In His holy mountain.
 - Psa 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.
 - 1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
 - 1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
 - 1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
 - 1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
 - Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
 - Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
 - Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
 - Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
 - Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
 - Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
 - Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
 - Rev 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
 - Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

IV. We need to build the wall to protect the church from differing teachings,

which are contrary to the teaching of the apostles—Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 1:3-4:

- Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- A. Differing teachings refer to teachings that are not in line with the economy of God—6:3.
- 1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
- B. The differing teachings in 1:3-4, 6-7; 6:3-5, 20-21 and the heresies in 4:1-3 are the seed, the source, of the church's decline, degradation, and deterioration.
- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- 1 Tim 1:6 From which things some, having misaimed, have turned aside to vain talking,
- 1 Tim 1:7 Desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither the things that they say, nor concerning what they confidently affirm.
- 1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
- 1 Tim 6:4 He is blinded with pride, understanding nothing, but is diseased with questionings and contentions of words, out of which come envy, strife, slanders, evil suspicions,
- 1 Tim 6:5 Perpetual wranglings of men corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, supposing godliness to be a means of gain.
- 1 Tim 6:20 O Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from profane, vain babblings and oppositions from what is falsely called knowledge,
- 1 Tim 6:21 Because of which some, professing this, have misaimed regarding the faith. Grace be with you.
- 1 Tim 4:1 But the Spirit says expressly that in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons
- 1 Tim 4:2 By means of the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, of men who are branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron,
- 1 Tim 4:3 Who forbid marriage and command abstaining from foods, which God has created to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who believe and have full knowledge of the truth.
- C. Teaching differently tears down God's building and annuls God's economy; even a small amount of teaching in a different way destroys the recovery.
- D. For the administration and shepherding of a local church, the first thing needed is to terminate the differing teachings of the dissenting ones, which distract the saints from the central line of God's economy—Titus 1:9.
- Titus 1:9 Holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to convict those who oppose.
- E. We must avoid differing teachings and concentrate on God's economy concerning Christ and the church—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Eph. 3:9; 5:32.
- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things

- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

V. If the wall is built up in the church, we will be protected from those who are used by the enemy to destroy God's building work:

- A. The destroyers of the divine building are those who preach and teach heresies—2 Pet. 2:1; 2 John 7-11:

- 2 Pet 2:1 But there arose also false prophets among the people, as also among you there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.
- 2 John 7 For many deceivers went out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.
- 2 John 8 Look to yourselves that you do not lose the things which we wrought, but that you may receive a full reward.
- 2 John 9 Everyone who goes beyond and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.
- 2 John 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!
- 2 John 11 For he who says to him, Rejoice, shares in his evil works.

1. Those who teach heresies concerning the person of Christ are antichrists, denying both the person of the Lord as the Master and His redemption, by which the Lord purchased the believers; to deny that the man Jesus is God is a great heresy—v. 7; 1 John 2:18, 22-23; 4:2-3.

- 2 John 7 For many deceivers went out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.
- 1 John 2:18 Young children, it is the last hour; and even as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come; whereby we know that it is the last hour.
- 1 John 2:22 Who is the liar if not he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.
- 1 John 2:23 Everyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who confesses the Son has the Father also.
- 1 John 4:2 In this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,
- 1 John 4:3 And every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming and now is already in the world.

2. The apostle warned the believers to watch for themselves lest they be influenced by the heresies and lose the things of the truth; we must reject those who deny the conception and deity of Christ, not receiving them into our house or greeting them—2 John 8-11.

- 2 John 8 Look to yourselves that you do not lose the things which we wrought, but that you may receive a full reward.
- 2 John 9 Everyone who goes beyond and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does

not have God; he who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

2 John 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!

2 John 11 For he who says to him, Rejoice, shares in his evil works.

B. The destroyers of the divine building are those who are factious, sectarian—Titus 3:10:

Titus 3:10 A factious man, after a first and second admonition, refuse,

1. A factious man is a heretical, sectarian man who causes divisions by forming parties in the church according to his own opinions; in order to maintain good order in the church, a factious, divisive person should be refused, rejected, after a first and second admonition—v. 10.

Titus 3:10 A factious man, after a first and second admonition, refuse,

2. Because such divisiveness is contagious, this rejection is for the church's profit so that contact with the divisive one may be stopped—cf. Num. 6:6-7.

Num 6:6 All the days that he separates himself to Jehovah he shall not come near a dead person.

Num 6:7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father or for his mother, for his brother or for his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is upon his head.

C. The destroyers of the divine building are those who make divisions—Rom. 16:17:

Rom 16:17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.

1. In Romans 14 Paul was liberal and gracious regarding the receiving of those who differ in doctrine or practice; however, in Romans 16:17 he was unyielding and resolute in saying that we must “mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.”

Rom 14 be omitted.

2. The Lord hates “one who injects discord among brothers”—Prov. 6:16, 19.

Prov 6:16 There are six things that Jehovah hates; / Indeed, seven that are an abomination to His soul:

Prov 6:19 A false witness who utters lies, / And one who injects discord among brothers.

D. The destroyers of the divine building are those who are ambitious for position—3 John 9:

3 John 9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us.

1. We should never hunt to be the first in any work for the Lord; this is the insidious work of hidden ambition to compete with others to be the first—v. 9.

3 John 9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us.

2. The destroyers of the divine building are those who are wolves, not sparing the flock, and those who speak perverted things to draw away the believers after them—Acts 20:29-30.

Acts 20:29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 And from among you yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverted things to

draw away the disciples after them.

VI. After the wall has been built, we will be able to resist the attack of death upon the church and to build up the Body of Christ in the resurrection life of Christ—Matt. 16:18; John 11:25; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16:

- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- A. Death is the characteristic of Satan's work; the ultimate goal of his work is to saturate man with death—Heb. 2:15.
- Heb 2:15 And might release those who because of the fear of death through all their life were held in slavery.
- B. Matthew 16:18 shows us from what source the attack upon the church will come—"the gates of Hades," that is, death:
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
1. Satan's special object is to spread death within the church, and his greatest fear with regard to the church is her resistance to his power of death—Rev. 2:8, 10-11.
- Rev 2:8 And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:
- Rev 2:10 Do not fear the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison that you may be tried, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.
- Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
2. The church that is built upon "this rock" can discern between death and life, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it—Matt. 16:18.
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- C. We need to know Christ as the First and the Last—the ever-existing, unchanging One—and as the One who became dead and lived again—the One who is resurrection—Rev. 1:17-18; 2:8; John 11:25; Acts 2:24.
- Rev 1:17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead; and He placed His right hand on me, saying, Do not fear; I am the First and the Last
- Rev 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
- Rev 2:8 And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:
- John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if

- he should die, shall live;
- Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.
- D. We can build up the Body of Christ only in the resurrection life of Christ—Eph. 2:6, 21-22; 4:16; Rev. 1:18; 2:8; Phil. 3:10:
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
- Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Rev 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
- Rev 2:8 And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:
- Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
1. The Body of Christ is in the resurrection life of Christ—John 11:25:

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

 - a. The nature of the church as the Body of Christ is resurrection—Acts 2:24; Eph. 1:19-23.

Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,

Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
 - b. The church is a new creation created in Christ's resurrection and by the resurrected Christ—1 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 2:6; Gal. 6:15.

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Gal 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters.
 2. The Body of Christ is in resurrection, and the reality of resurrection is Christ as the life-giving Spirit—John 11:25; 20:22; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me,

- even if he should die, shall live;
 John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.
 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
3. The principle of resurrection is that the natural life is killed and that the divine life rises up to take its place—2 Cor. 1:9.
 2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;
4. When we do not live by the natural life but live by the divine life within us, we are in resurrection; the issue of such a living is the growth and building up of the church as the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:10-11; Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19; 3:15.
 Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
 Phil 3:11 If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.
 Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
 Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
 Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
 Col 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

Message Nine
**Building and Fighting—
the Need to Engage in Spiritual Warfare
for the Building of the Church**

RK Hymns: 887, 767

Scripture Reading: Neh. 4; Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6, 21-22;
4:16, 23-24; 6:10-20

- Neh 4:1 And when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he became angry and was greatly enraged; and he mocked the Jews.
- Neh 4:2 And he spoke to his brothers and the army of Samaria and said, What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the dust heaps, though they are burned?
- Neh 4:3 And Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, Even their stone wall that they are building, if a fox were to go up on it, he would breach it.
- Neh 4:4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them as spoil in the land of captivity;
- Neh 4:5 And do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out before You, for they made provocations before the builders.
- Neh 4:6 So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a heart to work.
- Neh 4:7 And when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem was advancing, that the breaches were beginning to be closed up, they became very angry;
- Neh 4:8 And all of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion in it.
- Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.
- Neh 4:10 And Judah said, / The strength of the burden bearers fails, / And the debris is great; / And we are not able / To build the wall.
- Neh 4:11 And our adversaries said, They will not know, nor even see, until we come into their midst and slay them and cause the work to stop.
- Neh 4:12 And when the Jews who dwelt near them came, they said to us ten times, They will come up against us from all the places that you turn to.
- Neh 4:13 So I set men in the lowest places behind the wall, on the exposed areas, and I set the people by families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.
- Neh 4:14 And when I saw the situation, I rose up and said to the nobles and the rulers and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them; remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.
- Neh 4:15 And when our enemies heard that their counsel was known to us and that God frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each man to his work.
- Neh 4:16 And from that day half of my servants labored in the work, and half of them held the spears and the shields and the bows and the armor; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.
- Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.
- Neh 4:18 And as for the builders, each had his sword strapped to his side, and so they built; and he who sounded the trumpet was beside me.
- Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.

Neh 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.

Neh 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.

Neh 4:22 I also said to the people at that time, Let every man and his servant spend the nights inside Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and work by day.

Neh 4:23 So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each had his weapon at his right hand.

Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,

Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

I. Nehemiah chapter 4 describes the frustration of the enemy regarding the rebuilding of the city:

Neh 4 be omitted.

A. The enemies became angry and greatly enraged; they mocked the Jews and despised their

building work—vv. 1-3:

Neh 4:1 And when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he became angry and was greatly enraged; and he mocked the Jews.

Neh 4:2 And he spoke to his brothers and the army of Samaria and said, What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the dust heaps, though they are burned?

Neh 4:3 And Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, Even their stone wall that they are building, if a fox were to go up on it, he would breach it.

1. The enemies were angry because the building work was advancing, and they conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem—vv. 7-8.

Neh 4:7 And when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem was advancing, that the breaches were beginning to be closed up, they became very angry;

Neh 4:8 And all of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion in it.

2. Nehemiah trusted in God by praying that God would return their reproach to themselves; thus, the Jews built the wall, for they had a heart to work—vv. 4-6.

Neh 4:4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them as spoil in the land of captivity;

Neh 4:5 And do not cover their iniquity and do not let their sin be blotted out before You, for they made provocations before the builders.

Neh 4:6 So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a heart to work.

- B. The Jews prayed to their God, and under Nehemiah's instruction and direction they set a watch against the enemy day and night:

1. They were ready to fight with weapons under the encouragement of Nehemiah, who instructed them to remember the great and awesome Lord and to fight for their families—v. 14.

Neh 4:14 And when I saw the situation, I rose up and said to the nobles and the rulers and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them; remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.

2. Half of Nehemiah's servants labored in the work, and half of them held weapons, ready to fight—v. 16.

Neh 4:16 And from that day half of my servants labored in the work, and half of them held the spears and the shields and the bows and the armor; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

3. On the one hand, the children of Israel were prepared to fight; on the other hand, they trusted in God, believing that He would fight for them—vv. 9-23.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 4:10 And Judah said, / The strength of the burden bearers fails, / And the debris is great; / And we are not able / To build the wall.

Neh 4:11 And our adversaries said, They will not know, nor even see, until we come into their midst and slay them and cause the work to stop.

