

**THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, THE CHURCH LIFE,
THE CONSUMMATION OF THE AGE, AND THE COMING OF THE LORD**

(Lord's Day—Second Morning Session)

**Message Eight
Having Dispensational Value to God
in the Last Days to Turn the Age**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 12:1-14; Neh. 1:1-11; 2:9-20; 4:4-5, 9; 5:10, 14-19; 8:1-10; 13:14, 29-31

- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:3 And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold, there was a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.
- Rev 12:4 And his tail drags away the third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, so that when she brings forth he might devour her child.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev 12:12 Therefore be glad, O heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has come down to you and has great rage, knowing that he has only a short time.
- Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child.
- Rev 12:14 And to the woman there were given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent.
- Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now in the month Chislew, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital,
- Neh 1:2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and some men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped, who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
- Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.
- Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,
- Neh 1:5 And said, I beseech You, O Jehovah the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments:
- Neh 1:6 Let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant, which I pray before You now day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Your servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Indeed, I and the house of my father have sinned;
- Neh 1:7 We have been most corrupt toward You and have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances that You commanded Moses Your servant.

Neh 1:8 Remember now the word that You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples;

Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.

Neh 1:10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.

Neh 1:11 I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man. Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Neh 2:9 So I went to the governors beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of the army and horsemen.

Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.

Neh 2:11 Thus I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

Neh 2:12 And I arose at night, I and some few men with me. And I told no man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. And there was no animal with me except the animal I rode on.

Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had been consumed with fire.

Neh 2:14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass through.

Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.

Neh 2:16 And the rulers did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing; and I had not as yet told it to the Jews and the priests and the nobles and the rulers and the rest who were to do the work.

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

Neh 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;

Neh 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.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.

Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.

Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.

Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiah and Uriah and Hilkiyah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,

Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

I. God's desire is to end this age and bring in the age of the kingdom; in order for God to accomplish this, He must have His dispensational instrument:

- A. All of us should look to the Lord and pray that we will have dispensational value to God; we need to ask ourselves what we are doing to close this dispensation and to bring in the next age, the kingdom age; this is a special time, so there is the need of special believers to do a special work.
- B. Those who can only say, "Go," but not "Come," will have no effect; that is, they will have no dispensational value to God—cf. Heb. 10:22:

Heb 10:22 Let us come forward to the Holy of Holies with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

1. The writer of Hebrews did not tell the believers to go forward but to come forward; this means that the writer was in a particular place and that he wanted his readers to come forward to the place where he was.
2. We need to come forward to three things: to the Holy of Holies, to the throne of grace, and to God Himself; do not shrink backward—come forward—4:16; 10:22; 7:25; 11:6.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Heb 10:22 Let us come forward to the Holy of Holies with a true heart in full assurance of

- faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.
- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
3. God is on the throne of grace, and the throne of grace is in the Holy of Holies; at the time of the writing of the book of Hebrews, the writer was there in the Holy of Holies, calling the Hebrew believers to come forward.
- C. The rapture of the man-child to heaven, the casting of Satan to earth, and the declaration in heaven that the kingdom has come signify that God's gaining of the man-child is His greatest dispensational move because it brings an end to the church age and introduces the kingdom age—Rev. 12:5, 9-10; 11:15.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.
- D. The rapture of the man-child to the throne of God will be before the one thousand two hundred and sixty days, which is the time of the great tribulation of three and a half years (forty-two months)—12:1-14; 13:5; 11:2.
- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:3 And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold, there was a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.
- Rev 12:4 And his tail drags away the third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, so that when she brings forth he might devour her child.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev 12:12 Therefore be glad, O heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has come down to you and has great rage, knowing that he has only a short time.
- Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child.

- Rev 12:14 And to the woman there were given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent.
- Rev 13:5 And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and authority was given to him to act for forty-two months.
- Rev 11:2 And the court which is outside the temple cast out and do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

E. We live in the most privileged time in which we can do the most for God; God as light will show us the way, but the indwelling Christ as our strength and power will enable us to walk the road; a great price must be paid in order to be used now—3:18.

- Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.

II. Because the church has not attained to God's purpose, God will choose a group of overcomers who will attain to His purpose and fulfill His demand; this is the principle of the man-child—12:1-2, 5, 10-11; 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21:

- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
- Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

A. The universal bright woman represents the totality of God's people, and ultimately, the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15 is enlarged to include the overcoming believers, the stronger part of God's people, signified by the man-child—Rev. 12:1-2, 5, 10-11.

- Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity / Between you and the woman / And between your seed and her seed; / He will bruise you on the head, / But you will bruise him on the heel.

- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- B. The resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit is the transfigured descendant of the woman, the seed of the woman, dispensed into us to bruise the serpent's head in us and make us the corporate seed of the woman, the overcoming man-child, to carry out God's judgment on the ancient serpent and to be God's dispensational instrument to change the age and usher in the manifestation of God's kingdom—v. 5.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- C. Psalm 2:8-9, Revelation 2:26-27, and Revelation 12:5 indicate that the Lord Jesus as God's Anointed, the overcomers in the churches, and the man-child will rule the nations with an iron rod, thus proving that the Lord Jesus, the overcomers, and the man-child are one; the Lord as the leading Overcomer (3:21) is the Head, center, reality, life, and nature of the man-child, and the man-child as the following overcomers is the Lord's Body.
- Psa 2:8 Ask of Me, / And I will give the nations as Your inheritance / And the limits of the earth as Your possession.
- Psa 2:9 You will break them with an iron rod; / You will shatter them like a potter's vessel.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
- D. Through the Lord's death on the cross, Satan, the old serpent, was judged, cast out (John 12:31; 16:11); that judgment and sentence will ultimately be carried out and executed by the overcomers as the man-child, the corporate seed of the woman; the war waged by the overcoming believers against Satan is actually the executing of the Lord's judgment upon him for him to eventually be cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-9).
- John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.
- John 16:11 And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
- Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- E. The man-child consists of the overcomers who stand on behalf of the church, take the position that the whole church should take, and do the work for the church—2:7b, 11b, 17b, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21; 12:5, 11:
- Rev 2:7b ... To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 2:11b ... He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
- Rev 2:17b ... To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows

- except he who receives it.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
- Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

1. All of God's people should have a part in His eternal purpose, but not all assume their rightful responsibility; therefore, God chooses a group from among them—the man-child brought forth by the woman.
2. In the Bible the stronger ones among God's people are considered a collective unit fighting the battle for God and bringing God's kingdom down to earth—Rev. 12:5, 10-11.

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

3. God will use the man-child to fulfill His economy and to accomplish His purpose—1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11.

1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

2 Tim 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages

Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

4. God needs the man-child to defeat His enemy and to bring in His kingdom so that His eternal purpose might be accomplished; the Lord's recovery is the practicality of God's economy today, and His economy can be carried out only by the man-child—Rev. 12:10.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

- F. The rapture of the man-child is a transaction that causes Satan to have no more position in heaven; we must be raptured to fulfill God's need by executing His judgment upon His

enemy—vv. 5, 7-10.

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.

Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

- G. Those who constitute the man-child overcome the devil (the accuser, the slanderer), who is Satan, the adversary of God, because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they love not their soul-life even unto death—vv. 10-11.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

- H. The entire being of the man-child is saturated and permeated with the element of Christ because they are daily strengthened into their inner man so that Christ may build Himself into their hearts, they are being nourished with the unsearchable riches of Christ, and they put on Christ as the whole armor of God—Eph. 3:16-18, 8; 6:10-11.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel

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

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

III. When Israel was taken into captivity for seventy years, God still had a dispensational move because of Nehemiah, who was a true overcomer; he is a pattern of someone who has dispensational value to God—Neh. 1:1-11; 2:9-20; 4:4-5, 9; 5:10, 14-19; 8:1-10; 13:14, 29-31:

Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital,

Neh 1:2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and some men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped, who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.

Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,

Neh 1:5 And said, I beseech You, O Jehovah the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments:

Neh 1:6 Let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant, which I pray before You now day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Your servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Indeed, I and the house of my father have sinned;

Neh 1:7 We have been most corrupt toward You and have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances that You commanded Moses Your servant.

Neh 1:8 Remember now the word that You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples;

Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.

Neh 1:10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.

Neh 1:11 I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man. Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Neh 2:9 So I went to the governors beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of the army and horsemen.

Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.

Neh 2:11 Thus I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

Neh 2:12 And I arose at night, I and some few men with me. And I told no man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. And there was no animal with me except the animal I rode on.

Neh 2:13 And I went out at night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackals' Spring and the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down and whose gates had been consumed with fire.

Neh 2:14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass through.

Neh 2:15 And I went up at night by the brook and inspected the wall, and turned back and went in by the Valley Gate and so returned.

Neh 2:16 And the rulers did not know where I had gone or what I had been doing; and I had not as yet told it to the Jews and the priests and the nobles and the rulers and the rest who were to do the work.

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

Neh 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;

Neh 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.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.

Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.

Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.

Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.

Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiiah and Uriah and Hilkiyah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.

Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,

Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

A. The crucial point in the book of Nehemiah is that the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem with its wall was both a continual recovery among His elect for His testimony as the accomplishment of God's economy and a safeguard and protection for the house of God within the city:

1. 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.
Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
2. 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; the building of God's house and kingdom go together—Matt. 16:18-19.
Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

- B. 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. 1:10, 22-23; 4:15; Rev. 22:1.

Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;

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

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

Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

- C. Nehemiah shows the need for us to have the proper aggressiveness in the Lord's recovery today:

1. 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.

Neh 2:10 And when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard of this, it displeased them greatly that a man had come seeking the good of the children of Israel.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Ezek 25:3 And you shall say to the children of Ammon, Hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because you said, Aha! against My sanctuary when it was desecrated, and against the land of Israel when it was desolated, and against the house of Judah when it went off into exile;

Ezek 25:8 Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because Moab has said, Look, the house of Judah is just like all the other nations!

2. In relation to the mocking, despising, and reproach of these opposers, Nehemiah was very pure and aggressive, not cowardly—Neh. 1:4; 2:3-8, 17-20; 4:3-5, 8-9, 14, 17-23; 5:14; 13:23-31; cf. Acts 4:29-31; 1 Thes. 2:2; 2 Tim. 1:7-8.

Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,

Neh 2:3 And I said to the king, May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in waste and its gates are consumed with fire?

Neh 2:4 And the king said to me, What do you request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

Neh 2:5 And I said to the king, If it please the king and if your servant has found favor before you, that you would send me to Judah to the city of my fathers' graves that I may rebuild it.

Neh 2:6 And the king said to me (and the queen was sitting beside him), How long will your going be, and when will you return? So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a date.

Neh 2:7 Then I said to the king, If it please the king, let letters be given to me for the governors beyond the River, so that they will let me pass through until I come to Judah;

Neh 2:8 And a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the Park, which belongs to the king, so that he would give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace that belongs to the house and for the wall of the city and for the house that I will be entering. And the king gave these to me according to the good hand of my God, which was upon me.

Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, You see the bad state we are in, that Jerusalem lies in waste and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach.

Neh 2:18 And I told them about the hand of my God, which was good upon me, and also about the king's words, which he had spoken to me. And they said, Let us rise up and build; and they strengthened their hands for the good work.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard of it, they mocked us and despised us; and they said, What is this thing that you will do? Will you rebel against the king?

Neh 2:20 And I answered them and said to them, The God of heaven Himself will make us prosper; therefore we His servants will rise up and build. But you have no portion nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem.

Neh 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.

Neh 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;

Neh 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.

Neh 4:8 And all of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion in it.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

Neh 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.

Neh 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.

Neh 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.

Neh 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.

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

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

Neh 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.

Neh 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.

Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.

Neh 13:23 In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab;

Neh 13:24 And as for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod; and none of them could speak the language of Judah, but they spoke the language of the respective peoples.

Neh 13:25 And I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them swear by God, saying, You shall not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.

