

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 246

THE HOLY CITY (continued)

“And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he *measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs*. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he *measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits*, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel” (Rev. 21:16-17).

The heavenly messenger measured the holy city and it was twelve thousand furlongs or fifteen hundred miles: the length and the breadth and the height of it were equal, as we have pointed out — a cube. Some have supposed that a literal city must be meant since various measurements are given. However, we must always keep in mind that this city *is* the bride, the Lamb’s wife! Therefore such dimensions must necessarily have a symbolical and *spiritual meaning* in relation to the body of Christ! The measurements are in multiples of twelve which are a symbol and signature of God’s purposes in His elect. The number twelve often enters into the symbolism of the book of Revelation — twelve tribes, twelve stars, twelve apostles, twelve angels, twelve foundations, twelve gates. So here the number twelve is found in the measurements of the city: each side is twelve thousand furlongs and the wall is one hundred and forty-four cubits, which is twelve times twelve.

Twelve is the number of *divine government*. One thousand is the number signifying the *day of the Lord* (II Pet. 3:8). Twelve times one thousand is God’s light and illumination (day) multiplied by God’s authority and rule (government) — the perfect and full dominion of God by the revelation of His glory without mixture, limitation, or darkness. The Holy of holies of God’s eternal kingdom is, therefore, in type, 528,000 *times more glorious* than the Holy of holies in the Mosaic tabernacle that was a cube of only ten cubits or fifteen feet each way! The true measure of the city is the Lord Jesus Christ: “...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). The people who come to *this measure* will be the glory of God, the perfection of beauty, and the light of the world in the fullness of what that means, and will bring the total restoration that God, who cannot lie, has promised to all creation. Hallelujah!

Some years ago, as I waited before the Lord, a precious and hidden truth began to be opened before the eyes of my understanding. The Spirit of God in His own singular way shined His light of revelation upon an incident in the life of Jesus. The Spirit brought to my attention the scene in the garden of Gethsemane on that horrendous night when the mob stormed into the solitude to arrest our Lord, and Jesus declared that He could call for TWELVE LEGIONS OF ANGELS to come to His rescue. But He refused to summon them because He was born to die for the sins of the world and the scriptures and the plan of God must be fulfilled.

I wondered why “twelve legions” when there were *innumerable companies* of messengers comprising the heavenly hosts (Heb. 12:22). If in the Spirit of God we can sound the fathomless depths of wisdom and knowledge that inspired our blessed Lord when He spoke of the “twelve legions” of messengers, I believe we shall have in our possession the explanation of things that have remained secret and have been hidden from our understanding for centuries. It is significant to note that “legion” is a *military term*, for in ancient Rome a legion was the largest single military division composed of several thousands of foot soldiers, with additional cavalry, under the command of a general. It should be clear, first of all, that when Jesus referred to twelve legions of angels that could be summoned to His defense, He was identifying THE ARMY OF GOD! These were messengers, mighty in power and glory, trained, disciplined, prepared, and equipped for the specific purpose of *spiritual warfare* — to bring deliverance! Then, too, it should be plain that since Jesus had the authority to *command* these “twelve legions,” He Himself was THEIR GENERAL! Can we not see by this that Christ is revealing to us in the simplest of terms that He Himself is “the angel of the Lord,” the “Captain of the Lord’s host,” appearing throughout the Old Testament — thus He is THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE ARMY OF GOD! The seer of Patmos beheld with wonder the same great truth when in spirit he saw the Christ riding out of the heavens of the Spirit of God on His white horse of conquest, as King of kings, and Lord of lords, followed by the royal armies of heaven!

