

THE GATES OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Message 2

Seeing the Present Need in the Lord's Recovery— Not only Walls for Protection but Gates for Entrance

Scripture Reading: Rev. 21:12-13, 18, 21, 25; 22:14; Gen. 17:5-6; Hos. 7:8

- I. We thank the Lord that in the holy city there is not only a wall but also twelve gates; the wall is for separation and protection, and the gates are for communication and entrance—Rev. 21:12-13, 21:**
- A. If there were no gates, people would have no way to enter in; we need a wall with gates.
 - B. A gate is a break, an opening, in a wall; on the one hand, we need to build up the wall, but on the other hand, we need breaking to create an entrance into the city.
 - C. Many dear Christians have no wall at all; they are too open; but other spiritual ones have a wall with no openings; this is a problem:
 - 1. Sometimes we sense that certain saints are strong walls without any gates; no one can enter in through them.
 - 2. The more spiritual they become, the more they are not able to bring people to the Lord.
 - 3. They cannot beget spiritual children because they have a wall with no entrance; we need a breaking in order to reach out to others so that they may enter in through us.
 - D. We need the wall, and we need twelve gates, three gates in each of the four directions:
 - 1. We need to ask how many gates we have and whether people can be saved and enter into the church through us.
 - 2. Some local churches have a wall without gates, so there is no way for people to enter in.
 - 3. If anyone wants to be saved and come into the church, it seems that they have to climb over the spiritual persons, that they must be holy and spiritual before they can enter in.
 - E. The wall in our Christian life and church life must have adequate entrances in four directions; then no matter what direction people come from, there is an entrance for them to get in:
 - 1. In each direction, no matter where people come from, there must be an entrance for them; the gates are toward the Far East in the east, Africa and South America in the south, Europe to the west, and even an entrance for the Russians from the north; the entrances are toward all directions.
 - 2. The entrances are also toward all classes of people, whether they are doctors or gamblers; there are twelve gates in four directions for people to enter in.
- II. In our Christian life and church life, we must have the separating wall of the holiness and appearance of God in His glory, but our separation must provide adequate entrances for people to contact us and enter in:**
- A. We need the breaking to create openings in the wall, which are the Triune God as the three gates in four directions:
 - 1. The way to bring people into the church is to have more breaking to create the openings, not by human hands but by the Triune God; this breaking is accomplished by the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

2. Consider from Luke 15 how the Son came to sacrifice His life to bring us back to God, how the Spirit diligently enlightens the darkened heart, and how the Father loves the fallen sinners and awaits their return.
 3. If we are willing for the Triune God to break us to create the openings, many people will be brought into the church life through us because the entrances, the gates, will be open.
- B. We should not be too spiritual and boast that we are separated, holy, and not worldly; if we are this way, then we may want to see people saved, but they will not come; this indicates that we are still too whole.
- C. In Genesis 17:5-6 God said to Abraham, “Your name shall no longer be called Abram, / But your name shall be Abraham; / For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful...”:
1. Abram means an exalted father, and Abraham means the father of a great multitude.
 2. Although Abraham was a high father, he was not the father of a multitude, the father of many nations; but in 17:5 his name was changed from exalted father to the father of a multitude.
 3. As the person is the reality of one’s name, so the changing of Abraham’s name signifies the changing of his person; God changed his name to indicate that he would be the father of a great multitude.
 4. What is needed to fulfill God’s eternal purpose is not an exalted father but a father of a great multitude, not an exalted individual but a multiplied person, a person with a great multitude as his multiplication.
 5. God needed a great multitude of people to fulfill His purpose, and for this He needed a producing father—1 Cor. 4:15; 1 Thes. 2:11.
- D. Most Christians desire to be a person with exalted spirituality; the more they seek this kind of spirituality, the more they become barren and individualistic, producing no seed:
1. But God needs us to be multiplied in producing seed, not exalted in seeking spirituality; for this we need the changing of name, the changing of our person.
 2. The exalted father has to be changed to the father of a great multitude; the exalted-spirituality-seeking person has to be changed to the multitude-producing person.
 3. This requires the termination of the spirituality-seeking self; even this kind of self has to be terminated so that we may be a multiplied person, not an exalted one, for the fulfilling of God’s purpose.
- E. We should fall down, prostrate ourselves, and cry to the Lord, “I do not care about my spirituality. I would rather see people be saved and helped by the church.”
1. If we do this, the gates will be open.
 2. When our spirituality is broken, there are the gates, the openings and entrances, for the weak and sinful ones to come through.
- F. We need to build up the wall, but we must not build up a wall that is whole, without entrances:
1. It is too easy for us to go to extremes; on the one hand, we may have no wall at all.
 2. On the other hand, we may build a wall without entrances; we may have no desire to reach others for the Lord; we may prefer to stay within the wall and exclude others.
 3. Therefore, we need to be balanced; Hosea 7:8 speaks of a “cake not turned,” a cake burned on one side and raw on the other; we need to be turned again and again.
 4. We must build the wall, but there must be the breaking and cutting to create gates in every direction; some Christians need to build the wall higher, but those who have built the wall need breaking to create gates for people to enter through.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

Having Gates for Communication and Entrance

Revelation 21:12, 13, and 21 speak of the gates of the New Jerusalem. We thank the Lord that in the holy city there is not only a wall but also twelve gates. The wall is for separation and protection, and the gates are for communication and entrance. If there were no gates, how could people enter in? We need a wall with gates. A gate is a break, an opening, in a wall. On the one hand, we need to build up the wall, but on the other hand, we need breaking to create an entrance into the city. Sometimes we sense that a dear brother has a strong wall without any gates. No one can enter in through him. I have seen this kind of spiritual persons. The more spiritual they become, the more they are not able to bring people to the Lord. They cannot beget spiritual children because they have a wall with no entrance. We need a breaking in order to reach out to others so that they may enter in through us.

