

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying

Message Five : Ezra, a Priestly Scribe, and the Need for Ezras— Those Skilled in the Word of God

I. Overview:

A priest is one who is mingled with the Lord and saturated with the Lord; Ezra was a man who trusted in God, who was one with God, who was skilled in the word of God, and who knew God's heart, God's desires, and God's economy. As a priestly scribe, Ezra was one with the Lord by contacting Him continually. Ezra spoke nothing new; what he spoke had been spoken by Moses. The priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra in order to gain insight into the words of the law. After the return from captivity, the people of Israel were still unruly, for they had been born and raised in Babylon and had become Babylonian in their constitution. Ezra brought the people back to the Word of God so that they might be re-educated and reconstituted with the heavenly truths in the divine Word. In the Lord's recovery we need Ezras, priestly teachers who contact God, who are saturated with God, who are one with God, who are mingled with God, who are filled with God, and who are skillful in the Word of God. The recovery has the highest truth; the greatest need that must be met is to bring the saints in the Lord's recovery into the truth to carry the recovery on.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the meanings of the priest, the scribe, and the prophet.

A priest is one who is mingled with the Lord, saturated with the Lord, feeding upon the Lord, and breathing Him in all day long. Ezra was a priest, a descendant of Aaron, and he was also a scribe. The scribe in the Old Testament equals the teacher in the New Testament. The prophet is one who speaks directly from God, and the teacher is one who teaches the things spoken by the prophet.

B. Describe Haggai and Zechariah the two prophets.

What was spoken by Haggai was new; it was never revealed to anyone else. Zechariah's message is even more marvelous. He said that Christ is the shoot, the foundation stone with seven eyes, and the topstone. Zechariah was not a teacher but a prophet, speaking from God's instant, present, up-to-date inspiration. Ezra spoke nothing new. What he spoke had been already spoken by Moses.

Day 2 —

A. Expound how we can be reconstituted.

In order to be reconstituted, we need to come back to God by coming back to His law, that is, His word. When the word of God works within us, the Spirit, through the word, spontaneously dispenses God's nature with God's element into our being. We may not even be aware that such a dispensing is taking place within us. By this way we are reconstituted.

B. Explain the situation of the people who had returned to Jerusalem from the captivity.

Most of those who had returned to Jerusalem from the captivity in Babylon had been raised in Babylon. The Babylonian element had been wrought into them and constituted into their being. Therefore, after they returned to the land of their fathers to be citizens of the nation of Israel, they needed a reconstitution. Ezra was very useful at this point, for he was one through whom the people could be reconstituted with the word of God.

Day 3 —

A. Expound after this time of education and training, the nation of Israel became God's expression.

As a result of this time of education and training at Mount Sinai, the nation of Israel became an army not only formed and organized but also constituted to be God with man and man with God. Hence, in typology the Israelites were God-men...Everything related to them, even their environment with the pillar of cloud in the day and the pillar of fire at night, was God's expression. Their going forth became God's going forth.

B. Explain the experience of the people crossing Jordan river and coming to the city of Ai.

God raised up the second generation, and they crossed the river Jordan by a great miracle. As a heavenly constituted army, they came to Jericho. When they shouted, the city of Jericho fell. This was God's testimony. This was the move, the living, of God-men; it was God marching on. But when they came to the city of Ai, one among them caused them to fail. From that time onward, there was nothing among the Israelites but degradation.

Day 4 —

A. Why did the people of God need to be raised up in the same way as parents raise their children?

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 transfuse what they are and what they think into their children. Eventually, this constitutes their children to be the same as they are. 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.

B. Expound the Lord coming to carry out His ministry as a great light to shine upon them.

The Slave-Savior, as the light of the world, came to Galilee, the land of darkness, where people were sitting in the shadow of death, and He came as a great light to shine upon them. His teaching released the word of light to enlighten those in the darkness of death so that they might receive the light of life. The second thing the Slave of God did in His service was to carry out such teaching to bring people out of satanic darkness into the divine light.

Day 5 —

A. Expound that in 2 Timothy 3:16 teaching equals revelation.

If we have the proper and adequate spiritual experience, we will realize that in 2 Timothy 3:16 teaching equals revelation. Teaching is actually nothing less than a divine revelation. As you are teaching the young people, you must present a revelation to them so that they may see something of the Triune God. A certain matter may be hidden from view, but by your teaching you should gradually open the veil. This is teaching.

B. Fellowship the conviction in 2 Timothy 3:16, and how to apply it.

It is significant that in 2 Timothy 3:16 teaching is followed by conviction, or reproof. No one can see something of God without being convicted by what he sees. Whenever we see something of God, we realize our mistakes, wrongdoings, shortcomings, and sins. The result is that we are convicted; we are rebuked.

Day 6 —

A. Fellowship how we can be built up in the truth.

It is not an easy task to be built up in the truth. You must study the [Recovery Version] text and every footnote. It is helpful to take care of the cross references. Then you need to study the Life-study messages. Consider the text of the Recovery Version with the footnotes and the Life-study messages as a textbook. If you merely read them in a light way, you cannot get into them.

B. Expound how the truth becomes a long-term nourishment to us.

If you merely read the Life-studies without studying, you will receive only a temporary nourishment. That will become only a kind of inspiration to you. The only way for the truth to get into you is through your mentality. Then it remains in your memory. The truth gets into you through your mentality, your understanding. Also, if the truth gets into your memory, it becomes a long-term nourishment.

III. Conclusion:

More than half contents of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah speak of our need to be constituted by the Word of God. Today, in the Lord's recovery, we need to dive deeply into the Word of God, both individually and corporately. To be constituted by the truth, we need to pray-read and then study. We must study the truth word by word, term by term, sentence by sentence. Spontaneously we can recite what we have pray-read and what we have studied. In addition to our own study, we also need to study with others. We should prophesy by what we could recite. What we can recite is what we have studied. What we have studied is what we have pray-read. Through prayer, studying, reciting, and prophesying, we are equipped to nourish others with the unsearchable riches of