

**HWMR: CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES FIRST AND SECOND CHRONICLES,
EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND ESTHER, (Week 9)**

Scripture Reading: Neh. 4; Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6, 21-22; 4:16, 23-24; 6:10-20

**BUILDING AND FIGHTING—
THE NEED TO ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL
WARFARE FOR THE BUILDING OF THE
CHURCH**

Nehemiah 4:1	And when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he became angry and was greatly enraged; and he mocked the Jews.
Nehemiah 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?
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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;
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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;
Nehemiah 4:8	And all of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion in it.
Nehemiah 4:9	But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 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.
Nehemiah 4:15	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.
Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.

Nehemiah 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.

Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 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.

Ephesians 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,

Ephesians 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,

Ephesians 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;

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

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

Ephesians 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Ephesians 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

Ephesians 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.

Ephesians 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Ephesians 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

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

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

Ephesians 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.

Ephesians 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.

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

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

Ephesians 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.

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

Ephesians 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,

Ephesians 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,

Ephesians 6:20 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,

Day 1

Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 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.

I. Nehemiah chapter 4 describes the **frustration of the enemy** regarding the **rebuilding of the city**:

- A. The enemies became **angry** and greatly enraged; they mocked the Jews and **despised** their building work—vv. 1-3:
 - 1. The enemies were angry because the **building work was advancing**, and they conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem—vv. 7-8.
 - 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.
- 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.
 - 2. Half of Nehemiah's servants **labored** in the work, and half of them **held weapons**, ready to fight—v. 16.
 - 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.
 - 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.

Day 2

Nehemiah 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.

Nehemiah 4:21 - So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.

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:

- 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.
- 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:

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.
- D. **We must build the church as the temple and fight the battle** so that God may have the kingdom—6:10.
- E. When the saints migrate for the spreading of the church life, they are an **army fighting the battle**—cf. Acts 8:4-12.
- F. Those who build the church **must build and fight at the same time**—Neh. 4:14,16-21.
- G. Without warfare and without a spirit of fighting, there is no building; **building calls for grueling warfare.**

We have to realize that the **Lord's church today is a fighting army**. We are doing something more serious than any battle on this earth. We are fighting against God's enemy, Satan. The church is God's army, and this is fully revealed and illustrated in many aspects in Ephesians 6. Ephesians is a book on the **Body of Christ, the church**. It tells us that the Body of Christ, the church, is the fullness of the One who fills all in all. It also tells us that this church is the new man created in Christ on the cross. Furthermore, this church is the kingdom of God, the household of the very God, and the wife of Christ, His counterpart. Paul eventually tells us in Ephesians that the church, the Body of Christ, with such a tremendous status, is a **warrior to fight against God's enemy**. Whatever Christ is and whatever Christ has done should be used and applied as aspects of the armor of God. We have to wear Christ as our breastplate and as our shield. We have to have our loins girded with Christ, and we have to wear Christ as a pair of shoes for our standing to fight the battle. The church is not a mere group of people collected together. The church is a universal and divine army fighting for God in the universe against His enemy.

In modern history there have been two world wars, but we must realize that the church today is undertaking a universal war. The space of our war is much larger than today's space studied by scientists. Most of their study is confined to a single galaxy, but many, many millions of galaxies and beyond form the space in which we are fighting. **We are fighting the enemy in the heavenlies**, in the universal space. Our battle is great beyond measure. We are not undertaking a small battle merely for the United States or for the world. Our battle is universal. In Paul's speaking concerning the matter of interpretation of tongues, he considers that it is related to this universal battle that we are undertaking. In his talk concerning the interpretation of tongues, he uses an illustration—the sounding of a trumpet for the battle. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move, chapter 6*)

Day 3

Ephesians 6:10-11 - Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

III. For the building up of the church as the Body of Christ, there is the **need for spiritual warfare**—Eph. 6:10-20:

- 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:
 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:
 - a. The Son of God was manifested to **destroy** the works of the devil—1

John 3:8.

- b. In His incarnation and human living **Christ defeated Satan** during the temptation in the wilderness—Matt. 4:1-11.
 - 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.
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.

The gospel of God is a spiritual gospel, and to preach this gospel is to fight a **spiritual battle**. Such a battle is not in the physical realm but in the **spiritual realm**, because the preaching of the gospel is to plunder from under Satan's hands, from under Satan's authority, and from under Satan's usurpation those whom God predestinated and desires to save. To preach the gospel is not merely a matter of evangelizing but a matter of fighting a battle. As the gospel is being preached, **God is plundering through His church those who are being usurped by Satan**.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 12:29, "How can anyone enter into the house of the strong man and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will thoroughly plunder his house." This indicates that when we preach the gospel, we engage in **spiritual warfare**. First, we need to **bind the strong man**, Satan, and then we can rescue those who have been seized by him. This is carried out mainly through prayer. Only when we **pray fighting prayers** to bind Satan can we enter into his house, that is, into his power and influence, into the domain of his rule, to plunder the souls whom God intends to save from being under his usurpation.

Preaching the gospel is altogether a matter of fighting a battle. As persons fighting this battle, we need to have severe dealings before the Lord. **We need to deal with our motives, thoughts, inclinations, and standing**, because we may have within us a little room that is connected to the enemy or a little ground that is attached to the world. Whenever we have anything inward or outward that remains attached to the world or is joined to the enemy, we will fall under Satan's authority and have no way to fight the spiritual battle. In order to engage in spiritual warfare, we must have strong dealings before the Lord both inwardly and outwardly. **We must have nothing that is under the enemy's hands and nothing that is joined to the world**. (*Christ Being the Burden of the Gospel*, chapter 1)

Day 4

Ephesians 6:12-13 - 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. 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:
 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.
 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:
 1. Spiritual warfare is **not** an individual matter; it is a **matter of the Body**— 4:12, 16; 5:30.
 2. The church is a **corporate warrior**, and the believers together make up this corporate warrior—6:10-20.