Neh 4:12 And when the Jews who dwelt near them came, they said to us ten times, They will come up against us from all the places that you turn to.

Neh 4:13 So I set men in the lowest places behind the wall, on the exposed areas, and I set the people by families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

Neh 4:14 And when I saw the situation, I rose up and said to the nobles and the rulers and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them; remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.

Neh 4:15 And when our enemies heard that their counsel was known to us and that God frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each man to his work.

Neh 4:16 And from that day half of my servants labored in the work, and half of them held the spears and the shields and the bows and the armor; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.

Neh 4:18 And as for the builders, each had his sword strapped to his side, and so they built; and he who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.

Neh 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.

Neh 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.

Neh 4:22 I also said to the people at that time, Let every man and his servant spend the nights inside Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and work by day.

Neh 4:23 So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each had his weapon at his right hand.

4. As the commander in chief, Nehemiah was among those who were ready to fight against the enemy; he took part in the night watch and did not leave these matters to others but participated in them himself—vv. 17-23.

Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.

Neh 4:18 And as for the builders, each had his sword strapped to his side, and so they built; and he who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.

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Neh 4:23 So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each had his weapon at his right hand.

II. Building the church as the city of God is not an easy task; building can be carried out only by fighting—Eph. 2:21-22; 4:16; 6:10-20:

- Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
- Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
- Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.
- Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness
- Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;
- Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.
- Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,
- Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
- A. When the children of Israel returned from their captivity, Ezra, Nehemiah, and others rose up to rebuild the temple and the holy city through intense warfare.
- B. The Israelites who worked in the building with Nehemiah labored with one hand to build and with the other hand held their weapons for fighting the battle (Neh. 4:17); this reveals that whenever we labor on God's building, we will certainly be involved in a battle.
- Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.
- C. Regarding the building up of God's dwelling place, there is a real conflict, a severe fighting between God and His enemy—vv. 1-3, 7-8:
- Neh 4:1 And when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he became angry and was greatly enraged; and he mocked the Jews.
- Neh 4:2 And he spoke to his brothers and the army of Samaria and said, What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the dust heaps, though they are burned?
- Neh 4:3 And Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, Even their stone wall that they are building, if a fox were to go up on it, he would breach it.
- Neh 4:7 And when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem was advancing, that

- the breaches were beginning to be closed up, they became very angry;
 Neh 4:8 And all of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion in it.
1. The enemy hates seeing the building of God's dwelling place going up in a good way.
 2. Satan will do everything that he can to interrupt, interfere, attack, and destroy—Matt. 16:18-19.
 Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
 Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.
- D. We must build the church as the temple and fight the battle so that God may have the kingdom—6:10.
 Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
- E. When the saints migrate for the spreading of the church life, they are an army fighting the battle—cf. Acts 8:4-12.
 Acts 8:4 Those therefore who were scattered went throughout the land announcing the word as the gospel.
 Acts 8:5 And Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Christ to them.
 Acts 8:6 And the crowds gave heed with one accord to the things said by Philip as they heard and saw the signs which he did.
 Acts 8:7 For with many of those who had unclean spirits, the spirits came out crying with a loud voice; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.
 Acts 8:8 And there was much joy in that city.
 Acts 8:9 And a certain man named Simon had previously been practicing magic in the city and had been amazing the people of Samaria, saying that he was someone great.
 Acts 8:10 To him they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the power of God which is called Great.
 Acts 8:11 And they gave heed to him because for a considerable time he had amazed them with his magic.
 Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip, who announced the gospel of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.
- F. Those who build the church must build and fight at the same time—Neh. 4:14, 16-21.
 Neh 4:14 And when I saw the situation, I rose up and said to the nobles and the rulers and the rest of the people, Do not be afraid of them; remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.
 Neh 4:16 And from that day half of my servants labored in the work, and half of them held the spears and the shields and the bows and the armor; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.
 Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.
 Neh 4:18 And as for the builders, each had his sword strapped to his side, and so they built; and he who sounded the trumpet was beside me.
 Neh 4:19 And I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, each far from the other.
 Neh 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.

Neh 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.

- G. Without warfare and without a spirit of fighting, there is no building; building calls for grueling warfare.

III. For the building up of the church as the Body of Christ, there is the need for spiritual warfare—Eph. 6:10-20:

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.
Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness
Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;
Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.
Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,
Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

- A. Regrettably, in the church today almost none of the believers know of this spiritual warfare; this is due to weakness in life, lack of spiritual strength, and insufficient clarity in the light of the truth.

- B. Spiritual warfare is based on the victory of Christ—Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15; 1 John 3:8:

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

Col 2:15 Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

1. The starting point of spiritual warfare is standing upon the victory of Christ; it is seeing that Christ has already defeated the enemy—S. S. 4:8; Rev. 3:21; 5:5-6:

S. S. 4:8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride; / With me from Lebanon come. / Look from the top of Amana, / From the top of Senir and Hermon, / From the lions' dens, / From the leopards' mountains.

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.

- Rev 5:5 And one of the elders said to me, Do not weep; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so that He may open the scroll and its seven seals.
- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- a. The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil—1 John 3:8.
 1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
 - b. In His incarnation and human living Christ defeated Satan during the temptation in the wilderness—Matt. 4:1-11.
 Matt 4:1 Then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil.
 Matt 4:2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He became hungry.
 Matt 4:3 And the tempter came and said to Him, If You are the Son of God, speak that these stones may become loaves of bread.
 Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God."
 Matt 4:5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and set Him on the wing of the temple,
 Matt 4:6 And said to Him, If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down; for it is written, "To His angels He shall give charge concerning You, and on their hands they shall bear You up, lest You strike Your foot against a stone."
 Matt 4:7 Jesus said to him, Again, it is written, "You shall not test the Lord your God."
 Matt 4:8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.
 Matt 4:9 And he said to Him, All these will I give You if You will fall down and worship me.
 Matt 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, Go away, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve."
 Matt 4:11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.
 - c. Through death the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil, who has the might of death; He abolished Satan, brought him to naught—Heb. 2:14.
 Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,
2. The work of the church on earth is to maintain Christ's victory; the Lord has already won the battle, and the church is here to maintain His victory—Eph. 6:11, 13.
 Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
 Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- C. The warfare between the church and Satan is a battle between us who love the Lord and

who are in His church and the evil powers in the heavenlies—v. 12:

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

1. The principalities, the authorities, and the world-rulers of darkness are rebellious angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and who now rule in the heavenlies over the nations of the world—Col. 1:13; Dan. 10:20.

Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

Dan 10:20 Then he said, Do you know why I have come to you? And now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia; so I go forth, and the prince of Javan is now about to come.

2. We need to realize that our warfare is not against human beings but against the evil spirits, the evil powers, in the heavenlies.

D. Spiritual warfare is a matter of the Body of Christ; we must fight the battle in the Body—Eph. 1:22-23:

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

1. Spiritual warfare is not an individual matter; it is a matter of the Body—4:12, 16; 5:30.

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Eph 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.

2. The church is a corporate warrior, and the believers together make up this corporate warrior—6:10-20.

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

- Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,
- Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
3. If we read Ephesians from chapter 1 to chapter 6, we will see that warfare is a matter of the Body of Christ, and the Body is a new creation in Christ, in the Spirit, and in the heavenlies—2:6:
- Eph 1~6 be omitted.
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
- a. If we do not have the Body life, we are not adequate to engage in spiritual warfare.
- b. In order to fight the battle, we must be in the reality of the Body—4:12, 16.
- Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
4. After we have been formed corporately into an army, we will be able to fight against God's enemy—6:11-12.
- Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
- Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.
- E. To deal with God's enemy, we need to be empowered with the greatness of the power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavenlies, far above all the evil spirits in the air—v. 10; 1:19-22:
- Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
- Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,
- Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
- Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
1. The fact that we need to be empowered in the Lord indicates that in ourselves we cannot fight the spiritual warfare against Satan and his evil kingdom; we can fight only in the Lord and in the might of His strength—6:10.
- Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
2. The charge to be empowered implies the need to exercise our will; if we would be empowered for spiritual warfare, our will must be strong and exercised—S. S. 4:4.
- S. S. 4:4 Your neck is like the tower of David, / Built for an armory: / A thousand bucklers hang on it, / All the shields of the mighty men.

- F. We need to know and apply the principles of spiritual warfare:
1. The first principle of spiritual warfare is that we cannot use fleshly weapons, human schemes, and natural methods; since spiritual warfare is not against flesh but against spiritual forces (Eph. 6:12), the weapons should not be fleshly (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

2 Cor 10:3 For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to flesh;

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,

2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.
 2. The second principle of spiritual warfare is to keep the position of ascension—Eph. 2:6:

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

 - a. In fighting a battle, the position above the enemy is strategic.
 - b. Satan and his spiritual forces are in the air, but we are seated in the third heaven above them—v. 6.

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
 - c. Satan and his forces are under us, and it is their fate to be defeated by us.
 3. The third principle of spiritual warfare is that we must use spiritual weapons—2 Cor. 10:3-5:

2 Cor 10:3 For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to flesh;

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,

2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.

 - a. The spiritual weapons are powerful to overthrow the strongholds of the enemy—vv. 4-5.

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,

2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.
 - b. When we are fighting, all our activities must be of the spirit, touching the feeling from within our spirit; this is an extremely basic principle.
 4. The fourth principle of spiritual warfare is to have fighting prayers—the prayers of spiritual warfare—Matt. 6:9-10, 13:

Matt 6:9 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified;

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

Matt 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours

is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

- a. Whenever and wherever there is the building up of the church, there is the activity of the gates of Hades against it; therefore, there is the need for fighting prayers—16:18-19.

Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

- b. If we see that the prayers of the greatest worth are prayers in ascension, then we can understand that prayer is a warfare, and we will utter prayers of warfare; such is the nature of the prayer spoken of in Ephesians 6:

Eph 6 be omitted.

- 1) All prayers that are expressed in the heavenly realm and from the throne of God are prayers of warfare—Rev. 5:8; 8:3-5.

Rev 5:8 And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which bowls are the prayers of the saints.

Rev 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Rev 8:4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.

Rev 8:5 And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

- 2) If we are in the heavenly realm, we are able to pray prayers of ascension, prayers of warfare—Eph. 2:6; 6:18.

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

- c. When we are strengthened, we are renewed; when we are renewed, we are filled; when we are filled, we are equipped to fight; it is in the fighting spirit that we pray fighting prayers of spiritual warfare—3:14-16; 4:23-24; 5:18b; 6:18.

Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

Eph 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Eph 5:18b ... but be filled in spirit,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and

watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

- d. We need to stand against the stratagems of the devil by fighting the battle in the Body with fighting prayers, praying at every time in spirit to put on the whole armor of God to build up the Body of Christ as the house of God for the glory of God and as the kingdom of God for the dominion of God for the complete fulfillment of the economy of God—vv. 10-20.

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Message Ten

**The Central and Crucial Point
of the Recovery Books of Ezra and Nehemiah—
the Proper and Adequate Leadership
in the Lord's Recovery**

RA Hymns: 538

Scripture Reading: Neh. 8:1-10; 13:14, 29-31;
Matt. 20:25-28; 23:8-13; Heb. 13:7

- Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
- Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.
- Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
- Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.
- Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.
- Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.
- Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.
- Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.
- Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,
- Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.
- Matt 20:25 But Jesus called them to Him and said, You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them.
- Matt 20:26 It shall not be so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your

servant,
 Matt 20:27 And whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave;
 Matt 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.
 Matt 23:8 But you, do not be called Rabbi, for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers.
 Matt 23:9 And do not call anyone on earth your father, for One is your Father, He who is in the heavens.
 Matt 23:10 Neither be called instructors, because One is your Instructor, the Christ.
 Matt 23:11 And the greatest among you shall be your servant.
 Matt 23:12 And he who will exalt himself shall be humbled, and he who will humble himself shall be exalted.
 Matt 23:13 But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you close off the kingdom of the heavens in the face of men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter.
 Heb 13:7 Remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith.

