

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 125

MEASURING THE TEMPLE (continued)

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

In order to grasp the spiritual meaning of our text we must first understand the great truth that throughout the history of the world a holy city and temple have been in the making — not a city in the literal sense of the word, but a city of which the cities of earth are but a vague symbol or type, a spiritual city of God. In our earthly experience a city is composed of a great number of buildings of various kinds, in ancient times surrounded by a wall to keep out the enemy. It is simply a habitation for a large number of human beings who live, work, and play in correspondence with one another. So the city of God, which is in the process of completion throughout the history of the world, is the habitation and dwelling place of the Most High God! And instead of the dwelling places of wood and stone, in this city the people of God themselves constitute the habitations, for they are *living habitations* in whom God dwells, lives, walks, speaks, and works by His Spirit.

In the visions of John there are revealed three stages in the process of completion of this city of our God. At the conclusion of the Revelation, in the last chapters, we are shown the stage of perfection, when that city shall have been completed and perfected. We see the holy city of God pictured in highly symbolic language as coming down from God out of heaven. We shall discuss this in detail at a later time, Lord willing, but in passing we must note one peculiarity which is mentioned with special emphasis to the perfected and completed city — that in that city there is *no temple*, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof (Rev. 21:22). Why is there no temple in this city? The answer is also very evident: 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*. That is the mystery!

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 experience of 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! That shall no more be 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 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?” For the city itself is God’s habitation, and the temple and the city have become identical. It is indeed wonderful! Every child of God is a citizen in this city of God. 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 not yet ready for the Lord of glory to manifest His full majesty in their midst! That state must be reached. And all history, and God’s unfailing

dealings, serve to bring the city of God to perfection. We all know that that city has not yet reached its state of perfection.

The earthly Jerusalem of old served as the type. For in Jerusalem there was a temple. God did not dwell in all the city. His manifest presence and flaming majesty did not fill the city, but He dwelt in a particular house. If you entered Jerusalem as a stranger, you would not immediately be aware of the presence and glory of Yahweh, so you might ask, "Where does Yahwey dwell in this city?" In response to this question you would be directed to the great temple complex on the height of mount Moriah. But once arriving at the temple you still would not encounter the glory of the God of the city! Let us imagine that we approach the temple at the time our Lord walked on earth. We must not imagine that Yahweh dwelt in all that was called the temple. Several times we read that Jesus "entered into the temple." Matthew records, for instance, that "Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves" (Mat. 21:12). Yes, Jesus went into the temple, but in the area He entered there was no fiery Shekinah to be seen! Entering the temple from the right, as worshippers were directed to do, we would find ourselves first of all in a wide, open space, a large square, seven hundred fifty feet each way — the *court* of the temple — and that is where Jesus entered! He certainly did not go into the holy place or the most holy place!

The temple was surrounded by three walls enclosing three open courts. These three together formed what was broadly termed "the court." The first or inner court was the *court of the priests* (II Chron. 4:9). Outside of this was the outer or *court of Israel* which was divided into two apartments, one of which was the court of the women. Outside of the court of Israel was a still larger court with marble pavement called the *court of the Gentiles*, because the Gentiles were permitted freely to enter into it. They could not approach the court of Israel, which was guarded by a low balustrade. Each of these courts contained various buildings, halls, and galleries. In the *court of the priests* toward the east stood the brazen altar of burnt-offering, and southwest of the altar stood the brazen laver, and to the west stood the sanctuary — holy place and most holy place.

But now all this outward form and show has vanished with the passing of the Old Covenant and is now fulfilled *spiritually* in the *antitypical temple* which is the *body of Christ*! The holy city, the temple, and the court still exist, but no longer as a city and temple built of wood, stone, and gold. There is no more such a temple! And God has ordained in the earth, throughout this age, one billion fanatical Moslems with their holy shrine, the Dome of the Rock, built squarely on the old temple mount in order to *insure* that never again will a temple of the old abolished covenant be constructed on that sight! It has forever passed away! Oh, the depths of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:33). And by the time both Jew and Moslem have been brought to the living reality of God's Christ, through the ministry of the manifest sons of God, the Jews will have discovered the *reality* and will have no further inclination to rebuild a physical temple in Jerusalem.