Then I was made to know that the “twelve legions of angels” of which Jesus spoke is a *symbol* for the army of God. This knowledge stirred me tremendously! Think not, dear friend, that Jesus meant that He could call an *exact number* of heavenly messengers, for the number of soldiers in a legion was not fixed — it could run anywhere from about 3,000 to more than 6,000 men. Twelve is a symbolic number, a perfect number, a meaningful number, signifying GOVERNMENTAL PERFECTION. It is found as a multiple in all that has to do with RULE. Ed Vallowe, in his splendid book KEYS TO SCRIPTURE NUMERICS, has written, “This number, twelve, symbolizes God’s perfect, divine accomplishment actively manifested. It shows a *completeness* of a *growth* or *administration*. Twelve marks *governmental perfection* and is used as the signature of Israel. The number is used 187 times in the Bible. It is used 22 times in the book of Revelation. Twelve is the number for *government by divine appointment*. Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon *twelve* thrones, judging the *twelve* tribes of Israel’ (Mat. 19:28). The twelve apostles shall sit upon their twelve thrones and judge and rule in connection with our Lord’s rule upon His throne. They will occupy those twelve (symbolical) thrones by *divine appointment*.

“Genesis 17:20 states that Ishmael begat *twelve princes*, and in Numbers 1:5-16 there are *twelve princes* named over the *twelve tribes* of Israel. ‘And Solomon had *twelve officers* over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household’ (I Kings 4:7). There are *twelve months* in the year. The sun which *rules* the day (Gen. 1:14-18), and the moon and stars which *govern* the night, do so by their passage through the *twelve signs* of the Zodiac, which completes the great circle of the heavens of 360 degrees or divisions, and thus govern the year. Dr. Seise, in his GOSPEL IN THE STARS, claims that the *twelve signs* of the Zodiac have been accepted by the astronomers throughout the centuries, and that none of them know where the mapping of the stars started. Some claim that it came from beyond the Flood. In the opinion of Dr. Seise, it was revealed by the Lord to such men as Enoch and Noah. The *twelve signs* of the Zodiac were mentioned as established divine truth in the book of Job, the oldest book in the Bible. God Himself said to Job, “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth *Mazzaroth* (Heb.: the *Twelve Signs*) in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the *ordinances of heaven*? Canst thou set the *dominion* thereof in the earth?” (Job 38:31-33). Even the testimony of the stars is numerically and symbolically in harmony with the Bible use of the number twelve. No wonder the Psalmist said, ‘The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day *uttereth speech*, and night unto night *showeth knowledge*’ (Ps. 19:1-2).

“It is also significant that only *twelve judges* — who judged Israel — are mentioned in the book of Judges. There are things more startling yet to come, before which the puny minds of men seem as nothing, and the greatness of our God eclipses all things else. In John 19:11 Jesus told Pilate that he could have no power, or authority against Him except it were given to him from above. This was expressed by *twelve*

Greek words! Here is the *authority* (governmental perfection) that *comes from above*. If it comes from above, then it is authority that comes from God. These *twelve* Greek words which Jesus used in telling Pilate that he could have no power, or authority against Him, unless it came from *above*, is exactly the number that has been found to stand for *divine authority*” — end quote.

THE CITY OF PURE GOLD

“And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: *and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass*” (Rev. 21:18).

Gold fully tried in the fire is *pure gold*. The gold of the tabernacle in the wilderness was required by the Lord to be *pure gold*. The gold in Solomon’s temple was also *pure gold*. The gold of the new Jerusalem is likewise described as *pure gold, clear as crystal*. That is what God is after! To be “pure” means to be “unmixed, single, free of anything that adulterates or taints, containing nothing but its own reality.” *Pure* water is water without any contaminants; *pure* air is free from any pollutants; *pure* silver is refined until it contains no tinge of alloy, no trace of impurities, no residue of dross. The Lord has promised to purge, refine, and remove *all mixture* from the lives of those who become His kings and priests, called and chosen to rule with Him and restore creation unto God. In the city (government) of God there is no mixture, and there is nothing hidden. Apparently and actually, outwardly and inwardly, in any way and in every way, it is *pure gold*. The word is sure, “The Lord...shall suddenly come to His temple...and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi (His priesthood), and purge them as gold and silver...” (Mal. 3:1-3).