I. In God's eternal economy and in the Lord's recovery, leadership depends upon spiritual capacity; the leadership is not official, permanent, organizational, or hierarchical—1 Thes. 1:5; 2:1-14; 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24:

1 Thes 1:5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, even as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.
 1 Thes 2:1 For you yourselves know, brothers, our entrance toward you, that it has not been in vain.
 1 Thes 2:2 But having suffered previously and having been outrageously treated, even as you know, in Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggle.
 1 Thes 2:3 For our exhortation is not out of deception nor out of uncleanness nor in guile;
 1 Thes 2:4 But even as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who proves our hearts.
 1 Thes 2:5 For neither were we found at any time with flattering speech, even as you know, nor with a pretext for covetousness; God is witness.
 1 Thes 2:6 Nor did we seek glory from men, neither from you nor from others, though we could have stood on our authority as apostles of Christ.
 1 Thes 2:7 But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children.
 1 Thes 2:8 Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.
 1 Thes 2:9 For you remember, brothers, our labor and travail: While working night and day so as not to be burdensome to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.
 1 Thes 2:10 You are witnesses, as well as God, how in a holy and righteous and blameless manner we conducted ourselves toward you who believe,
 1 Thes 2:11 Just as you know how we were to each one of you, as a father to his own children, exhorting you and consoling you and testifying,
 1 Thes 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.
 1 Thes 2:13 And because of this we also thank God unceasingly that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but even as it truly is, the word of God, which also operates in you who believe.
 1 Thes 2:14 For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus, for you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, even as they also from the Jews,

- 1 Thes 5:12 Furthermore we ask you, brothers, to acknowledge those who labor among you and take the lead among you in the Lord and admonish you,
- 1 Thes 5:13 And to regard them most highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.
- Heb 13:7 Remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith.
- Heb 13:17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.
- Heb 13:24 Greet all the ones leading you and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.

A. The Lord's concept of leadership is the opposite of the natural concept; among God's people there is actually no leadership in the natural sense—Matt. 20:25-28; 23:8-13:

- Matt 20:25 But Jesus called them to Him and said, You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them.
- Matt 20:26 It shall not be so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant,
- Matt 20:27 And whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave;
- Matt 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.
- Matt 23:8 But you, do not be called Rabbi, for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers.
- Matt 23:9 And do not call anyone on earth your father, for One is your Father, He who is in the heavens.
- Matt 23:10 Neither be called instructors, because One is your Instructor, the Christ.
- Matt 23:11 And the greatest among you shall be your servant.
- Matt 23:12 And he who will exalt himself shall be humbled, and he who will humble himself shall be exalted.
- Matt 23:13 But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you close off the kingdom of the heavens in the face of men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter.

1. In God's New Testament economy, leadership means slavery; anyone who would be a leader must be willing to be a slave—Mark 10:35-45.

- Mark 10:35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying to Him, Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask You.
- Mark 10:36 And He said to them, What do you want Me to do for you?
- Mark 10:37 And they said to Him, Grant to us to sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory.
- Mark 10:38 But Jesus said to them, You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup which I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?
- Mark 10:39 And they said to Him, We are able. And Jesus said to them, The cup which I drink you shall drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you shall be baptized.
- Mark 10:40 But to sit on My right or on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.
- Mark 10:41 And when the ten heard this, they began to be indignant concerning James and John.
- Mark 10:42 And Jesus called them to Him and said to them, You know that those who are esteemed as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones

- exercise authority over them.
- Mark 10:43 But it is not so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant,
- Mark 10:44 And whoever wants to be first among you shall be the slave of all.
- Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.
2. A leadership is shaped by the growth in life and is an issue of the need; if there is no need, no leadership can be manifested—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

1 Pet 5:1 Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed:

1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;

1 Pet 5:3 Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock.
 3. In order to set aside the human concept of leadership, God ordained that the leadership among His people should depend always upon spiritual capacity—Acts 13:2, 9; 14:12; Gal. 2:11-14.

Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

Acts 13:9 But Saul, who is also Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

Acts 14:12 And they called Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, since he was the one who took the lead in the discourse.

Gal 2:11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.

Gal 2:12 For before some came from James, he continually ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to shrink back and separate himself, fearing those of the circumcision.

Gal 2:13 And the rest of the Jews also joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was carried away in their hypocrisy.

Gal 2:14 But when I saw that they were not walking in a straightforward way in relation to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?
 4. There is no organized leadership in the Lord's recovery, and there is no unifying organization; instead, there is one Head who gives orders to all the members directly, and there is one organism, the Body—Eph. 1:22-23.

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- B. According to the New Testament, the authority of the apostles is spiritual and is in their ministry of the word—Acts 2:42; 2 Cor. 13:5-6; 1 Thes. 2:13:
- Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- 2 Cor 13:5 Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not realize about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?
- 2 Cor 13:6 But I hope that you will know that we are not disapproved.
- 1 Thes 2:13 And because of this we also thank God unceasingly that when you received the word

of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but even as it truly is, the word of God, which also operates in you who believe.

1. They have no authority in position to interfere with the church affairs; only the word ministered by them has authority—Col. 4:16; Heb. 13:7.

Col 4:16 And when this letter is read among you, cause that it be read in the church of the Laodiceans also, and that you also read the one from Laodicea.

Heb 13:7 Remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith.

2. The churches follow the apostles because the apostles have the New Testament teaching—Phil. 2:12; Acts 20:17-36.

Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

Acts 20:17 And from Miletus he sent word to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Acts 20:18 And when they came to him, he said to them, You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you all the time,

Acts 20:19 Serving the Lord as a slave with all humility and tears and trials which came upon me by the plots of the Jews;

Acts 20:20 How I did not withhold any of those things that are profitable by not declaring them to you and by not teaching you publicly and from house to house,

Acts 20:21 Solemnly testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance unto God and faith in our Lord Jesus.

Acts 20:22 And now, behold, I am going bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what will meet me there,

Acts 20:23 Except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in city after city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

Acts 20:24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:25 And now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will see my face no more.

Acts 20:26 Therefore I testify to you on this day that I am clean from the blood of all men,

Acts 20:27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you all the counsel of God.

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

Acts 20:29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 And from among you yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after them.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.

Acts 20:32 And now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified.

Acts 20:33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing.

Acts 20:34 You yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my needs and to

- those who are with me.
- Acts 20:35 In all things I have shown you by example that toiling in this way we ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
- Acts 20:36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down with them all and prayed.
3. If a church goes astray or is misled, the apostles have the obligation and responsibility to deal with the situation according to God's word, which has authority—vv. 26-27; 2 Cor. 10:6; 2 Tim. 1:13; 4:2.

Acts 20:26 Therefore I testify to you on this day that I am clean from the blood of all men,

Acts 20:27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you all the counsel of God.

2 Cor 10:6 And we are ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

2 Tim 1:13 Hold a pattern of the healthy words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

2 Tim 4:2 Proclaim the word; be ready in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching.
 4. The leadership is produced, strengthened, and restricted in the apostles' teaching—Titus 1:9.

Titus 1:9 Holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to convict those who oppose.
- C. In the New Testament there is one ministry with one leadership—Acts 1:17, 25; 2 Cor. 4:1:
- Acts 1:17 For he was numbered among us and was allotted his portion of this ministry.
- Acts 1:25 To take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.
- 2 Cor 4:1 Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart;
1. Today's Christianity is divided because there are so many leaderships; because the ministry is one, there should not be more than one leadership.
 2. There is one leadership since God, the Lord, and the Spirit are all one; the one leadership is for the keeping of the oneness of the Spirit for the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:3-6.

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
 3. The New Testament shows us God's delegated authority in the leading ones in the ministry, an authority that is for building up—2 Cor. 13:10:

2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.

 - a. God's delegated authority was in the teaching of the leading ones—1 Cor. 4:17b-21; 7:17b; 11:2; 16:1; 2 Thes. 3:6, 9, 12, 14.

1 Cor 4:17b ... who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.

1 Cor 4:18 Now some have become puffed up as though I were not coming to you.

1 Cor 4:19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will ascertain not the

- speech of those who are puffed up but the power.
- 1 Cor 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not in speech but in power.
- 1 Cor 4:21 What do you want? Should I come to you with a rod or in love and a spirit of meekness?
- 1 Cor 7:17b ... And so I direct in all the churches.
- 1 Cor 11:2 But I praise you because in all things you have remembered me and hold fast the things that I have handed down even as I handed them down to you.
- 1 Cor 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, just as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also do.
- 2 Thes 3:6 Now we charge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the things which were handed down to you and which you received from us.
- 2 Thes 3:9 Not because we do not have the right, but in order that we might give ourselves to you as a pattern that you might imitate us.
- 2 Thes 3:12 Now such ones we charge and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work with quietness and eat their own bread.
- 2 Thes 3:14 And if anyone does not obey our word through this letter, mark this one so as not to mingle with him, in order that he may be ashamed.
- b. Teaching the same thing everywhere in every church was the demonstration of Paul's delegated authority—1 Cor. 4:17b.
- 1 Cor 4:17b ... who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.
- D. The leadership in the New Testament ministry is in the New Testament teaching more than in the leading ones of the New Testament ministry themselves—Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:10.
- Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- 2 Tim 3:10 But you have closely followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, endurance,

II. The leadership in the New Testament ministry is the leadership of the controlling vision of God's eternal economy, not the leadership of a controlling person; the apostle Paul declared, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision"—Acts 26:19:

- A. God's eternal economy was unveiled through the apostles, but because the believers lost the proper understanding of it, there is the need for it to be recovered by the Lord; God's eternal economy (Gk. *oikonomia*) is His household administration to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people so that He may have a house to express Himself, which house is the church, the Body of Christ—Eph. 3:2, 8-9; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15; Eph. 1:10; 2:21-22; 1 Pet. 4:10.
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which

throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
 Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
 Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
 Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
 1 Pet 4:10 Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

B. *Recovery* means the restoration or return to a normal condition after a damage or a loss has been incurred; *recovery* means to go back to God's original intention and standard as revealed in the Scriptures, which is according to the present advance of His recovery of the contents of God's eternal economy:

1. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ as our center, reality, life, and everything in His full ministry of incarnation, inclusion, and intensification—Col. 1:17b, 18b; Psa. 80:1, 15, 17-19; John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 2:4-5, 7, 17; 3:7-8, 12-13, 17-22; 4:5; 5:6; John 6:57; 14:21, 23; 21:15-17; cf. Jer. 32:39.

Col 1:17b ... and all things cohere in Him;

Col 1:18b ... He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

Psa 80:1 O Shepherd of Israel, give ear, / You who lead Joseph like a flock; / You who are enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth.

Psa 80:15 Even the stock which Your right hand has planted / And the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself.

Psa 80:17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, / Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself;

Psa 80:18 Then we will not turn back from You. / Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.

Psa 80:19 O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; / Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rev 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows

except he who receives it.

Rev 3:7 And to the messenger of the church in Philadelphia write: These things says the Holy One, the true One, the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no one opens:

Rev 3:8 I know your works; behold, I have put before you an opened door which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept My word and have not denied My name.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Rev 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev 3:17 Because you say, I am wealthy and have become rich and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.

Rev 3:19 As many as I love I rebuke and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent.

Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.

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.

Rev 3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.

John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.

