

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 122

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and *measure the temple of God*, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Rev. 11:1-2).

The eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation is one of the most important chapters in the entire book. Once we understand this chapter not only in its intrinsic spiritual revelation, but also in its relation to those things which follow in the subsequent chapters, we have less difficulty in grasping the significance of the rest of the book. As we enter into the scenes in this portion of the Revelation there need be no misunderstanding whatsoever! John is called in the vision to do something. A reed, a measuring rod, is placed in his hand; and the commission is given him that with this reed he must proceed to the holy city, Jerusalem, and measure the temple of God.

Before proceeding with this thought of measuring the temple I would point out that the scenes in chapter eleven are the result and outgrowth of the events in chapter ten. Chapter ten concludes with John “eating” a little book. *“And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter”* (Rev. 10:8-10).

John was not merely an observer of something that happened at a distance. He was not looking, as it were, at a motion picture projected on a screen. Nor was he seeing a stage play. This vision had such depth in dimension that John himself was caught up into it and made part of it — perhaps a little like the interactivity of a dream, or in the holodeck of a starship in the Star Trek series. John went to the angel and said, “Give me the little book.” This signifies that the reality of the revelation of Christ must be received from *Him*, at His word and by His Spirit! And this reality must in like manner be *sought* from Him! The humble disciple says, “Give me, I pray Thee, the little book!” The angel replied, “Take it, and eat it up,” that is, digest it, make it a part of yourself. This signifies the Christ saying to each of God’s seeking elect, “Take it.” Yes, “Take it and eat it up!”

“Thy word was found,” said the prophet, “and I did eat it.” The angel also told John how the little scroll would taste (spiritually) and what the effects of eating it would be. “It shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.” He ends on the more appealing note, perhaps, to persuade John to follow his directions, which must have sounded strange, indeed! Spiritually it means that Christ wants to impart everything to us — both the glory and the suffering! We are joint-heirs with Him, partakers in His suffering, and sharers of His glory, wisdom, majesty and power — that is the meaning of this strange command that John receives. Many revel in the proclamation of truth, but how many are just as anxious for

it to be wrought out into reality in their lives? To “love your enemies, and pray for those that spitefully use you” is wonderful to talk about, but it is often a bitter experience when it actually happens and we have to put it into practice. And so it is with all truth...it has to be *lived, walked out!*

Then comes the word, “*It was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, **Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings***” (Rev. 10:10-11). This brought the revelation home to John that HE AND HIS MESSAGE MUST BE ONE! He must assimilate it, making the message life and substance within himself. It must be delivered to the people, not as a mere spoken word, not just as a teaching out of what he knew and understood, but out of **what he is** — out of his inner **state of being**. The message was to become so a part of the man that it would be impossible to separate the prophet from his prophecy. His very life would BE the prophecy — a **living word!** He would prophesy out of a new and higher realm, as he had never prophesied before; not merely as a prophet, but as the very MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN THE FLESH! He himself would be the “sample” of the message he proclaimed! Now he would prophesy **again** — in a new and living way!

Can we not see by this that eating the book, taking the word in, digesting and assimilating it, becoming the revelation, is what **makes us the temple of God!** That is how God gets on the inside, that is how Christ is formed in us, dwelling, living, walking, speaking, acting out of us! This precious truth is the simplicity of moving from chapter ten of the Revelation to chapter eleven. In chapter ten we become the habitation of God by eating the book, whereas in chapter eleven the command is given to measure (examine, inspect, appraise, survey, explore) the temple of God. It should be clear to every discerning heart that “eating the book” and “measuring the temple” are not separate visions about different things, but the latter is the divine result of the former! That is the mystery.

THE TEMPLE

“The angel stood, saying, Rise, and *measure the temple of God*” (Rev. 11:1).

The Lord dwells not in temples made with hands! They are but shadowy figures of the true. “What temple will ye build me?” saith the Lord. So wherever we see a reference to a temple of the present or the future, it *must* refer to “the true sanctuary, and the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. 8:2). Furthermore, there is only *one* such tabernacle, or temple. The scripture nowhere tells of two, or three, or one hundred; one away off somewhere in space where Jesus is ministering, another in Jerusalem built by the Jews, and another spiritual one composed of living stones. Oh, no! There is but ONE temple, ONE great High Priest, and ONE royal priesthood. So when the priests of old served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly (spiritual) things,” those heavenly things were the same that Moses saw in the mount, and the same heavenly and spiritual things to which we, God’s spiritual and heavenly people, have now come, for, we “**are come** unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem**” (Heb. 12:22). None of these are a future reality to be entered into after we die, or after Jesus returns. We ARE COME! Let us never forget that fact.

