Message Five

Being Properly Aggressive and Pure in Heart to Build the Wall of the City for the Separation and Protection of the Church as the House of God

Scripture Reading: Neh. 1:1-11; 2:4, 10; 4:4-5, 9; 5:10, 14-19

I. The book of Nehemiah is a history of the rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem as a continual recovery among His elect for His testimony for the accomplishment of God's economy—2:9-20; cf. Ezek. 13:3-5; 22:30.

II. The crucial point in the book of Nehemiah is that the city of Jerusalem was a safeguard and protection for the house of God within the city:

A. 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.

B. 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; God's building of His house and of His kingdom go together—Matt. 16:18-19.

C. The city of God is the enlarged, strengthened, and built-up church as the ruling center for God's reign in His kingdom; eventually, in God's economy the house of God becomes the holy city, the New Jerusalem, as God's eternal habitation and the ruling center of His eternal kingdom—Rev. 21:2-3, 22; 22:3.

D. 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. 1:22-23; 4:15; Rev. 22:1.

III. Nehemiah's aggressiveness shows us the need for the proper aggressiveness in the Lord's recovery today:

A. 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.

B. In relation to the mocking, despising, and reproach of these opposers, Nehemiah was very pure and aggressive, not cowardly—Neh. 2:17-20; 3:1-6; cf. Acts 4:29-31; 1 Thes. 2:2; 2 Tim. 1:7-8.

C. It is the aggressive ones who 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.

D. 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.

E. 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)—cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

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.
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.
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.

IV. 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:

A. 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.
B. 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.
C. 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.
D. 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.

V. The great and high wall of the holy city is for our separation unto God, the protection of God's interests, and the expression of God:

A. The function of the wall of the city is to separate, to sanctify, the city unto God from all things other than God, thus making the city the holy city—Rev. 21:2a, 10b; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Cor. 6:14—7:1:
   1. The wall of the holy city, the New Jerusalem, is built with jasper and the foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with every precious stone—Rev. 21:18-20:
      a. By our growth in the divine life in Christ as the precious stone (1 Pet. 2:4), we are transformed into precious stones (1 Cor. 3:12a).
      b. Precious stones indicate transformation; the more we are transformed, the more we are separated—Rom. 12:2.
   2. While the transformation work of the Spirit is going on in the divine life, we, the transformed precious stones, are being built up together to be one complete wall with its foundations—1 Cor. 3:6-12a.
B. The function of the wall of the city is to protect the interests of the riches of God's divinity on the earth and the attainments of Christ's consummation; we must put out the pure truth from the Word for this protection—cf. John 17:17.
C. The function of the wall of the city is to express God; God's appearance is like jasper, and the jasper wall signifies that the whole city, as the corporate expression of God in eternity, bears the appearance of God—Rev. 4:3; 21:18.

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