John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

- Jer 32:39 And I will give them one heart and one way, to fear Me all the days, for their own good and for the good of their children after them.
2. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness of the Body of Christ—John 17:11, 21-23; Eph. 4:3-4a; Rev. 1:11.
- John 17:11 And I am no longer in the world; yet they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given to Me, that they may be one even as We are.
- John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.
- John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;
- John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.
- Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:
- Eph 4:4a One Body and one Spirit, ...
- Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
3. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the function of all the members of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:15-16; Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; 1 Cor. 14:1, 4b, 12, 26, 31, 39; Jer. 31:33-34 (see footnote 1 on v. 33).
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Rom 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.
- 1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
- 1 Cor 14:1 Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.
- 1 Cor 14:4b ... but he who prophesies builds up the church.
- 1 Cor 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
- 1 Cor 14:39 So then, my brothers, desire earnestly the prophesying, and do not forbid the

speaking in tongues.

Jer 31:33 But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My ¹law in their inward parts and write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

note 1 31:33¹ (law) See note 101 in Heb. 8. The center, the content, and the reality of the new covenant is the inner law of life (Rom. 8:2). In its essence, this law refers to the divine life, and the divine life is the Triune God, who is embodied in the all-inclusive Christ (Col. 2:9) and realized as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), and who has been processed and consummated to become everything to His chosen people.

According to its life, the law of the new covenant is the Triune God, and according to its function, it is the almighty divine capacity. This divine capacity can do everything in us for the carrying out of God's economy. According to this capacity we can know God, live God, and be constituted with God in His life and nature that we may become His increase, His enlargement, to be His fullness for His eternal expression (Eph. 1:22-23; 3:19-21). Furthermore, the capacity of the inner law of life constitutes us the members of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30) with all kinds of functions (Rom. 12:4-8; Eph. 4:11, 16).

Jer 31:34 And they will no longer teach, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for all of them will know Me, from the little one among them even to the great one among them, declares Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

C. This vision must be renewed in us day by day to be the controlling vision of all our life, work, and activity—1 John 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:9; Isa. 2:5; Psa. 119:105; 36:8-9.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Isa 2:5 House of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah.

Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet / And a light to my path.

Psa 36:8 They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, / And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures.

Psa 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; / In Your light we see light.

D. For a person to leave the Lord's recovery means that he has never seen what the Lord's recovery is; if we have not seen a vision of the Lord's recovery, we actually are not in the Lord's recovery—Acts 26:13-19; cf. Gen. 13:14-18.

Acts 26:13 At midday, on the way, I saw, O King, a light from heaven beyond the brightness of the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me.

Acts 26:14 And when we all fell to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.

Acts 26:15 And I said, Who are You, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.

Acts 26:16 But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you;

Acts 26:17 Delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you,

- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
- Gen 13:14 And Jehovah said to Abram after Lot had separated from him, Now lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward;
- Gen 13:15 For all the land that you see I will give to you and to your seed forever.
- Gen 13:16 And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then your seed can also be numbered.
- Gen 13:17 Rise up; walk through the land according to its length and its breadth, for I will give it to you.
- Gen 13:18 And Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to Jehovah.
- E. We in the Lord's recovery must have a clear vision of God's eternal economy and then be governed, controlled, and directed by this vision, for we are here to carry out God's eternal economy in His recovery.
- F. The leadership in the Lord's recovery is the leadership of the God-given vision of God's eternal economy that restricts us, directs us, and controls us so that confusion and division are avoided—Prov. 29:18a.
 Prov 29:18a Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; ...
- G. Read the supplement from *The Vision of the Age*.

III. The central and crucial point of the recovery books of Ezra and Nehemiah is the proper and adequate leadership—Neh. 8:1-10:

- Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
- Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.
- Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
- Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.
- Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

A. In the Lord's recovery we have the leadership of the one controlling vision in the one ministry through those who bring in the vision—Eph. 3:3-5, 9; Col. 1:24-29:

Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,

Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,

Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;

Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

1. Paul said that he and his co-workers were “servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1); they were stewards, dispensing the heavenly vision of the mysteries of God to the believers; these mysteries are Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ (Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4; 5:32); this dispensing service, the stewardship, is the ministry of the apostles (3:2, 8-9).

Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,

Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,

Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

2. “It is sought in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:2); like Paul, we need to be “shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful” (7:25b; 1 Tim. 1:12) so that we may be faithful slaves, who habitually give the household of God spiritual food, ministering

the word of God and Christ as the life supply to the believers in the church (Matt. 24:45-47); we want to be those who are faithful over the Lord's work in this age so that we may participate in the Lord's joy in the next age, with the realization that the Lord's appraisal and reward are not related to the size and quantity of our work but to our faithfulness in using His gift to the fullest extent (25:21-23; cf. Rev. 3:8).

1 Tim 1:12 I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry,
 Matt 24:45 Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time?
 Matt 24:46 Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.
 Matt 24:47 Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.
 Matt 25:21 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 Matt 25:22 And he who had received the two talents also came and said, Master, you delivered to me two talents; behold, I have gained another two talents.
 Matt 25:23 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 Rev 3:8 I know your works; behold, I have put before you an opened door which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept My word and have not denied My name.

- B. Only under the leadership of faithful persons such as Nehemiah and Ezra could Israel be reconstituted to be the testimony of God, the expression of God on earth, a people absolutely different from the Gentile nations; this is a type of what God wants the church to be today—Neh. 13:14, 29-31; 1 Tim. 3:15.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.
 Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.
 Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,
 Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.
 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

- C. Nehemiah knew that without Ezra he could not reconstitute the people of God:
1. In reconstituting the nation, Nehemiah realized that he did not know God's Word.
 2. Ezra was renowned for his knowledge of the Word of God, and Nehemiah was willing to turn to him for help.
- D. According to the divine principle, the proper representation of the Body is always by those who are matched with others—1 Cor. 1:1; Exo. 4:14b-16:

1 Cor 1:1 Paul, a called apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Sosthenes the brother,
 Exo 4:14b ... I know that he can certainly speak. And even now he is coming out to meet you; and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

- Exo 4:15 And you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do.
- Exo 4:16 And he shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him.

1. To be alone is to be individualistic, but to be sent forth with another is to be sent according to the principle of the Body—Luke 10:1; Acts 13:1-3; Rom. 12:5; 1 Thes. 1:1.

Luke 10:1 Now after these things, the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to come.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

Acts 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1 Thes 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

2. To act individualistically is to violate the principle of the Body.
3. In the Lord's recovery there is an urgent need for the true work of building up the Body; however, this building work can be carried out only by co-workers who have been matched—Phil. 2:19-22.

Phil 2:19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged by knowing the things concerning you.

Phil 2:20 For I have no one like-souled who will genuinely care for what concerns you;

Phil 2:21 For all seek their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus.

Phil 2:22 But you know his approvedness, that as a child with a father he has served with me unto the gospel.

- E. "The Lord has shown me that He has prepared many brothers who will serve as fellow slaves with me in a blended way. I feel that this is the Lord's sovereign provision for His Body, and the up-to-date way to fulfill His ministry"—Witness Lee, March 24, 1997 (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 5, "A Letter of Fellowship with Thanks," p. 525).

Supplement from *The Vision of the Age*:

CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE COMPLETED VISION OF THIS AGE

In order for us to serve God today, our vision must extend all the way from the first vision of Adam in Genesis to the ultimate vision of the manifestation of the church, the New Jerusalem. This and this alone is the complete vision. It is not until today that this vision has been fully opened to us.

In the National Palace Museum in Taipei, there is a painting on a long scroll called "The River

Scene at Ching-Ming Festival.” It describes in detail the culture, life, and way of the Chinese people at the time of the painting. It is not enough to see only the first few portions of that long scroll. One has to go all the way from one end to the other end before he can have a clear picture, or “vision,” of the entire spectrum of life in China. In the same way we have our own painting, our “River Scene at Ching-Ming,” in our service to God. It begins from Adam’s vision of the tree of life in the garden of Eden and extends all the way to the New Jerusalem with the tree of life. The New Jerusalem is the last scene of the vision. After that there is nothing more to be seen.

...We are serving God according to the last scene, which includes all the previous scenes...

Since we have the up-to-date and ultimate vision, we should closely follow after it. We are absolutely not following a man; rather, we are following a vision. It is grossly wrong to say that we are following a certain person. We are following a vision that belongs to the present age. It is God’s consummate vision.

The Lord’s recovery was brought to us through our dear Brother Nee. Because of this he became a target of attack. In 1934 he was married in Hangchow. Some took this opportunity to stir up a storm. He became very sad, so one day I went to him to comfort him, saying, “Brother Nee, you know that between the two of us, there is no natural relationship. I do not take the way that you are taking or preach what you are preaching out of a natural friendship with you. The two of us are widely separated from each other. I am a northerner, and you are a southerner. Today I am taking the same pathway not because I am following you as a person. I am following the way that you are taking. Brother Nee, I would like you to know that even if one day you do not take this way, I will still take this way.” I said this because the storm affected some, and they decided not to take this way anymore. In other words, many people were following a man. When the man seemed to have changed, they turned away. But I told Brother Nee, “Even if one day you do not take this way, I will still take this way. I am not taking this way because of you, and I will not leave this way because of you. I have seen that this is the Lord’s way. I have seen the vision.”

Fifty-two years have passed. Today I do not regret at all what I have done. During the past fifty-two years I have seen the same story repeat itself again and again. Some people came and left. One scene changed, and another scene came along. Since the beginning of our work in Taiwan, during the past three decades we have witnessed some major crises. Even brothers whom I led to salvation and who went through my own training have left the Lord’s recovery. The vision has never changed, but the persons have indeed changed, and those who follow the vision also have changed. I would say a sober word to all of you from the bottom of my heart. By the Lord’s mercy I can stand here today to bring you this vision. I hope that you are not following me as a person; I hope that by the Lord’s mercy you are following the vision that I have shown you...

I would like to relate to you one fact. It is the Lord’s mercy that He has revealed to me the vision. I advise you not to follow me but to follow this vision, which Brother Nee and all the servants of the Lord throughout the ages have left to us and which I have handed to you. This is indeed the vision that extends from the first scene of Adam to the last scene of the New Jerusalem. (pp. 48-50)

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**

RA Hymns: 971, 972

Scripture Reading: Rev. 21:2, 9-11, 18; 22:1

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

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.

I. 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 build up the church as the house of God and the kingdom of God by living out and working out the New Jerusalem according to this intrinsic significance—1 Kings 8:48; Psa. 48:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:21-22.

1 Kings 8:48 And if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;

Psa 48:1 Great is Jehovah, / And much to be praised / In the city of our God, / In His holy mountain.

Psa 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

II. To live and serve God according to the vision of the age in the ministry of the age is to live out and work out the New Jerusalem: “the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass”—Rev. 21:18; Acts

26:19; 22:15; Rev. 21:2, 9-11:

- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
Acts 22:15 For you will be a witness to Him unto all men of the things which you have seen and heard.
Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

- A. The city being pure gold, like clear glass, signifies our need of purification with God in His holy nature and of enlightenment through education by applying the Bible teachings to our mind for the renewing and enlightenment of our mind to make us clear with the thoughts, considerations, and ways of God—cf. Matt. 5:8; Eph. 4:23; John 17:17.

Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

- B. “The building work” is God’s unique work for our reconstitution with the Triune God so that we may be rebuilt with Him and minister Him into others for Him to build Himself into their being to make them beings in the New Jerusalem—1 Cor. 3:9, 12; Eph. 3:16-19; Rev. 3:12; S. S. 6:4; Heb. 11:10.

1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

S. S. 6:4 You are as beautiful, my love, as Tirzah, / As lovely as Jerusalem, / As terrible as an army with banners.

Heb 11:10 For he eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

- C. The city with its wall signifies the New Jerusalem as the eternal kingdom of God under the headship of God for the separation of God’s people and the protection of God’s interests—Neh. 4:17; Eph. 5:26.