There is no more a literal city recognized as the holy city of God. There is certainly nothing "holy" about the city of Jerusalem in the middle east! There is no more a golden altar built with hands. The true "temple" is composed of God's elect sons and daughters! And in the broader sense the "court" which belongs to the temple, but is not indwelt by the glory of God, is the visible community of people who call themselves born-again believers and who love Jesus and flock around the Word, which are also called the "church," and because of their love for the Lord and the scriptures which they embrace in the limited measure they understand them, are indeed the people of God. Under the symbol of this court we therefore see before us the visible church of regenerated people which, not literally but figuratively, is called the *court*.

In its spiritual meaning the distinction between the holy city, the outer court, and the temple proper still exists and holds good. And it is on the basis of this great truth that we understand the words of our text. Jerusalem in its broadest sense is the representation of the entire *professing church*, all of Christianity, all who are baptized, who confess Jesus Christ as the Saviour, or their Leader; the entire Christian world, of all nominal Christians, inclusive of every Christian denomination, sect, and group from the Roman Catholic all the way to the weirdest of cults. Everything! That is the "holy city."

But in this great city of what is called “the church” one must distinguish between three different classes. In the first place, in this nominally Christian world there are millions of people who name the name of the Lord, but do not truly know Him. They may have been baptized, have studied catechism, or been taught doctrines, they observe rituals, partake of sacraments, embrace the moral and ethical teachings of Jesus, and perform all kinds of good works to help and bless mankind in outward ways and on the natural plane. Most of these have never been born of the Spirit, or quickened to the living reality of the Christ within. Some have even cast away the redemptive work of Christ, embracing a purely social gospel, and some are even activists for all kinds of ungodly movements, including “gay rights” in the church! They know nothing of any spiritual truth or reality. This is Jerusalem sacrificing to Moloch, filled with abomination, the city of God serving the devil. Jerusalem of old did so, and it is the type! It is the city of desolation, captive in a strange land by the rivers of Babylon.

In the second place, there is also in the church that people which comprise the “outer court.” It represents a people who do know God, those who have drawn near to His presence in the place where the altar of sacrifice and the laver of cleansing stand. These dwell close to the temple although yet outside it; they are truly worshippers of God, redeemed people, alive unto Christ, and serving God to the best of their ability on the level they know and in the measure they have experienced Him. They are in the church, but they have never entered the sanctuary of intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Christ in His temple. These have received no revelation of going on to perfection, of being filled with all the fullness of God, of growing up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, unto a perfect man, conformed to His image — mature, manifest sons of God.

Oh, yes! *In the temple* there are the real, spiritual, transformed, mature people of God, the *invisible church*, unseen and unknown by *all* those standing in the outer court and treading the streets of the city! This is the living body of Christ, many sons brought to glory, a royal priesthood, the real temple and the true sanctuary which the Lord has built, and not man; where God dwells, and where the priests of the Lord minister at the altar of Christ in spirit and in truth. These are represented by the temple which John is commanded to measure. Three distinctions, therefore, there were in ancient Jerusalem: the city of Jerusalem proper, the outer court, and finally the temple. So there are also three distinctions in the spiritual Jerusalem of the New Testament day: the entire Christian world, the born-again people of God, and the truly spiritual, transformed, people of the Lord who are going on to perfection and maturity as God’s house of sons. It is to these three companies that our text refers plainly!

