

Finishing Well

Lesson #14

The River of God

April 5, 2023

Israel has had 4 different sanctuaries: the tabernacle of Moses, the temple of Solomon, the 2nd temple after the captivity, and Herod's temple in the time of Jesus.

God gave the plans for the tabernacle to Moses, a prophet. Ex. 25:8-9, 40

- God's glory left the tabernacle > Ichabod I Sam. 4:19-22

God gave the plans for Solomon's temple to David, a king. I Chron. 28:11-19

- Before the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, Ezekiel saw God's glory leave the temple [Ezek. 9:3; 10:4; 11:22-23].

There is no evidence that the glory of God ever resided in either the second temple or Herod's temple. The Son of God ministered in Herod's temple and in that sense brought back the glory.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

But Jesus abandoned the temple in a manner similar to the way the glory left Solomon's temple: He went to the Mount of Olives [Ezek. 11:22-23; Matt. 23:38; 24:3].

The Jews have not had a temple since Herod's temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

There are two temples in Israel's future:

- The tribulation temple, which will be taken over by the Antichrist.
Dan. 9:24, 26-27; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:1-4; Rev. 11:1; 15:5
- The millennial temple described by Ezekiel, a priest and a prophet.

At His 2nd Coming, when Jesus brings the glory to the millennial temple, He will come from the Mount of Olives [Ezek. 43:1-5; Acts 1:9-12; Zech. 14:4].

Prophet Haggai 2:1 In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai,

- Final day, Tishri 21, of the 7-day Feast of Tabernacles. Points forward to Kingdom Age
 - ❖ *Hoshanah Rabah*, the 'Great Salvation'.

It was on this same day of *Hoshanah Rabah*, many centuries later, Jesus stood in the Temple, and spoke of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

John 7:37-39: In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. ³⁸ He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

³⁹ (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Haggai 2:4-5 Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: ⁵ According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remains among you: fear ye not.

Then Haggai looked into the future and saw the end of the ages. Take courage in God's Plan. Haggai 2:6-9 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; ⁷ And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

⁸ The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

⁹ The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former [Solomon's], saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

- Function as Christ's dwelling place, His throne room, for His 1000-year earthly reign.
- A place for His glory which will be a visible sign of God's presence among His people.

24th Day of 9th Month: Haggai 2:20-23 God's Message To Zerubbabel, Governor of Judah

Hag. 2:20-22 God's Explicit Message: *The Sovereign Lord Will Prevail In His Eternal Plan*

Precept: Because the Sovereign Lord will prevail in His eternal plan, His servants should be encouraged to trust Him and to do His will.

A. God Has A Definite Plan For History

- "I am going to shake the heavens and the earth..."
- "I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms..."
- "I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen..."
- "I will overthrow the chariots and their riders and the horses and their riders shall come down, everyone by the sword of his brother."

Rev. 6:12-14 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

¹³ And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

Joel 2:10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

Dan. 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Luke 1:32-33 He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: ³³ And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. [Fulfillment of prophecy and promise]

History isn't just careening out of control with God desperately trying to grab the reins! The Sovereign God controls all the events of history for His purpose.

Isa. 14:24 The Lord of hosts has sworn saying, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand."

God's ultimate purpose is that He will be glorified. Hab. 2:14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

The Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House

Woven throughout Old Testament prophecy is a constant theme of:

- spectacular topographical and geographical changes to occur when Christ returns.

Isa. 40:4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low:

and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

Zechariah 14 describes many features of this upheaval, including a new river to flow from Jerusalem into the desert.

Zech. 14:4,10 And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley;

and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

[Large plateau on top will be 50 miles in each direction. Outer court = 400,000 sq. ft.]

In Israel: The Millennial Temple will be the largest and most magnificent structure ever erected, and it will all be for the glory of God.

Who Will Build The Temple

Zech. 6:12-13 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the LORD:

¹³ Even He shall build the temple of the LORD; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. [Office of King & Priest will be joined.]

Jerusalem Will Be The Center Of World Government.

Isa. 2:2-4 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be EXALTED above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. ³ And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. [Jerusalem = Place of Instruction]

⁴ And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

- This will result in worldwide peace. Difference among the nations will be settled by the Word of The Lord that will come from the Mountain of Jehovah's House.

Jerusalem Will Be The Worship Center For His Kingdom.

Isa. 27:13 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Ezek. 20:40a For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me:

- Worship is based on the Levitical order in the Mosaic Law.
- The Temple will demonstrate Christ's holiness and purity. [Ezek. 43:12]
- Holiness will permeate everything connected to the Temple.