Neh 4:17 Those who built the wall and those who carried burdens took the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other holding a weapon.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

- D. The wall of the city being jasper (God's life in its richness) and the city being gold (God's divine nature) reveal that God's eternal economy is to make us the same as He is in life and in nature but not in the Godhead for His unique expression—Gen. 1:26; John 10:10b; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 4:3; 21:10-11, 18.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

John 10:10b ... I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

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 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

III. To live out and work out the New Jerusalem is to live and serve in the intrinsic significance of Ezra's ministry and Nehemiah's leadership:

- A. We need to stay in the process of being purified from all mixture, taking the Lord and the interests of His eternal economy as our unique goal—Ezra 9:2; Matt. 5:8; 1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:4a, 6; Luke 9:54-55; Heb. 4:12; 1 Kings 8:48:

Ezra 9:2 For they have taken some of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this unfaithfulness.

Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

1 Tim 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

2 Cor 6:4a But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, in much endurance, ...

2 Cor 6:6 In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love,

Luke 9:54 And seeing this, the disciples James and John said, Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?

Luke 9:55 But turning, He rebuked them and said, You do not know of what kind of spirit you are.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

1 Kings 8:48 And if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;

1. 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—Psa. 139:23-24; 51:7, 10; Rev. 22:1.

Psa 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; / Try me, and know my anxious thoughts;

Psa 139:24 And see if there is some harmful way in me, / And lead me on the eternal way.

Psa 51:7 Purge my sin with hyssop, and I will be clean; / Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Psa 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, / And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

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.

2. We can be purified through the washing process of the water of life in God's pure word; the more a person is in the word of God, the purer he becomes—Psa. 12:6; 119:9, 140; Eph. 5:26; Isa. 55:8-11.

Psa 12:6 The words of Jehovah are pure words, / Silver refined in a furnace on the earth, / Purified seven times.

Psa 119:9 With what should a young man keep his way pure? / By guarding it according to Your word.

Psa 119:140 Your word is very pure, / And Your servant loves it.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Isa 55:8 For My thoughts are not your thoughts, / And your ways are not My ways, declares Jehovah.

Isa 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, / So My ways are higher than your ways, / And My thoughts higher than your thoughts.

Isa 55:10 For just as the rain comes down / And the snow from heaven, / And does not return there, / Until it waters the earth / And makes it bear and sprout forth, / That it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater;

Isa 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; / It will not return to Me vainly, / But it will accomplish what I delight in, / And it will prosper in the matter to which I have sent it.

3. Leviticus 19:19 reveals that God wants everything to be according to its kind, without any mixture—Rev. 17:3-6; Deut. 22:5, 9-11; cf. Gen. 1:11, 21, 24-26; 2:7-9:

Lev 19:19 You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor shall a garment made of two kinds of material come upon you.

Rev 17:3 And he carried me away in spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Rev 17:4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication.

Rev 17:5 And on her forehead there was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Rev 17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And I marveled with great marvel when I saw her.

Deut 22:5 A woman shall not put on a man's clothing, nor shall a man wear a woman's garment; for everyone who does these things is an abomination to Jehovah

- your God.
- Deut 22:9 You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the full produce, the seed which you sow, be forfeited to the sanctuary, as well as the increase of the vineyard.
- Deut 22:10 You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.
- Deut 22:11 You shall not wear clothing of mixed materials, of wool and linen together.
- Gen 1:11 And God said, Let the earth sprout grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit according to their kind with their seed in them upon the earth; and it was so.
- Gen 1:21 And God created the great sea creatures and every living animal that moves, with which the waters swarmed, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind; and God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1:24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth living animals according to their kind, cattle and creeping things and animals of the earth according to their kind; and it was so.
- Gen 1:25 And God made the animals of the earth according to their kind and the cattle according to their kind and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind, and God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
- Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.
- Gen 2:8 And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed.
- Gen 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- a. Breeding cattle without mixture signifies that life is not allowed to be mixed; those living by the life of God must not live by the flesh—cf. Gal. 5:16.

Gal 5:16 But I say, Walk by the Spirit and you shall by no means fulfill the lust of the flesh.
 - b. Sowing seed without mixture signifies that in the ministry of the word only one kind of seed, one kind of teaching, should be sown—the unique teaching of God’s eternal economy—Deut. 22:9; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3.

Deut 22:9 You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the full produce, the seed which you sow, be forfeited to the sanctuary, as well as the increase of the vineyard.

1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things

1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God’s economy, which is in faith.

1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
 - c. Making a garment without mixing materials signifies that our conduct is not

allowed to be mixed; those living in the life of the New Testament should not live by the ordinances of the Old Testament (Gal. 2:19-20; 5:1-6), and those who belong to the Lord should not live according to the customs of the Gentiles (Lev. 20:23; 18:3; cf. Eph. 4:17; Rom. 12:2a).

- Gal 2:19 For I through law have died to law that I might live to God.
- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- Gal 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not be entangled with a yoke of slavery again.
- Gal 5:2 Behold, I Paul say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.
- Gal 5:3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law.
- Gal 5:4 You have been brought to nought, separated from Christ, you who are being justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
- Gal 5:5 For we by the Spirit out of faith eagerly await the hope of righteousness.
- Gal 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith avails, operating through love.
- Lev 20:23 And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation, which I am about to send away before you. Because they did all these things, so I abhorred them.
- Lev 18:3 You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, in which you dwelt; and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, nor shall you walk in their statutes.
- Eph 4:17 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind,
- Rom 12:2a And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind ...

4. First Peter 1:22 says, "Since you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned brotherly love, love one another from a pure heart fervently":

- a. This means that to have our soul (our mind, emotion, and will) purified is to have it delivered from all things other than God and fixed on God as the sole object and unique goal (1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Thes. 3:5); when we obey the truth, the content and reality of our faith in Christ (2 Tim. 4:7; Titus 1:1), our entire soul is concentrated on God and is thus purified from all things other than God.

- 1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."
- 1 Cor 2:10 But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.
- 2 Thes 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.
- 2 Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.
- Titus 1:1 Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's chosen ones and the full knowledge of the truth, which is

according to godliness,

- b. Since the purifying of our souls causes our entire being to be concentrated on God so that we may love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind (Mark 12:30), such purifying issues in unfeigned brotherly love, our loving from the heart fervently those whom God loves (John 13:5, 14-17, 34-35; 2 Pet. 1:5, 7; Rom. 12:9-11; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; 1 Thes. 3:12; 4:9-10; Heb. 13:1; 1 John 2:5-8; 3:11, 23; 4:7-8, 16-21).

Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."

John 13:5 Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

John 13:14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

John 13:15 For I have given you an example so that you also may do even as I have done to you.

John 13:16 Truly, truly, I say to you, A slave is not greater than his master, nor one who is sent greater than the one who sends him.

John 13:17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

2 Pet 1:5 And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;

2 Pet 1:7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.

Rom 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

Rom 12:10 Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.

Rom 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

2 Tim 1:6 For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

1 Thes 3:12 And the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we also to you,

1 Thes 4:9 Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need for me to write to you, for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another;

1 Thes 4:10 For you also do this unto all the brothers in the whole of Macedonia. But we exhort you, brothers, to abound still more

Heb 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

1 John 2:5 But whoever keeps His word, truly in this one the love of God has been perfected. In this we know that we are in Him.

1 John 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.

1 John 2:7 Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment, which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you heard.

- 1 John 2:8 Yet again a new commandment I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.
- 1 John 3:11 For this is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,
- 1 John 3:23 And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, even as He gave a commandment to us.
- 1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and everyone who loves has been begotten of God and knows God.
- 1 John 4:8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.
- 1 John 4:16 And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.
- 1 John 4:17 In this has love been perfected with us, that we have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world.
- 1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear because fear has punishment, and he who fears has not been perfected in love.
- 1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.
- 1 John 4:20 If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.
- 1 John 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him, that he who loves God love his brother also.

B. We need to be educated to educate others with the truth for God's testimony, His corporate expression—2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; 6:3; 1 Cor. 14:31:

- 2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.
 - 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
 - 1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.
 - 1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
 - 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
1. The twelve foundations of the holy city, the New Jerusalem, bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, indicating that the New Jerusalem is built according to the apostles' teaching, the healthy teaching of God's economy—Rev. 21:14; Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 1:15; Titus 1:9; 2 Tim. 2:2.
- Rev 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
 - Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
 - 2 Tim 1:15 This you know, that all who are in Asia turned away from me, of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.
 - Titus 1:9 Holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to convict those who oppose.

- 2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.
2. Ezra was skilled in the law of God, which is linked to God's economy; the law is a type of Christ as God's Word, God's testimony, God's portrait, God's expression—Exo. 16:34; 34:28; cf. Rev. 1:2.
- Exo 16:34 As Jehovah commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony to be kept.
- Exo 34:28 And he was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. And He wrote upon the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.
- Rev 1:2 Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.
3. By coming to Christ as the living word in the written word, He can become the applied word for us to be infused with Him to become the testimony of Jesus—John 1:1; Rev. 19:13; John 5:39-40; 6:63; Rev. 1:2, 10-11.
- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.
- John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
- John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- Rev 1:2 Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.
- Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
- Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
4. By remaining in the unique ministry of the teaching of God's economy, we can apprehend the Word's intrinsic significance to be filled with the light of life—Neh. 8:8, 13; Matt. 4:12-16; John 1:4-5.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- Neh 8:13 And on the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, that is, in order to gain insight into the words of the law.
- Matt 4:12 Now when He heard that John was delivered up, He withdrew into Galilee.
- Matt 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is beside the sea in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali,
- Matt 4:14 In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying,
- Matt 4:15 "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:
- Matt 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in

- the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen."
- John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
5. We must learn to use the new language, "the language of Judah," in the new culture, the God-man culture of the new man—Neh. 13:23-24.
- Neh 13:23 In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab;
- Neh 13:24 And as for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod; and none of them could speak the language of Judah, but they spoke the language of the respective peoples.
- C. We need to be reconstituted with grace, which is the processed Triune God becoming life and everything to us—1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 10:29:
- 1 Pet 5:10 But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and ground you.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- Heb 10:29 By how much do you think he will be thought worthy of worse punishment who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has considered the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing and has insulted the Spirit of grace?
1. The twelve apostles represent the grace of the New Testament, signifying that grace is the source, the element, and the means for producing the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:14.
- Rev 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
2. We need to be constituted with grace upon grace, labor by grace, dispense grace, and minister the word of grace—John 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Pet. 4:10; Acts 20:32.
- John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- 1 Pet 4:10 Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.
- Acts 20:32 And now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified.
3. The New Jerusalem is built by God's constituting Himself into man to make man the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead so that God and man may become a corporate entity and be a mutual dwelling place—Rev. 21:2-3, 10-11, 18-22.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

- Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
- Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
- Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.
- Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
4. We should do only one work, which is the work of the New Jerusalem; we need to be one with our inner operating God as He proceeds to bring His chosen ones through the major steps of His organic salvation—regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, and conformation unto glorification.
 5. In this way we ascend 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, and all are beings of the New Jerusalem; this is the highest point of God's work, and we are His fellow workers—John 5:17; Phil. 2:13; Rev. 4:3; 21:11; 1 Cor. 3:9, 12; 2 Cor. 6:1; 1 Thes. 3:2.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father is working until now, and I also am working.

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

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 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

2 Cor 6:1 And working together with Him, we also entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain;

1 Thes 3:2 And we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and encourage you for the sake of your faith,
 6. “The processed and consummated Triune God, according to the good pleasure of His desire and for the highest intention in His economy, is building Himself into His chosen people and His chosen people into Himself, that He may have a constitution in Christ, as a mingling of divinity and humanity to be His organism, and the Body of Christ, as His eternal expression and the mutual abode for the redeeming God and the redeemed man. The ultimate consummation of this miraculous structure of treasure will be the New Jerusalem for eternity”—Witness Lee.
- D. We need to be fully separated unto God to be fully saturated with God, living a holy life for the church life to make us the holy city—Rev. 21:2; 2 Pet. 1:4:

- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- 2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
1. The renewing of the mind and the resulting transformation separate and save us from our nature and living that are soaked with the element of the world—Rev. 21:12a; Rom. 8:5-6; 12:2, 5-11; Eph. 4:23.