May I here point out that in all deeper truth there is a two-fold application — first, the personal, inward, and individual; second, the visible and corporate. John was told to measure the temple. He was instructed, however, *not* to measure the outer court. In other words, the messenger, or the *message from the heavens of God’s Spirit*, was telling John, on the individual level, not to measure or even consider his outer man — it does not measure up, it is cut off, and old Adam’s life is no longer our place of dwelling. Thus, in our personal experience we are told to check the condition of our inner man, to take inventory and assess his growth and development in life. But don’t measure the outer court right now — God is not dealing with that at this time. Our spirit is quickened and our soul is being saved, but the outer man, the body realm, is under the dominion and treading down of the Gentiles, that is, sin and corruption are still in his members, the carnal, fleshly, human nature of old Adam. It is the inner man, not the outer court of the body realm, that God is growing up into the image and likeness of Christ. There is an hour for the redemption of our body, but all who are honest will have to admit that we have not seen any change there yet. As much as we desire our body to be changed our experience has often been no different than that of the great apostle Paul when he wrote, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I (my new man) that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me (my flesh). For I delight in the law of God after the *inward man*: but I see another law in my members (body), warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” (Rom. 7:18-23).

After being born again we have the idea that our flesh has been changed or transformed, but we soon find out that is not the case! When we discover the same old desires, propensities, inclinations, weaknesses, habits, lusts, sickness, mortality, and death our first thought is, “If I’m a new creature in Christ Jesus, why do I still feel these things, why do I still get angry, fly off the handle, and say things that are ungodly?” There

are those times when the Gentiles, the heathen, the corrupt old natural man of the flesh, runs all over us! We're so shocked! We don't understand! Oh, my Lord, how can this be? The Lord says, "I'm not shocked. I know what is in man. Don't measure your experience in me by what you find in your flesh. Leave it out! Measure it not!" Oh, yes, God will reconcile and redeem even that realm, for growth and transformation are a process, but first He must release your spirit and save your soul in order to finally redeem that body! Give all diligence, my beloved, pay careful attention to the work of God in your spirit and in your soul — the redemption of the body will follow! That is the mystery.

Now let us consider this truth in its *corporate* application. John is told to measure the inner sanctuary of the "temple of God" where the golden altar stands and the true worshippers assemble. What he has in mind, of course, is the body of Christ, the temple of God which we are! The outer court is to be omitted. It is rejected, unmeasured. The people of Israel could come and assemble at the outer court, but only the priests of God, the sons of Aaron the high priest, were permitted within the inner sanctuary. Therefore it becomes clear that "the court that is without" includes all three areas of the court, for all of these courts are "without" the *naos*, or the temple sanctuary. Just as the *court* had three parts, the court of the priests, the court of Israel, and the court of the Gentiles, so the temple or *naos* had two parts, the holy place and the most holy place. Everything outside the temple building is broadly called "the court which is without." Thus the outer portion of the sanctuary, spiritually meaning the fringe of the church, the vast multitudes of those who profess to be the Lord's people, is not included in this measure. Their hour has not come.

"Measure not..." Don't measure what is natural, don't measure what is carnal, don't measure what is earthly. Don't measure that which is exposed to the elements of the world! Don't measure that which is not completely covered by the Christ! That realm has been cut off from you, its not part of your world any more. Cut it off from your concern, because God is in control and it is *given* to the Gentiles. It's given to people who really don't believe in the Spirit-filled, Spirit-led life, they really don't seek the fullness of Christ, nor do they pursue the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They take the holy city, the glory of God, the bride in her most intimate relationship with the Bridegroom, all that is high, pure, and holy, the *pure* gold of the street, the *pure* river of the water of life, the *glory* of sonship in the dominion of the throne, and the *incorruptible* word of God (tree of life) leading to perfection, full redemption, and immortality — they take all this, I say, and trample it under foot for forty-two months. All the high and holy things of God they keep treading under foot; that means they keep beating a path to the outer court; they are content to be saved by grace, forgiven but not perfected; children of God, but not mature sons; reconciled and justified but not transformed; possessing gifts to play with but no authority to rule and reign with Christ!