The Lord, when He comes to His temple of living stones and purges the sons of Levi, or His kingdom of priests, first of all purges out *one man* — old Adam! He comes to cleanse us from the carnal, Adamic mind, nature, and ways. He comes as a consuming fire to burn out of us all that is contrary to the righteousness and wisdom and purposes of the Lord. He is coming to each one of us personally, His elect, in this new day of the kingdom of God, and is purging the old fleshly nature and worldly and religious ways out of us! On a corporate level He is also coming to those who have received the call to sonship and is separating out all who *talk* the kingdom but do not *walk* the kingdom! Only the ones who have truly surrendered to His will, have walked in His ways, obeying each sound of His voice, who have clean hands and pure hearts, will reign with Him in His kingdom.

As we respond to God’s call to become pure gold we are casting our lot for the highest and the best! There is gold and all manner of precious stones and we yield ourselves under His mighty hand to both become and be adorned with the materials that comprise the city, for we are the city of God. Our hearts are filled with gratitude to the Lord for His invitation to enter in through the gates of the city to become the expression and manifestation of His glory and power in the earth! God Himself has offered us His *best* — His own divine nature. It will just be something more real and wonderful all the time because God’s gold is not limited and He has asked of us to buy of Him gold tried in the fire (Rev. 3:18). As we build up this city within ourselves we are building with real, spiritual, heavenly bricks, gold bricks, and the city is raised up one golden stone upon another golden stone as the Father produces each of them in our experience.

We also learn in the formation of this city of gold and putting nothing in it but the best, that we must begin with the foundation just as every builder does. Paul tells us about the foundation, that it is Jesus Christ. In another sense, in the Revelation, it is the apostles of the Lamb. Now how can both be true? The answer is not difficult to find. When the life, nature, faith, wisdom, and power of the Lord is *laid in our lives* the foundation is laid *in us* — that is Jesus Christ. Paul well knew his calling. It had been from heaven and after God revealed it to him, Paul didn’t go and ask the other apostles what they thought about it, but got busy right away with getting the foundation laid first in his own life, and then in those he ministered to. Thus he said, “I am determined to know *nothing* among you save *Jesus Christ* and Him crucified.” And that is the foundation for every saint of God who will press on to the glory and majesty of the holy city, the precious stone that has been laid in the earth, the tried stone, the sure foundation that will never fail. The dread infirmity of the Lord’s people is just this — that not only are they oft times building with inferior materials of wood, hay and stubble, but many are not building on the true and only foundation of JESUS CHRIST. The foundation is not a generic Christ, nor some cosmic Christ, nor the Christ principle — it is

JESUS CHRIST and none other. It was Paul's lot to lay the foundation in men which is *nothing else* but Jesus Christ the Lord!

Years ago a dear sister had a dream. In this dream she wanted something very much. She didn't seem to realize just what it was she wanted, but she wanted whatever it was more than anything else in the world and was looking about to see what she could find of any value that she could sell in order to be able to buy this that she wanted. There was no regret in giving up anything, no matter how precious, and after she had sold everything she had she found herself in the chapel where she attended services, kneeling at the front, and there before her was a heap of pure gold nuggets and she realized that was what she had been seeking for. Then she looked toward the congregation to see who else was there and she saw the people in their places and at their feet also was a heap of gold nuggets and she realized that all had been doing the same as she, selling all they had that they might obtain this gold. She then tried to see the different faces to see just who the people were, but the gold shone in their faces so radiantly that they had lost all identity and there was just the reflection of the pure gold upon each one. Ah, gold is the nature of God Himself and His reflection shall be upon all His people as they buy the gold until they will no longer be seen in any aspect of their humanity — only the radiance of the Lord Himself will be upon them!

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich...to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:18,21). "Buy of me gold" means to *pay the price* for the divine nature of our Father to be brought forth in our lives! "Tried in the fire" means that His nature has become an experiential reality within us and has been put to the test. It speaks of an intimate, direct encounter with God that causes all that is contrary to His nature to be consumed by the all-consuming fire of His Spirit, resulting in our spiritual growth and maturity in Christ. Our Lord has called upon His elect to buy of Him this gold tried in the fire that *we may be rich!* Now we know what the *true riches are!* The riches of which He speaks are not the riches of the world, either of money, material things, or of stature, position, fame, or self-glory. The riches of this world corrupt the spiritual man and prevent a manifestation of the true Life of God. The gold that we are to buy of Him represents a life that has been tried and tested, even as gold is refined, to bring forth the qualities of the Christ life within all who are His called and chosen ones.