Rev 21:12a It had a great and high wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, ...

Rom 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Rom 12:7 Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching;

Rom 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.

Rom 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

Rom 12:10 Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.

Rom 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
 2. By living in our spirit and eating Christ as the hidden manna, we can overcome the world to become God's building—1 John 5:4, 18-19, 21; Rev. 2:12-17; cf. John 14:30.

1 John 5:4 For everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory which has overcome the world—our faith.

1 John 5:18 We know that everyone who is begotten of God does not sin, but he who has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him.

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the evil one.

1 John 5:21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

Rev 2:12 And to the messenger of the church in Pergamos write: These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:

Rev 2:13 I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name and have not denied My faith, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Rev 2:14 But I have a few things against you, that you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat idol sacrifices and to commit fornication.

Rev 2:15 In the same way you also have some who hold in like manner the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

Rev 2:16 Repent therefore; but if not, I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war

- with them with the sword of My mouth.
- Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.
- John 14:30 I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing;
3. We need to be fully separated from the idolatrous world of Babylon, which is characterized by the wickedness of business, or commerce, involving covetousness, deceit, and the love of money; our Christian life should be without the love of money, and our Christian work should not be a money-making trade—Zech. 5:5-11; 1 Tim. 3:3, 8; 6:5-10; Acts 11:29-30; 20:33-34; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; Heb. 13:5; 2 Cor. 2:17; 12:15; cf. 2 Kings 5:15-27:
- Zech 5:5 Then the angel who spoke with me went forth and said to me, Lift up now your eyes and see what this is that goes forth.
- Zech 5:6 And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah vessel that goes forth; and he said, This is their appearance in all the land;
- Zech 5:7 (Then a lead cover was lifted up) and this is a woman sitting within the ephah vessel.
- Zech 5:8 Then he said, This is Wickedness. And he threw her down into the midst of the ephah vessel and threw the lead weight over its opening.
- Zech 5:9 Then I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there were two women going forth, and the wind was in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork. And they lifted up the ephah vessel between the earth and the heavens.
- Zech 5:10 And I said to the angel who spoke with me, Where are they taking the ephah vessel?
- Zech 5:11 And he said to me, To build a house for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there in her own place.
- 1 Tim 3:3 Not an excessive drinker; not a striker, but forbearing; not contentious; not fond of money;
- 1 Tim 3:8 Deacons must similarly be grave, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for base gain;
- 1 Tim 6:5 Perpetual wranglings of men corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, supposing godliness to be a means of gain.
- 1 Tim 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain;
- 1 Tim 6:7 For we have brought nothing into the world, because neither can we carry anything out.
- 1 Tim 6:8 But having food and covering, with these we will be content.
- 1 Tim 6:9 But those who intend to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin.
- 1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all evils, because of which some, aspiring after money, have been led away from the faith and pierced themselves through with many pains.
- Acts 11:29 And the disciples, according to how one was prospered, determined, each one of them, to send things for dispensing to the brothers dwelling in Judea,
- Acts 11:30 Which also they did, sending it to the elders through the hand of Barnabas and Saul.
- Acts 20:33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing.

Acts 20:34 You yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my needs and to those who are with me.

2 Tim 3:2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2 Tim 3:3 Without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, not lovers of good,

2 Tim 3:4 Traitors, reckless, blinded with pride, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

Heb 13:5 Let your way of life be without the love of money, being satisfied with the things which are at hand; for He Himself has said, "I shall by no means give you up, neither by any means shall I abandon you";

2 Cor 2:17 For we are not like the many, adulterating the word of God for profit; but as out of sincerity, but as out of God, before God we speak in Christ.

2 Cor 12:15 But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?

2 Kings 5:15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him and said, Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except with Israel. And now, please accept a present from your servant.

2 Kings 5:16 But he said, As Jehovah lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing. And Naaman urged him to take it, but he refused.

2 Kings 5:17 And Naaman said, Then if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth, for your servant will no more offer burnt offerings and sacrifices to other gods, but to Jehovah only.

2 Kings 5:18 In this matter may Jehovah pardon your servant: When my master goes into the house of Rimmon to bow down there and leans on my arm, and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I bow down in the house of Rimmon, may Jehovah pardon your servant in this matter.

2 Kings 5:19 And he said to him, Go in peace. And when he had gone from him a little way,

2 Kings 5:20 Gehazi, the attendant of Elisha the man of God said, Now my master has spared Naaman this Syrian by not receiving from his hand that which he brought. As Jehovah lives, I will run after him and take something from him.

2 Kings 5:21 So Gehazi pursued Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he alighted from the chariot to meet him and said, Is all well?

2 Kings 5:22 And he said, All is well. My master has sent me, saying, Now at this moment two young men from among the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim; please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.

2 Kings 5:23 And Naaman said, Please take two talents. And he urged him and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of clothes, and gave them to two of his attendants; and they carried them before him.

2 Kings 5:24 And when he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in the house. And he sent the men away, and they departed.

2 Kings 5:25 And he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, Where have you come from, Gehazi? And he said, Your servant has not gone anywhere.

2 Kings 5:26 And he said to him, Did not my heart go with you when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to receive silver and to receive clothing and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and oxen and male servants and female servants?

2 Kings 5:27 Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cleave to you and to your seed forever.
And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

- a. Satan is a businessman, a merchant, and his thought is according to his commercial principle, which is versus God's purpose in creating man—Ezek. 28:16, 18; Job 1:9; cf. Phil. 3:7-8; Gen. 1:26.

Ezek 28:16 By the abundance of your trading they filled your midst with violence, and you sinned. So I cast you out as profane from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek 28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities in the unrighteousness of your trading you have profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I sent forth fire from your midst; it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all those who look at you.

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered Jehovah and said, Does Job fear God without cause?

Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

- b. Of the cargo sold by Babylon, the first item is gold and the last is the souls of men; *souls of men* refers to men who sell themselves for employment—Rev. 18:12-13; cf. 2 Pet. 2:3, 15.

Rev 18:12 Cargo of gold and silver and precious stone and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel of most precious wood and brass and iron and marble,

Rev 18:13 And cinnamon and amomum and incense and ointment and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargo of horses and chariots and slaves and souls of men.

2 Pet 2:3 And in covetousness, with fabricated words, they will make merchandise of you, for whom the judgment of old is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

2 Pet 2:15 Forsaking the straight way, they have gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness

- c. This depicts not only the coming Babylon but also today's world; people sell their soul, their life, that is, themselves, to their occupation, neglecting God and their eternal destiny—cf. Luke 12:13-21.

Luke 12:13 And someone out of the crowd said to Him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

Luke 12:14 But He said to him, Man, who appointed Me a judge or a divider over you?

Luke 12:15 And He said to them, Watch and guard yourself from all covetousness,

for no one's life is in the abundance of his possessions.

Luke 12:16 And He told them a parable, saying, The land of a certain rich man brought forth abundantly.

Luke 12:17 And he reasoned in himself, saying, What shall I do, for I have no place where I may gather my crops?

Luke 12:18 And he said, I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and I will gather there all my wheat and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; rest, eat, drink, be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said to him, Foolish one, this night they are requiring your soul from you; and the things which you have prepared, whose will they be?

Luke 12:21 So is he who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

- d. God's sovereignty will cause the wickedness in business, which the people of Israel learned from the Babylonians in their captivity, to go back to Babylon (the land of Shinar)—Zech. 5:10-11; Gen. 11:2, 9.

Zech 5:10 And I said to the angel who spoke with me, Where are they taking the ephah vessel?

Zech 5:11 And he said to me, To build a house for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there in her own place.

Gen 11:2 And as they journeyed east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

Gen 11:9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there Jehovah confounded the language of all the earth, and from there Jehovah scattered them over the surface of all the earth.

E. We need to build up the wall to protect the church as the house of God:

1. We can build up the wall through the overcoming blood of the Lamb, applied to us through our repenting, confessing our sins, and asking God for His purging—Rev. 12:11; Psalms 51:18.

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

Psa 51:18 Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion; / Build the walls of Jerusalem.

2. We must shepherd the flock of God by sounding the one trumpet of the unique New Testament ministry, declaring to them all the counsel of God to complete the word of God with the Lord's protective warning and healthy teaching, so that they may be full-grown in Christ—1 Cor. 14:8; Eph. 4:11; Acts 20:26-35; Ezek. 33:1-11; 34:25; Col. 1:24-29.

1 Cor 14:8 For also if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

Acts 20:26 Therefore I testify to you on this day that I am clean from the blood of all men,

Acts 20:27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you all the counsel of God.

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

Acts 20:29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 And from among you yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after them.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.

Acts 20:32 And now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified.

Acts 20:33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing.

Acts 20:34 You yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my needs and to those who are with me.

Acts 20:35 In all things I have shown you by example that toiling in this way we ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Ezek 33:1 Then the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,

Ezek 33:2 Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them, Whenever I bring the sword upon a land and the people of the land take a man from their midst and set him up as their watchman,

Ezek 33:3 And when he sees the sword come upon the land, he blows the trumpet and warns the people;

Ezek 33:4 Then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and ignores the warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head.

Ezek 33:5 He heard the sound of the trumpet and ignored the warning; his own blood will be on him; whereas if he had taken warning, he would have delivered his soul.

Ezek 33:6 But if the watchman sees the sword come and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned and the sword comes and takes someone away from them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.

Ezek 33:7 It is you, O son of man, whom I have appointed as a watchman to the house of Israel; therefore when you hear the word from My mouth, give them warning from Me.

Ezek 33:8 When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you will surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man will die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand.

Ezek 33:9 Yet if you warn the wicked man of his way to turn from it and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity, and you have delivered your soul.

Ezek 33:10 And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, This is what you speak, saying, Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and because of them we are wasting away. How then can we live?

Ezek 33:11 Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn away from his way and live. Turn away, turn away from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Ezek 34:25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish evil beasts from the land, so that they will dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;

- Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
- Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;
- Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.
3. We must build up the wall to protect the church by fighting the battle in the Body—Rom. 16:20:
- Rom 16:20 Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.
- a. The Body puts on the whole armor of God and renders protection to every member; we must seek the counsel and covering of the Body to receive the Body's protection and safeguard—Eph. 6:10-20; Matt. 16:18; Acts 21:4, 11-12.
- Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
- Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
- Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.
- Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness
- Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;
- Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.
- Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,
- Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Acts 21:4 And when we had sought out the disciples, we remained there seven days. These told Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.
- Acts 21:11 And he came to us and took Paul's belt; and having bound his own feet and hands, he said, Thus says the Holy Spirit, In this way will the Jews in Jerusalem bind the man whose belt this is and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.
- Acts 21:12 And when we heard these things, both we and those in that place entreated him not to go up to Jerusalem.
- b. Spiritual warfare is in this principle—one will chase a thousand, and two will put ten thousand to flight—Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9-12; Exo. 17:11-13.