Those who constantly tread down the outer court take the high and holy truths of God and apply them on the low level of church doctrine, ritual, works, religious practices, golden streets in some far-off heaven somewhere where they will live in literal mansions and drink from a literal river of life, and a thousand other such childish notions. They sacrifice over, and over, and over, never secure in the finished work of Christ. They go from revival to revival, dedicate and rededicate, never experiencing union with God. They wash, and wash, and wash again at the laver, because their hearts are still uncircumcised and they can only purify the works of the outer man for a little season. "Measure not the outer court" because it can never measure up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!

God doesn't expect much from babes, so He doesn't demand that they measure up to the full stature of sonship! Neither should God's elect require of babes in Christ that of which they know nothing and are incapable of even understanding. Release them to God! Don't expect them to measure up! ***Measure them not!*** They will continue to tread through the city and do their service in the outer court for forty-two months — three and a half years — the time of the revelation of God in flesh upon this earth. Three and a half years encompasses the entire period from Jesus' baptism in the Jordan, His announcement by the Father as the Son of God, His full sonship anointing without measure, His wonderful ministry of the kingdom of God with power, signs, wonders, and miracles, His transfiguration, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to the throne of the majesty on High, and His high priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Three and a half years is the full journey from being a child of God all the way to enthronement as a king-priest in the kingdom of God! Just as the religious leaders and people of Israel continued to tread the courts of their Old Testament law and order all the time Jesus was walking out His sonship, so the nominal Christians of our day continue to tread down the outer court of the old-order church systems of man all the time the sons of

God are following on to know the Father in all His glorious and eternal reality! The symbolic “gentiles” will tread down the holy city and occupy the outer court *until* they are able to see the glory of the manifest sons of God stepping forth from beyond the veil of the Holiest of all! Only then will they see and understand that there is something more in God than the outer court!

The outer court was exposed to the elements and at night time was shrouded in darkness. There was always light in the holy place, the light of the candlestick, Christ in you the hope of glory. There was always light in the most holy place, the blazing Shekinah of the fullness of God’s presence, glory, and power. But the outer court (as well as the city) knew both seasons of light and darkness. Tony Salmon once shared his own experience in this regard, saying, “Before my initial salvation experience I was in outer darkness. I was lost. I was weeping and gnashing my teeth. My Saviour found me in this miserable condition and brought me into His temple. I came seeking His light. In the outer court I identified with His sacrifice at the brazen altar and I was immersed into Him at the laver. It was a glorious experience! After a while, darkness began to engulf me again. The outer court could no longer satisfy me. When it was time to go to the next level, Father simply turned off the light of the outer court! The glory of the outer court had now become outer darkness and I was once again weeping and gnashing my teeth — desperately seeking a greater light.”

In the times of the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon, each day the sun set and the outer court became a realm of darkness. The sun is now setting on this tired old age in which we have lived so long and during which the Church of Christ has dwelt for the most part in the outer court realm of spiritual experience. To each and every son of God who treasures the beautiful hope of the revelation of God’s fullness in this hour, the Lord says, “I have so drawn you unto myself, so raised you up into union in my life, that there need be no measuring of the outer court realm anymore. The external realm of natural understanding, of the letter of the word, of types and shadows, of outward rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, rules, regulations, and laws — none of these can measure up to the experience of *spiritual reality!*” The true bread (show-bread) of the living word of God is not found in the outer court! The oil of the candlestick, the inner anointing of the Holy Spirit, is not known there! The spirit of prayer, praise, and worship at the golden altar is not experienced there! The inworking of the hidden manna of God’s incorruptible life, the blazing glory of His presence over the mercy seat, the tables of the law written in the heart, and Aaron’s rod that budded, signifying the divine calling of high-priesthood, are not appropriated there! ***Measure not the outer court!***

What is happening here is that God is cutting off that outer court realm — the Greek text actually reads, “cast off” or “cast away” the court which is without. That realm is no longer credible in the life of a son of God! It doesn’t pertain to us, it no longer belongs to us, it has no validity in our walk in God. That doesn’t mean that we repudiate the experience of that realm, God forbid! But that is not the place of our dwelling. There is no more need for any realm of religious exercise where the glorious light, life, voice, presence, and power of God do not dwell. Measure only the *naos*, the inner sanctuary, where the glory and reality dwell! Everything in our experience must measure up to the reality of the most holy place! Nothing else will avail. All is emptiness, void, lifelessness, and death. The external religious realms hold nothing for us anymore!

