

The Book of Ezekiel (181-200)

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181

Once again the Lord made it very evident that what He would do for them was not because of some goodness on their part. He plainly stated that it was not for their sakes that He would restore the land to them and bless it with great abundance.

Eze. 36:32 The Lord was certainly not one bit slack in reminding them that they would remember their ways of wickedness and loathe themselves for all of their wicked ways. Eze. 36:31-32 An emotion that is common to all who violate the Word of the Lord. Yet the Lord, for His own purpose and because He loves and forgives, stated that He would cleanse and save them from their unrighteousness. The land and the people would be blest. How patient and loving the Lord is. Eze. 36:33-38

The valley of dry bones. Eze. 37:1-8 How many thousands of sermons have been preached from this portion of Scripture. What ever application has been made of this event it must be noted that it is the result of the hearing of the Word of the Lord. Their springing into life was the result of the impartation of the breath (ruach, also translated spirit or wind) of the Lord. Most definitely and perhaps the outstanding feature of a last day revival is the coming together of the body of Christ. Here in Ezekiel individuals are seen as the various members of their body are united. The Lord Jesus will have a united body of believers in the end of the age. United not by organization but by the Word and the Spirit. Paul urged the Corinthian church to come too, and practice this type of unity. 1 Cor. 1:10

The beauty of Ezekiel's prophecy is that it accomplished the purpose of imparting life to that which was dead and well dried out. All those bodies scattered around the valley came together but were not alive for they had no breath in them. At the command of the Lord, Ezekiel called for the breath or the Spirit of the Lord to come from the direction of the four winds to breathe upon them and impart life to them all. Winds blowing from four directions at one and the same time can only mean a mighty whirlwind or a hurricane of immense proportions. In prophetic vein of thought it is apparent that Ezekiel

was prophesying of the first resurrection and the glorious second coming of Christ. Eze. 37:9 Jesus said that at His second coming and the rapture, that the world would see Him coming in the clouds of glory. Then, at that time, He would send His angels and they would gather His elect from the four winds of the earth. Mark 13:26-27 Which leads me to believe that among the many events taking place at that particular moment of time, there may also be some extra ordinary winds.

After all, the clouds are carried about by the winds.

182

The Spirit of life is to be found only in the Lord Jesus. He imparts eternal, everlasting life to those who place their trust in Him. Those who practiced the Law have the right of the resurrection of life implanted within them. The seed of resurrection through Christ Jesus is to be their portion. Job had that blessed hope of a resurrection unto life, where he could look upon and know his God. Job 19:25-27 David spoke of those whose reward is in this world only, as men who have received their portion, their riches and their pleasures. By contrast, David looked forward to the resurrection of life where he would be able to look upon the One who had given him the promise of being in the likeness of God. That is, with an everlasting glorified body which will never know the suffering and agony of this current life. Ps. 17:14-15

Because of the words of the prophecy the fulfillment of the same must be placed at the time of the rapture and the beginning of the Millennial age. This is verified by the statement of the prophet where he saw the opening of the graves. It places a definite time frame for this event to take place. Eze. 37:13 These bewildered almost hopeless individuals (Eze. 37:12) are those who trusted in the Law, prior to Christ. From the time of Christ, down to the very end of the age there is but one way to assure oneself of participating in the resurrection of life and that is through Christ. There is no other way. There is but one source of eternal life, one way, one door and that is Jesus the Son of God. Acts 4:12 The kingdom of God on earth, the Millennial reign of Christ is a spiritual kingdom. The Spirit of the Lord will be the source of life for all in that glorious day. Even these, whose sacrifices portrayed the once for all sacrifice of Christ, will live in the beautiful glow of the Spirit of the Lord for He promised that His Spirit would be upon them. Eze. 37:14

The coming kingdom of the Lord is the most exclusive kingdom of time or eternity. As much as the world ridicules the born again experience, it is the vital key to entrance into the kingdom of God on earth and also the new heavens and the new earth. Jesus made a positive statement excluding sinners from His kingdom at all times. Expect a person is born again they cannot enter the kingdom of God. John 3:5 In other words, everyone who dies does not go to heaven. The ungodly will not be able to find a way into that kingdom for they cannot find pardon or release when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 2 Cor. 5:10 Sinner will not be found in the gathering together of the redeemed in His kingdom. Ps. 1:5 If they did get in, they would not like it and would beg to immediately leave that holy kingdom.

183

The blending together of two sticks, into one, in the hands of the prophet.

Eze. 37:20 A prophecy of the uniting of a kingdom which had been split and divided into two kingdoms. This is to be accomplished after a spiritual manner in the hand of the prophet, the Lord Jesus. Such unity as accomplished by the prophet can only be done in a mighty move of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus is not building a secular kingdom but one which is Spiritual. Jesus is the prophet (Luke 24:19) in whose hand this will be fulfilled. This is a last day prophecy which will come to pass, for Jesus said all would be fulfilled and it will. Mt. 5:18.

Now, we know that the nation which retained the name Israel, Samaria, the northern kingdom, the ten tribes were scattered abroad and ceased to exist as a nation. Where and who are they? Were they scattered throughout Europe? Are they those from Ethiopia whom claim to be Jews? Are they that group of people in India who claim to be Jews? The Lord knows precisely who Israel is today and likewise those who are of Judah. Only in the hands of the prophet can there possibly be a gathering and a uniting of the descendents of the two into one spiritual nation. Only in a spiritual sense will that take place. That which is called Israel today, or the Jews are the descendents of Judah who were dispensed abroad. The old Israel, the ten tribes were scattered, spread abroad, making it almost impossible for them to return to their former home land.