Many dear Christians have no wall at all; they are too open. But other spiritual ones have a wall with no openings. This is a problem. We need the wall, and we need twelve gates, three gates in each of the four directions. How many gates do we have? Can people be saved and enter into the church through us? Some local churches have a wall without gates, so there is no way for people to enter in. If anyone wants to be saved and come into the church, it seems that they have to climb over the spiritual persons, that they must be holy and spiritual before they can enter in. Do we want this kind of Christian life and church life? The wall in our Christian life and church life must have adequate entrances in four directions. Then no matter what direction people come from, there is an entrance for them to get in. We say that we are not sectarian or exclusive, but where are our entrances? Do we have twelve gates toward creation in four directions?

In each direction, no matter where people come from, there must be an entrance for them. The gates are toward the Far East in the east, Africa and South America in the south, and Europe to the west. There is even an entrance for the Russian Bolsheviks from the north. The entrances are toward all directions. The entrances are also toward all classes of people, whether they are doctors or gamblers. There are twelve gates in four directions for people to enter in.

That there are three gates on each side signifies that the three of the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—work together to bring people into the holy city. This is indicated in the three parables in Luke 15. The Son as the shepherd came to die for us to bring us back to God. The Spirit as the seeking woman enlightens our heart to cause us to repent, to make a decision to come back to the Father. Then the loving Father receives the returning prodigal son. The three parables in Luke 15 show us the three steps taken by the Triune God to bring fallen man back to Himself.

In our Christian life and church life, we must have the separating wall of the holiness and appearance of God in His glory, but our separation must provide adequate entrances for people to contact us and enter in. We need the breaking to create openings in the wall, which are the Triune God as the three gates in four directions. In some places the saints have asked me for the way to bring people into the church. The way is to have more breaking to create the openings, not by human hands but by the Triune God. This breaking is accomplished by the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Consider from Luke 15 how the Son came to sacrifice His life to bring us back to God, how the Spirit diligently enlightens the darkened heart, and how the Father loves the fallen sinners and awaits their return. If we are willing for the Triune God to break us to create the openings, many people will be brought into the church life through us because the entrances, the gates, will be open.

We should not be too spiritual and boast that we are separated, holy, and not worldly. If we are this way, then we may want to see people saved, but they will not come; we may distribute tracts, but there will be no response. This indicates that we are still too whole. We should fall down, prostrate ourselves, and cry to the Lord, "I do not care about my spirituality. I would rather see people be saved and helped by the church." If we do this, the gates will be open. When our spirituality is broken, there are the gates, the openings and entrances, for the weak and sinful ones to come through. Then there is no need for them to use their own effort to climb over the high wall. We need to build up the wall, but we must not build up a wall that is whole, without entrances.

It is too easy for us to go to extremes. On the one hand, we may have no wall at all, but on the other hand, we may build a wall without entrances. We may have no desire to reach others for the Lord. We may prefer to stay within the wall and exclude others. Therefore, we need to be balanced. Hosea 7:8 speaks of a "cake not turned," a cake burned on one side and raw on the other. We need to be turned again and again. We must build the wall, but there must be the breaking and cutting to create gates in every direction. Some Christians need to build the wall higher, but those who have built the wall need breaking to create gates for people to enter through. (*A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church - Part 4: Revelation*, ch. 44, pp. 473-475)

The Changing of Name

Now we come to the changing of name. In 17:5 God said to Abraham, "Neither shall thy name anymore be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." Abram means an exalted father, and Abraham means the father of a great multitude. Although Abraham was a high father, he was not the father of a multitude, the father of many nations. But in 17:5 his name was changed from exalted father to the father of a multitude. In Hebrew the name Abram is composed of just four letters represented by the English letters A-b-r-m. The name Abraham is composed with one additional letter—h. This indicates four plus one. Four is the number of the creature, and one is the number of the Creator. Hence, as four fingers plus one thumb makes a complete hand, so man plus God equals perfection. Four plus one equals five, the number of responsibility. Regardless of how good we may be as the number four, we are still short of the number one. In order to be the number five, bearing the responsibility to fulfill God's eternal purpose, God must be added to us. What was the significance of the changing of Abraham's name? It was that God was added into him. Before Genesis 17, Abraham was just Abram, a man who did not have God added to him. But in Genesis 17 the man, and not only his name, was changed by having God added into him. One unique letter was added to the four letters, and God was added into man. God is the perfecting factor. Without Him we are imperfect. We all need God to be added into us. This is perfection.

As the person is the reality of one's name, so the changing of Abraham's name signifies the changing of his person. His original name indicated that he was an exalted father. Now God changed his name to indicate that he would be the father of a great multitude. What is needed to fulfill God's eternal purpose is not an exalted father but a father of a great multitude, not an exalted individual but a multiplied person, a person with a great multitude as his multiplication. God needed a great multitude of people to fulfill His purpose, and for this He needed a producing father. Most Christians desire to be a person with exalted spirituality. The more they seek this kind of spirituality, the more they become barren and individualistic, producing no seed. But God needs us to be multiplied in producing seed, not exalted in seeking spirituality. For this we need the changing of name, the changing of our person. The exalted

father has to be changed to the father of a great multitude. The exalted-spirituality-seeking person has to be changed to the multitude-producing person. This requires the termination of the spirituality-seeking self. Even this kind of self has to be terminated so that we may be a multiplied person, not an exalted one, for the fulfilling of God's purpose. (*Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 47, pp. 633-634)

References and Further Reading:

1. *A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church - Part 4: Revelation*, ch. 44
2. *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 47