Neh 13:26 Did not Solomon the king of Israel sin in these matters? And among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; yet the foreign wives caused even him to sin.

Neh 13:27 Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God in marrying foreign women?

- Neh 13:28 And one of the sons of Joiada the son of Eliashib the high priest was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I chased him away from me.
- Neh 13:29 Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.
- Neh 13:30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,
- Neh 13:31 And for the wood offering, at the appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.
- Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings and grant Your slaves to speak Your word with all boldness,
- Acts 4:30 While stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may take place through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.
- Acts 4:31 And when they had so besought, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.
- 1 Thes 2:2 But having suffered previously and having been outrageously treated, even as you know, in Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggle.
- 2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.
- 2 Tim 1:8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me His prisoner; but suffer evil with the gospel according to the power of God;
3. The aggressive ones 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.
- Acts 26:21 Because of these things certain Jews seized me while I was in the temple and tried to slay me.
- Acts 26:22 Having therefore obtained the help which is from God, I have stood unto this day, testifying both to small and great, saying nothing apart from the things which both the prophets and Moses have said would take place,
4. 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.
- D. 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)—1 Kings 8:48; cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-5.
- 1 Kings 8:48 And if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;
- 2 Tim 3:1 But know this, that in the last days difficult times will come.
- 2 Tim 3:2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
- 2 Tim 3:3 Without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, not lovers of good,
- 2 Tim 3:4 Traitors, reckless, blinded with pride, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
- 2 Tim 3:5 Having an outward form of godliness, though denying its power; from these also turn away.
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.
- Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now in the month Chislew, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital,

Neh 1:2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and some men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews who had escaped, who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

Neh 1:3 And they said to me, The remnant who are left from the captivity there in the province are in an exceedingly bad state and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.

Neh 1:4 And when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for some days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven,

Neh 1:5 And said, I beseech You, O Jehovah the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments:

Neh 1:6 Let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant, which I pray before You now day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Your servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Indeed, I and the house of my father have sinned;

Neh 1:7 We have been most corrupt toward You and have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances that You commanded Moses Your servant.

Neh 1:8 Remember now the word that You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples;

Neh 1:9 But if you return to Me and keep My commandments and perform them, though your outcasts are under the ends of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.

Neh 1:10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.

Neh 1:11 I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man. Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Neh 2:4 And the king said to me, What do you request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

Neh 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;

Neh 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.

Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

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.

Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

2 Cor 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.

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.

Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.

Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.

Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.

Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

- Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.
- Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.
- Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.
- E. 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:
- 1 Tim 3:2 The overseer then must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, of a sober mind, orderly, hospitable, apt to teach;
- 1 Tim 3:3 Not an excessive drinker; not a striker, but forbearing; not contentious; not fond of money;
- 1 Tim 3:4 One who manages well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity
- 1 Tim 3:5 (But if one does not know how to manage his own house, how will he care for the church of God?);
- 1 Tim 3:6 Not a new convert, lest being blinded with pride he fall into the judgment suffered by the devil.
- 1 Tim 3:7 And he also must have a good testimony from those outside, that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
- 1 Pet 5:1 Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed:
- 1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;
- 1 Pet 5:3 Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock.
1. Unlike many of the kings of Israel and Judah, Nehemiah was not selfish, did not seek his own interests, and was not indulgent in sexual lust.
 2. 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.
- Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 4:15 And when our enemies heard that their counsel was known to us and that God frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each man to his work.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.