The expression, “But the court which is without the temple ***leave out***, and measure it not,” is too mild a translation of the Greek. The Greek word is a very strong one. It does not at all signify mere omission. It means to “cast out,” as though to violently throw, toss, pitch, fling, expel, hurl, or banish it from the precincts of the temple. What a word that is! A part of the temple is ***cast out!*** The court which is outside the inner temple is to be cast without. This is relative to the experience of God’s TEMPLE PEOPLE! John is distinctly forbidden to measure the court or even to acknowledge it. God will take care of it! It is to be trodden in the winepress of His judgment, left to wallow in its own quagmire of carnality, shallowness, childishness, and error. The Gentiles, or those believers who walk after the flesh, shall be allowed to trample it under foot for a determined time. Then God will take charge in His own moment.

Once we thoroughly understand by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God that the outer court realm is indeed cut off and cast away from us, our entire perception of it is altered. The environment in that entire ghost town of the outer court becomes so ineffective and unavailing, so empty and hollow, so worthless, irrelative, and inconsequential, so lacking and desolate, and so repugnant and horrible to us that

we can no longer countenance it. All who have been called of the Father to sonship understand precisely what I am saying! It is no longer for us, for the Lord now commands us to “*cast out the outer court and measure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles.*” That doesn’t mean that it is given to the unbelievers of the world, or to some imagined armies of the antichrist — it signifies that the realm of religious externals is given to those people who abide in the outer fringes of spiritual life and know God only in the types and shadows of outward observances. These are the people who “tread under foot” the holy city, that is, they keep the things of God and the people of God under the feet of, or subservient to, the carnal mind, natural understanding, fleshly religious ways, bringing them into bondage on the lowest level of spiritual experience. They know nothing of the glory, life, wisdom, and power of the *indwelling Lord!* To these knowing *about* God is more important than truly *knowing Him!* Therefore this outer court realm becomes extremely uncomfortable to the man or woman in whose walk it has become *cut off*.

Ray Prinzing commented on this passage, “Religion concerns itself with the measuring of the outward, the physical, the self-worth, the fame and success, etc. And they set standards for dress, and code of action, ignoring the fact that the outward is but a portrayal ground for the inward — and sooner or later all masquerades are stripped away, and we will be seen for what we are. In the measuring of the temple, altar, worshipper, the instruction was to place the emphasis upon the spiritual, not the natural — it is the spiritual realm which is being dealt with. Another application can be drawn — for the intense dealings of God are first upon the remnant firstfruits of the new creation order — the OVERCOMER, which He is leading onward. These are being dealt with in ways and depths that the multitudes know nothing of. But the people of the ‘court’ will carry on with their ministries and programs, often blessed by God for the realm in which they move, though they are totally ignorant of the ‘wheel within a wheel,’ of the separated walk of those who go on to worship in spirit and in truth.”

For years the simple vision of John in chapter eleven of the Revelation intrigued my mind with its mystery. Through those years my understanding remained unfruitful until the glad day the light of the Spirit chased away the dark clouds that obscured the beautiful truth and great reality contained there. Not least among the meaningful symbols John heard and beheld in spirit that day is this word of the angel which showed him these things, whereby John was instructed to measure the temple, but to cast out the outer court and measure it not, for it is *given unto the Gentiles*, and the holy city they shall tread under foot forty-two months.

I have previously pointed out that when we speak of “Gentiles” we must not think with carnal, natural minds, but understand the *symbol* by the spirit. In its spiritual meaning Gentiles are not races of people after the flesh. Oh, no! Gentiles stand for the *carnal mind, soulish nature, and fleshly ways* of all men, both saint and sinner. It is that which is outside of the holy seed of the Christ within! The unvarnished truth is that the entire religious world of man is *outside* of the holy seed of the Christ! Though the sacramental realm of ceremonies, ordinances, traditions, doctrines, programs, laws, and all external religious observances was once a glorious realm to us, it is no longer our place of habitation. The sun has set on that day and all that remains for those who walk there is the cold reflective light which rules the night where men walk in spiritual darkness. What was once a glorious realm has now become outer darkness!