Would God that all the saints might see that God’s purpose from the foundation of the world has been the building of a spiritual house, a holy temple, an eternal abiding place in which He can be at home, and in which place He and His creation can meet. As Ray Prinzing has pointed out, “The ultimate goal of God’s purpose being wrought out through the ages, is to have a people with whom, in whom to dwell, a place where He can PRESENCE HIMSELF without controversy, and say, ‘*This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it*’ (Ps. 132:14). So He is preparing man, both individually and corporately, to be partakers of His divine nature, to be IN HIS OWN IMAGE, so that He might have communion with them.

“God said to Moses, ‘*Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them*’ (Ex. 25:8). Sanctuary — literally, a place set apart. It was necessary for them to set apart a little area of earth with a tent on it, for His place of dwelling. But this was only an interim thing, for He yet planned to SET APART A PEOPLE for Himself. But for the time being, Israel had too much of Egypt’s god in them, along with all their own self-will and rebellion, so God said, ‘*I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people: lest I consume thee in the way. So Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it **without the camp, afar***

off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that everyone that sought the Lord went out unto the Tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp' (Ex. 33:3,7).

“What a commentary on the state of the people, that even though God had brought them up out of Egypt, so *‘that I might dwell among them,’* yet there was so much controversy in them, they had to set apart a place outside the camp for Him, where they might go and find Him. Had He stayed in the camp He would have consumed them, for, *‘our God is a consuming fire,’* consuming all that is not one in His holiness. And so we read, *‘Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp...’* (Heb. 13:12-13). And so there has been a going without the camp — beyond the forms of religion, beyond symbol and ceremony, to be joined with Him in one spirit. We leave all else behind, that He might become First and Foremost in our life. And in this union with Him, we find that we are BECOMING HIS TEMPLE, *‘Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit’*” (Eph. 2:20,22) — end quote.

More than three thousand years ago Solomon built a magnificent temple of stone and precious materials. He overlaid it with gold and adorned it with silver. Silently it seemed to grow out of the top of mount Moriah, as if drawn from the very mountain by some huge hand. There was no sound of hammer or chisel or saw, but only the soft blowing of the wind, for all of the stones and every part had been carefully made and cut far away, down in Solomon’s quarry. And now this magnificent temple with its mammoth stones was rising into the sky. The pillars reflected the light of the Judean hills; the great Corinthian brass door shone in the sunlight. Inside was the huge thick blue, crimson, and purple veil which separated the holy place from the Holy of holies. And within the Holy of holies was the gold covered mercy seat with the cherubim facing each other on either side. In the center over that mercy seat, when the temple was completed and prayer was offered, suddenly there appeared right there in the presence of men the visible evidence of God’s presence: the Shekinah Glory...and God dwelt among His people in His temple. The brilliant blinding light of His Shekinah Glory dwelt in the most holy place. So wonderful was it that the Queen of Sheba stood transfixed at the sight. But the temple built by Solomon was only a fleeting foreshadow of the living temple which Christ would build by the Spirit — a temple not made with hands!

When Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 587 B.C., the great temple of Solomon, along with the rest of the city, was destroyed and its valuable contents carried away to Babylon. Seventy years later a remnant of Israel returned from the Babylonian exile and soon thereafter the community began to rebuild the temple under the leadership of Zerubbabel. When the foundation was laid, the old men, who had seen the “first house” (Solomon’s temple), wept for sorrow (Hag. 2:3). Like most of the reconstruction in that era immediately following the exile, the temple of Zerubbabel must have been modest indeed. Five long centuries further down the spectrum of time king Herod the Great, who was a usurper, an Idumean prince who had usurped the throne in Jerusalem, announced to the people assembled at the Passover, just twenty years before the birth of Jesus, his intention of restoring the temple which was quite dilapidated by that time. Herod was an indefatigable builder. Many cities and heathen temples had been rebuilt by him and it was natural that he should wish to show his own grandeur by making the modest restoration temple larger, more complex, and much more beautiful. Other motives also moved him, especially his desire to ingratiate himself with the more religious Jews, who resented his Idumean origin and friendliness with the Romans. Herod’s temple in some respects exceeded both the temple of Solomon and the temple of Zerubbabel in beauty and glory. It is minutely described by the historian Josephus, and the New Testament has made us familiar with the pride of the Jews in its magnificence during the days of Jesus and His apostles.

The tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness and the temples of Solomon and Herod upon mount Moriah, were merely *shadows of better things to come*; merely the natural type of the spiritual reality which Moses saw by the Spirit in the mount. These never did constitute the TRUE TEMPLE of God! How absolutely clear are the inspired words of the apostle, “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the TRUE TABERNACLE, which **the Lord pitched**, and not man.” Jesus is now a minister in the true tabernacle or temple! Concerning the old tabernacle and temple with its priestly ministry the writer to the Hebrews continues, “Who serve unto the *example and shadow* of **heavenly things**,

as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the *pattern* showed thee in the mount.” The tabernacle of old was made as a physical, material *copy* or *representation* of the true **heavenly and spiritual tabernacle** which Moses beheld in the spiritual realm of the heavens of God’s Spirit. What Moses saw in the mount was not physical, material, or earthly; it was heavenly and spiritual! And that which is heavenly and spiritual is the **true tabernacle** which the Lord pitched, and not man!

We are now come to the true! The true temple is the body of Christ! The temple of the Lord is that vast company of God’s sons who are coming to maturity in the image of Christ. It distresses me to hear preachers constantly proclaiming as fact the old wives’ fable that the temple of God must be rebuilt by the Jews in Israel! May I say in the strongest terms possible that I do not hold any such view! My conviction is the exact opposite — that there never again will be a Jewish temple upon mount Moriah, and never again will men sacrifice the blood of animals either in an effort to cover their sins or as a commemoration. All of the sacrifices of animals in the Old Testament dispensation were to cover the sins of the penitent until such time as the true and eternal Lamb of God should come and once for all manifest God’s forgiveness for every sin of every man and once for all make an end of sin.

I fail to see how anybody could have even a rudimentary understanding of the epistle to the Hebrews and the high-priestly ministry of Jesus Christ, and still believe that animal sacrifice will again be enacted upon the face of the earth! I know that some teachers have said that animal sacrifices will be reinstituted in the land of Israel during the “millennium” as a *commemoration* of Calvary, but Calvary needs no *old covenant commemoration*, as the apostle makes plain: “*For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image (reality) of the things, can never with those sacrifices they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance (commemoration) again made of sins every year. Wherefore when HE cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body Thou hast prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Wherefore the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, THERE IS NO MORE OFFERING FOR SIN*” (Heb. 10:1-3, 5-6, 15, 17-18).

In the light of those plain statements, and many more throughout the book of Hebrews, how could anyone even imagine that God would **re-establish animal sacrifices to “remember” or “commemorate” the sacrifice that ENDS ALL SACRIFICES!** What a contradiction! Perish the thought! It is abomination of the worst sort! It is my conviction that it was the continuation of the animal sacrifices in the old temple, which continued on for many years after the one, true sacrifice had been made, that brought about the desolation of the temple by the Romans in A.D. 70 — as foretold by Daniel, and later by Jesus. The ninth chapter of Hebrews especially deals with the work of Jesus Christ as our great High Priest, and the eleventh verse says that “*Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands...neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*” Then the argument is developed that if the blood of sacrificial animals could sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, how much more should the blood of Christ purge our conscience from dead works — external works of the law, sacrifices, offerings, rituals, feast days, and ceremonies. The blood of Christ purges our *conscience* from these dead works; that is, we no longer sense that they are necessary to please God or to receive anything from Him — our conscience does not condemn us for never doing any of those things! God no longer desires it or requires it! Christ has established a New Covenant built upon better promises and the old is forever *abolished!* Aren’t you glad!

Listen to the words of Peter as he presses this golden truth home to the understanding hearts of the saints. “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a *living stone*, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, *ye also*, as *living stones*, are built up a *spiritual house*, an holy priesthood, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a *chief cornerstone*, elect, precious, and he that believeth in Him shall not be confounded” (I Pet. 2:3-6).