- Deut 32:30 How shall one chase a thousand, / And two put ten thousand to flight, / Were it not that their Rock sold them, / And Jehovah delivered them up?
- Eccl 4:9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor;
- Eccl 4:10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls and does not have another to lift him up!
- Eccl 4:11 Again, if two lie together, they keep warm. But how can one be warm alone?
- Eccl 4:12 And while a man may prevail against the one, the two will withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.
- Exo 17:11 And when Moses lifted his hand up, Israel prevailed; and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed.
- Exo 17:12 But Moses' hands were heavy, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.
- Exo 17:13 And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.
4. We must build up the wall to protect the interest of the riches of God's divinity on the earth and the attainments of His consummation—cf. John 1:12-13; Isa. 9:6; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17; 4:5; Col. 1:18; Acts 2:36; 5:31; Heb. 4:14; 9:15; 7:22; 8:2; 1 John 2:1; John 15:26; Rom. 8:34, 26.
- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
- John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- Isa 9:6 For a child is born to us, / A Son is given to us; / And the government / Is upon His shoulder; / And His name will be called / Wonderful Counselor, / Mighty God, / Eternal Father, / Prince of Peace.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- 2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
- 2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.
- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- Heb 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession.
- Heb 9:15 And because of this He is the Mediator of a new covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.
- Heb 7:22 By so much Jesus has also become the surety of a better covenant.
- Heb 8:2 A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.
- 1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you that you may not sin. And if anyone

- sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous;
- John 15:26 But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;
- Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- Rom 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
- F. We need to live by Christ and to live out Christ, thus magnifying Christ, so that we can build up the church as the expression of God—Exo. 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:1-11; Rom. 13:14, 12; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Phil. 1:19-21a; Rev. 21:3, 22, 10-11:
- Exo 40:34 Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.
- Exo 40:35 And Moses was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud settled on it and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.
- 1 Kings 8:1 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the children of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem in order to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah from the city of David, which is Zion.
- 1 Kings 8:2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves before King Solomon at the feast in the month of Ethnaim, which is the seventh month.
- 1 Kings 8:3 And when all the elders of Israel came, the priests took up the Ark;
- 1 Kings 8:4 And they brought up the Ark of Jehovah and the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; and the priests and Levites brought them up.
- 1 Kings 8:5 And King Solomon and all the assembly of Israel, who had assembled before him and were with him before the Ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen which could not be counted or numbered for multitude.
- 1 Kings 8:6 And the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah to its place, into the innermost sanctuary of the house, into the Holy of Holies under the wings of the cherubim.
- 1 Kings 8:7 For the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark, and the cherubim covered the Ark and its poles overhead.
- 1 Kings 8:8 And the poles extended out so that the ends of the poles could be seen from the Holy Place before the innermost sanctuary, but they were not seen outside; and they are there to this day.
- 1 Kings 8:9 There was nothing in the Ark except the two stone tablets, which Moses placed there at Horeb when Jehovah made a covenant with the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.
- 1 Kings 8:10 And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah;
- 1 Kings 8:11 And the priests were not able to stand and minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah.
- Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.
- Rom 13:12 The night is far advanced, and the day has drawn near. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the weapons of light.
- 1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- 1 Cor 3:17 If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, and such are you.

- Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
- Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
1. The wall of the city is for the expression of God; thus, to “build up the wall” (Neh. 2:17) is to build up the church as the expression of God (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:20-22; 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 3:9-17; Rev. 4:3; 21:11, 18-19).

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Eph 2:20 Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone;

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

Eph 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,

Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

1 Cor 3:10 According to the grace of God given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid a foundation, and another builds upon it. But let each man take heed how he builds upon it.

1 Cor 3:11 For another foundation no one is able to lay besides that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

- 1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,
- 1 Cor 3:13 The work of each will become manifest; for the day will declare it, because it is revealed by fire, and the fire itself will prove each one's work, of what sort it is.
- 1 Cor 3:14 If anyone's work which he has built upon the foundation remains, he will receive a reward;
- 1 Cor 3:15 If anyone's work is consumed, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.
- 1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- 1 Cor 3:17 If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, and such are you.
- 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 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
- Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
2. Today in His recovery the Lord is working to restore the normal condition of Christ within the proper church as His expression—Eph. 3:16-21; Rev. 4:3; 21:11, 18-19.
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
- 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 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
- Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
3. In order to express God, we need to be saved from our natural disposition and from self-likeness by living a mingled life with the Divine Trinity in the blending life of the entire Body of Christ—Rom. 5:10; Lev. 2:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:24-25.
- Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,

- much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Lev 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
- 1 Cor 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- 1 Cor 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.
4. In order to express God, we need to be daily sanctified and renewed by the washing of the water in the word to be presented to Christ, our Bridegroom, as His pure, glorious, God-expressing bride—v. 24; Eph. 5:26-27.
- 1 Cor 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
- Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Message Twelve

A God Who Hides Himself—the Hidden God

RK *Hymns*: 1206, 966

Scripture Reading: Isa. 45:15; Eph. 3:16-17; Phil. 2:13; Luke 18:1-8

- Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
- Luke 18:1 And He told them a parable to the end that they ought always to pray and not lose heart,
- Luke 18:2 Saying, There was a certain judge in a certain city who did not fear God and did not regard man.
- Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.
- Luke 18:4 And for a time he would not; but afterward he said within himself, Even though I do not fear God nor regard man,
- Luke 18:5 Yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out.
- Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.
- Luke 18:7 And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?
- Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

I. “Surely You are a God who hides Himself,/O God of Israel, the Savior”—Isa. 45:15:

- A. Hardly any of God’s children know that the Bible speaks of God as a God who hides Himself—v. 15:
- Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.
1. This proves that God’s children do not have an adequate knowledge of God as the One who hides Himself.
 2. We may know God as the mighty God, the righteous God, and the God who is full of grace and lovingkindness; however, we may not know God as the God who hides Himself—Luke 1:49; 1 Pet. 5:6; Rev. 15:3; Eph. 2:7; Psalms 17:7.
- Luke 1:49 Because the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name.
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
- Rev 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty! Righteous and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!
- Eph 2:7 That He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- Psa 17:7 Wondrously display Your lovingkindness, / You who save by Your right hand / Those who take refuge in You from them who rise up against them.
- B. Although our God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and full of forgiveness, He is also the hiding God, as the book of Esther indicates—4:14.

- Esth 4:14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from some other place, and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?
- C. God created the universe and then hid Himself within it, until we do not know where to find Him—Job 23:3.
Job 23:3 Oh that I knew where I might find Him, / That I might come to His seat!
- D. God did countless things in the midst of the children of Israel and countless things in their personal lives, yet He concealed Himself; He was ceaselessly working, yet He was always hidden—Isa. 45:15.
Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.
- E. We need to realize that the omnipotent God whom we are serving is still hiding Himself, especially when He is helping us—John 14:26; Rom. 8:28:
John 14:26 But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and remind you of all the things which I have said to you.
Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
1. We cannot see Him, and apparently, He is not doing anything.
 2. Actually, in a hidden way He is doing many things for us, as He is strengthening us with power through His Spirit into the inner man so that Christ may make His home in our hearts—vv. 28, 34; Esth. 4:14; Phil. 2:13; Eph. 3:16-17a.
Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
Esth 4:14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from some other place, and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?
Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- F. The God who hides Himself is operating within us silently yet mightily—Phil. 2:13:
Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
1. Our responsibility is to cooperate with Him by responding to the inner sense deep within us—Rom. 8:6.
Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
 2. Whenever we sense God living and acting within us, we should say Amen, for there, in the depths of our being, secretly and ceaselessly the God who hides Himself is working.
- G. If we study the Scriptures carefully, we will see that God has the kind of temperament that dislikes ostentation; He likes to work secretly rather than openly—Matt. 6:1-8.
Matt 6:1 But take care not to do your righteousness before men in order to be gazed at by

- them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens.
- Matt 6:2 Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.
- Matt 6:3 But you, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
- Matt 6:4 So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.
- Matt 6:5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.
- Matt 6:6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.
- Matt 6:7 And in praying do not babble empty words as the Gentiles do; for they suppose that in their multiplicity of words they will be heard.
- Matt 6:8 Therefore do not be like them, for your Father knows the things that you have need of before you ask Him.

H. Our disposition is diametrically opposed to God's disposition, a disposition that hides itself—Isa. 45:15:

Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.

1. God likes concealment; we like display—Matt. 6:1.
 Matt 6:1 But take care not to do your righteousness before men in order to be gazed at by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens.
2. God does not crave outward manifestations; we cannot be content without them—v. 2.
 Matt 6:2 Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.
3. This divine disposition constitutes a great trial and test to us.

II. The book of Esther supplies a vivid record of how the hiding God of Israel secretly took care of His oppressed elect in their dispersion and openly saved His persecuted elect in their captivity—1:1-22; 2:1-23:

- Esth 1:1 Now in the days of Ahasuerus (this is the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over one hundred twenty-seven provinces)
- Esth 1:2 In those days when King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Susa the capital,
- Esth 1:3 In the third year of his reign, he held a banquet for all his princes and his servants. The army of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces were before him
- Esth 1:4 As he showed the glorious wealth of his kingdom and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, for one hundred eighty days.
- Esth 1:5 And when these days were completed, the king held a banquet for seven days for all the people found in Susa the capital, both great and small, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.
- Esth 1:6 There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings tied with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and marble pillars, as well as couches of gold and silver upon a pavement of porphyry, white marble, mother-of-pearl, and mosaics.

Esth 1:7 And drinks were served in vessels of gold, and the vessels were different from one another; and the royal wine was abundant, according to the king's bounty.

Esth 1:8 And the drinking was, by commandment, without constraint; for so the king had ordered all the officials of his house to do as each man desired.

Esth 1:9 Also Vashti the queen held a banquet for the women in the royal house that belonged to King Ahasuerus.

Esth 1:10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

Esth 1:11 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the peoples and the princes; for she was beautiful in appearance.

Esth 1:12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command given through the king's eunuchs; and the king became very angry, and his wrath burned within him.

Esth 1:13 Then the king said to the wise men, who knew the times (for such was the custom of the king toward all who knew law and justice;

Esth 1:14 And those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who saw the king's face and sat first in the kingdom):

Esth 1:15 According to the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti because she has not performed the command of King Ahasuerus given through the eunuchs?

Esth 1:16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen has done wrong not only to the king but also to all the princes and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.

Esth 1:17 For this deed of the queen will go out to all women, causing them to view their husbands contemptibly as they say, King Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought to his presence, but she did not come.

Esth 1:18 And this day the princesses of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's deed will speak likewise to all the king's princes, and contempt and wrath will abound.

Esth 1:19 If it please the king, let a royal order go forth from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it cannot be overruled, that Vashti come no more into the presence of King Ahasuerus and that the king give her royal estate to another who is better than she.

Esth 1:20 And when the king's decree which he will make is heard throughout all his kingdom, vast though it is, all women will give honor to their husbands, great and small.

Esth 1:21 And this word pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to Memucan's word.

Esth 1:22 So he sent letters to all the king's provinces, to each province in its own script and to each people in their own language, that every man should be master in his own house and speak in the language of his own people.

Esth 2:1 After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her.

Esth 2:2 Then the king's attendants who served him said, Let young virgins, beautiful in appearance, be sought for the king;

Esth 2:3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the young virgins, beautiful in appearance, to Susa the capital, to the house of the women and into the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let their cosmetics be given to them.

Esth 2:4 And let the young woman who pleases the king become queen in place of Vashti. And the word pleased the king, and he did so.

Esth 2:5 There was a Jew in Susa the capital whose name was Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite,

Esth 2:6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah the king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

Esth 2:7 And he was foster father to Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother; and the young woman was beautiful in form and appearance. And when her father and mother died, Mordecai took her to himself as his daughter.

Esth 2:8 So when the king's commandment and his decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered to Susa the capital into the custody of Hegai, Esther was taken to the king's house into the custody of Hegai, who was in charge of the women.

Esth 2:9 And the young woman pleased him, and she obtained kindness in his presence. And he quickly gave her her cosmetics and her portions as well as the seven choice young maids who were to be given her from the king's house. And he transferred her and her young maids to the best place in the house of the women.

Esth 2:10 Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to make these known.

Esth 2:11 And every day Mordecai walked in front of the court of the house of the women to learn how Esther was and what was happening to her.

