

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying

Message Two : Israel's encamping in array typifying God's redeemed people being consummated as the New Jerusalem

I. Overview:

In Numbers 2:2 the children of Israel shall encamp facing the Tent of Meeting on every side. In the matter of encamping in array, there was no human choice, coming absolutely out of God's ordination and arrangement. The picture of Israelites' encamping in Num. 2 corresponds to the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21. The New Jerusalem had a great and high wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve gates were twelve pearls which signify the issue of Christ's secretion in two aspects, His redeeming and life-releasing death and His life-dispensing resurrection. Christ was wounded for us in order to have us imprisoned in His wound so that He might carry out His secretion over us to make us pearls. The more we are made pearls subjectively, the more we are in the New Jerusalem, and the more we are in the kingdom.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. What did it reveal in Numbers 2:2 having a deep implication?

The formation of the Israelites was first numbered for encamping in array, by which the Israelites became an army. Whichever tribe an Israelite was born of, he had to encamp by the standard of that tribe. This typified that in the coordination in the church, the believers are not allowed to have their own choice; their coordination must come absolutely out of God's ordination and arrangement.

B. How do the books of Leviticus and Numbers speak of two sides of tabernacle?

Leviticus speaks mainly of the Tent of Meeting, so the emphasis of it is not the testimony of God but how man comes before God to have fellowship with Him, serve Him, and live a holy life. Numbers emphasizes the matter of God's testimony, which refers to the two tablets in the Ark of the Testimony. The Ark of the Testimony was the center of the tabernacle; hence, the tabernacle was the Tabernacle of the Testimony.

Day 2 —

A. What does it signify of Israelites encamping with the number of 3x4 ?

The Israelites encamped facing the Tent of Meeting in four directions: the east, the south, the west, and the north. There were three camps in each of the four sides. Three denotes the Triune God, and four denotes the created man. Three times four signifies God in His Trinity being mingled with the created man as one. Three times four equals twelve, which also denotes eternity and completion as well as administration and government.

B. Why's the more we consider the picture of the children of Israel encamping in array around the tabernacle, the more we must adore God for His sovereignty?

Jacob had twelve sons, each of whom became a tribe. Levi was set aside to become the priests, but Joseph's two sons filled the gap. Levi begot three sons, who occupied three sides of the tabernacle, leaving one side for Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons.

Day 3 —

A. Explain the picture in Numbers 2 corresponding to the New Jerusalem.

The Israelites' encamping in Numbers 2 was around God's tabernacle; this picture corresponds to the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21. Just as the New Jerusalem has four sides, so also the encamping in Numbers had four sides. The New Jerusalem has three gates on each side, on which are the names of three tribes; the twelve tribes of Israel encamping in Numbers 2 had three tribes on each side.

B. How can we say that the twelve tribes were encamped just like a city?

The walls of the four sides of the New Jerusalem are the safeguard of the city. The twelve camps of the army encamped in array in Numbers correspond to the walls of the New Jerusalem. Likewise, the coordination in the church is for safeguarding God's testimony. The administration of each local church should be three times four. This administration is an army that fights for God and maintains God's testimony.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the names of the twelve tribes of Israel being on the twelve gates.

Israel represents the law of the Old Testament, signifying the requirement of the law at the entrance into the kingdom of God, and the twelve tribes being the entrance into the holy city through the preaching of the gospel, leading people into the supply of the riches of Triune God. As you walk through the gate, call “Lord Jesus”, and live in Christ, every part of the requirement of the law is fulfilled, and you are okay for the law.

B. Explain the meaning of the twelve angels at the twelve gates.

This signifies that the angels watch over the entry into the New Jerusalem. The angels are spectators. The entire realm of God’s New Testament economy is actually “a big show.” If you call on the name of the Lord Jesus, you get a free ticket into the holy city, and the angelic spectators will rejoice and welcome you in. One angel at the gate actually represents the entire angelic realm.

Day 5 —

A. Describe the process of a pearl produced by an oyster.

A pearl is not created or manufactured but produced by an oyster. When the oyster is wounded by a particle of sand, it secretes its life-juice around the sand and makes it a precious pearl. The oyster depicts Christ as the living One coming into the death waters, being wounded by us, and secreting His life over us to make us pearls for the building of God’s eternal habitation and expression.

B. What kind of outcome can we get when we remain in Christ’s death?

Every moment we need to stay in the all-inclusive death of Christ. Where can you get the victory over sin, over your temperament, over the world, and over Satan? There is victory only in the death of Christ. Where death is, resurrection is. His death is the place where He has the position to secrete Himself around you, and this is the only place to make you a piece of pearl.

Day 6 —

A. What do pearls signify of the issue of Christ’s secretion in two aspects?

These two aspects are His redeeming and life-releasing death and His life-dispensing resurrection. Both kinds of secretion require the seeking believers’ daily experience of the death of Christ subjectively by the power of Christ’s resurrection that they may be conformed to the death of Christ. We have to put not just Christ’s death itself but the secretion of His death into our daily experience subjectively.

B. How can we say that we experience Christ’s resurrection is by the Spirit?

When we turn to our spirit, we meet Christ as the life-giving Spirit, who is the very reality of Christ’s resurrection. It is by this Spirit that we experience Christ’s resurrection. In order to apply this we have to remain in our spirit all the time to meet Christ as the Spirit, who is the reality of His resurrection. Then we have the power to remain on the cross.

III. Conclusion:

In Numbers among two million Israelites, those males over the age of twenty were numbered and formed into an army. In the matter of encamping in array, one had to encamp by the standard of his tribe, facing all sides, according to his life, and around the tabernacle; there were three camps in each of the four sides, which corresponds to the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 with three gates in each of four sides. Numbers 2:2 says, “They shall encamp facing the Tent of Meeting on every side.” They took the Tent of Meeting, the testimony of God, as their center; that means as long as they focused on Christ, God would fight for them and do everything for them. Here, three times four equals twelve, three denotes the Triune God, and four denotes the created man; that signifies God in His Divine Trinity being mingled with the created man as one. This is our Christian life and also the way that God fight for.