The accomplishment of the amalgamation of the two sticks will be done under the leadership of one king, the Lord Jesus. Eze. 37:22 That king is identified by the name David, who was a type of the Lord Jesus. Jesus came to occupy the throne of David. Luke 1:32 The people in the day of the Lord Jesus expected Him to establish the kingdom at that time. Luke 19:11 To that question Jesus gave an answer to which we need to give heed today. "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36 The kingdom of God is available now in a true relationship with the Lord Jesus. Ezekiel spoke of a people who were all of one heart, who were privileged to have received a new spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit. Eze. 11:19 The spirit which the unified people should receive was the identified as His Spirit. Eze. 36:27 Furthermore Jesus taught that the kingdom of God was to dwell within the heart of repentant. Luke 17:21 Paul in his writings made it very well known that the kingdom of God was not eat and drink but the precious evidence of the Holy Spirit dwelling within, in righteousness, peace and the joy of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 14:17.

184

The two sticks are the amalgamation of the full family of a spiritual people.

The true Israel of the Lord. A relationship which is based on the power and change wrought in those who have been born again. They are those who comprise the true family of the Lord. Except one be born of the Spirit they cannot even see that there is a kingdom of God. John 3:3 Then, without being born of water and Spirit they cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John 3:5 Very explicit statements.

The spiritual changes that are recorded by Ezekiel in this miracle of the two sticks becoming one are, a sign to us of a work of the Spirit in the lives of individuals, who regardless of racial origin have been adopted into the family. Unquestionably among them are descendents of the ten lost tribes as well as those of Judah. By the Spirit of adoption, all are made to be one in Christ. Even those to whom adoption was first granted must come through the same manner as all others. Gal. 4:5 While it is exciting to see those of opposing religions come to Christ, once in Christ, the past affiliations cease and we become new creatures in Him. Gal. 6:15 There is but one way, one God and Father of all. One kingdom, with the Lord Jesus as the only King privileged

and fit to occupy the eternal throne, as the descendent, not only of the Lord but of the lineage of king David. Eze. 37:24.

The prophecy covers spiritual elements which Israel miserably failed to accomplish even in the years of the leadership of Moses and Aaron. There is a spiritual purity accompanying the prophetic utterance which will be the conditions found in the Millennial reign of Christ. Incidentally there will be no sinners in the kingdom of the Lord at that time. No idols nor things which are offensive or sinful before the Lord. Eze. 37:23 The holiness of the Lord will prevail over the whole kingdom for the people of that age are the blood washed and redeemed. They are the true people of the Lord, following one and the same shepherd, the Lord Jesus. They fully do His will. They inherit the eternal kingdom of the Lord, whether on this earth or in the new heavens and new earth. Eze. 37:24 The New Covenant, the everlasting covenant of peace, founded by the Lord Jesus is theirs. Eze. 37:26 He will prepare a place for them and multiply them. They are the sanctuary of the Lord, His eternal Temple. That is, those who are the resurrected and become the dwelling place of the Lord, by His Spirit. 1 Cor. 6:19 Only by having experienced the majestic presence of the Lord in the baptism of the Spirit can we even begin to imagine the everlasting flow of the Spirit of the Lord through those who are His redeemed and sanctified. Eze. 37:27-28.

185

There is probably a no more misinterpreted prophecy found in the Bible than this which is found in Chapter 38. The key to understanding the future presented in its words is found in one who is called Gog. Eze. 38:2 Naturally, scripture interprets scripture. Thus, we are not surprised when this name Gog is used in reference to a situation which will develop at the close of the Millennium. Rev. 20:8 Lets visit the outline given us in the Word of the Lord pertaining to Ezekiel's Gog.

The capture and binding with a chain of Satan is introduced in Rev. 20:1-2.

The conquering angel, we should not have a problem identifying Him, for an angel is a messenger and in Christ we find the message of the Lord. The Angel of the Lord, the Lord Jesus is seen in the book of Revelation as a mighty Angel, marvelously clothed with a cloud and the consequential rainbow about His head, He is filled with the great

and marvelous glory of the Lord, for His glorious face shines as the Sun, while His feet are like pillars of fire, feet of judgment. Rev. 10:1 He is the sacrifice and altar of the heavenly kingdom having power over fire, Rev. 14:1, that is the majestic presence of the Lord who is a consuming fire. Heb. 12:29 He is the Angel with exceeding great power, remember He said that all, fullness of power, was given unto Him, not only on earth but in heaven as well. Mt. 28:18 Jesus said that there would be signs in the heavens prior to His second coming. Luke 21:11 This Great phenomenon is surely one of them, for to have the whole of the earth lightened at one and the same time, is spectacular, and will be an exceedingly frightening experience. Rev. 18:1.

He carries with Him the ability to open and close the bottomless, thus eternal, pit. He will place Satan under arrest and restraint, using an enormously strong, unbreakable chain. He possesses the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Mt. 16:18 He also has control over the keys of hell and death. Rev. 1:18 His it is to have absolute power over the key of David, making Him to be the promised, eternal king who will occupy the throne of David. Rev. 3:7 This event, will occur at the time of the second coming of

Christ at the beginning of the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus on earth. Satan is bound for one thousand years, cast into the pit, he is shut up (in more ways than one), and the seal of the Lord is placed upon his place of incarceration. Rev. 20:3 Then to finalize the purpose and judgment of the Lord upon him and the ungodly of the ages, he is loosed for a brief season, at which time he will perpetrate his last lie and act of deception. We shall see this to be the battle of Gog and Magog.

186

The battle of Gog and Magog is at the end of the Millennial reign of Christ.

“When the thousand years are expired.” Rev. 20:7 The question which is always asked is, who are the “nations?” Rev. 20:8 The “nations” are the resurrected ungodly dead of all the past ages. Plus the remnant of humanity who are alive at the time of the coming of Christ and have been deceived by the lies of the devil, who will be slain by the sword of the Lord. Rev. 19:21 No ungodly will in any shape or form enter into the Millennial reign of Christ. They are physically annihilated by the brightness of the sword of His mouth, the Word of the Lord, at His

coming. 2 Thess. 1:8 They are eternally excluded from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. Please take special note, this event will take place "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, or the time of the so called rapture." 2 Thess. 1:10 It is a total impossibility for any sinner to make it past the second coming of Christ and enter into the Millennium.

The Millennial day, the thousand years, is the day of rest, the Sabbath of the dealings of God with man. For six thousand years He has called mankind unto Himself. Now we are approaching the Sabbath, the last thousand years of time, which will have as it's introduction, the return of Christ. As with the children of Israel, the unbelievers did not enter into the earthly promised land (Heb. 3:19), so in the end the unbeliever will not inherit the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 6:9 It is not true that all Christians will escape the great tribulation period. John saw a group of people, exalted to reign with Christ for they occupy thrones in the kingdom of our Lord. These are they who came face to face with the decision to deny Christ and live or maintain their faith and die as martyrs during the season of great tribulation. Their history is that they totally rejected the order of that day and refused to worship the beast or his image. They also strongly rejected his number, name or mark. Rev. 20:4 They will live and reign with Christ for the thousand years. Rev. 20:4 Further evidence of saints in the tribulation is in the fact that a war is waged specifically against them and they become martyrs for Christ. Rev. 13:7 After the bride is delivered from his clutches and she is transported into her place in the wilderness, the remnant of her seed, the five foolish virgin class, are attacked. Rev. 12:17 Then there are the two witnesses who will testify for the whole of the tribulation that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Messiah, and that in Jerusalem. No doubt, they will be featured daily on the TV World News. They are so greatly hated that their bodies are desecrated for three days in the current city of Jerusalem. After lying dead for three and one half days, they are then resurrected and caught up in a cloud. They are a part of the first resurrection. Rev. 11:12.

187

Ezekiel gave us a list of seven names of those who would physically attack Israel. Eze. 38:1-6 History leaves a record of these nations at one time or another coming against the land of Israel. Prophetically,

the number seven is a divine complete number. Thus it portrays the amalgamated world, the united world which will be the kingdom of the devil and his antichrist. What will take place, though it is called a battle, is so one sided that it can hardly be considered a war such as we depict and see today. Note that the enemy has hooks in his jaws, in other words is under the absolute control of the Lord. The Lord will bring him out to do battle and at the same time turn him around in full flight and defeat. Eze. 38:4 Bear in mind also that there is a variety of armament evidenced among this army, for they are from all the nations of the world.

The Lord made it very apparent that this is a situation which will develop at the brink of time, the very end, that is the end of the last thousand years. The gathering together of the people of the Lord, this undesirable visitation, will take place "in the latter years," the end of the dealings of the Lord with mankind on earth. The people of the Lord occupy the land "that is brought back from the sword," that is a land and a time of absolute peace and tranquility. The thousand years of rest and peace, the Lord's Sabbath. They are gathered from every nation, tribe and tongue and made to be the people of the Lord, regardless of their genealogy. They are the redeemed and resurrected. They are the chosen, eternal generation, the very elect of the Lord. 1 Peter 2:9 Of vital importance is the statement that they "shall dwell safely all of them." Eze. 38:8 This is a condition which does not exist today but is destined to prevail during and until the end of the Lord's Sabbath, at the conclusion of the Millennial reign of Christ on earth. Rev. 20:7

In this prophecy given by Ezekiel there are a number of important, key words which give an insight into the coming fulfillment of the prophecy, such as "ascend," To ascend can mean going up to Jerusalem. Acts 25:1 As stated in Ezekiel, it is approaching or ascending against the New Jerusalem. Eze. 38:9 It is also used in relationship to the beast which will ascend from the bottomless pit, Rev. 11:7 The beast which will arise from the sea. Rev. 13:1 Then the beast which will come up out of the earth. Rev. 13:11 Thus we have the ungodly trilogy composed of the devil, the antichrist and the false prophet, all of whom ascend or come forth. The display of the powers of evil and darkness at this particular time is staggering and far more serious than we can even imagine.

It is worth while to consider the nations to whom the Lord addressed this prophecy. The play on the names of Rosh (chief prince), Meshech and Tubal is the very worst violation of Bible interpretation. To decipher Rosh to become Russia, Meshech to be Moscow and Tubal to become Tubrusk we have committed an extreme fallacy. When the USSR broke up it was amusing to watch those who believed and taught such strange doctrine, scramble, to cover their tracks. The prophecy involves the whole of the nations of the world in the attack against the New Jerusalem which we have outlined in these studies. Eze. 38:2

The second resurrection at the close of the Millennial reign of Christ and His Bride is presented by the unrighteous coming forth from their graves, bewildered and without a leader. Then Satan is loose from his imprisonment and immediately proceeds to once again deceive his followers. That mass of resurrected corpses become convinced that they can capture and occupy the city of light. Rev. 20:7-8 In our studies we have noted that the wind and whirlwind speak of the might and power of the Lord. Such as recorded in Ezekiel 1:4. Also the word ruach may be translated wind, breath of spirit, so, the Lord made manifest His presence in the hurricane. The Lord proclaimed that Satan and his horde of zombies will come like a mighty world wide storm, accompanied by black and ominous clouds. Certainly clouds of satanic demon's and wicked vile spirits. A display such as never seen before and certainly will not happen again. Eze. 38:9 The prophet Isaiah experienced a traumatic time when given a vision/prophecy pertaining to the coming of the enemy to establish a siege against the city. An awesome fear gripped him, just at the pronouncement of the coming attack. Isa. 21:1-9 However, this approaching multitude will have no effect on the occupants of the New Jerusalem. The Lord Jesus is our refuge. Isa. 25:4

When Satan is loosed from the pit his scheming, evil mind will conceive a wicked thought. What else can we expect from him but ever manner of vileness and heinous thought. For all the punishment which he had experienced he will not change an iota. In the end he will still try to usurp the authority of the Lord and replace the Lord, with himself. Eze. 38:10 This act of insurrection is Satan's final attempt to be God. He and his mob are utterly defeated, the deceived are

consumed by the fire of the Lord and Satan is cast into the lake of eternal fire where his cohorts, the antichrist and the false prophet are already incarcerated. Rev. 20:10.

189

The evil thoughts of Satan when he is loosed from his incarceration are outlined. His first thought is to go up against the land of villages without walls. Where there is no sin or unrighteousness it is not necessary to have walls, bars and locks. This is a description of the conditions which will prevail during the reign of Christ on earth, in the Millennium. The people are at rest. This seventh thousand year period of time is the Sabbath or the day of perfect and absolute rest. Those who were resurrected and those who were caught up alive at the second coming of the Lord Jesus will have lived the thousand year in absolute tranquility. Eze. 38:11.

The prophet Zechariah had an interesting revelation given him which has a similarity to the statements of Ezekiel. Looking up, he saw a man with a measuring line in his hand who was about to measure Jerusalem. Zech. 2:1-2 Be assured, the Jerusalem of the Lord will be measured and will be required to meet the standards of the Lord. The Apostle John received the contents of the book of Revelation, among the many things revealed to him concerning the last days was the measuring of Jerusalem. The true Jerusalem, that which is spiritual and will be the eternal new Jerusalem.

The first measurement is done by John, using a reed like a rod. Rev. 11:1.

It was his responsibility to measure the temple of God, the altar and all who worshipped there. The New Testament people are the temple of the Lord and will be measured by the reed in the hand of the Lord Jesus. Just prior to His crucifixion the Roman soldiers, in mockery, placed a reed in His right hand, then used it to smite Him on the head. Mt. 27:29-31 The outer court, represents the Old Testament Law, Jerusalem and its people which will be in subjection and ruled by the antichrist for the forty two months known as the great tribulation period. Rev. 11:2.

The second measurement was when John was about to receive the revelation of the Lamb's wife. Rev. 21:9 The wife of the Lord Jesus will

not be chosen from those who live a casual Christian life, but from a people who totally dedicate themselves unto Him. She will be a virtual living New Testament having met all the requirements contained in the Word of the Lord. To think that just any or all will be in that Bride is a great mistake. Ephesians five presents to all who will read and understand the standards that are a way of life for that Bride. The reed in the hand of this angel who is having this conversation with John is a golden reed. The reed of great price, the Lord Jesus. Rev. 21:15 The whole of the city is inspected and measured. If it were possible that someone without the proper wedding garment had entered, on inspection, they will be thrown out. Mt. 22:11-14.

190

The question which is faced concerning the end of the age and the Israel to whom the Word is referring is recorded in the words of the Apostle Paul. The prophecies will be accomplished in a spiritual people to whom the natural must also be joined. Remember, salvation is not of race but of grace. He referred to the children of the flesh, of whom he was one, as not receiving the status of children of God. Those who have received the promises of the Lord, that is, are living in Christ Jesus, be they Jew or Gentile are the children of the Lord. Rom. 9:6-8.

The redeemed of the Lord will have enjoyed the thousand years of peace and rest. While Satan has been an observed of their tranquility and worship unto the Lord. Eze. 38:14-16 He is then loosed for a short season to marshal the dead which come up out of their places of internment. It is the final deception perpetrated by him. Like a vast, dark, ominous cloud they will attempt to attack the city of the Lord, the New Jerusalem, only to be consumed by the fire of the Lord. Rev. 20:3, 7-9 It is worthwhile to take cognizance of the name of this battle, Gog and Magog. That establishes when and where this battle will take place. The place of the incarceration of the devil is stated to be the "North" Eze. 38:15 This word (tsaphon) comes from (tsaphan), that is to hide, or the hidden, the dark. ISBE. It certainly is not difficult to apply this condition to the prison in which the devil has been incarcerated for the thousand years. Rev. 20:1-3.

The remainder of this chapter is difficult to place as one and the same event. There are events which transpire that are associated with the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I found that there are

translations which refer to him rather than to Gog as the one to whom the prophecy is addressed. Now, to relate these verses to the second coming. The manifestation of His fury. Nahum described the great and furious anger of the Lord in an extremely fierce and strongly worded prophecy. Nahum 1:2-8 In this prophetic utterance he presented the fury of the Lord and the horrific world wide shaking which will take place at the coming of the Lord Jesus. As we have seen in recent years a localized earthquake with or without an accompanying tsunami can be a catastrophe, how much greater that which will take place when Jesus returns. According to Nahum, the mountains quake, the hills melt, earth is burned along with all who dwell on it. His fury is sent forth like fire and the rocks are thrown down by His presence. Every mountain and island moved from their normal position. Rev. 6:14 He comes with flaming fire taking vengeance. 2 Thess. 1:8 The prayers of the ungodly answered. Rev. 6:15-17.

191

All Bible prophecy has its fulfillment in situations which prevailed at the time or shortly thereafter. There is also a dual or even a multiple condition when the prophecy will come into action once again. For instance, in the statement of Isaiah, "The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it lighted upon Israel." Isa. 9:8 In other words, what was meant to fit a state of affairs in Jacob was also found in Israel. Thus, the Lord reacted accordingly toward both. We are also aware that the execution of a prophecy may be like viewing a mountain range, there are many peaks, each one being higher than the others until we come to the highest. So it is with many of the prophecies of the Word. A prophecy will speak to current circumstances, and peoples, with a final grand climax in view. With that in mind, we consider the final verses of Ezekiel thirty eight.

The judgment of the sword. In the climax of the ages, at the time of the warfare between the forces of righteousness and the powers of evil controlling this world, the battle will be most awesome. It is not to be a simple skirmish on earth but the future holds a cosmic warfare which even reaches into the heavens. Rev. 12:7 It may be a play on words but it is also interesting to note that the Lord made reference to "all my mountains." Eze. 38:21 The sword in the warfare which will be conducted the sword of the Lord will sweep though the land and annihilate all. Eze. 14:17 Every man's sword shall; be against his

brother.” The Lord periodically used this strategy to defeat the enemy who came against His people. He used Gideon’s special forces against Midian. Judges 7:22 For Saul the Lord caused the Philistines to use their swords on one another. 1 Sam. 14:20 The singing of praise was used by the Lord to defeat Ammon and Moab. They too fought one another until when the forces of Judah arrived for the battle, the enemy were all dead. 2 Chron. 20:23.

The sword or war is not the only weapon used to defeat the enemy. The Lord will also send a plague or unnamed pestilence among them. There will also be a great shedding of blood by the enemy. A statement which makes one question as to the particular timing of this prophecy. Will these who come up in the second resurrection, these who surround the New Jerusalem, have the blood of life in them? In connection with this, there will be literally “torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur” poured out upon them. Eze. 38:22 NIV All of this that the Lord might convince the ungodly nations that He and He alone is the true and living God. Eze. 38:23 When comparing this portion of Ezekiel’s prophecy I find that this corresponds with the picture given by the Apostle’s and the book of Revelation to the battle of Armageddon and the second coming of Christ.

192

The prophecies of the Old Testament were directed, first toward a people or a nation which existed in that day. As we have noted they may also have a future accomplishment, as well as to those to whom the prophecy was directed at that period of time. Therefore conditions along with the manner in which they are first consummated may differ in their climax. For instance, the constant reference to the sword both in the past and the future of the prophecies. The sword speaks to warfare of any kind whether or not a sword is used. Such as in the final two battles, Armageddon at the close of the great tribulation and Gog and Magog at the close of the Millennium. The prophecy is given according to the system of life in the day in which it was first given. It is then anticipated that some of the prophecies were local and consummated in that day.

This prophecy of Ezekiel was directed to Gog and Magog, an existing people of that day. The children of Israel were in captivity in Babylon. At the completion of their captivity some returned to Israel, others

were so imbedded in the life style of Babylon that they continued their residence there. Those who returned and began to rebuild had to work with a tool in one hand and a sword in the other. Neh. 4:17-18 It must also be noted that almost all attacks against Israel came from the north. The burning of the weapons of warfare and the burying of the bones of those killed in the battle very easily fits into the carnage which was left behind after any of the battles conducted in the area.

There is that left which pertains to the ultimate battle of Gog and Magog as seen in the book of Revelation. From the very start, the Lord, as always, is in control. He is against that which Gog will attempt to do and will turn him (the devil) back from his attempt to take the New Jerusalem. Rev. 20:7-9 Some marginal readings give this translation of Eze. 39:2 which is more reasonable than leaving a sixth of the people alive at the battle of Gog and Magog in the end of the age. "strike thee with six plagues" (namely, pestilence, blood, overflowing rain, hailstones, fire and brimstone, Eze. 38:22). ISBE "Or, draw thee back with a hook of six teeth." Eze. 38:4

ISBE This gives the sound of great victory on the side of the Lord over the final attempt of Lucifer to take over the authority of the Lord. The number six is the number of man inasmuch as he was created on the sixth day. The number six is most definitely imposed upon the enemy who will deceive the nations at the time of the second resurrection. It will be his and his followers last attempt to gain eternal life, without recognizing the perfect atonement which is to be found in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus.

193

The utter defeat and extermination of Gog is predicted with the sternest of manner. Their weapons, bodies and bones are to be scattered on the mountains and on the plains. All with the purpose of convincing the enemy that The Lord is God indeed. Also to manifest the holiness of His name, while making certain that His name is no longer blasphemed. Eze. 39:1-7 Concerning the gathering, the burning of the weapons and the burying of the dead for seven months. In the first place, it was necessary that the land be kept cleansed by covering even the sight of the blood of an animal with dust, (Lev. 17:13), how much more the bodies and body parts. The usage of the number seven, a divine complete number, foreshadows the end of the seventh

day, or the end of the seventh thousand year. The conclusion of the Sabbath. Eze. 39:12-16.

The birds and the flesh eating animals called together to partake of the carrion caused by the battle of Gog and Magog. The name of a city of the area was to be called Hamonah, or "his multitude, his uproar," Hitchcock Names. Eze. 39:16-20 The same is to be found after the battle of Armageddon. Rev. 19:17-21 The same would be true concerning the last great battle, the battle of Gog and Magog. The multitudes who are deceived by the devil will be destroyed with him, at one and the same time. To follow him is certain and eternal death.

Lessons which were to be learned by all. The heathen were to see the glory of the Lord in the execution of His judgments against and among them. Thus, leaving no question but what He is Lord indeed. They were to find that only because the Lord permitted it, as a form of punishment for Israel, were they ever able to carry Israel into captivity. The Lord hid His face from Israel. Have we ever felt as if the Lord was hiding His face from us? If so there has to be a reason and a lesson here to be learned by all. The Lord will not tolerate sin in the life of those who profess to belong to Him. After having suffered the consequences and the embarrassment of their sin, they were to be brought back into the land. They are then to be a people whom the Lord has sanctified and purified unto Himself. Good things take place when we acknowledge the name and power of the Lord. They are all totally freed from captivity, with none left behind and brought into the land to become one people in the Lord. Even more wonderful is the promise that the Spirit of the Lord will be poured out upon them. Eternal life is full, and wholly living the life of the Lord, through His Spirit. Eze. 39:21-29.

194

In vision, Ezekiel is given a great view of the city of Jerusalem after it had been smitten and its inhabitants carried off into captivity. From a great high mountain he was able to view the frame of a city located to the south of the place where he stood. Eze. 40:1-2 Along with his observation of the city he also saw the figure of a very special man whose appearance was as bright shining brass. One of such dazzling expression would immediately capture the attention of the individual seeing the vision. The Lord Jesus was, and is eternally, the vessel in

whom the completeness of the glory of the Lord will always be revealed. Eze. 40:3 Ezekiel, in a previous vision had seen Him as one who was a flaming fire and surrounded with an aura of glorious light, of great brightness. Eze. 1:21 Daniel was also privileged to see this blessed person who is the manifestation of the God of glory. His face shines like the lightning, His eyes as great flames of fire while His feet and arms take on the brightness of highly polished brass. Dan. 10:5-6 Words and the demonstrations of the brilliancy of nature in fire and lightning, which we have seen with our eyes, does not even begin convey to us the intensity and the brilliancy of the light seen emanating from Him. His great voice like that of a great mass of people. Dan. 10:6 Like the roaring of the seas or even the sweet melody of a bubbling stream, the sound of many waters. Rev. 1:15 To the redeemed, the voice of the Lord is most precious.

Of one thing we may be certain and that is that the Lord will measure The city and those who comprise the New Jerusalem. The line of flax which is in the hand of the man in the vision of Ezekiel will be used to determine the measurements of the city of God. The prophet Zechariah had a similar vision where he saw a man headed for Jerusalem with a measuring line in his hand. Zech. 2:1-2 The measuring line is that which is recorded in Ephesians. 4:13 It requires that all who are involved in the city be of absolute unity of faith. Likewise, possessing a full and complete knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Must have reached a place of total maturity. Plus, they will have attained the same spiritual stature as that which is found in the Lord Jesus. Here is an interesting item concerning flax. "(Heb. Pishtah, i.e. "peeled", in allusion to the fact that the stalks of flax when dried were first split or peeled before being steeped in water for the purpose of destroying the pulp). Easton's Bible Dict. Spiritualize the foregoing and the process of salvation and cleansing appears. It is dried, separated from it's former life. Split or peeled, opened before the Lord and then the processing by water begins to separate it from the pulp or excess. The Christian is washed in the waters of baptism in order to touch the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. They are washed by the water of the Word, again a process of change, leading to the fullness of the measure of Christ. Eph. 5:26.

requirements must be met. Any structure erected by the inspiration of the Lord has a very exact measurement applied to it. Even as the record shows that the Tabernacle was built according to the pattern given Moses in the wilderness. Heb. 8:5 We are now confronted with a building described by Ezekiel. The line and the reed are used to measure from outside inwardly and from room to room. The Lord applied a plummet or a plumb line to the children of Israel as a means of judgment and righteousness. Isa. 28:17 The importance of the use of the plumb line is emphasized by the person using it, as found in Amos 7:7-9 There it was found in the hand of the Lord. The message conveyed is extremely vital for it indicated a last opportunity for Israel to measure up, or be left desolate. Spiritually, that plumb line is the Lord Jesus. As we have already noted the challenge to the body of Christ is to achieve "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Eph 4:13 In order to be a member of the body of Christ every cell must have reached that completeness which is found in the Lord Jesus and only in Him. Eph. 1:22-23 He will not have an emaciated, weak, sickly body for a bride.

The scriptural meaning of the reed is to portray a man. Jesus used it in reference to John the Baptist. Mt. 12:20 The fact of the reed having a measurement of six cubits, with six being the number of man, would give us a reed depicting the Lord Jesus, the perfect, sinless man. It is a play on words, but it is note worthy that six cubits would be about nine feet, the number of the Spirit. When we need a champion by whom we want to measure ourselves, there is none greater than the man, totally and completely a man, subjected to all the temptations of this life, yet triumphantly, did not sin, the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 5:21 The man whose responsibility it was to measure the building stood in the gate. Interesting inasmuch as Jesus said that He was the door and that all entered in only through Him. John 10:9.

All things spiritual should always demand total attention. Ezekiel is instructed to fully behold with his eyes the vision which he is about to have. Likewise listen carefully to the words he is about to hear. Then to take to heart all these things which he is about to see and hear that he may be able to carefully convey the message to the children of Israel. Eze. 40:4 These are attitudes which should become the common practice for everyone who involves themselves in the Word of the Lord, whether it is by reading the Word or by the hearing of the Word. The

reading or the hearing of the true Word is real life, spiritual life, life everlasting. It is the Word of Life. 1 Jn. 1:1.

196

Concerning the Temple which is presented to Ezekiel, I find the numbers to be significant according to the numerology of the Bible. We know that the Temple constructed in Jerusalem never reached the splendor of this one which is presented to Ezekiel. The rebuilt Temple, when compared with the Temple of Solomon seemed to those who had seen both, as nothing. Hag .2:3 However, in a time of great shaking and upheaval the Lord promised that He would fill it with His great and wondrous glory, until the latter house would be more glorious than the former. Hag. 2:7-9 Surely, this is a promise which can only be fulfilled in a Temple, which we know in New Testament times, as the church, the Bride. In laboring together with the Lord we are constructing the true, eternal Temple, which ends up being "God's building." 1 Cor. 3:9 So much fuss is made today pertaining to the natural, but natural things are for this world and this life only. The spiritual is that which is everlasting. Abraham looked for the city built by the Lord. Heb. 11:10 It is time for the church to wake up and properly evaluate that which is spiritual, for the Lord is not concerned with natural structures. He is building a church composed of people who are spiritual. Heb. 12:22.

Most definitely the eastern gate is of great interest, here again, we find an element which refers to the end of the age. Eze. 43:1 The East or the rising of the sun is an important component of this great Temple. The main doors of the Tabernacle and the Temple were facing East. It is the direction of anticipation, or the dawning of a new day. The return of the Lord Jesus at the time of the rapture will be from the East unto the West and as bright and shining as the lightning. Mt. 24:27 Any appearance of any glorious being from any other direction immediately identifies them as a fake or false Christ. His return is the reason for great anticipation and the divine purpose in having these doors face in that particular direction. It is also most worthy of our consideration to view the men of great wisdom, who came to the Christ child from the east as being men of the same spirit as Christ and not as magicians. They were worshipers, not necromancers. Mt. 2:1-2 Had they in anyway been soothsayers or the like it would have been an extreme violation of the Word and will of the Lord. It was certain death. Lev. 20:6.

The importance of this gate is emphasized by the appearance of the glory of the Lord. The glory of the Lord is revealed in a person, who else other than the Lord Jesus. It is certain that when He comes the whole of the earth will be filled with His glory. Isa. 6:2 The Lord Jesus is the shining forth of that light of the glory of the Almighty. He is its very brightness. Heb. 1:3.

197

A place of worship without the Divine presence of the Lord in a display of His everlasting glory is not acceptable to the Lord. The last day Temple, the church, the Bride of the Lord Jesus will be a people who are the vessels of His glory. The woman of Revelation twelve is His Bride and is associated with every light giving body in the universe. In other words, she is the very epitome of light. He has completely filled her with His brightness and glory. Every fiber of her being will be of the most brilliant light. The very pure light, perfect light, outshining all other sources of light. The glory of the Lord is the full manifestation of our God, who is light. I John 1:5 A light which is incomprehensible to man for its shining far outshines any light seen by man. No man has seen God, in the completeness of His glory and splendor. 1 John 4:12 The redeemed will not only see Him but will bear His absolute likeness. Like Moses, because they have been in His presence they will have assimilated and will become saturated with the glory of the eternal Lord. An open spirit, a hungry heart for longing for all that the Lord has for His people will result in a people, the true Temple of the Lord, of which every fiber will be in His absolute likeness. 2 Cor. 3:18 We do not wait for the process to take place but even now the process is in operation. Daily we are building for our spiritual future.

Once again, Ezekiel is privileged to hear His voice which he described to be as the sound of many waters. It can be like the murmuring of the brook or the roar of a mighty sea or flood of waters. Eze. 43:2 John on the isle of Patmos not only heard it as many waters but add to his description the voice of great thunder. Not just a clap of thunder but intensively loud thunder. How frightening, such a voice if one were not accustomed to hearing it would strike great fear into the heart of the hearer. Rev. 14:2 When will His voice be more meaningful than at the time of His second coming, called the rapture. Paul had the true understanding of His second coming and left us with these words of description. The one who is coming is the Lord Himself, that is, the

Lord Jesus Christ. His descent will be from heaven for He has been exalted to the right hand of His Father. At the time of the rapture His voice will be heard by all who have inhabited the earth, for even those in the grave will hear it. John 5:28. He comes with a SHOUT. The same voice which Ezekiel heard. It is the voice of an Angel of the highest standing, an Archangel, the Lord Jesus. The trumpet of the Lord shall also be sounded awakening the dead in Christ to participate in the first resurrection.

1 Thess. 4:16 With all of this happening at the time of the rapture, how can it be said that when He comes the redeemed are caught away secretly and the ungodly did not know what had happened. 2 Tim. 2:15.

198

The day of His entrance into His Temple through the eastern gate is the day when the earth is lightened with His presence. Eze. 43:2 The scripture nowhere, even hints, that His coming and the rapture will be an event which is invisible. Like Ezekiel's vision, when He comes, He comes as the light of the world. Inasmuch as Jesus is the precise image and likeness of His Father. He is filled with and is clothed with the glory of the Father until He is the very brightness of that glory. Heb. 1:3 Brightness, off flash or effulgence. Strong's Dict.

Paul's subject is that of the rapture when he wrote to the church at Thessaloniaca, he used the word parousia, which is translated today into the coming of Christ and the rapture of the saints. He emphasized the truth that His coming or rapture would be with the same brightness as mentioned by Ezekiel when He entered into the eastern gate in all of His splendor and glory. 2 Thess. 2:8 Jesus related the visibility of His coming at the time of the rapture to the lightning, the glorious, brilliant shining forth of what the Psalmist calls the Lord's arrows. Ps. 144:6 He also gave a specific direction from which He will appear. Mt. 24:27.

The highly visible second coming of Christ, and the accompanying rapture is further stated in the book of Revelation. Rev. 1:7 He is declared to be coming with clouds. Clouds which are not like the natural clouds which drift over our earth today but clouds of the saints and armies of the Lord. They too will shine with His glory as they are clothed with the light and righteousness of the Almighty. Rev. 19:14

Not only will the living inhabitants of the earth behold His coming but all of heaven and hell (those who pierced Him) will see His coming.

The great volume of sound is another factor which must be considered when His coming (rapture) is said to be secret. He comes with a shout, using the volume of the voice of an archangel. A shout which will be heard almost simultaneously around the whole of the earth. The trumpet of the Lord will also be sounded. A blast which will exceed all previous trumpet sounds. This is His trumpet, it will be loud enough to awaken the saints from their place of burial. 1 Thess. 4:16 His coming will be the brightest, most glorious cosmic event ever, of which there are many preceding the rapture. Signs which have not yet been fulfilled but will be before that glorious and wonderful day arrives. The signs mentioned by Joel (2:30-31) have yet to take place and they will be before He comes.

199

The entrance of the glory of the Lord will be through the gate facing eastward. That the glory of the Lord is that brilliant radiance of pure light, which is the very essence of His being, is evidenced from creation down the final fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The comprehension, a total understanding of the glory of the Lord, which is seen in a person, must be found in one's relationship with the Lord Jesus. The knowledge of that glory is to be seen in the face of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 4:6 In other words, the revelation of His glorious and Divine nature which we are privileged to receive of Him, is seen in His face, or in His person.

The Tabernacle (Ex. 40:34) and the Temple (1 Kings 8:10-11), each one, at the time of their dedication became the recipients of the very presence of the glory of the Lord. The glory of His presence is far more important than any building or person which might be declared by man, to be the dwelling place of His glory. The ultimate revelation of the glory of the Lord is found to be in the redeemed. In the first place, the greatest glory currently seen by mankind is the glory or the shining of the sun, for the light of the LORD is like a sun. Ps. 84:11 That glory was very visible to the disciples who accompanied Him up to the mount of transfiguration. Mt. 17:2 The righteous, the redeemed, in His kingdom, are destined to shine with that same brilliant glory. Mt. 13:33 The woman of Revelation twelve is clothed with that glory. Rev.

12:1 There are many instances where the glory of the Lord was revealed, which may be found in the scriptures, far too many to mention here at this time. The purpose in viewing the few that we have is that we might know that the glory of the Lord is the presence of the Lord Jesus. Therefore, Ezekiel's Temple is that which is eternal.

Now we have the question posed by the mention of sacrifices being made in this temple. While the vision contained information of the far distant future, it was given in a time when the sacrifices were still under the order of the Law. Consequently, the vision was in keeping with the religious practices of that day. The offering of the Lord Jesus, the once for all sacrifice, thoroughly satisfied the demands of a proper atonement. Heb. 10:10 This man, the Lord Jesus Christ, offered Himself as the all sufficient sacrifice, once, for all of mankind and all of time. Heb. 10:11 To rebuild a temple and reinstitute animal sacrifices is absolutely the greatest insult to God which can be made. Understand from His Word and how He feels about it. "He who kills a bull is as if he slays a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, as if he breaks a dog's neck; he who offers a grain offering, as if he offered swine's blood; He who burns incense, as if he blesses an idol. Isa. 66:3 NKJV All of which are an abomination to the Lord and totally unacceptable.

200

A rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and the restoration of the religious ceremonies formerly conducted there would be the greatest of religious atrocities. It would be the manifestation of a complete denial of the only atonement, that is, the blood of the Lord Jesus. It would be a display and a practice that is absolutely against Christ. No one has ever, nor will they ever be saved by any other way but through the blood of Jesus. Jesus came to take away the first (the Law of sacrifice) that He might establish the second (grace). Heb. 10:9 It is impossible that there be any other means of salvation but through His precious blood. Heb. 10:4 King David, under the Law of sacrifice recognized the futility of animal sacrifice and stated that even God did not have a heart or desire for such sacrifices. Ps. 40:6 Heb. 10:5-6 The Lord found absolutely no pleasure in the multitude of sacrifices offered under the old order. Heb. 10:8.

Ezekiel once again, in his vision, was transported by the Spirit and brought into the inner court, into the presence of the Lord. Here he

saw the glory of the Lord filling the whole house. This is the house of His glory. It is not a physical structure built by man but is the true Temple of the Lord. Don't you know, don't you understand, YOU are the Temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you. 1 Cor. 1:16 The building, the people who are obedient to the Word, are molded into a structure, called "the holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:21 This living edifice has been constructed to be the eternal dwelling place of the Lord. Eph. 2:21 What a great privilege that is. His everlasting Temple is not built of dead stones but living, spiritually alive stones. Those who minister in that Temple are an holy priesthood. Their offerings before the Lord are according to the Word and the Spirit of the Lord. They offer up to Him only that which is acceptable to Him. 1 Peter 2:5.

The younger generation who had not seen the Temple in all of its splendor rejoiced at the sight of the Temple which they had constructed, but those who had seen the former, wept as they compared the two. However the promise of the Lord was that the glory of the latter would be far greater than the former. Hag. 2:9 The King of glory will occupy a completed and sanctified living Temple. He will enter triumphantly into that most precious church, His Bride, which He has purchased with His own blood. Ps. 24:7-10 This is the place of peace At this time the church will fully comprehend the truth of the Lord dwelling within His own house. That house has a glorious destiny and will be filled with ALL the FULNESS of the Lord. Just think, ALL, nothing of the nature nor of the spirit of the Lord excluded but a people, a house glorified by the all inclusive, absolute presence of the Lord. Eph. 3:19.

(continued in 201 and ending in 218)