

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message Ten : The Promise, the Prophecy, the Remnant, and the Recovery

I. Overview:

The children of Israel, as the chosen people of God, are the greatest, collective type of the church. Jehovah promised to turn the captivity of Israel and bring them back to their land. Jeremiah prophesied that the captivity of Israel in Babylon would be for seventy years; just as God gave the people up to captivity, He would bring them back as triumphant warriors. As God's co-worker on earth, Daniel understood God's will and prayed for God's will according to the Scriptures. Daniel knew that God's intention was to bring the children of Israel back to the land of Israel. When God called His people to come back to His chosen land, very few responded; the majority remained in their captivity. In the Lord's recovery today we are a remnant of God's people who have come back to His original intention while so many believers are scattered and remain in captivity. The return of the children of Israel from Babylon to Jerusalem prepared the way for the coming of Christ. The children of Israel went back to Jerusalem, the God-ordained unique ground, with all the vessels of the temple of God, which had been brought to Babylon. The first step of the enlargement of Christ is the church as the house; the second step of the enlargement of Christ is the church as the city.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

- A. Explain in His old administrative arrangement, God chose the children of Israel as a type of the church. In His old administrative arrangement God chose the children of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, and made them His people as a type of the church. In the Old Testament the church is not mentioned in plain words. What a work that in the old dispensation God prepared such a type of the church!
- B. Expound that Paul applies the history of the children of Israel to the New Testament church life. In Hebrews and 1 Corinthians he points out that what happened to the children of Israel is a type of us. The entire history of Israel is a story of the church. The Bible, then, contains two histories; the history of Israel and the history of the church. The entire Bible gives us one revelation, the revelation of God's economy concerning the church.

Day 2 —

- A. Expound the promise in Jeremiah 31:11-14.
Jehovah will redeem Israel from the hand of one stronger than them. They will come and sing in the height of Zion; they will flow forth to the goodness of Jehovah. Their soul will be like a watered garden, and they will not languish anymore. Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old men together, and Jehovah will turn their mourning to gladness and cause them to rejoice after their sorrow.
- B. Explain when the restoration of Israel will take place.
The restoration of Israel will take place after Jehovah's chastisement of Israel with justice. All those who consume him will be consumed, and every one of them will go into captivity. Jehovah will bring him recovery and will heal him of his wounds. Jehovah will turn the captivity of the tents of Jacob and will have compassion on his dwelling places. The city will be rebuilt on its mound, and the palace will be inhabited after its own manner.

Day 3 —

- A. Expound how Jeremiah responded in the condition of Israel being miserable.
After Israel entered into the good land, they forsook God and set up other worship centers. The kingdom of Israel was captured by the Assyrians, and later the kingdom of Judah was captured by the Babylonians. In God's eyes the condition and situation of Israel were miserable; the temple was burned, the wall of Jerusalem was torn down and the entire good land was devastated. What a pitiful situation!
- B. Describe how God comforted Jeremiah while Jeremiah was lamenting.
While Jeremiah was lamenting, God came in to comfort him with the word that the captivity would last only seventy years. God assured Jeremiah that the miserable situation of his country and his people, of the temple and the city, would not last long. God comforted Jeremiah by assuring him that just as He gave the people up to captivity, He would also bring them back from their captivity. God would bring them back as triumphant warriors.

Day 4 —

A. Expound that Jeremiah prophesied concerning Jehovah's promises to restore Israel.

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied concerning Jehovah's promises to restore Israel. Jehovah said that He would gather the remnant of His flock out of all the lands where He had driven them and would bring them back to their pasture. He also said that they would be fruitful and would multiply; they might dwell in their own land. These are promises concerning the restoration of Israel.

B. Expound the cooperation of God's people in the Lord's first coming.

The Lord's first coming depended on the return of God's people from their captivity in Babylon to the Holy Land. According to Micah 5:2, Christ was to be born in Bethlehem. Therefore, in order for this prophecy to be fulfilled, God's people had to be in the Holy Land to enable Christ to come the first time. Without God's people in the Holy Land, Christ would have had no way to come to the earth through incarnation.

Day 5 —

A. Expound the meaning of the word "recover".

The word recover means to obtain again something that has been lost, or to return something to a normal condition. When we speak of the recovery of the church, we mean that something was there originally, that it became lost or damaged, and that now there is the need to bring that thing back to its original state. The entire history of the nation of Israel is a full type of the church.

B. Explain the church's degradation and recovery.

Spiritually speaking, the church, due to its degradation, has been in captivity. God's people have been divided and carried away from the proper ground of unity to a wrong ground. Therefore, we need to be recovered. The recovery was not only from Babylon but back to Jerusalem, the God-ordained unique ground. Jerusalem was the place the Lord had chosen.

Day 6 —

A. Why must a return from the capture bring all the vessels of the temple of God?

Those who went back to Jerusalem from Babylon brought with them all the vessels of the temple of God which had been captured to Babylon. These vessels, which were of silver and gold, signify the experiences of Christ and the riches of Christ. The people of God were scattered, and all the spiritual experiences were carried away. Therefore, all the vessels of silver and gold must be brought back to Jerusalem.

B. Explain what the meaning of the building of the temple in the Old Testament, there being still the need to build up the city is.

The recovery of the church is typified in the Old Testament by the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. After the recovery of the building of the temple, there was still the need to build up the city. The temple, the place of the Lord's presence, needed protection. The wall of the city was the defense to the temple. Ephesians 2:19 speaks of the church as the house of God. But in the last two chapters of Revelation, there is a city, and in this city there is no temple, because the city has become the enlargement of the temple.

III. Conclusion:

Today God's enemy, Satan, usurps the land and makes it his temple and kingdom, which causes great difficulties. Therefore God needs a group of people so that He may have a home (temple) in which He can be the Father; He can also have a kingdom in which he can reign. This is why God needs His people to return from captivity. The house (temple) of God, as His dwelling place on earth, needs His kingdom to be established as a sphere to guard His earthly administration and interests to fulfill His economy. Rebuilding the temple of God typifies God's restoration of the fallen church; Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem is a sign that God will restore His kingdom. God builds his home and his kingdom in parallel.