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:
 - 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.
4. After we have been **formed corporately into an army**, we will be able to fight against God's enemy—6:11-12.
- 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:
 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.
 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.

When we are in the Body, we actually do not carry on the spiritual warfare; **we simply enjoy it**. Instead of struggling in the battle, the battle becomes an enjoyment. Because we **pray in spirit** to apply all the aspects of Christ as the armor, spiritual fighting becomes an enjoyment. We enjoy Christ as the reality that girds us and as the righteousness that covers and protects our conscience. Furthermore, we enjoy Him as the firm foundation of the gospel of peace and as our shield of faith. Christ Himself is faith to us. As Hebrews 12:2 says, He is the Author and Perfector of faith. With Christ as our shield, we are defended from the flaming darts of the evil one. Moreover, we enjoy Christ as the helmet of salvation that covers our head, and also as the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Psalm 23:5 says, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." This indicates that the battlefield is a place of feasting. We feast in the presence of the enemy, enjoying Christ as reality, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and as the living word of God. **We enjoy Him and apply Him by praying in spirit.**

As we receive the word by means of all **prayer and petition**, we should pray "**at every time in spirit.**" The spirit in verse 18 is our regenerated spirit indwelt by the Spirit of God. Hence, this spirit is the mingled spirit, our spirit mingled with God's Spirit. Whenever we pray as a means of taking in the word, **we need to be in spirit**. The spirit is the proper organ for prayer. As we have pointed out many times, we can be in spirit simply by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus from deep within. When we call "O Lord Jesus," we turn from the vanity of the mind to the spirit of the mind. How sweet and enjoyable it is to call on the Lord Jesus in spirit!

By praying in spirit we apply Christ as the **whole armor of God**. As we take the word by praying in spirit, we spontaneously contact Christ as the life-giving Spirit. Immediately, our praying and reading become living, and we are empowered by Christ and covered with Him as our armor. Furthermore, we have the realization that **we are in the Body and that Christ with all that He is and has is our portion**. In this way we apply Him as the all-inclusive armor. (*Life-study of Ephesians, chapter 97*)

Day 5

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 - *For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to flesh; For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, 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.*

- 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).
 2. The second principle of spiritual warfare is to **keep the position of ascension**—Eph. 2:6:
 - 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.
 - 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:
 - a. The spiritual weapons are powerful to overthrow the strongholds of the enemy—vv. 4-5.
 - 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.

Day 6

Matthew 6:9-10 - You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

Matthew 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.

4. The fourth principle of spiritual warfare is to **have fighting prayers**—the prayers of spiritual warfare—Matt. 6:9-10, 13:
 - 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.
 - 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:
 - (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.
 - (2) If we are in the heavenly realm, we are **able** to pray **prayers of ascension**, prayers of warfare—Eph. 2:6; 6:18.
 - 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.
 - 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.

This **principle of warfare** is also very evident in our practical daily living. Whether in the church, at home, or at the place of our employment, whenever we have a touch of sin, a love for the world, a display of temper, a dealing in craftiness, or a living in the earthly life, we simply cannot be strong before the enemy and fight against him. At this time we are already earthly and have fallen into the hand of the enemy. On the other hand, if we constantly have **fellowship with the Lord, walk in spirit, and live in the heavenly life**, we are heavenly and abide in the **position of ascension**. Then we can stay on higher ground rather than lower ground and deal with Satan. At this time, should the church encounter difficulties, we can engage in prevailing prayer before God, demanding God to come forth to judge His enemy. We can **rise to express our attitude to God**, saying, “We will not allow these things to happen in the church.” We can also say seriously to Satan, “We are disgusted with this. We are against this.” When we make such a **severe declaration and strong expression**, the entire host of Satan will retreat. His work will also be completely destroyed. But if we live in the earthly life, using natural methods and means, we will never be able to solve these problems. We have already fallen from heaven and have lost the position of warfare. We have no way to deal with God’s enemy and nullify his works.

Many Christians today are greatly concerned with the problem of power. But the Lord has saved us not only to the **state of possessing power but also to the place of having authority**. Those in the heavenly realm not only have power but also authority. Those with power can only cause others to be **moved**. But those with authority cause others not only to be moved but also to be **reverent and fearful**. For example, consider some brothers and sisters who love the world and live according to the flesh. When they see brothers or sisters **loving the Lord, seeking Him, and living in the spirit**, they admire them very much and are moved. This is a matter of power. But if they meet other brothers or sisters who are **living in the realm of ascension**, they feel not only a certain power that causes them to be moved but also a certain phenomenon that causes them to be reverent and fearful. With such brothers or sisters there is the heavenly reality; therefore, they are also full of heavenly authority. Thus, while they are walking among men, they bring with them a certain fearsomeness, which causes others to be reverent.

Why does the position of ascension cause us to be victorious in battle? It is because **only in the position of ascension may we have heavenly authority**. In order to wage spiritual warfare, we need to **depend upon heavenly authority**. There is only one place where we can obtain heavenly authority—this place is heaven. If we pass through death and resurrection to reach the heavenly realm, we will surely obtain heavenly authority. Therefore, we will surely be victorious in battle. (*The Experience of Life, chapter 16*)