

Life-Study of Nehemiah Summaries - Messages 1-5

The Rebuilding of the Wall of the City

The book of Nehemiah is a history of the rebuilding of the wall of the city of Jerusalem. The crucial point of the book of Nehemiah is that the city of Jerusalem was a safeguard and protection for the house of God, which was in the city. 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. 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 His building of His kingdom go together. The house of God on the earth needs His kingdom to safeguard the house and to carry out His eternal economy.

Nehemiah's answer to the leaders of the Moabites and Ammonites who mocked and despised the children of Israel was very aggressive. He was not cowardly. Anyone who is cowardly cannot be a servant of God. Nehemiah trusted in God by praying that God would return their reproach to themselves. Today, no matter how much we may be mocked and despised, we should have a heart to build and should be aggressive.

Nehemiah's Aggressiveness

In order for God to have a house and a kingdom on the earth, three sections of work were needed. First, there was a need for some of the captivity to come back from Babylon to Jerusalem to lay a foundation for the formation of a nation. Second, there was the need of teaching and education to bring the people of God into a culture that was according to God. Third, there was the need to constitute the nation organically.

We are not told that Nehemiah was stirred up by God. Rather, according to 1:1-2, he asked one of his brothers and some others who came from Judah about those who were left from the captivity and about Jerusalem. When Nehemiah heard the report, he wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed. He did not call a prayer meeting, and he did not ask those who gave the report to pray about the situation. He prayed by Himself with a real burden. Nehemiah surely was an aggressive person. He volunteered himself, in a sense, not to God but to his burden. He had a burden to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. His aggressiveness was very much used by God.

If our natural capacity, natural ability, and natural virtues are not crossed out, they will cause a great deal of trouble and will be the source of big mistakes. Our natural capacity, ability, and virtue need to be transferred from our natural life into the consummated Triune God through death and burial. In ourselves we are natural, but when we are transferred out of ourselves in to God, who is resurrection, we enter into resurrection. In himself Nehemiah's aggressiveness was natural, but in God his aggressiveness was in resurrection.

The Reconstitution of the Nation of God's Elect

In order to be reconstituted, we need to come back to God by coming back to His law, that is, His word. God's word gradually changes our mind and our way of thinking. When the word of God works within us, the Spirit, through the word, spontaneously dispenses God's nature with God's element into our being. Then, the people made a clear confession to God of their past and made a firm covenant with God.

In Ezra and Nehemiah three leaders are mentioned. They were all excellent leaders, but the best and the highest was Nehemiah. Nehemiah was the perfect leader, the best leader in human history. Only under the leadership of such persons as Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah 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. (Life-Study of Nehemiah – Messages 1-5).