

# THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God  
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#03-09104

***New Jerusalem #14.***

September 8, 2009

***According to Ezekiel's Vision***

So far in this series, I have purposely avoided a line-by-line commentary of John's vision of New Jerusalem as recorded in Revelation 21-22 because I believe it is important for us to lay a foundation based on what others saw, including the ancient prophets of the Old Testament. It is unfortunate that so many Christians seem to approach the Old Testament while wearing old-covenant glasses rather than new-covenant glasses, so to speak. In other words, they fail to look at Scripture for what it signifies under the new covenant. Consequently, Old Testament prophecy of future events, especially events that will take place in the next eon (age) during the Kingdom or Tabernacles Age, are seen through the lens of either the old covenant that has been made obsolete by the new, or a mixture (half-breed) of the two covenants.

A case in point is prophecy given by Ezekiel in chapters 40-48 about a future temple being built in Israel, one that some see as the third temple that will be Jesus' temple on earth during His 1,000-year reign. As the interpretation goes, animal sacrifices will be reinstated as Jesus officiates from this temple; the One, by the way, who took away the sin of the world through His one and final sacrifice. I think the writer of the Hebrews epistle would have taken exception to such thinking.

**(9) He takes away the first in order to establish the second. (10) By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** (Hebrews 10:9-10 NASB)

Ezekiel's vision of the temple is quite involved, but in this issue I merely want to underline a few points of similarity with John's vision of New Jerusalem that has no temple (i.e., it is not of wood and stone), for the Lord God Almighty and the Lambkin are its temple (Revelation 21:22). Again, it is vital that we understand that what Ezekiel saw, as if it were in the physical realm, needs to be seen in the spiritual realm; it must be seen for what it signifies. To achieve His purpose of being **all in all new**, God's plan is to build a temple of living stones, a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5).

First, the Lord told Ezekiel that He would pour out His Spirit on the house of Israel.

**"I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.** (Ezekiel 39:29 NASB)

John was told that the ones constituted as New Jerusalem, a temple of the Lord, the dwelling of God in spirit (2 Corinthians 6:16b-18; Ephesians 2:21-22), will see His face (Revelation 22:4). They are the immortal ones, raised a spiritual body, bearing the image of the Celestial One. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15:44, 45, 49). Jesus confirmed that this would take place in the last day, the great day, the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:38-39). Today, believers have an earnest of the spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14), but in the next age, they will be the **first** to have the full measure (Ephesians 3:19), for they are the first fruits of the true Israel.

Next, Ezekiel was taken up on a high mountain to see something that looked like a city.

**In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city.** (Ezekiel 40:2 NASB)

John too was taken up on a high mountain to see the city, the holy city, Jerusalem (Revelation 21:10).

Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord fill the house. The writer to the Hebrew Christians states that Christ is faithful as Son over His house, whose house we are (Hebrews 3:6). Paul describes the body of Christ as God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Himself being the corner stone (Ephesians 2:19-20).

**And behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.** (Ezekiel 43:5b NASB)

John saw the city whose temple is the Lord God and the Lambkin illumined by the glory of God. In fact, he saw the city come down out of heaven, having the glory of God (Revelation 21:10-11a, 23). He saw the house filled with the glory of the Lord.

Ezekiel heard the law of the Lord regarding the house and all that surrounds it. The law of the house is that it is holy.

**“This is the law of the house: its entire area on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.”** (Ezekiel 43:12 NASB)

John saw **the holy city**, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven (Revelation 21:10). **You shall be holy, for I am holy** (Ephesians 1:14; 5:27; 1 Peter 1:15-16).

Ezekiel was shown a river of living water flowing out from the temple, giving life to all that come in contact with the water. He also saw all kinds of trees that bear fruit every month; their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.

**Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar.** (Ezekiel 47:1 NASB)

**“By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”** (Ezekiel 47:12 NASB)

John saw the river of living water flowing from the throne of God and of the Lambkin. He too saw trees (tree of life) that bear twelve kinds of fruit, and the leaves of the trees are for healing (Revelation 22:1-2). The river Ezekiel saw flowed from the throne in the house to the Dead Sea and gave life to that which was dead. The river John saw flowed from the throne in the house (city) to the nations of the new earth, giving them life. The river of life eventually will engulf all of mankind, and its tree(s) will bring healing. John saw that there was no more sea in the new earth (Revelation 21:1). The sea signifies separation of the nations. In other words, the nations will no longer be separated from the Lord or from one another. In the days of King Nimrod, the nations were divided and confused according to new languages, but in God's day, there will be no confusion or division. There is only one God and one Lord and one City.

It is God's kind intention that the nations will be blessed through New Jerusalem and will be part of it at the consummation of the eons. The curse of death that came through Adam will be no more, for the last enemy to be abolished is death (1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 22:3).

Finally, Ezekiel saw a man measuring the city and he heard its dimensions and its name.

**“The city shall be 18,000 cubits round about; and the name of the city from that day shall be, “The LORD is there.”** (Ezekiel 48:35 NASB)

John saw the angel measuring the holy city and heard its name, New Jerusalem, which is the dwelling place of the Lord, for the Lord is there. Thus, we have the name of the city and its spiritual meaning, for it is the Lord's house and He lives there. He lives not only among His people but in them.