

## ORDER AND DISORDER

### “For God is not a God of disorder but of peace” (1 Cor 14:33)

- Fact # 1 - the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed in 586 B.C.
- Fact # 2 - Nehemiah and his co-workers rebuilt the walls in 444 B.C. (142 years later)
- Fact # 3 - Those who returned from captivity numbered 42,942 (42,360, plus 7,337 servants, and 245 singers - Neh. 7:66 - 67).
- Fact # 4 - the workers were not professional builders but people from all walks of life.
- Fact # 5 - in spite of opposition, the walls were rebuilt in only 52 days (Neh. 6:15).
- Obviously, this remarkable project was not completed by accident. The logistical problems involving architecture, food, drink, building materials, etc. reflecting a great deal of detailed thought and planning.

The orderly nature of God is reflected in many places in the Holy Bible. Our text in Corinthians, is but one example. Paul reminded them that God does not create disorder or confusion. When there is disorder in the church, God did not cause it. When there is disorder in society, God did not cause it. In fact, wherever you find disorder and confusion, you may be certain that it did not come from God. God creates order and peace. Our study of Nehemiah provides an excellent illustration of this truth. Ungodly people broke down the walls of Jerusalem and godly people built them back. Godly people specialize in cleaning up messes and clearing up confusion.

The Greek word “poieo” means to “make” or “do”. It is found 565 times in the N.T. Scriptures. The noun “poiema”, however, is found only twice. It is the basis of our English word “poem”. Both times this word is used it refers to the orderly work of God. In the first instance (Rom. 1:20), it refers to the physical creation of the universe and is translated in the KJV as “made”. The second instance refers to spiritual creation of “Christians” (Eph. 2:10). and is translated in the KJV as “workmanship”. Both the physical creation of God, and the spiritual creation of God, are like poems. They represent design, order, rhyme, and meter. The point is, God is not a God of disorder but of peace!

The harmony created by God through Christ manifests itself in a variety of ways. First it is reflected by the fact that those who are born again have an immediate attraction to everyone else who is born again. Please consider: “. . . **everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.**” (1 Jn 5:1) This is the reason that Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren, because we both have a common Father (Heb. 2:11). Solomon said that we should consider the ant (Prov. 6:6 - 8). Even though ants do not have “no commander, no overseer, or ruler” they still function as one. This is also true of Christians. We too can function as one without an earthly system of rulers and commanders. The God who creates order in an ant hill also creates order in the church.

But there is also a more specific type of guidance mentioned in the Scriptures. Sometimes God does call people like Nehemiah into positions of leadership. The walls of Jerusalem had been broken down a long time and never would have been rebuilt until some leader like Nehemiah showed up. The New Testament Scriptures make many references to leadership “gifts” given by the Holy Spirit. All of these gifts, of course, are given for our common good (1 Cor. 12:7). Paul put it like this: “**And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.**” (1 Cor 12:28)

While all of these gifts are important and given for our common good, let us focus in particular on “gifts of administration”. While not first in importance, administrators are still important. Perhaps even more so as society becomes more complex. The Greek word used here is “kubernesis”. It refers to someone who governs or guides and is used in Acts 27:11 of the pilot and owner of a large ship. As we obey them that have the rule over us (Heb. 13:17), let us continue to remember that God is not a God of disorder, but of peace.