The gold of which our Lord speaks is symbolic of the divine nature and the divine life of those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ. The gold of the realm of the spirit represents the spiritual riches of the saints, for Christ said that we should buy this gold tried in the fire, "that thou mayest be **rich.**" Therefore gold represents our true wealth, that is, our true value! Jesus pointed out to the multitude gathered at His teaching, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). The gold of the realm of the spirit is the true riches!

Bill and Elaine Cook, when they were still publishing their paper, printed a dream that the Lord had given to Martin Paulet. He wrote, "I looked and I saw something coming down from heaven. The Lord said He was giving this to me. It appeared to be **a large block of gold** coming down to me. The size was seven by five feet by three feet high. As it came down, I discovered it shone like it had light in it. It reminded me of the transparent gold, '...and the city was *pure gold*, as it were *transparent glass*' (Rev. 21:18). It was impressed upon me that this was *very valuable*, so I chipped off a piece about one inch by one inch by ¼ inch, and called some jewelers together for an evaluation. The jewelers offered me a million dollars for this small chip of gold. I replied, 'Oh, that's not enough,' for I knew the value was greater than that. They then offered me *ten million* for it and I went home without selling it and knowing the true worth. As I pondered this before the Lord, He made me to know **the gold block He was giving me was none other than His nature.** This is such a valuable thing He is giving us! It is *more precious* than gold! His nature in us is far more valuable than all the gifts and miracles He has given us. It is greater than *any gift* He has ever given us!" — end quote.

Speaking of the day when He would bring His kingdom and show forth His glory in the earth the Lord said through the prophet Isaiah, "**I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a MAN than the golden wedge of Ophir**" (Isa. 13:12). The MAN the prophet speaks of is God's Christ, Head and body, even the *new creation man* in the image and likeness of God! A man is growing to maturity in this day, it is the manchild company, the sons of God, or the body of Christ. This corporate man will be made more

precious than fine gold by the Lord Himself, for He dwells within them in all the fullness of His divine life and glory. The reference to the “golden wedge of Ophir” is to the source of the finest gold available in that day, which was the gold of Ophir. From the mines of the land of Ophir in Arabia the Israelites obtained the most precious and highly refined gold in the days of Solomon. This gold was for the temple of God! The temple of God today is a living temple of *living stones*, raised up a *spiritual house*, the dwelling place of God from which He rules in kingdom authority and ministers to creation through His king-priests after the order of Melchizedek. The temple of God is the same as the body of Christ, the sons of God, the city of God, and the MAN who is ***made more precious than fine gold!*** When the Lord completely delivers us from the old fleshly nature of sin and mortality we shall then *fully become* that MAN that is more precious than the finest gold of Ophir. Of what great *value* is this MAN both to God and to all creation! This MAN, totally delivered from the bondage of corruption, shall then be the deliverer of creation! He shall shed forth the spirit and power of reconciliation, restoration, and transformation to all mankind, bringing deliverance to the whole, groaning creation. A MAN who can bring universal salvation, health, life, purity, peace, and glory — oh! how *valuable* is that MAN!

Even as gold is purified by fire, so are we purified by the fiery trials the Lord sends into our lives. Like the intense heat that causes the impurities to rise to the top of the molten gold, so the many tribulations we face in life, and the blazing fire of God’s dealings that accompany them, draw from us those things that pollute the pure nature of God within our spirit. One pass through the furnace is never sufficient to remove all the impurities in gold, neither can we become pure in one season of testing. God allows us to be tested and tried by the Holy Ghost and fire for however long it takes because He wants us to be pure vessels to manifest His glory. Those who hunger and thirst for Him will not be devastated by this fire, but purified. They are those who heed the apostle Paul’s warning to examine the materials with which we are building as the temple of God is raised up within us, for “every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be *revealed by fire*; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (I Cor. 3:13).

Gold fully tried in the fire is *pure gold*. To be “pure,” as we mentioned earlier, means to be “unmixed” with anything else — no foreign substances, no adulteration, no pollutants, no contaminants, no impurities, not even anything *different*. Under the law of Moses people were not permitted to wear garments of wool mingled with linen. Not that there is wrong in either one, but the *type* is meaningful, for wool is derived from animals while linen comes from a plant. Israel was called to be God’s *holy* people and were not to become mixed with the false gods, pagan customs, and gross sins of the peoples and nations around them. So by His law the Lord taught them by object lesson what it means to be *pure* and *holy*. They were prohibited from sowing two kinds of seed in the same field. They were not to plow with an ox and an ass in the same yoke, for an ox is a *clean animal*, but an ass is *unclean*. God was showing them that there are things that are not to be mixed! Flesh must not be mixed with spirit. Truth must not be joined with error. Righteousness must not be mingled with unrighteousness. The will of the Father must not be combined with the will of man. The means and methods and exercises of religious Babylon must not be added to the move of God’s spirit. Even the ministries of the outer court and the holy place are not to be conglomerated with the ministry of the most holy place! Purity of heart means that the Adamic heart is put off; the old religious heart is put off as well! There is singleness of vision, purpose, hope, and motive; the mind of Christ which is the nature of the Father is the only reality. This is the glory of the *city of transparent gold*, the new Jerusalem! This is what brideship to Christ is all about! And this is what sonship to God is about!

The Lord has promised to purge, refine, and remove *all mixture* from the lives of all those who become His kingdom of priests in the earth (Mal. 3:1-3). In the natural world, in this wonderful process of refining the miner first mines the ore out of the darkest depth. The miner has it in his mind that he will go after the ore. Now, it’s not easy to obtain the ore. The ore is in inaccessible places, and it requires great effort and endeavor for the miner to obtain the precious ore. The refiner then goes after the ore. The ore doesn’t go after the refiner! I have never heard of an ore searching for a refiner! You never will. It’s the refiner who goes after the ore. Someone says, “I sought the Lord.” Well, that’s how it appeared to you, my friend, but the truth of the matter is the Lord sought you! He sought you in the darkest depths of the flesh and the bestial system of this world, and He brought you forth and made you His. It was HE who did it! Yes, you responded to His call, but it was He who purposed, initiated, and completed the action!

The ore is now the property of the miner who mined it, but the mixture is there. Both gold and silver are found in nature, but never in their pure form. They come mixed with, or imbedded in, various kinds of rock, minerals, and metals. No jeweler would want to work with natural gold with bits of rock or sand in it. Nor could such impure stuff be beaten into sheets. And no one likes a ring that turns their finger green! No, silver and gold as they are found in nature do not have, in themselves, much usefulness. They must first be separated from all the impurities that naturally accompany them. And the process for doing that is called *refining*. Our lives, dear ones, are like that! We are spirit, soul, and body — and within our spirit, which is the offspring of God, there is so much that is worthwhile in us, but in our outer life of the flesh and the carnal mind there is so much that is worthless. And how we have wound up mingling these things all together! There is so much that is of God, and so much that is of self. There is part of us that is out of heaven, and part of us is of the earth, earthy.

So what does the great and eternal Miner have on His hands? He has mixture! There is, at this juncture, no glorious city of *transparent gold*! And that is why there has to be a furnace of fire. The ore which we are, in that mixed, raw, unrefined state, brings no pleasure or glory at all to the Refiner, nor does it fulfill any useful purpose in His plans. Of these He says, “With them I am not well pleased.” Our Father in His sovereign purpose sees us, but He cannot use all that He sees. The ore is wonderful relative to its pure precious metal content, but it is disgusting relative to the impurities that are mingled therein. He is unable to use us in that condition of mixture, so He comes to us as a refiner’s fire. And immediately we wonder what is happening! What is happening is that HE is appearing, and I might add, He is showing up in a form that we did not expect. Yes, ‘tis the same Jesus, the lovely Saviour who so graciously saved us by His grace, who dug us out of the darkness and depth of the earth, but He comes now, not to forgive and bless and coddle and wink at our carnality, but He comes as a refining fire, to purify the sons of Levi. He comes now because He has a *great purpose for us!*

THE STREET

“...and the *street of the city was pure gold*, as it were *transparent glass*” (Rev.. 21:21).