High mountain will become a Place Of Prayer for all peoples - Jews & Gentiles

Isa. 56:6-7 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; ⁷ Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

[Note: A kingdom temple and kingdom worship are also mentioned in Isaiah 2:1-5, 60:7, 13; Jeremiah 33:18; Joel 3:18; Mic. 4:2; Haggai 2:7-9; and Zechariah 6:12-15, 14:16, 20-21.]

Ezekiel: God strengthens: Born into priestly family; knew and taught the Law; a prophet

Ezekiel provides details of this very high Mountain of Jehovah's House.

Ezek. 40:1 In the five and twentieth year of our captivity [April 28, 573 BC], in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the LORD was upon me and brought me thither.

- 25th year of the 70 years of captivity in Babylon: 10th Day of Nisan
- 1st Day of Passover: Remind them of Israel's deliverance from Egypt
- Beginning of Israel's Religious Year Ex. 12:2

Key: The Lord chose that significant day to tell His servant about the glory that Israel would share when Messiah established His kingdom.

40:2-3 In the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south. [Millennial Jerusalem] And He brought me thither, and behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass,... with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

Before the "brass man" gives Ezekiel a guided tour of the temple precincts, the guide gave Ezekiel some solemn counsel.

Ezek. 40:4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and SET THINE HEART upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou see to the house of Israel.

- He is to relate the vision to the Jews who are in captivity in Babylon.
- During the Babylonian siege they had lost their land, their Holy City, their Temple and many of their loved ones.

Ezekiel's Vision: Demonstrate to them by this FUTURE HOPE the unconditional love of God.

Ezekiel, the LORD'S watchman, has described the return of the Jewish people to their land,

- the cleansing of the nation, and the restoring of the land to productivity and security.
- Now he must give them assurance that their beloved temple and its ministries will be restored. The presence of God's glory in the temple set Israel apart from all the nations [Rom. 9:4].

God's message: His judgments are always redemptive.

His purpose is not to destroy them, but to restore them and reconcile them back to Him.

His judgment was to return them to righteousness.

Ps. 94:14-15 For the LORD will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance.

¹⁵ But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

Ezek. 36:26-28 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

²⁷ And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

The River That Flows Out From The Temple

Ezek. 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east,...

Its origin coincides with Christ's Second Coming on the Mt. of Olives, which will trigger a massive earthquake, thus creating a vast East-West valley running through Jerusalem and allowing for the water flow. When the earthquake occurs, everyone will know the King of kings has arrived. The nail-printed hands of our Lord will have been put on the map of the earth. He is claiming it for His own. [God the Father promised it to the Son in Psalm 2.]

This amazing life-giving river originates from the house of the LORD [Joel 3:18].

- Joel mentioned this ~250 yrs. Before Ezekiel.
- Zechariah mentioned it after the Babylonian exile.
- Joel envisions a fountain coming out of the temple and watering the valley of Shittim in which the Dead Sea is located.
- Half of this amazing river will empty into the Dead Sea which will be turned into fresh water teeming with fish. The Living Sea! [Ezek. 47:10; only one described]
- Half of the river will empty into the Mediterranean Sea. [Zech. 14:8]

Psalm 46:4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. [Context of Ps. 46 is the future Kingdom.]

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

- 46:5 Jesus coming to defend His people at Armageddon
- 46:6 Tells of the rage and trouble among the nations when Jesus arrives on the scene. Nations come against the city of God.
- 46:7-8 Messiah will take up residence in that city. He invites the people to observe the works of God after He arrives.
- 46:9 He makes wars to cease and destroys all weapons of war.
- 46:10 Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations.
I will be exalted in the earth.

Geographical & topographical changes when Jesus arrives:

46:2-4 Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah
There is a RIVER whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.

Ezek. 40:3 And He brought me thither, and behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass,...with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

Ezek. 47: When Ezekiel is shown the river that flows out from the Temple, the bronze man uses the linen cord for measurement. [measureless measure]

Ezek. 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east,...

At the eastern front of the temple Ezekiel sees a spring emerging. The waters begin at the immediate dwelling place of Christ who is the source of all spiritual and physical life.

The miraculous waters "trickled forth" at first, and yet, without any tributaries, increased in depth and the river becomes too deep for man.

47:2-5 Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looks eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

³ And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured 1000 cubits, [~4.1 football fields] and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

⁴ Again he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

⁵ Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

47:6-7 And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me and caused me to return to the brink of the river. ⁷ Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

These marvelous trees shall be "for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for medicine" [v. 12].