- Neh 4:20 In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, gather yourselves to us there. Our God will fight for us.
- Neh 4:21 So we labored in the work; and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out.
- Neh 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.
- Neh 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.
3. 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.
- Neh 5:14 Moreover from the time that the king appointed me to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the food appointed for the governor.
- Neh 5:15 But the former governors, who were before me, laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them food and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants tyrannized the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.
4. Nehemiah 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.
- Neh 5:16 And I also applied myself to the work on this wall. And we did not acquire fields, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.
- Neh 5:17 And there were at my table one hundred fifty men, Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations that surrounded us.
- Neh 5:18 And what was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowl was prepared for me, as well as all kinds of wine in abundance every ten days. Yet for this I did not demand the food appointed for the governor, for the service was heavy upon this people.
- F. Although Nehemiah was the ruler, he was altogether not ambitious; this is indicated by the fact that in reconstituting the nation, he recognized his need of Ezra for the reconstitution of the people of God with the word of God—8:1-10; Phil. 2:3-4.
- Neh 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man in the open area that was before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel.
- Neh 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- Neh 8:3 And he read in it before the open area that was before the Water Gate from first light until midday in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- Neh 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden platform that had been made for that purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Anaiiah and Uriah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah at his right hand; and at his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchijah and Hashum and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.
- Neh 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
- Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.
- Neh 8:7 Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites helped the people understand the law; and the people stood in their place.
- Neh 8:8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, interpreting and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading.
- Neh 8:9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the

- Levites who helped the people understand said to all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; do not mourn or weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.
- Neh 8:10 Then he said to them, Go your way; eat the fat, and drink the sweet wine, and send portions to him for whom nothing has been prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.
- Phil 2:3 Doing nothing by way of selfish ambition nor by way of vainglory, but in lowliness of mind considering one another more excellent than yourselves;
- Phil 2:4 Not regarding each his own virtues, but each the virtues of others also.
- G. Nehemiah was the perfect leader, the best leader in human history and the best example of what an elder should be; it is surely worthwhile for us, especially the leading ones in the churches, to consider his example so that we may be a pattern of gaining God and flowing out God to others in order to turn the age—Neh. 5:19; 13:14.
- Neh 5:19 Remember me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.
- Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE LEADERSHIP OF NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah, the son of Hacaliah, was not a counselor of the king nor a captain of the army. He was just a cupbearer, one who served wine to the king. But in his living and behavior he must have built up something that earned the king's respect. Nehemiah had never been sad in the king's presence (Neh. 2:1). One day the king said to him, "Why is your face sad, since you are not ill? This is nothing other than sadness of heart" (v. 2). Being aggressive, Nehemiah took advantage of this opportunity and said, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in waste and its gates are consumed with fire?" (v. 3). The king asked him what his request was, and Nehemiah asked the king to send him to Judah that he might rebuild the city of his fathers (v. 5). Nehemiah went on to request that letters would be given to him for the governors so that they would let him pass through. He asked also for a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the Park, so that he would give him timber (vv. 7-8). The king granted to Nehemiah all that he had requested.

THE AGGRESSIVENESS OF NEHEMIAH IN VOLUNTEERING HIMSELF TO HIS BURDEN

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. They told him that the people were in an exceedingly bad state and reproach and that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and its gates had been burned with fire (v. 3). When Nehemiah heard this report, he wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed (v. 4). 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.

In principle, these three sections—government, education, and constitution—have been present in the Lord's recovery through the centuries. Some are raised up and stirred up by God, and some volunteer. Some are in a high position, and some are common people. But all must be bold and strong in character and aggressive. All who have been used by God through history have been aggressive persons. For example, both Paul and Martin Luther were very aggressive. Brother Nee also, even though he was a gentleman, was very aggressive.

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.

In the Lord's recovery today there are many good saints, but we are short of aggressiveness. If

just five thousand among us were aggressive, the world would be turned upside down. If there were seven hundred aggressive ones in each continent, a great deal would issue forth for the carrying out of God's economy.

In our reading of the book of Nehemiah, we need to pay attention to Nehemiah's aggressiveness. Although he was a common man, a servant of the king, he was aggressive to volunteer himself to God and to his burden concerning the building up of the city. He was also aggressive in making his requests known to the king. When the king asked him about his sad face, he spoke to the king in a bold, aggressive way about his burden for the city of Jerusalem. It is important that we see this in the Word.

