

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Nine : Enjoying Christ with God on the Ground of Oneness

I. Overview:

Deuteronomy 12 reveals that the children of Israel were to worship God in the unique place of His choice by bringing their tithes, offerings, and sacrifices to Him. The unique ground of Jerusalem, the place where the temple as God's dwelling place was built on Mount Zion, typifies the unique ground of God's choice, the ground of oneness. In the New Testament the proper ground of oneness ordained by God is the unique ground of one church for one locality. The church life on the ground of oneness is today's Jerusalem; within the church life there must be a group of overcomers, and these overcomers are today's Zion. In order to be today's overcomers, we must enjoy Christ with God on the ground of oneness for the exhibition of Christ, the building of the church, and the preparation of Christ's bride. In order to be today's overcomers, we must maintain the ground of oneness, God's unique choice, without elevating anything other than Christ; in the Lord's recovery we elevate Christ alone and the enjoyment of Christ with God on the ground of oneness.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain what the three things are to keep the oneness among God's people.

The children of Israel were to seek Jehovah and come unto the place which Jehovah their God would choose out of all their tribes to put His name, even unto His habitation with His altar. Here we have three things: the place, the name, and the altar. To fulfill the requirements of Deuteronomy 12 was to have a center of worship for the keeping of the oneness among God's people, avoiding the division caused by man's preferences.

B. Expound how Deuteronomy 12 speaking of God's people being one corresponds to the revelation in the New Testament.

The people of God should always be one. If each tribe had had its own center for the worship of God, then each center would have been the ground and the base of a division. In His wisdom, God required them to come three times a year to the unique worship center. The principle is the same in the New Testament. We believers in Christ must be one and have the same center for the worship of God.

Day 2 —

A. Why do we meet in the different cities but still remain in the oneness?

For convenience and practicality, we meet in the different cities where we live. Apparently we are divided by geography, for we meet in separate cities all over the world. Actually we remain in the oneness and are not divided, for wherever we may be, we meet in the Lord's name, in the spirit, and with the cross.

B. Explain how our meeting is in the Lord's recovery.

In the Lord's recovery, we have one name and one Spirit. We all meet in the name of Jesus Christ, and we all meet in the mingled spirit, that is, in the regenerated human spirit indwelt by the Holy Spirit. In order to meet as the church we must experience the cross. The flesh, the self, and the natural man cannot be in the church; they must be crucified.

Day 3 —

A. Expound the church having two aspects of the nature and the practice.

The church is constituted of the universal God, but it exists on earth in many localities, one of which was Corinth. In nature the church is universal in God, but in practice the church is local in a definite place. Hence, the church has two aspects of the universal and the local.

B. Explain what the two aspects of our enjoyment of Christ are.

Our enjoyment of Christ has two aspects. One aspect is individual, which can be enjoyed in any place. The other aspect is corporate. If we desire to worship God with all the saints,...we cannot do it according to our desire, but according to God's ordination. The place appointed by God was eventually Jerusalem.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the relationship between the type of Zion and the overcomers.

Zion was the city of King David, the center of the city of Jerusalem, where the temple as God's dwelling place on earth was built. Zion within Jerusalem typifies the body of overcomers, the perfected and matured God-men, within the church as the heavenly Jerusalem. As the highlight and beauty of the holy city Jerusalem, Zion typifies the overcomers as the high peak and the reality of the church.

B. Explain the relationship between Zion and Jerusalem in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament there was the city of Jerusalem with Zion as the center. The church life is today's Jerusalem; within the church life there must be a group of overcomers, and these overcomers are today's Zion. A local church must have some overcomers, and these overcomers are the peak and the center of that local church.

Day 5 —

A. Explain the two ways of Israelites enjoying the rich produce of the good land.

The children of Israel could enjoy the rich produce of the good land in two ways. The common way was to enjoy the common portion of the rich produce of the good land at any time, in any place, and with anybody. The special way was to enjoy the top portion, the firstfruit and the firstborn, in the unique place chosen by God. We have the common enjoyment of Christ and the special enjoyment of Christ.

B. Expound how we live a life of laboring on the good land.

We need to live a life that we may enjoy the good land. The life must be a life of laboring on Christ, seeking to enjoy Him and experience Him in every situation. In order to labor on the good land, they tilled the ground, sowed the seed, watered the plants, nurtured the vines, and pruned the trees. It is a picture of how we must work diligently on Christ.

Day 6 —

A. Why was the worship at the high places a factor in the dispersion of the children of Israel?

Often the pagan centers of worship were located on mountains or hills or under flourishing trees. The mountains and hills signify the exaltation of something other than Christ. The various worship centers in today's Christianity lift up something other than Christ. However, God's people must destroy all the places, idols, and names. To do this is to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord.

B. Why is the ground of oneness the proper way to have the Christian life and the church life?

In this universe God has chosen only one place, and that place is the church. The church with Christ is the unique place of God's choice. As we enjoy Him with God, we will be planted in the house of the Lord, we will grow, and we will flourish. This is the proper way to have the Christian life and the church life. In the church there cannot be anything other than Christ.

III. Conclusion:

In Deuteronomy 12-14, there are at least fifteen times referring to the way God's people worship God. In this matter we have no choice and freedom. After the children of Israel entered into the good land, God required them to come three times a year to the place where they chose to put His Name, at His dwelling place and at the altar, to worship Him. They were asked to completely drive out the nations in the land, destroy the idols, tear down the altars, crush the pillars, burn all of them with fire, and cut down the idol gods in order that God's people could keep the oneness there. In the New Testament the proper ground of oneness ordained by God is the unique ground of one city with only one church. Although we may meet separately in several meeting halls geographically, we are still one church for one place, in the name of the Lord Jesus, in our mingled spirit, and with the cross to meet together. This is the oneness, and this is the proper ground for the worship of God.