These trees will have an inexhaustible quantity of fruit all year long. The leaves of the tree will provide healing, apparently for those who were redeemed in the Tribulation and entered the Millennium in their physical bodies, and for their offspring.

Its issue from the temple, its immense size, the beneficial qualities of its fruit, its perennial flow "in summer and in winter" [Zech. 14:8] emphasize the supernatural nature of the stream.

47:8-10 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that lives, which moves, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

Question: Son of Man, do You See This? HOPE

The River Is Vital To Bring The People Back Into Their Restored Inheritance!

1. This river brings life and nourishment to a barren and accursed land - the Judean Wilderness east of Jerusalem
2. The river is used by God to cleanse the people in the land and bring nourishment and healing Great River that brings food, nourishment and sustenance - Garden of Eden

Ezekiel's vision is like a ray of light piercing the darkness.

A small trickle that becomes a flood. Joy pierces through despair for the 1st time.

There is a new or perfect temple where God will once again dwell with His people.

The removal of the curse affects the physical earth and the plant life.

Isaiah 35:1-7 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. ² It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing:

for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

⁷ And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

Isaiah 41:18-20 I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys:

I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

¹⁹ I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree;

I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together:

²⁰ That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

Ps. 24:1 The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, & they that dwell therein.

Consider: This earth, since the sin of Adam and Eve, has never seen what God can do with it because it has been held in the grips of an usurper.

One of the specific parts of the whole curse was that the ground thereafter would bring forth thorns and thistles. It was more than 2,000 years ago that the Lord Jesus went to Calvary, wearing upon his head a crown of thorns - the very symbol of the earth's curse.

As the Lord of all the earth, He purchased redemption for the earth as well as fallen mankind. All creation is waiting for the Lord to come to earth, so that the curse upon the earth will be lifted.

The Lord is coming personally, visibly and physically in His glorified body to possess it and redeem this world from Satan's grasp.

He will then transform and remake it into an instrument that can be used for His glory.

Hab. 2:14 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Two Instruments Of Measurement:

A. The Rod Of Measurement - Measure the details of the House of God

The Man of Brass with His measuring rod: the object in view is Christ. He governs everything.

Jesus Christ will judge our lives, our walk, our works.

His standard is The Word of God, Jesus Christ.

The Linen Cord Of Measurement - Line Of Flax - The Measureless Measure

1. No measurement is given: Linen Cord was used for the greater measurements.

2. Bronze Man with the Line of Flax shows us there is great fullness of Christ.

➤ He is God's standard of measure. God measures everything by Jesus Christ.

➤ We all will be measured by His Fullness and whether we have attained it!

Consider: We are to be filled with the FULLNESS of JESUS CHRIST.

➤ This supernatural life can only be lived because we are indwelt by a supernatural Person whose indwelling Presence is to make the life of Christ a living reality within us.

➤ To be filled with the Holy Spirit is the standard for every Christian.

My Spiritual Growth: Ezek. 47:3-5: ankle deep, knee, waist, deep river.

Key: It takes faith & obedience to experience more of God's presence.

The more the Lord as the man of bronze measures us, the more the level of the river of water of life increases in our being, and the more this flow of life is deepened in us. The more we allow the Lord to examine, test, and judge us to possess us, the deeper the flow becomes.

The more the flow of life increases in us and the deeper we are in the flow, the more we are limited. When the river is up to the ankles, up to the knees, or up to the chest, we still have some liberty to move in the water.

But when the level of water is so increased that it becomes a river, it sweeps us off our feet, and we are carried along by the flow.

In a sense, we are fully limited, but in another sense, we are fully free, for we don't have to do any effort or struggling - the flow of life carries us on and brings us to where God wants to be.

For believers, the trickle of God's Spirit and understanding is shallow at first. Instead of running out of energy God's Spirit gets deeper and wider as it flows from the Word into our hearts! Its ultimate destination is to sanctify the most desolate wastelands of our heart, full of the poisonous water of our carnal old nature like the Dead Sea.

As you go deeper in the river, you see less of the flesh!

This is the beautiful reality of receiving Christ and drinking the living water from His Word that so richly flows from His throne.

Isa. 43:2 When you go through deep waters, I will be with you.

- Experiencing the fullness of Christ

"The tragedy of many believers: they are sitting and paddling on the edge of the shore.

They have never gone in and known the blessings of the Spirit of God.

There is a whole ocean out there to enjoy. But they are satisfied with just dabbling!"

In your spiritual growth and life, you can go as deep, as mature and developed as you want to.

May you not linger in the shallows when there are depths for you to enjoy.

Eph. 3:19-21 And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that ye might be Filled With All The Fullness Of God.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

²¹ Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

Amen.