Our Lord Jesus Christ is remarkable as the cornerstone of this human heavenly temple because not only is Christ the sure foundation in the midst of a world where the pillars are trembling and the foundations are shaken, but He remains ever sure and ever stable and gives His stability to the entire structure. More than that, He is the living stone that communicates that stability to all the other stones that are joined to Him. Praise God that in the midst of all the pressures and testings there is that INNER STABILITY of the Christ! So, we see painted before our eyes a magnificent structure, the living cathedral of Christ rising into the sky, made of living stones. This is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man! Not a temple of dead stones, but of living stones, each stone a spiritually living person indwelt by the glory of God, whose temple we are. Not covered by glittering gold, but overshadowed by divinity. Not adorned with silver, but displaying the beauty of redemption. Not fashioned with glittering, precious stones, but with the eternal jewels of His own nature, glory, and power!

God will **never vacate** this heavenly, spiritual temple to return to a temple made with hands! No temple of God, formed from stones and ornamented with cedar and silver and gold, will ever be rebuilt in Jerusalem! The notion of a rebuilt temple is a lie that would be humorous, were it not so ridiculous and absurd. The very thought is a horrible blasphemy! God never goes *backward* in His purposes, nor does He reinstate the *type* once the *reality* has come! The temple that God builds is the temple of which Jesus spoke to the poor, sinful woman at the well of Sychar. She was quibbling about the *place* to worship God, and He said, "Neither in this mountain, NOR IN JERUSALEM, shall ye worship the Father...the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit (in their own spirits) and in truth (spiritual reality)" (Jn. 4:21-24). And our brother Paul adds this testimony, "Now therefore...ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the *chief cornerstone*; in whom *all the building* fitly framed together groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an HABITATION OF GOD through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

Almost two thousand years ago the Lord Jesus spoke to the house of Judah, saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Mat. 23:38). This was a pronouncement of doom upon a city and a nation that had not received its King. He is saying that the *presence* and the *glory* and the *purpose* of God had departed from Judah. God took His presence from the Holy of holies in the temple, leaving their house desolate unto them. Finally, in A.D. 70, He came and destroyed that vacant shell of a building so that not one stone of it was left upon another. He scattered the people of Judah throughout all the earth, abolished their law and their priesthood, ended their sacrifices and offerings, which to this day have never been restored, nor can they be. It seems to me that when the firstborn Son of God was anointed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit the presence and glory of God left the dwelling place in the Holy of holies and came into the firstborn Son of God, taking up His abiding place in human flesh, the first stone of God's new and eternal temple. All of those years the priests had been offering sacrifices to God who was not in His accustomed dwelling place, though they did not know it. He had left His centuries-old habitation and had moved into a body of flesh, the body of His Son, the true temple of God! All of the world was ignorant of this for we read, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (Jn. 1:10). And again, standing before Herod's temple, beholding the stones and the glory thereof, He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews were furious, demanding, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" But the record states, "They wist not that He spake of *the temple of His body*" (Jn. 2:19-21).

At the crucifying of Jesus, God drew a curtain of darkness over the earth and blotted out everything from sight. Beneath the cover of that dense darkness God tore the temple veil from top to bottom so that *any* carnal, earthly priest of Aaron's passing order could peer into the Holy of holies, the former abode of God, and plainly see and know that **God was not there!** This Holy of holies was empty! Ah, what must have been the thoughts of the priesthood as they returned to the temple! What must have been the feelings of the priests who had remained in the temple! When the darkness was lifted and the desolation seen and they discovered that they could come into the Holy of holies and not suffer death! Then they must have known that something catastrophic had taken place. They would not dare breathe a hint of this to the people! They must hide the facts and continue on with the form of the sacrifices as though nothing had happened. And yet, in spite of this, only shortly thereafter we read, "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a *great company of the priests were obedient to the faith*" (Acts 6:7).

God was establishing something entirely new and different! Beneath the cover of darkness God ripped open that veil and let the whole world see that He had departed, leaving that room empty. It was desolate, and now this was the beginning of the end for Jerusalem, the temple, and its priesthood. And I want to say again, in spite of what many tell us, WE WILL NEVER SEE ANOTHER TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM! Are we so foolish even to entertain the impious thought that God would allow the still unbelieving Jews to construct in Jerusalem *another desolate temple*? To again institute a priesthood offering the blood of goats and calves *after Christ has been offered once for all*? The very idea is ludicrous!

