

The Recovery of the Church as Portrayed in Ezra and Nehemiah

Scripture Reading: Ezra 7:6-10, 21, 27-28; 8:21-23; 10:1; Neh. 1:1-11; 2:4, 10, 17-20; 3:1-6; 4:4-5, 9; 5:10, 14-19; 8:1-4, 8-9, 14

- I. The recovery of a remnant of the children of Israel from Babylon to Jerusalem signifies the Lord's recovery of a remnant of the church out of today's division and confusion back to the original ground of oneness—Rev. 17:1-6; 18:2, 4a.**
- II. In the Lord's recovery we need Ezras, priestly teachers who contact God, who are saturated with God, who are one with God and filled with God, and who are skillful in the Word of God—Matt. 13:52; 2 Cor. 3:5-6; 1 Tim. 2:7:**
 - A. Ezra was a priest and also a scribe, one who was skilled in the law of God; as such a person, Ezra had the capacity to meet the need—v. 21.
 - B. Ezra reconstituted the people of Israel by educating them with the heavenly truths so that Israel could become God's testimony—Neh. 8:1-4, 8:
 1. After the return from captivity, the people were still unruly, for they had been born and raised in Babylon.
 2. 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—Neh. 8:8.
- III. 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:**
 - A. Ezra spoke nothing new; what he spoke had been spoken already by Moses—Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:14.
 - B. To be constituted with the truth is to have the truth wrought into us to become our constituent, our intrinsic being, our organic constitution—2 John 2:
 1. 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.
 2. 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 continually under the constant nourishment—Col. 3:16, 4; 1 Tim. 4:6.
 - C. 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:
 1. We should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word—Acts 17:11-12; Matt. 4:4; 1 Pet. 2:2.
 2. If we would do this every day, little by little the word will be accumulated in us and we will have a rich store of the Lord's word—Col. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:2.

3. If everyone reads the Lord's Word in this way, the truth among us will greatly increase, and we will become a house of scholars; then when we open our mouths, the scholarly fragrance will be there—1 Tim. 3:15, 4:12-13.
- IV. We need Ezras to teach the people, to educate them, and to constitute them with the heavenly truths—Ezra 7:10-12, 21; Neh. 8:8:**
- A. The greatest need we must meet is to bring the saints in the Lord's recovery into the truth to carry the recovery on—2 Tim. 2:2, 15.
 - B. The main responsibility of the elders is to teach the saints with the truths—1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9.
 - C. The standard of the Lord's recovery depends upon the standard of the truth we put out; the truths will be the measure and the standard—John 18:37.
- V. 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. Eek. 13:3-5; 22:30:**
- A. Nehemiah's aggressiveness shows us the need for the proper aggressiveness in the Lord's recovery today—Rom. 15:19-23.
 - B. 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.
- VI. The Lord's recovery has been commissioned with a big enterprise to spread the Lord's truths—Matt. 24:14, 28:19; Rom. 16:25-26:**
- A. The Lord's present charge to us should be: "Go and teach the nations (cf. Matt. 28:19) that the present age may be consummated" —Matt. 24:14.
 - B. For the spreading of the truths, the elders and leading brothers need to strive to produce young people in all the churches—2 Tim. 2:1-2:
 1. We need young people to carry out the up-to-date move of the Lord.
 2. All the co-workers and all the churches need to pay attention to producing "spiritual descendants".
 - C. "I wish to live on this earth and witness with my own eyes the truth of the Lord not only being printed into books through our hands, but also being sent through us to every part of the world and prevailing in every place. I absolutely believe that this will hasten the Lord's return because it is through this that the Lord will prepare His bride." (*The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity*, ch. 12)