As we have stated again and again, in the symbolism of scripture, gold signifies the divine nature of God. Just as gold is the perfect metal that cannot be tarnished, so God’s nature is perfect and cannot be tarnished, faded, or oxidized in any way. From times immemorial men walked on streets. Cain built the first city, and of necessity it had streets. So the street of the city speaks of our *walk*. The fact that the street of this city is of pure, transparent gold reveals to us the great truth that in our walk, we will have to come to the perfect walk in the spirit, the perfect walk in the nature of our God, having attained to the perfect nature of our God, and therefore walking in absolute purity, absolute holiness. We cannot overemphasize the fact that so many Christians, in their spiritual immaturity, entertain a completely carnal and erroneous concept of this street — supposing that some day by death or by rapture they are going to fly away to a literal, physical city, out in space somewhere, having streets paved with literal gold — but any spiritual mind discerns at once that such a notion is merely the product of spiritual childishness. There is no physical city prepared for us as our “heaven” anywhere in God’s vast universe having streets paved with literal gold. Should there actually be such a city on some planet in some far-distant galaxy, it certainly is *not* the one John saw in his vision descending from God out of heaven! Our heaven is revealed to us by the apostle Paul when by revelation he wrote, “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS: that in the ages to come He might show (display) the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Jesus Christ” (Eph. 2:1,5-7). We all know that Jesus is “in heaven.” And the “heavenly places” where we now dwell are *there* IN CHRIST JESUS. To be “in Christ” is also to be “in heaven.” In the words of the old hymn, “Where Jesus is, ‘tis *heaven there!*”

To become exactly like Christ — this is our “heaven,” no matter where we happen to be in God’s vast universe. “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that *He might be the firstborn among many brethren*” (Rom. 8:29). This is our final dwelling place, our ultimate state of being, when we have arrived at our glorified spiritual state in spirit, soul, *and* body — we will, in all the fullness of Christ, know for certainty that heaven is a *condition* and *spiritual state of being* rather than some limited, physical location out in the galaxies somewhere. When we have truly attained that

unlimited eternal state of being we shall have come to our full perfection in Christ Jesus, and will have become the Holy City. Then we will not have to go to any city and look for a hotel to spend the night, for we will dwell in the *power of His resurrection* and the whole universe will be our dwelling place. We will be free — free from the limitations of flesh, free from the tyranny of sin, free from the power of death, and therefore free to live in God's universe as citizens of God's universe. Of what benefit would streets paved with gold be to us after this vile body has been changed, and fashioned anew like unto *His body of glory*? We will have no need to walk on any kind of streets then! We will have attained, in our whole being, to the resurrection life of Jesus. This has already become reality in our spirit, but must also become true in our soul and in our body.

After the Lord Jesus was resurrected, we don't find that when He wanted to go somewhere He had to walk down streets. When He wanted to go to the upper room where His disciples were gathered, He simply appeared to them there in the upper room. When Father led Him to join some of the disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, He simply appeared to them there. When He wanted to meet with His closest disciples in the hills of Galilee, He simply appeared there. If He didn't need a key to open the locked door, where the disciples were hiding in fear, He certainly didn't need a road to get there! When the disciples were fishing on the sea of Galilee and He appeared to them on the shore, He didn't need to walk there, He was just there. *Streets in heaven?* The very idea is ludicrous!

When we have attained to the full resurrection power of Christ and we want to transport ourselves from one place to another, we won't have to walk down any literal street of gold, or asphalt, or gravel, or anything else. We will simply think the thought in the will of the Father and we will be there. The light of our sun is a physical, material thing, part of the natural creation. Light travels at the speed of 186,000 miles per second. The light of our sun travels over 93,000,000 miles to arrive on earth in precisely eight minutes. But *spirit* travels at a speed that is incalculable by physical standards or measures! So streets of gold would be of no value to us, or walls of jasper, or gates of pearl, because our dwelling will not be in the physical realm. Our dwelling place will be in God by the spirit! The only reason that gold and jewels are so attractive to us now is because we are still physically in our carnal state and these things are beautiful to our natural vision and also have real monetary value. They have carnal value here on earth.