Those who espouse such error, apart from contradicting the scriptures, have also not thought very clearly about the issues involved. Unless Islam was totally obliterated from off the earth, the very first result of any effort to rebuild a temple would be World War III! Randall Price has explained the Arab mindset in regard to Jerusalem and the temple mount. He writes, "Because the Islamic worldview recognizes the only relevant history of the region as that which began with Muhammad, any statement that a Jewish temple once occupied the *Haram* ("noble enclosure," an Islamic term for the site) is considered "provocation" to the Islamic mind. The Palestinian Authority fabricated a revisionist history based on Islamic supercessionism that maintains that nothing other than Islam's sacred structures have ever occupied the site. The present Palestinian mufti of Jerusalem illustrated this core belief when he declared, 'There is not the smallest indication of the existence of a Jewish temple on this place in the past; in the whole city there is not even a single stone indicating Jewish history.'

"When I interviewed him Sabri told me a Jewish temple could never have been on the site, or Allah would never have permitted a mosque to be built there. He said the first mosque was built there by Adam and consecrated by Abraham and Ishmael, the progenitors of the Arab people and 'worshippers of Allah.' With this belief enshrined in sermons and inculcated throughout the Palestinian school system, it is not surprising a sincerely bewildered Palestinian merchant asked me (knowing I am an archaeologist) why the Jews were digging around the *Haram*: 'What's there that concerns them anyway?' Explaining that the ancient remains surrounding the site are important for Jewish history only brought the further statement, 'These are pre-Islamic, and nobody knows what they are!' To minds that have been conditioned against critical thinking regarding their religion, no explanation is reasonable or welcome" — end quote.

The fact is that any effort to restore the temple in Jerusalem would be on the part of a very small minority of Jewish people. A large percent of Jews in Israel and worldwide are secular, non-religious, and many of these are actually agnostic or atheist. The government of Israel has no interest whatever in building a temple, and few religious Jews have any desire for one. Any such attempt would very likely spark a civil war within Israel itself! The Jewish people are so hopelessly divided both religiously and politically. The issues would be: Who would appoint the high priest? Would he be Sephardi or Ashkenazi? Who would appoint the Sanhedrin? Would it be run by this rabbi or that rabbi, or by a committee, representing the various factions within religious Judaism? Would the Sanhedrin appoint the government? Would the temple be consecrated as Solomon did with the sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep? On and on and on the questions go and there is no consensus anywhere in Israel! It would be a nightmare of unimaginable proportions! The Holy Spirit tells us that the Old Covenant with its priesthood, sacrifices, and temple *is abolished* and has *passed away forever* (read the book of Hebrews); now consider, precious friend of mine, with what divine genius God has also ordained the structure of society, religion, culture, and military might and posturing in the middle east so as to absolutely preclude that old covenant from *ever being established in Israel again! Ever!* Almighty Father, HOW GREAT THOU ART!

We read in Matthew 24:1-2, "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and His disciples came to Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." In A.D. 70 the Roman general Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple just as the Lord Jesus said, and not one stone was left upon another. History records (see Jewish Talmud and Maimonides) that Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem, did with a ploughshare tear up the foundations of the temple. Josephus, the Jewish historian of New Testament times, states that all the rest of the city was so demolished and leveled with the ground until it appeared as a plowed field, and they who came to see it, could scarcely believe that it was ever inhabited. If you doubt that, look at the wailing wall in

Jerusalem today. A brother who has made numerous trips to Jerusalem states that the thing that amazes him about the wailing wall is THE KIND OF STONES THAT ARE IN IT. There are stones from Solomon's temple, from the temple of the days of Ezra and Haggai, from the temple of Herod, and from every other period. The wall existing today is not the remains of any *one* temple, just a re-laying of rubble from them all. One stone was literally not left upon another, and the prophecy of Jesus was meticulously fulfilled!

Many years ago I read an account about plans that were under way to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, that stones had already been cut in a quarry in Indiana and shipped to Israel! I'm sure a number of those reading these lines will remember that report. Ralph Woodrow, who researched this matter at the time, wrote: "Here is the story as it appeared in one magazine in August, 1967. 'Israeli government representatives have ordered 60,000 tons of the finest Bedford stone from Bedford, Indiana to be used in the erection of the Jerusalem temple. Five hundred railcar loads of stone from Bedford, considered to be among the finest building stone in the world, is being freighted pre-cut to exact specifications, and one consignment has already been dispatched to Israel. Shipments are being handled by Pier 26 in New York. This report, received from authoritative sources in Sellersburg, Indiana said that cornerstones for the Third Temple are already in Israel. Materials for this temple have been in secret preparation for seven years, and it is believed American Jews are mainly responsible for financially undergirding the whole project...'

