

Ezekiel (2nd study)

As we continue in our “exile” from so many familiar things, we look again at Ezekiel. Remembering that he lost everything he loved, and in a vision saw the departure of the Glory of the Lord God from the His Temple in Jerusalem. Ezekiel, lost his home, his place of worship and what must have been a great personal loss, his wife - the delight of his eyes.

In and through all this personal grief, the Lord God speaks His message to His people. A promise of a future and a hope (see Jeremiah chapter 29).

The last 10 chapters of the Book of Ezekiel are used by the writer of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament to describe the last battle and the New Jerusalem, the future home of the People of God. The new Temple – prepared as a dwelling place for the Lord looked like a city! (Ezekiel 40, verse 2).

In chapter 43, Ezekiel has a vision of the Glory of the God of Israel returning to his dwelling place in the new Temple. Note that he enters the Temple by the gate facing east. (Chapter 43, verses 1 – 5). On that first Palm Sunday our Lord Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem by the east gate.

We need to make the connection clear between these Old Testament prophecies and what we see as the fulfilment of many of them in the New Testament.

Read Ezekiel 47, verses 1 – 12

The “river of living water” is a recurring theme in both the Old and New Testaments. Psalm 46 verse 4:- “There is a river, whose streams make glad the city of God.” This is re-iterated by John in Revelation 22, verses 1 – 2. In the New City of God there is no need of a Temple. “. . . its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb”. (Revelation 21, verse 22). The “river of the water of life” flows from the throne of God and the Lamb through the midst of the city.

In Ezekiel the water of the river flowing out from the Temple is not only life giving, it becomes deeper and wider as it flows out through the land. Even the notorious Dead Sea will become fresh and a source of fish. The water flowing from the sanctuary (verse 12) will water the trees growing on both banks of the river. Trees providing fruit and healing:- compare Genesis 2 verses 9 – 17, and Revelation 22 verse 2. A return to the blessings of the paradise of Eden.

However – for Christian believers there is more! Our Lord Jesus used the example of the streams of living water to teach the gift of the Holy Spirit, available and necessary for all who believe in him. Gospel of John, chapter 7 verses 37 – 39. Jesus was teaching in the Temple in Jerusalem, but pointing to Himself as the source of living water. This living water, the Holy Spirit of God flows into the believer from the Lord Jesus and out of the believer into the world.

Here we need to pick up on the teaching that Christian believers are members of the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Living God. See 2 Corinthians 6 verse 16. Also 1 Corinthians 3 verse 16: Ephesians 2 verse 21: 1 Peter 2 verse 5 etc.

John 14 verse 23 is the promise that Jesus and the Father Himself will dwell with those who love Him.

Ezekiel, in his exile from all that he loved, had a God given vision of blessings of the future. In our present “exile” are we longing for and praying for the presence of the Holy Spirit of God, dwelling in and flowing through us, out into a very needy world?

“Revive Thy work O Lord, while here to Thee we bow. Descend O gracious Lord descend! O come and bless us now!”

(Chorus to the hymn “Revive Thy work O Lord” from the Salvation Army Song Book)