

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying Message Nine : Building and Fighting—the Need to Engage in Spiritual Warfare for the Building of the Church

I. Overview:

Nehemiah chapter 4 describes the frustration of the enemy regarding the rebuilding of the city. The enemies became angry and greatly enraged; they mocked the Jews and despised their building work. Nehemiah trusted in God by praying that God would return their reproach to themselves. The Jews under Nehemiah's instruction and direction, they set a watch against the enemy day and night and were ready to fight with weapons. Half of Nehemiah's servants labored in the work, and half of them held weapons, ready to fight. As the commander in chief, Nehemiah was among those who were ready to fight against the enemy; he took part in the night watch and did participated in them himself. Building the church as the city of God is not an easy task; building can be carried out only by fighting. Spiritual warfare is based on the victory of Christ; the starting point of spiritual warfare is standing upon the victory of Christ, seeing that Christ has already defeated the enemy. The work of the church on earth is to maintain Christ's victory. Spiritual warfare is a matter of the Body of Christ. Knowing the principle of spiritual warfare, we cannot use fleshly weapons, keeping the position of ascension, and we must use spiritual weapons to have fighting prayers. The prayers of the greatest worth are prayers in ascension.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the fighting they faced in their building.

Nehemiah 3 is a record of the building of the wall by all the Israelites. Chapter 4 describes the frustration of the enemy. The enemies became angry, greatly enraged, mocked and despised their building. Under Nehemiah's instruction, they set a watch against the enemy day and night, ready to fight. Nehemiah, who instructed them to remember the Lord and fight for their families. Half of his servants labored in the work, and half of them held weapons to fight.

B. Explain the pattern of Nehemiah in the war.

Some built the wall and some carried burdens, taking the loads with one hand doing the work and with the other hand holding a weapon. The one who would sound the trumpet was beside Nehemiah, to gather them to fight. As the commander-in-chief, Nehemiah took the lead to watch. Thus, they labored and half of them held spears from the start of dawn until the stars came out, and Nehemiah with his brothers, none of them took off their clothes. Each had his weapon at his right hand.

Day 2 —

A. Explain without fighting, there is no building.

At the completion of the seventy years of captivity, God brought His people back once again. He brought them back for the purpose of rebuilding the temple and the city. During the rebuilding of the temple, Nehemiah 4:15- 23 shows that the entire process was a warfare. Half of the Israelites were working, and half of them were fighting. Without warfare and without a spirit of fighting, there is no building.

B. Expound that we need to build on the one hand and to fight on the other.

We need to have fighting prayer for the building. The enemy tried a thousand schemes to frustrate and falsely incriminate the Israelites so that their hands might be weakened. When Nehemiah saw the situation, he immediately went to pray before God. As soon as he prayed, he became clear inwardly. He and his brothers carried out the rebuilding work with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon. This is to build on the one hand and to fight on the other.

Day 3 —

A. Expound the spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6.

When we read Ephesians 6:10-12, we realize that the work and responsibility of the church is spiritual warfare. The opponents in this warfare are not flesh and blood, but spiritual beings whose dwelling is in the air. In Ephesians 6:13-14 we are told that we should stand, not that we should attack. The spiritual warfare is defensive, not offensive, because the Lord Jesus has already fought the battle and won the victory.

B. Explain the work of the church on the earth.

The Lord has already won the battle, and the church is here to maintain His victory. The church's work is not to overcome the devil, but to resist him who has already been overcome by the Lord. Her work is not to bind the strong man—the strong man has already been bound. Her work is not to let him be loosed. There is no need to attack; simply guarding is sufficient.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the forces of darkness in the heavenlies in Ephesians 6.

The principalities, the authorities, and the world-rulers of this darkness are the rebellious angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and who now rule in the heavenlies over the nations of the world, such as the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece in Daniel 10:20. This indicates that the devil, Satan, has his kingdom of darkness. In this kingdom, Satan is at the top, and under him are the rebellious angels.

B. Explain the stratagems of the spiritual warfare we faced.

In fighting a battle, the position above the enemy is strategic. Satan and his evil forces are under us, and it is their fate to be defeated by us. Our warfare is not against human beings, but against the evil spirits, the spiritual powers in the heavenlies. The rebellious angels are the evil spirits in Satan's kingdom.

Day 5 —

A. Explain the first principle of spiritual warfare.

It is that we cannot use fleshly weapons. The apostle Paul tells us this clearly in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. These fleshly weapons not only refer to the losing of temper but include all human schemes and natural methods. Whenever we use the schemes of our flesh, we have already fallen into the hands of the enemy. How then will we be able to deliver others from the hands of the enemy?

B. Expound the second principle of spiritual warfare.

It is to keep the position of ascension. There is only one kind of people who can engage in spiritual warfare—those who have received salvation, have been raised from death, and are now sitting with Christ in the heavens. Only this kind of men can attack the enemy in the air from a transcendent position in the heavens. Therefore, in order to engage in spiritual warfare, we must keep the heavenly position.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the fourth principle of spiritual warfare.

It is to have fighting prayers. After the apostle mentions the various kinds of spiritual weapons in Ephesians 6, he says, "Praying at every time in spirit". Spiritual warfare largely depends on prayer. What Satan fears most is the saints' bended knees before the Lord, or the prayer of the church before God.

B. Expound that the prayers of greatest worth are prayers in ascension.

If we have seen that the prayers of greatest worth are prayers in ascension, then we can easily understand that prayer is a warfare. Such is the nature of the prayer spoken of in Ephesians 6. It is not the ordinary, common, general prayer. It is very high, being uttered from the realm of the heavens.

III. Conclusion:

When the church blows the trumpet for immigration to the new city, we need to offer ourselves, to be called up, to be trained, to be formed into an army, not in an individual way, but in a corporate way to be sent to fight. When brothers and sisters migrate to a new place, they realize that they are an army fighting there. They must engage in spiritual warfare through prayers, wrestling with evil forces in the air. No matter how busy they are, they always need to pray together. Everyone is awake. Everyone comes to the meetings, ready for battle; They are like fighting in every meeting. No wonder they had a higher experience, for they had taken plunder in the battle. On the other hand, those who remain in one place all the time seem to have no enemies to fight, and experience is quite limited.