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The Three Battlegrounds by Francis Frangipane

Chapter 12 - Repairers of the Breach (Part 1)

And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of [buildings that have laid waste for] many generations; and you shall be called Repairer of the Breach, Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. Isaiah 58:12 AMPC

The Gathering Together of the Saints

True Christians from all backgrounds share an expectation commonly known as the rapture of the church (see 1 Thessalonians 4:16). Although debate surrounds the timing of this event, Scripture assures us that it will occur when Jesus Himself returns.

However, before we are “caught up” to meet the Lord, there will be an unusual season of grace in which the living church of Jesus Christ, like a bride, makes “herself ready” (see Revelation 19:7). In this unparalleled season of preparation, while we will not become perfect, we shall realize a new level of holiness of the quality in which Jesus Himself walked (see 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13; Ephesians 5:26-27; Philippians 1:9-10).

The result of this new spiritual fullness will be a new level of unity. Fault Finding and gossip will disappear. In their place will be intercession and love. Wholeness will return to the citywide church. This also means that the ambition and division we see today between congregations will be identified as sin, which will be repented of before Jesus returns.

The truth of this message must be made clear, for most Christians consider oneness within the body inconceivable before Jesus returns. They have not discerned nor warred against the enemy’s lies, which have conditioned believers to accept strife and sectarianism in the church. It is my passionate conviction that the church which will ultimately be raptured will be free of strife and carnal divisions - it will be a bride “having to spot or wrinkle,” made ready for her bridegroom (Ephesians 5:27; see Revelation 19:7).

According to Scripture, during the rapture, “in a twinkling of an eye” our bodies will be changed (1 Corinthians 15:52). But our character, that is, the essence of who we have become, will remain intact. There will be no regrets or wondering how “those from that church” made it, for the living bride will be a church built together in love, meeting in separate buildings but serving

the one and only Lord. These true disciples of the Lord Jesus will be known for their intense and holy love for one another - not merely in their individual local assemblies but within the context of a citywide church.

It is highly significant that the scriptural term for the rapture is called the “gathering together” (2 Thessalonians 2:1; Matthew 24:31). What ultimately will be consummated in our gathering together physically to the Lord will be precipitated by a spiritual gathering together of His body on earth. Concerning the era known as the “end of the age,” Jesus taught that the “good fish” shall be “gathered... into containers” (Matthew 13:48). And in the context of spiritual warfare, Jesus warned, “He who does not gather with Me scatters” (Matthew 12:30).

This scattering, dividing process among the Lord’s sheep has gone on long enough. Jesus has set His heart to bring healing and unity to His body. In this regard, through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord spoke a somber warning. He said, “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” (Jeremiah 23:1) The Son of God is not pleased with carnal divisions in His body! Indeed, the Lord promises to chasten those pastors who continue to build their kingdoms without laboring together to build His. To them He says, “I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deed” (v.2).

In the tenth chapter of John, the Lord makes His goal clear: there shall be “one flock with one shepherd” (v.16). He reveals that it is the wolf nature which “snatches [the sheep] and scatters them”; and it is the hireling nature which allows the scattering to occur. But His promise to His sheep says this:

[3] “But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. [4] I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the Lord. Jeremiah 23:3-4 NKJV

The pastors of the last Christian Church will be undershepherds to the Lord Jesus; they will be anointed to gather together His remnant and under that anointing shall be “fruitful and multiply.”

Indeed, right now, in the context of humbling ourselves and submitting our hearts to His will, we are participating in being “gathered together.” This process will progressively increase until the barriers between brethren are melted by the overcoming nature of Christ’s love. Before Jesus returns, we will truly be “one flock with one shepherd.” We will be holy and blameless sheepfold, meeting in different buildings but baptized into one body. To be continued...