THE NATURAL VIRTUES AND CAPACITIES BEING BROUGHT TO THE CROSS IN ORDER TO BE BROUGHT INTO RESURRECTION

At this juncture we need to consider a matter that is significant in the typology in the Old Testament and in the fulfillment of the types in the New Testament. In typology many persons were temporarily used by God according to their natural capacity and natural virtues to signify something spiritual. An example of this is Nehemiah and his aggressiveness, which was a virtue in his human conduct. Whereas in typology natural things were used by God temporarily, in the fulfillment of the types in the New Testament, all the natural virtues and capacities should be brought to the cross. They need to be put to the cross and crossed out.

Many among us think that to put a certain thing to the cross means to put that thing to an end. In a sense, this is correct. However, according to the real significance of the cross of Christ, the cross does not mean merely that something is put to an end but that the natural things are crossed out in order to be brought into resurrection. The cross of Christ brings all natural things to death and burial. But according to the Bible, burial is followed by resurrection. Burial is therefore the threshold of resurrection. Whatever is buried will be resurrected. According to John 12:24, a grain of wheat falls into the ground, dies, and is buried. But this is not the end. After burial, something will come forth in resurrection.

The Example of Moses

Let us consider the example of Moses. I believe that Moses had a strong character and that in his natural constitution he was even more aggressive than Nehemiah was. At the age of forty Moses aggressively volunteered to save Israel out of the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, but God came in to limit him, allowing him to fail and be disappointed. Moses was then "buried" in the wilderness for forty years. Eventually, the resurrecting God came in to resurrect Moses (Exo. 3:2-6).

The Example of Peter

God made us with certain virtues and capacities in our natural constitution. Matthew 25:15 tells us that the "talents" are given according to our "own ability," that is, our natural ability, which is constituted of God's creation and our learning. This ability needs to be crossed out and then brought into resurrection.

This was the experience of all the able and capable apostles, such as Paul and Peter. Peter, for instance, was in the "tomb" for three and a half years. Whenever he crept out of the tomb, the Lord Jesus would send him back to the tomb. On the night of the Lord's betrayal, Peter was so bold and aggressive as to say to the Lord, "Even if I must die with You, I will by no means deny You!" (Mark 14:31). Peter went on to tell Him that others might forsake Him but he would never do so. What boldness! What aggressiveness! The Lord told Peter, "Truly I say to you that today in this night, before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times" (v. 30). Once again, Peter was put to the cross and buried.

Entering into Resurrection

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. But if we allow our natural capacity, ability, and virtues to be brought to the cross and die, we will be resurrected. Then in resurrection our capability, ability, and virtues will be many times greater than they were in the natural life. These things are still ours, but having passed through death and burial, they are now in resurrection. This means that we ourselves, with our capacity, ability, and virtues, have entered into resurrection. We continue to exist, but we with our natural ability have been brought into resurrection.

The reality of resurrection is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the consummated Triune God. Resurrection, therefore, is the consummated Triune God. 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 into God, who is resurrection, we enter into resurrection.

An Important Principle

This is a very important principle for interpreting the types and their fulfillment. If we do not apply this principle, all the natural capacities, abilities, and virtues, unchecked by crucifixion, will be like “wild beasts” among us.

This has been the situation with many capable ones who came into the recovery and stayed for a while. They eventually realized that in the recovery there was no ground for them to employ their natural capacity and ability. Eventually, they left the recovery and formed a work for themselves. They were not willing to accept crucifixion and burial in order to be brought into resurrection. They could not take the cross. This is the reason certain capable persons who have come into the recovery do not remain.

God needs people who are highly educated. For example, he needed someone like Moses, who was “educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (Acts 7:22). If Moses had not been an educated person, God would not have used him to give the law. However, we should not trust our natural wisdom or education. It is risky to put our trust in such things. We need to be one with God. If we are one with God, we will put our natural wisdom and education to the cross. The more we do this, the more we will be in resurrection.

It is never a loss to sow the “seed” of our natural ability into the ground. When we sow a seed, we lose it temporarily, but eventually there will be a harvest in resurrection.