Esth 2:12 Now when the turn of each young woman came to go in to King Ahasuerus, at the end of the twelve months of her preparation according to the regulation for the women (for the days of their beautification were completed as follows: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and with the women's cosmetics),

Esth 2:13 The young woman would go in to the king in this way: Anything that she desired was given her to go with her from the house of the women to the house of the king.

Esth 2:14 In the evening she would go in, and in the morning she would return to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not go again in to the king unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

Esth 2:15 Now when the turn of Esther the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her to himself as his daughter, came to go in to the king, she requested nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.

Esth 2:16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

Esth 2:17 And the king loved Esther more than all the other women. And she obtained favor and kindness with him more than all the other virgins, so he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.

Esth 2:18 And the king held a great banquet for all his princes and his servants, Esther's banquet; and he made it a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts according to the king's bounty.

Esth 2:19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate.

Esth 2:20 Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, as Mordecai had charged her; for Esther did what Mordecai told her, as she had when he was bringing her up.

Esth 2:21 In those days, while Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, among those who were in charge of the threshold, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

Esth 2:22 And the thing became known to Mordecai, and he told Esther the queen; and Esther told the king in Mordecai's name.

Esth 2:23 And when the matter was investigated and found to be so, the two of them were hanged on the gallows; and it was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

- A. The crucial point of this book is that the very God who chose Israel, the descendants of Abraham, as His elect, after He gave them into captivity to the Gentile nations, became a hidden God to them to take care of them secretly and save them openly while acting in secrecy—Isa. 45:15:

Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.

1. This is the reason that the book of Esther does not mention the name of God even in places when the name of God should be mentioned—4:3, 16.

Esth 4:3 And throughout every province, wherever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and wailing; many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

Esth 4:16 Go; assemble all the Jews who are to be found in Susa, and fast for me; and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day; I also and my maids will fast in the same way. And so will I go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.

2. On the one hand, God used the Gentile nations as tools to discipline His people; on the other hand, the hiding God was with the people of Israel, caring for them.

- B. The hiding God did many things for Israel in a secret way:

1. The hiding God established a top king in the Gentile world in power over a great empire extending from India to Ethiopia—1:1-2.

Esth 1:1 Now in the days of Ahasuerus (this is the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over one hundred twenty-seven provinces)

Esth 1:2 In those days when King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Susa the capital,

2. The hiding God caused the top king to depose his queen because of her disobedience to his word—vv. 3-22.

Esth 1:3 In the third year of his reign, he held a banquet for all his princes and his servants. The army of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces were before him

Esth 1:4 As he showed the glorious wealth of his kingdom and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, for one hundred eighty days.

Esth 1:5 And when these days were completed, the king held a banquet for seven days for all the people found in Susa the capital, both great and small, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

Esth 1:6 There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings tied with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and marble pillars, as well as couches of gold and silver upon a pavement of porphyry, white marble, mother-of-pearl, and mosaics.

Esth 1:7 And drinks were served in vessels of gold, and the vessels were different from one another; and the royal wine was abundant, according to the king's bounty.

Esth 1:8 And the drinking was, by commandment, without constraint; for so the king had ordered all the officials of his house to do as each man desired.

Esth 1:9 Also Vashti the queen held a banquet for the women in the royal house that belonged to King Ahasuerus.

Esth 1:10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and

- Esth 1:11 Carcas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the peoples and the princes; for she was beautiful in appearance.
- Esth 1:12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command given through the king's eunuchs; and the king became very angry, and his wrath burned within him.
- Esth 1:13 Then the king said to the wise men, who knew the times (for such was the custom of the king toward all who knew law and justice;
- Esth 1:14 And those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who saw the king's face and sat first in the kingdom):
- Esth 1:15 According to the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti because she has not performed the command of King Ahasuerus given through the eunuchs?
- Esth 1:16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen has done wrong not only to the king but also to all the princes and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.
- Esth 1:17 For this deed of the queen will go out to all women, causing them to view their husbands contemptibly as they say, King Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought to his presence, but she did not come.
- Esth 1:18 And this day the princesses of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's deed will speak likewise to all the king's princes, and contempt and wrath will abound.
- Esth 1:19 If it please the king, let a royal order go forth from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it cannot be overruled, that Vashti come no more into the presence of King Ahasuerus and that the king give her royal estate to another who is better than she.
- Esth 1:20 And when the king's decree which he will make is heard throughout all his kingdom, vast though it is, all women will give honor to their husbands, great and small.
- Esth 1:21 And this word pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to Memucan's word.
- Esth 1:22 So he sent letters to all the king's provinces, to each province in its own script and to each people in their own language, that every man should be master in his own house and speak in the language of his own people.
3. In His secret care the hiding God raised up Esther, a Jewish orphan virgin, to be crowned by the top king as his queen—2:1-18.
- Esth 2:1 After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her.
- Esth 2:2 Then the king's attendants who served him said, Let young virgins, beautiful in appearance, be sought for the king;
- Esth 2:3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the young virgins, beautiful in appearance, to Susa the capital, to the house of the women and into the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let their cosmetics be given to them.
- Esth 2:4 And let the young woman who pleases the king become queen in place of Vashti. And the word pleased the king, and he did so.
- Esth 2:5 There was a Jew in Susa the capital whose name was Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite,

- Esth 2:6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah the king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.
- Esth 2:7 And he was foster father to Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother; and the young woman was beautiful in form and appearance. And when her father and mother died, Mordecai took her to himself as his daughter.
- Esth 2:8 So when the king's commandment and his decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered to Susa the capital into the custody of Hegai, Esther was taken to the king's house into the custody of Hegai, who was in charge of the women.
- Esth 2:9 And the young woman pleased him, and she obtained kindness in his presence. And he quickly gave her her cosmetics and her portions as well as the seven choice young maids who were to be given her from the king's house. And he transferred her and her young maids to the best place in the house of the women.
- Esth 2:10 Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to make these known.
- Esth 2:11 And every day Mordecai walked in front of the court of the house of the women to learn how Esther was and what was happening to her.
- Esth 2:12 Now when the turn of each young woman came to go in to King Ahasuerus, at the end of the twelve months of her preparation according to the regulation for the women (for the days of their beautification were completed as follows: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and with the women's cosmetics),
- Esth 2:13 The young woman would go in to the king in this way: Anything that she desired was given her to go with her from the house of the women to the house of the king.
- Esth 2:14 In the evening she would go in, and in the morning she would return to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not go again in to the king unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.
- Esth 2:15 Now when the turn of Esther the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her to himself as his daughter, came to go in to the king, she requested nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.
- Esth 2:16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.
- Esth 2:17 And the king loved Esther more than all the other women. And she obtained favor and kindness with him more than all the other virgins, so he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.
- Esth 2:18 And the king held a great banquet for all his princes and his servants, Esther's banquet; and he made it a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts according to the king's bounty.

C. During the years of the captivity, God was hiding, and He is still hiding; even today in the church age, God is hiding Himself—Isa. 45:15.

Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.

III. The significance of the parable in Luke 18:1-8 is profound, and we need to

know God as He is revealed, as the hidden God:

- Luke 18:1 And He told them a parable to the end that they ought always to pray and not lose heart,
Luke 18:2 Saying, There was a certain judge in a certain city who did not fear God and did not regard man.
Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.
Luke 18:4 And for a time he would not; but afterward he said within himself, Even though I do not fear God nor regard man,
Luke 18:5 Yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out.
Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.
Luke 18:7 And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?
Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

- A. The widow in verse 3 signifies the believers; in a sense, the believers in Christ are a widow in the present age because their Husband, Christ, is apparently absent from them—2 Cor. 11:2.

Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.

2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

- B. Like the widow in the parable (Luke 18:3), we believers in Christ have an opponent, Satan the devil, concerning whom we need God's avenging:

Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.

1. This parable indicates the suffering we have from our opponent during the Lord's apparent absence.

2. During His apparent absence, we are a widow whose opponent is troubling her all the time.

- C. While our opponent is persecuting us, it seems that our God is not righteous, for He allows His children to be unrighteously persecuted—1 Pet. 2:20; 3:14, 17; 4:13-16, 19:

1 Pet 2:20 For what glory is it if, while sinning and being buffeted, you endure? But if, while doing good and suffering, you endure, this is grace with God.

1 Pet 3:14 But even if you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not be afraid with fear from them, nor be troubled,

1 Pet 3:17 For it is better, if the will of God should will it, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Pet 4:13 But inasmuch as you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice exultingly.

1 Pet 4:14 If you are reproached in the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

1 Pet 4:15 For let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler into others' affairs;

1 Pet 4:16 But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name.

1 Pet 4:19 So then let those also who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing to a faithful Creator.

1. Throughout the centuries, thousands upon thousands of honest and faithful followers of the Lord Jesus have suffered unrighteous persecution; even today many are undergoing unrighteous treatment—Rev. 2:8-10.
 - Rev 2:8 And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:
 - Rev 2:9 I know your tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander from those who call themselves Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.
 - Rev 2:10 Do not fear the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison that you may be tried, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.
 2. Our God seems to be unjust, since He does not come in to judge and vindicate; because of this situation, the Lord Jesus used an unjust judge to signify God, who does not seem to do anything on behalf of His persecuted people—Luke 18:2-6.
 - Luke 18:2 Saying, There was a certain judge in a certain city who did not fear God and did not regard man.
 - Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.
 - Luke 18:4 And for a time he would not; but afterward he said within himself, Even though I do not fear God nor regard man,
 - Luke 18:5 Yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out.
 - Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.
- D. The widow in the parable kept coming to the unrighteous judge and asking him to avenge her of her opponent; we ought to pray persistently for this avenging and should not lose heart—vv. 1, 3:
- Luke 18:1 And He told them a parable to the end that they ought always to pray and not lose heart,
 - Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.
1. When our Husband is apparently absent and we are left on earth as a widow, temporarily our God seems to be an unrighteous judge—v. 6.
 - Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.
 2. Although He appears to be unrighteous, we still must appeal to Him, pray persistently, and bother Him again and again, for He will carry out quickly the avenging of His chosen ones, who “cry to Him day and night”—vv. 7-8a.
 - Luke 18:7 And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?
 - Luke 18:8a I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. ...
- E. Revelation 8:5 implies the answer to 6:9-11 and Luke 18:7-8:
- Rev 8:5 And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.
 - Rev 6:9 And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had.
 - Rev 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Master, holy and true, will You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?

- Rev 6:11 And to each of them was given a white robe; and it was said to them that they should rest yet a little while, until also the number of their fellow slaves and their brothers who were about to be killed, even as they were, is completed.
- Luke 18:7 And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?
- Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?
1. The prayers of the saints in Revelation 8:3-4 must be for the judgment of the earth, which opposes God's economy.

Rev 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Rev 8:4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.
 2. God's judgment upon the earth—casting fire to the earth—is the answer to the prayers of the saints with Christ as the incense—vv. 3-5.

Rev 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Rev 8:4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.

Rev 8:5 And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.
- F. "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:8b:
1. Literally, the Greek words rendered "faith" mean "the faith"; this denotes the persistent faith for our persistent prayer, like that of the widow.
 2. The faith through which we were saved is the initial stage of faith; the faith that brought us into a life union with Christ is the linking faith—the faith that comes into us through our contacting the Triune God continually so that we may live by the Son of God—Rom. 1:17; Gal. 2:20; John 14:19.

Rom 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

John 14:19 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live.
 3. The linking faith is the divine requirement for the overcomers to meet Christ in His triumphant return—Luke 18:8b:

Luke 18:8b ... Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

 - a. Linking faith is the Triune God moving in us to link us to His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8.

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
 - b. Linking faith is the faith of the believers who have no trust in themselves; rather,

their trust is in God—2 Cor. 1:9.

2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

- c. When the Lord Jesus returns, He will find a number of overcomers who are living by the linking faith and will regard them as treasures for His kingdom in the thousand years of His reign—Luke 18:8b; Rev. 20:4, 6.

Luke 18:8b ... Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.