"Those who hold the rapture-seven-year-tribulation theory became quite excited! The story was carried in religious papers and magazines. A few weeks later, however, it was discovered that the story had no basis in fact. It was a hoax! A minister in New York inquired at the New York harbor about the matter. He found there was no such pier as that named, no such shipment of stone, that there was not a word of truth in the whole fabrication! The paper from which the above was taken was honest enough to admit the error and included the following letter from the Jewish Ambassador in London: 'Allow me to refer to a story in a recent issue of your publication concerning the shipping of stones from the U.S.A. for the alleged purpose of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. I would like to point out that this story is an absolute and complete fabrication in all its aspects. There are no such plans for the rebuilding of the Temple, no shipments for such a purpose have been made from the U.S.A. or elsewhere, and the matter has not been considered either in secrecy (as the report alleges) or openly. In view of the fact that the Temple area is now occupied by shrines of other faiths, both Christian and Moslem, and we would never touch these, the entire story must be considered an invention'" — end quote.

God is not looking for a temple of stone in which to dwell. GOD HAS A TEMPLE! A temple that the hands of men did not build or plan. He not only *will* dwell in this temple, but HE IS NOW IN IT! Every stone of this temple is living. Every stone is speaking. Every stone is breathing the breath of eternal, incorruptible life. The living stones in this temple are the members of the body of Christ! They are sons of God and members of HIS CELESTIAL FAMILY. By adding them to Himself God is increasing and expanding Himself, as a man by fathering many sons expands his family and himself. By God's family of sons the holy temple of the Lord will fill the universe with HIMSELF, for the saints are the fullness of Him who filleth all in all. From this temple of sons God will bless all the peoples and nations of the earth, reconcile all things everywhere to Himself, and rule the unbounded universe in righteousness for evermore. Isn't it wonderful!

For two thousand years it has been rising on the foundation of the apostles and prophets and the flaming words of the prophet Malachi are even now being fulfilled: "THE LORD, WHOM YE SEEK, SHALL SUDDENLY COME TO HIS TEMPLE. Behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall *purify* the sons of Levi (the spiritual priesthood), and purge them as gold and silver, that they may *offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness*" (Mal. 3:1-3). Praise God! He is reigning within His own, to dethrone the man of sin (self-ego, Adamic mind, carnal nature) which sits in the very temple of God, proclaiming *himself* as god (the ruler), and striving for his own will and way in all things, even the things of God. That *self* is being dethroned is evident as more and more of God's elect come to that place where we pray, in spirit and in truth, "not my will, but *Thine* be done."

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and *the angel* stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God...” (Rev. 11:1).

Since there were no chapter divisions in the original Greek text, this verse naturally connects with the preceding one, connecting chapter ten with chapter eleven by the conjunction “*and*.” I make a special point of this because this knowledge clearly shows that “the angel” who gives John the measuring rod is the same “mighty angel” who had just been talking to him! We must be very clear about the identification of each symbol or we become confused and miss the full import of the message. John himself represents the *ministry* within the body of Christ. The temple signifies the body of Christ itself, the habitation of God through the Spirit. And the “mighty angel” who commissions the ministry to “measure” the temple of God, or the body of Christ, is none other than our glorious Head, the Lord Jesus Christ! He is the One who walks in the midst of the churches having eyes of fire and feet like burnished brass, and His voice is truly the *voice of the Son of God!* Let us not rob Him of His supremacy by trying to make every majestic symbol in the Revelation apply only to the “many-membered body” or the “corporate Christ.” Truly this is *the revelation of JESUS CHRIST!* Let us never lose sight of that.

Yet, the “angel” is not the Christ in some far-off heaven somewhere, but the Christ *within*. When the book of Revelation speaks of an “angel” it always symbolically denotes a messenger and his message — a fresh word or revelation from the Lord! God brings a word to us out of Himself giving enlightenment, counsel, or instruction. All truth is revealed by the *Living Word* of God! The living Christ, as the Spirit, is the very Word of God! Therefore, when John sees or hears an angel, he is seeing and hearing in the symbols of vision a revelation of the Lord Himself. By the symbol of an angel the Lord Himself has appeared in a new and fresh and further manifestation of Himself to reveal, teach, instruct, and deal in the lives of His called and chosen ones. John heard a word from the Lord in his spirit — that, my beloved, is the angel, and that is the mystery! And the message is just this — the temple of God must be *measured!* In our next Study we will consider the meaning and work of that “measuring” of those called unto sonship to God.

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY