Message Four

Separation

Scripture Reading: Neh. 2:4, 10, 17-20; 1 John 2:15-17; 5:4; James 4:4; Rev. 21:18-20; 2:17

I. The intrinsic need in the Lord's recovery is for a remnant of His people to build up the church as the kingdom of God, to "build up the wall," by being fully separated unto God from the world to be fully saturated with God for the church—Neh. 2:4, 10, 17-20; 4:11-23; Rom. 6:19, 22; Eph. 5:26; John 17:17; 2 Pet. 1:4:

A. We need to be transformed into precious stones by being constituted with God so that we may be completely separated unto God to be the kingdom of God, the city of God, under the headship of God—Rev. 21:1-2, 10, 18-20; Col. 2:19.

B. Precious stones indicate transformation; the more we are transformed, the more we are separated and built up together to be one complete wall with its foundations—Rev. 21:12a; 1 Cor. 3:6-12a; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.

C. The renewing of the mind and the resulting transformation separate us from our nature that is soaked with the element of the world and save us from a living soaked with the element of the world—Rom. 8:5-6; 12:2, 5-11; Eph. 4:23.

II. The world consists of everything that replaces God and all that usurps man; anything that causes man to disregard God, be removed from Him, or be independent of Him is the world—1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4:

A. Satan not only employs the necessities of life, such as people, activities, and things, to preoccupy man, he further organizes them into numerous individual systems to intensify his grip upon man—cf. Gal. 1:4; Eph. 4:14.

B. The world denotes the enemy's scheme, system, and organization to usurp the place of God in man and to gain full possession of man—cf. Matt. 4:8-11.

C. When man left and lost the presence of God, he invented a godless culture, which will continue to develop until it climaxes in the great Babylon—Gen. 4:16; Rev. 17—18:

1. Satan caused man to employ his entire effort to seek food and clothing for self-nurture, to invent instruments for self-defense, and to design various forms of amusements for self-enjoyment—Gen. 4:16-24.
2. God Himself, the presence of God, is man's provision, protection, and pleasure; when man loses the presence of God, he fears poverty, danger, and boredom with life—cf. Matt. 6:31-33.

III. Babylon as a place of idols, Egypt as a place of worldly riches and pleasures, and Sodom as a city of sin are three aspects of the world that form a triangular boundary around the land of Canaan; God's called ones live within and must be saved from this satanic triangle—Jer. 2:13; 1 John 5:21; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 2 Cor. 6:14—7:1:

A. The idolatrous world of Babylon is characterized by the wickedness of business, or commerce, involving covetousness, deceit, and 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:

1. 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.
2. 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.

3. This depicts not only the coming Babylon but also today's world; people sell their soul, their life, themselves, to their occupation, neglecting God and their eternal destiny—cf. Luke 12:13-21.
4. 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.

B. Satan uses the world, typified by Egypt with its pleasures and riches, as his anti-God system to keep man under his slavery and bondage—Exo. 1:11:
1. The world is against God's building, and God's building is opposed to the world—John 15:18; 1 John 2:15-17.
2. God's intention in giving His chosen people a revelation of the true nature, meaning, and issue of life in Egypt (the world) is to cause His people to hate and become disgusted with Egypt, to leave Egypt behind, and to be separated to God for His dwelling place—Exo. 5:1; 40:34; Rom. 12:1-2.
3. If we would be God's dwelling place, we must know the world in a thorough way, and the element of the world must be purged out of our being.
4. God desires to rescue His chosen people from every form of usurpation and preoccupation so that they may have nothing besides God Himself—Mark 9:7-8; Psa. 73:25-26; 90:1.
5. God desires that all His people be Nazarites, those who separate themselves unto God to be absolutely, utterly, and ultimately for God, that is, to be for nothing other than God—Num. 6:1-8; Rom. 1:1; 15:16.

C. We need to overcome the stupefying effect of the world's indulgent living, signified by the days of Lot, who drifted into the wicked city of Sodom—Luke 17:26-32; Gen. 13:5-13; 14:12; 2 Pet. 2:6-9:
1. In their giving up God, the wicked Sodomites were given up by God to "passions of dishonor"; this is the ultimate issue of man's rebelling against God and rejecting his conscience—Gen. 19:4-16, 30-38; Rom. 1:21-27; 2:14-15; 1 Tim. 4:2.
2. In God's complete salvation, we can be washed from all the sinful things of Sodom, sanctified by God, and justified, accepted, by God; if we glorify God, thank God, worship God, and serve God, we will be protected from every kind of evil—1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rom. 1:21, 25.
3. As Abraham was enjoying sweet fellowship with God, he received a revelation from Him regarding the birth of Isaac and the destruction of Sodom; this signifies that God intends to bring forth Christ in our life and to destroy the "Sodom" in our home life, work life, and even in our Christian and church life—Gen. 18:10, 14, 16-21; Heb. 12:1-4; 1 Cor. 5:7-8; Rom. 8:2.
4. "Remember Lot's wife" is a solemn warning to the world-loving believers—Luke 17:31-32; 19:15-17, 26; 14:34-35; 1 John 2:27-28.

IV. By living in our spirit and eating Christ as the hidden manna, we can overcome the world to become God's building—cf. John 14:30:

A. As we live in our spirit, we overcome the world, we are kept from sinning, and the evil one cannot touch us; whatever is not in our spirit is an idol—1 John 5:4, 18-19, 21.

B. While the degraded church goes the way of the world, we can come forward to the Holy of Holies to eat the Lord as the hidden manna, the focal point of God's building, for our incorporation into the Triune God—Rev. 2:12-17.

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