When Israel entered into the land of their inheritance and David raised up the tabernacle on mount Zion, the outer realm of the outer court was cut off, and the worshippers worshipped only at the Holiest of all. What a day that was! And how unspeakably glorious! The truth is, coming into the fullness of our inheritance in Christ *requires* that the former orders of the outer court be cut off from us! Every son of God must cease to measure those who live and minister only in the outer court! They are not meant to enter beyond the veil at this time, but *we* must enter as Father draws us to the Holiest of all! Oh! How my heart yearns for this! Behind the veil is where every son of God belongs! The “Gentiles” tread under foot — trample with unsanctified feet — the holy things of the outer court as by carnal means and methods they function in and by a fleshly mixture of soul and spirit, of soulish promotions and Holy Spirit anointing. The spirit of the world’s ways invades this carnal church and takes possession of it. Worldly church-members welcome the ideas of the world; feel themselves perfectly at home with the world. It is a real exercise of the faith, revelation, and obedience of God’s chosen ones in this new day of the Lord, when God gives us the measuring reed, and enables us rightly to perceive the true character and nature of that which is of Himself. As this work has been raised up in the elect of the Lord there is a company of sons and daughters of God in

this hour who are spiritually intelligent in the mind of Christ — the “wise” of Daniel 12:3 — who have been enabled by the Spirit of God to appreciate what is true and holy, and we can no longer be a part of that which is profane. There are myriad things in the religious systems of man that will not bear measurement by a divine standard!

Now consider, the Gentiles, or the believers who only know God in the externals, shall tread the holy city under foot for forty-two months. I would speak a little further about this “treading under foot.” We may conceive treading under foot as indicating moving in and destroying everything, or being occupied and ruled as by a foreign army. The Greek word is *pateo* meaning a “path” or “to trample.” It carries the significance of beating a path, of a multitude of people standing or walking over the same territory again and again until the grass dies and the dirt is packed down. The “Gentiles” are beating a path through the city to the outer court because they have not tasted of life and reality in the spirit. So they keep coming to the brazen altar in the outer court offering their sacrifice upon the altar. Then they go to the brazen laver where they wash their hands and their feet because they constantly feel guilty, condemnation laid upon them by the false doctrines preached to them by the ministers of religion who only know an outer court experience. They stop in the outer court, linger there, milling around, repeating over and over the outward ministrations of that realm imposed by the church systems.

Can we not understand that under the old covenant of law, because of the terrible guilt and weight of sin, men were constantly *wearing a path to this place!* Through the gates of Jerusalem, down the streets and avenues of the holy city they came day after day driving before them their lambs and their bulls to make sacrifice for sin and uncleanness. The multitude of Israel was continually treading under foot both the city and the court in their outward efforts to deal with sin and come under the mercy of Yahweh. They had to keep going back, going back, and going back just as the immature baby Christians in the church systems today are fed a constant diet of condemnation and sin-consciousness. Meeting after meeting, revival after revival, altar call after altar call, the people are reminded of their sinfulness, perhaps in thought or word or deed they have offended and are not “ready” should Jesus split the eastern sky before morning light. They might be left behind!

Again and again the people beat a path to the altar to beg God’s forgiveness, to do penance, to pray the rosary, take communion, request prayer, get hands laid on them, to get everything right between them and God, to “rededicate” and “reconsecrate” their lives to the Lord. Not having grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ within, they tread down the holy city so that it never consistently radiates the triumph, victory, glory, and liberty of Christ. Were we not all there at one time, whatever our religious background, treading down, “God forgive me,” ever making another sacrifice, another committal, I must do this, I have to do that, I must not do the other, to be pleasing to God, to escape judgment and hell, going through the motions of our own self-efforts at serving the Lord, to make sure we were in good standing in the church and the grace of God.