NEHEMIAH’S LIVING IN RESURRECTION

Nehemiah was one who lived not in his natural man but in resurrection. He was aggressive, but his aggressiveness was accompanied by other characteristics. First, he loved God. There is no doubt about this. He was born in captivity and was appointed to be the king’s cupbearer, but he loved God. He also loved the Holy Land (signifying Christ), the holy temple (signifying the church), and the holy city (signifying the kingdom of God). He loved God and, in typology, he loved Christ, the church, and the kingdom. As a person who loved God, Nehemiah was one who contacted God. We are told a number of times that Nehemiah prayed to God (Neh. 1:4; 2:4b; 4:4-5, 9). Furthermore, Nehemiah trusted in God and even became one with God.

In himself Nehemiah’s aggressiveness was natural, but in God his aggressiveness was in resurrection. Nehemiah was an aggressive person who loved God, the Holy Land, the holy temple, and the holy city, who contacted God and had fellowship with Him, who trusted in God, and who was one with God. As a result, he became the representative of God. We need to be clear about this in order to understand the intrinsic significance of the type according to the insight given by the Spirit. (*Life-study of Nehemiah*, pp. 11-15)

THE LEADERSHIP OF NEHEMIAH FOR THE RECONSTITUTION

OF THE NATION OF GOD'S ELECT

The leaders of the returned captivity were Zerubbabel of the royal family, Ezra of the priestly family, and Nehemiah of a common family. Among all the leaders in the history of Israel, these three were the top ones. Nehemiah was very common with no rank. There is no indication that his family had a high standing in society, and he did not have a high profession. Even though he served in the palace of the king of Persia, he was just a household servant.

Although Nehemiah was a common person without any position, he was placed in a very high position, a position that involved close contact with the king. Nehemiah was a cupbearer to the king (Neh. 1:11b). While wine was being set before the king, Nehemiah would take up the wine and give it to him (2:1a). Eventually, the king appointed this cupbearer to be the governor of Judah.

NEHEMIAH'S PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTICS

As one of the leaders of the returned captivity, Nehemiah had some particular and special characteristics.

Being a Pleasant Person with a Proper Attitude and Behavior

As a cupbearer to the king, Nehemiah must have been a person who was pleasant and sweet and who was always proper in his attitude and behavior. He was never sad in the king's presence (v. 1b). If Nehemiah had not been a pleasant person who fulfilled the king's requests, the king would not have allowed him to continue serving as a cupbearer.

A Person Who Loved God and God's Interest on Earth

Nehemiah loved God, and he loved God's interest on earth concerning His economy. This interest included the good land, the temple, and the city of Jerusalem, all of which Nehemiah loved. Even though he was a common person without a rank such as that of a king or of a captain in the army, he took care of God's interest on earth.

One Who Prayed to Contact God in Fellowship

Nehemiah was also one who always prayed to God to contact God in fellowship. When he heard that the people in Jerusalem were suffering and that the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down and that its gates had been burned with fire, he wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed (1:2-4). In verse 11 he prayed, saying, "I beseech You, O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants, who take delight in fearing Your name; and cause Your servant to prosper today, and grant him to find compassion before this man." Here Nehemiah was praying that he would find favor with the king. When the king asked him regarding his request, Nehemiah "prayed to the God of heaven" (2:4).

A Person Who Trusted in God and Who Was One with God

Furthermore, Nehemiah was a person who trusted in God and who was one with God. Burdens were placed upon his shoulder by God, but in bearing these burdens he trusted in God. Nehemiah knew that the good hand of God was upon him (vv. 8, 18), and he asked God to remember him (5:19; 13:14, 31). This indicates that he trusted in God and was one with God.

It was not easy for God to gain such a person as Nehemiah. In rank and profession he was very low, but he loved God and God's interest, he prayed for God's interest, contacting Him in fellowship, and he trusted in God and became one with Him. These are Nehemiah's particular characteristics in his relationship with God.

Altogether Unselfish

In his relationship with the people, Nehemiah was altogether unselfish. With him, there was no

self-seeking. Even though he gained a high position as the governor of Judah—he was actually the acting king of Judah, representing the king of Persia—he never sought anything for himself. With Nehemiah there was no self-interest. He was always willing to sacrifice what he had for the people and for the nation. He was the governor, but he did not take any compensation for twelve years, because he realized that the building of the wall was a heavy burden on the people (5:14-18). He did not want to increase the burden on them. Instead of receiving compensation, he provided for the daily necessities of more than one hundred fifty men.

Nehemiah also was among those who were ready to fight against the enemy, and he took part in the night watch (4:17-23). He did not leave these matters to others but participated in them himself.

Not Indulging in Lust

It is quite striking that there is no word concerning Nehemiah's marriage. I believe that, in contrast to the judges and the kings, Nehemiah had only one wife. He did not indulge in sexual lust. David and Solomon were both indulgent in this way. The indulgence in sexual lust was the main factor of the rottenness of David's family and the main factor behind the loss of the kingdom for David and his descendants. Nehemiah, however, was altogether different.

I believe that in the whole six thousand years of human history, there has never been such a one as Nehemiah. There were no complaints about Nehemiah from the people. Everyone appreciated him and was grateful for him. We may say that Nehemiah was an outstanding elder, the best example of what an elder should be. I hope that all the elders in the churches today will be like Nehemiah.

NEHEMIAH GOING TO EZRA FOR HELP IN RECONSTITUTING THE NATION OF GOD'S ELECT

Nehemiah was a head, a ruler, of a nation, but he was altogether not ambitious. This is indicated by the fact that he recognized his need of Ezra. In reconstituting the nation, Nehemiah realized that he did not know God's Word. But Ezra, who was famous for his knowledge of the Word of God, was still alive, and Nehemiah was willing to go to Ezra for help. Many of today's leaders would not seek help in such a way. Instead, being ambitious, they would hold on to their position and not bring in an Ezra to help them. But because Nehemiah was not ambitious, he brought in Ezra. Nehemiah knew that without Ezra he could not reconstitute the people of God.

RE-EDUCATION FOR RECONSTITUTION

In order to reconstitute the people of God, there is the need to educate them with the word that comes out of the mouth of God, which expresses God. This means that to reconstitute the people of God is to educate them by putting them into the Word of God that they may be saturated with the Word.

The Israelites had been in Egypt for at least four hundred years. During those years they must have been constituted with Egyptian learning. Then they were brought to Babylon for seventy years. Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah were all born and raised among the Babylonians. After the people of Israel returned from Babylon, they mixed themselves with the Canaanites. Thus, the Israelites were constituted with the Egyptian, Babylonian, and Canaanite culture. Nevertheless, they returned to be the testimony of God. But how could a people with a constitution of Egyptian, Babylonian, and Canaanite culture be God's testimony, the expression of the God-man? Such a people were not the God-men. How could they express God? In order to be the testimony of God, His expression, they needed to be re-educated in the Word of God.

THE RETURNED ISRAELITES BECOMING GOD'S TESTIMONY

In addition to being re-educated, the people of Israel needed to be raised up in much the same way as parents raise their children. Parents not only educate their children but spontaneously and

unconsciously impart themselves, nearly their whole being, into their children. Parents transfuse what they are and what they think into their children. Eventually, this constitutes their children to be the same as they are. This is what the children of Israel needed.

Before Nehemiah came back, the nation of Israel was a mess. The duties of the priests were not certain, and no one was taking care of the Levites and the serving ones. The singers were there, but no one had opened the way for them to sing and to be formed into companies. Nehemiah, with the help of Ezra, totally reconstituted the nation. Then Israel became a particular nation, a nation sanctified and separated unto God, expressing God. They were transfused with the thought of God, with the considerations of God, and with all that God is, making them God's reproduction. Everyone became God in life and in nature by this kind of divine constitution. As a result, they became a divine nation on earth expressing the divine character. They were reconstituted personally and corporately to be God's testimony. The returned captives became God's testimony through the reconstitution that took place under the leadership of Nehemiah.

The central and crucial point of the recovery books, which end with Nehemiah, is the matter of proper, adequate leadership. Whereas the record of the leadership in Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles is dark, the record in Ezra and Nehemiah is bright. In Ezra and Nehemiah three leaders are mentioned: Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. 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*, pp. 29-33)