When we have attained to our spiritual state in spirit, soul, and body — sons of God just like Jesus — such things will be meaningless to us because all things will be ours. Not one physical thing will have more value than another to us. That's why God in Christ could come down and be born in a stable and laid in a manger! He could be raised up in the dusty streets of a country village, rather than in the palace of a king! Such things meant nothing to Him, for His mind and nature were spiritual and heavenly. So we see that there never has been, and never will be, a literal city in some far-off heaven somewhere having streets paved with gold. These are simply symbols, as it were *object lessons*, the Holy Spirit employs to teach us spiritual realities! That spiritual reality is the holy city which is the body of Christ in the perfection and full stature of Jesus the Head. Oh, yes! We actually do see that street of pure gold when we see the body of Christ having attained to the perfect nature of God, and *walking in the perfect and divine nature of God*. We see that street of gold *walked out* in the lives of our brothers and sisters who walk out the nature of God even here on earth. That is the mystery.

THE CITY WITHOUT A TEMPLE

“And I saw *no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it*” (Rev. 21:22).

The idea of the temple is that it is the house of God, the dwelling place of God in fellowship with His people. In the earthly Jerusalem in the Old Testament period there was a special temple, a separate edifice, distinct from the rest of the city. Although Jerusalem as a whole was the city of the great King, yet the Lord did not dwell and manifest His presence throughout the whole city; but He had His dwelling place in the city in a special building, and then in a special part of that building, in the Holiest of all, behind the veil. The people were required to go there to worship, to pray, to sacrifice, and to be blessed. And this is what it means when we are told that in New Jerusalem there is no temple — there is no special house of God. How interesting! A city without a single temple spire! And the reason for the absence of a special

temple is just this: “*For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*” You see, my beloved, the text does not mean that the concept of temple is done away, but rather that it has come to its fullest and highest realization. There is no need for a specially designated temple mount, for God Himself is the temple of His people in Christ. That God and the Lamb are the temple signifies that God through the Lamb is the temple. The Lamb’s presence and glory fill the city! God is *in the Lamb*. And we who dwell within the city are the body of the Lamb — we are therefore “in Christ” — and there “in Christ” we are also *in the temple* where God dwells! Can you not see the mystery? God, by His Spirit, perfectly and completely fills each and every member of God’s elect, and there God is with us in perfect and constant fellowship. In the state of perfection the city and the temple are one, all that was true in the temple is *now fulfilled in the whole city!* They are completely *made one*, so that not a special building will be His temple, but in the truest sense the entire city *becomes* the expression and revelation of God in His temple! Oh, the wonder of it!

As long as there is a temple in a city, it shows that God does not yet dwell in fullness in the entire city, but merely in that particular house which is called the temple. There He lives in isolation from the rest of the city. Ah, yes, He dwells in the city, but not in the entire city. He does not fill the city with the fullness of Himself. The city does not know the full majesty, nature, wisdom, purpose, power, and glory of the One who dwells in the Holiest of all! Someone may object, “But we don’t have an arrangement like that today — that was just in the Old Testament.” The truth is, however, that the Old Testament mentality has been brought over into our New Testament experience on a huge scale! So many Christians refer to a church building as “the house of God.” On Sunday they “go to church” to worship the Lord, to be blessed, to hear from God, to get a touch from God, as though God dwelt in some unique way in that building. And then — many almost worship ministries, they see God in a much greater measure in certain preachers, apostles, prophets, or healers. They admire God in those people, and often it becomes sort of a “cult worship.” The ministry becomes their “Holy of holies,” that place where God dwells outside of and beyond themselves, localized in the ministry, and *there* they can hear from God and be touched by God.