“...the holy city shall they tread under foot *forty and two months*” (Rev. 11:2).

We have already pointed out one aspect of the meaning of the forty-two months. Let us look at this a little further. This number appears repeatedly in the book of Revelation; at one time it appears as “three and a half years,” and at another time as “1260 days,” and again as “a time, two times, and half a time.” It is always the same length of time stated in different terms and figures. Here the time is given as “forty-two months.” The significance lies in it always being three and a half, that is, *half of seven*. Seven is the complete, perfect number denoting fullness! Three and a half, then, shows a broken, limited period or work, that which always falls short of perfection and fullness, an imperfect word or move of God on a level short of fullness, that which can never prevail, can never endure forever, but must be thwarted and cut off. All the numbers in the Revelation are symbolic. They cannot be fitted into the framework of world history, though there are a few startling coincidences which embolden the uninspired and create an enthusiasm for a historical interpretation based on outward world events. The spiritual interpretation of this great book must be maintained at all costs, for the writings of those who apply its prophecies to outer world events either past, present, or future, are strewn with the carcasses of confident predictions which now are fit only for the ash-heap of history.

If not a measurable period of chronological time, what then does the figure of forty-two months signify? We have already said that in actual time it is *one-half of seven years*. Thus we are dealing with an indefinite period of time, in each case known only to God and not intended to be measured by man. If it were an actual world-time that could be measured in advance what consolation would it be for those who were able to calculate that no deliverance was to be expected in their day or perhaps for centuries to come? And of what value would it be to us if we were able to calculate that this period was already fulfilled historically hundreds or thousands of years ago in some local incident in the middle east or elsewhere? Such schemes strike at the very heart of the fact that the Revelation is a *spiritual revelation* given for and sent to a *spiritual people* symbolically represented as *the seven churches of Asia*. In place of these carnal-minded literalistic interpretations it is my deep conviction that these strange time figures in the Revelation in each case indicate THE BROKEN SEVEN. Seven being the number of divine completeness and fullness it is significant to note that all the “halves” of seven are associated with dark and sinister works and operations — things that boast their power and continuity but which are in fact limited, failing, and passing away — the enemy will not endure one day beyond the will and purpose of our Father!

The message is just this — anything in the book of Revelation that lasts for forty-two months, 1260 days, three and a half years, or for “a time, two times, and half a time” is DOOMED FOR FAILURE! It will not endure, it is limited as to both time and influence, it *will be overcome*, it will be cast off, it shall come to naught, and will forever pass away. Aren’t you glad! The Lord’s people and the holy things of God will not be trodden down by the flesh and the world forever, for Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish! (Eph. 5:25-27). Well did the apostle Paul know in writing these prophetic words that the Christ cannot fail! He will purify not only the “sons of Levi,” His Royal Priesthood, but He will cleanse and purify *all His church*, including the church in the outer court and the church in the holy city! He will lead every redeemed child of God out of the shackles of Babylonian slavery and bring them marching up to the glorious golden city of God! Oh, yes! The holy city shall be trodden down of the symbolic “Gentiles” for *only forty-two months* — her captivity will end, we will be glad and rejoice because the marriage of the Lamb is come, His wife has at last “made herself ready,” and glorious will be her final state! Oh, the wonder of it!