That is no longer the case when the city has “made herself ready” in the state of perfection. When the holy city, which is the bride of the Lamb, shall have been purged, cleansed, purified, matured, perfected, and completed, there shall be no special dwelling place of God in the city, for the simple reason that He shall fill the whole city equally with the fullest glory of Himself, that is, in the mind, heart, and life of every citizen. You do not have to enter the city and ask, “Where is the house of God?” Or, “Where is the preacher,” “where is the prophet,” “where is the healer,” “where is the church meeting,” “where is the crusade,” for the city itself is God’s habitation, and the temple and the city have become identical. All dwell in the fullest glory of God and the Lamb. It is indeed wonderful! Every elect child of God is a citizen in this city. The entire church, including each and every one of the Lord’s people held in the bondage of religious Babylon, is a citizen of the holy city. We must be very clear about that. But the city is *still in preparation*, “*making herself ready*,” and “*adorning herself*” for union with the Lamb. The city is not yet ready for the Lord of glory to manifest His full majesty in their midst! We all know that the city has not yet reached its state of perfection. That state must be reached. And all history, and God’s unailing dealings, serve to bring the city of God to perfection!

Think of it! We still tend to “localize” God in the temple within the city. We compartmentalize God’s workings, and highly esteem certain manifestations of God over others. I know people today who instead of worshipping God, worship worship. It is not the Lord Himself they delight in, but the soulish sensation or a kind of “high” they get on by entering into “worship.” Others worship a message — the faith message, the life message, the brideship message, the Pentecostal message, the serpent-seed message, the death-to-self message, the end-time message, the reconciliation message, the sonship message, the third day message, the kingdom message, and on and on the list goes. They may not have laid hold upon any of the reality, but they surely do love the “message”! Many worship experiences, and can only find God in the particular “temple” of a certain experience. Wherever God has brought us in previous dealings, God is progressively moving forward. Today He says, “Build it.” Tomorrow He says, “Destroy it.” Today He says, “Plant it.” Tomorrow He says, “Pluck it up.” Today He says, “Get a harvest.” Tomorrow He says, “Let the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die.” He who has a right to build has also the right to destroy when He is through with a thing. And, woe! unto the man who cannot discern the times. But the great truth which the Holy Spirit would now reveal in power within our hearts is just this — God is not in the business today of raising up TEMPLES. He will tear down every temple until there is literally “not one

stone left upon another!” God is destroying, demolishing the temples and calling us to come up higher — to come to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God — THE CITY THAT HAS NO TEMPLE! In that city of gold God is ALL IN ALL!

What we have witnessed to for years was a “work” of God, His salvation in us, His peace in us, His healing in us, His victory in us, His revelation in us; we had become a product of the work of God. But God’s purpose is not that we shall be a testimony of the work of God, but that there shall be a revelation of A PERSON, that the revelation will BE CHRIST. It will not be a revelation of the work of God, but the revelation of the Person of God in us. It is right there that “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb ARE THE TEMPLE OF IT!” God is talking to His sons about PERSONIFICATION, MANIFESTATION, REVELATION, AND IDENTITY. In the city without a temple you are going to PERSONIFY CHRIST as you have embodied the works of Christ. Christians represent the work of God: Saved from this, having received that, changed into something else, but it is still “ME.” What you see is a marvelous expression of the handiwork of God.

But God intends that the hour should come when there shall be a revelation of the Person of God, the identity of God, so that HE IS OUR LIFE. Not: we have become because He has wrought life in us, but “Christ who *is our life shall appear.*” He no longer gives us peace, He becomes our peace, our righteousness, wisdom, redemption, sanctification, ALL THAT HE IS until we are no longer a witness to a work, or a word, or an experience, but a witness of His Person, His Identity as our reality. Are you ready to have nothing but the Person? Are you willing for God to be your life, and you His life, until HE IS ALL THERE IS? Are you willing to forget the work and the experience, to bear HIS IDENTITY? In our moving on into God, God is saying to us: What I did for you yesterday, the works of God, must now become just GOD IN YOU. When this reality becomes established in God’s people we will then understand with divine clarity what John meant when he cried out, “I SAW NO TEMPLE THEREIN, FOR THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY AND THE LAMB ARE THE TEMPLE OF IT.” Come, my beloved, let us go up to THE CITY THAT HAS NO TEMPLE!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY

If you would like to receive these studies write to:

Kingdom Bible Studies
P.O. Box
El Paso, TX 79937-1240

All writings are distributed on a free-will offering basis.