The people of the Lord have long been held captive by the spirit of the world. Thank God, there has been a little light in Babylon, and there has ever been the voice of the *bride* and the *Bridegroom* (Rev. 18:23), for the people chained in that horrible darkness have been the *Lord’s people*. The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular churches to declare enough of the gospel to lead many to the Saviour. A few of these receive and teach a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit. These have in measure tasted of His reality and received of His gifts. But from here on, practically everything that is taught is nothing but defilement and shame: naught but the precepts of the elders, and the lies and deceptions of the antichrist. Organized religion today, while totally ignorant of the fact of there being an antichrist in our midst, is busy teaching his doctrines, observing his forms and ceremonies, and glorying in his shame. To His people who sit shackled in these chains of Babylonian bondage the word of the Lord commands: “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins...for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities” (Rev. 18:4-5). Thank God, the chains of the Babylon system are doomed to destruction. “Forty-two months” are decreed upon her! This mysterious system is to be finally and irrevocably destroyed. Wherefore, the Lord saith, “Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and unclean. Shake thyself from the dust (flesh); arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: LOOSE THYSELF FROM THE BANDS OF THY NECK, O CAPTIVE DAUGHTER OF ZION. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money” (Isa. 52:1-3).

When the above is fulfilled, then shall the True Man — the Lord from heaven, the Corporate Man composed of “many sons brought to glory” — take His seat upon the throne in the city, and in companionship with His bride, the New Eve, the cleansed and perfected church — rule over a restored creation. This church is quickened out of the grave of Christ, taken from His riven side, being thus “of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” He is the Head and she the body, making ONE NEW MAN, as we read in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, “Till we *all* come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a *perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the *fullness of Christ*” (Eph. 4:13).

The sons of God are the *temple of God* (I Cor. 3:16; Rev. 11:1-2,19). We will see this great truth more clearly set forth in the book of Revelation as we continue on in our studies. The bride of Christ is the *city of God* (Rev. 21:9-11). That city is the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Every stone of that city is a living stone, a glorified CHRIST-BEING. Every stone is a living, ransomed soul just as every member of the body of Christ, which is the temple of God, is a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. We cannot fully explain or understand a mystery so awesome as this, but the eye that sees by the spirit sees the temple as a living thing, composed of living saints. In that temple redeemed men, the sons of God, are the pillars and foundations (Rev. 3:12; Eph. 2:20-21), and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, growth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom we also are builded together to become the habitation of God through the spirit.

In holy vision the apostle John was transported in spirit to a great and high mountain, the majestic heights of the kingdom of God, from which he was permitted to see the perfected bride of Christ in all her beauty and glory. From this lofty vantage point the eyes of John were ravished with the electrifying sight of the unequalled majesty and infinite splendor of the bride adorned for her Husband. Not a city of stone as was the old Jerusalem, but a New Jerusalem, a *living city*, a bride beyond compare, a completely redeemed wife, pure and holy, composed of incorruptible saints brought forth out of the living substance of Christ. This is the “holy city” *after* the “forty-two months” of treading down! Thank God, forty-two months has a limit! The forty-two months have an end! This is the “holy city” that is trodden down, but not forever! ALL of God’s precious people shall be delivered from Babylonian captivity, ALL of the Lord’s redeemed ones shall come and return to Zion with singing and with everlasting joy and gladness in their hearts! Despise not those dear saints in the outer court and in the city who are now trodden down — they are yet to be “made ready” as a bride adorned for her husband! The sons of God, the firstfruits of redemption, are being perfected under the work of the *seven trumpets*. The rest of the church, those trodden-down ones, will be cleansed, delivered, and perfected by the work of the *seven vials*. That is the mystery.

Words utterly fail me to describe the wonder of such a deliverance and transformation, for ours are but the words of men, but that holy and beautiful city belongs to THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. Now at last the perfection, the image of God, sons and daughters, male and female, temple and city, of which Adam and Eve were but a frail shadowy type, has come; the many-membered Bridegroom, the last Adam, with the many-membered bride, the holy city, Adam and Eve, the first and the last, in the image and likeness of God JOINTLY RULING OVER ALL THINGS! The nations shall walk in the light of this city and the rulers and leaders of the earth shall bring into it their glory. The tree of life is in the midst of it and the water of life flows from the throne of God in the midst of it. This is GOD, male and female, united with the image of God in man, male and female, ruling over all the endless vastnesses of infinity unto ages of ages! May the Holy Ghost unfold these things more fully and powerfully to our hearts, that we may have a deeper sense of the conduct and character which are worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called. Amen!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY