

CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY - Ezekiel, Book 4, Week 23 (Study Guide)

The Holy Temple and the Holy City in the Holy Land

Ezekiel 47:13-20 Thus says the Lord Jehovah, This is the **boundary** by which you shall divide up the land as an inheritance for the twelve tribes of Israel; Joseph shall have two portions. And you shall **divide it for an inheritance**, each one equally with the other, for I swore to give it to your fathers, and this land will fall to you as an inheritance. This shall be **the border of the land**: on the **north side**, [*Mount Hermon*], ... And on the **east side**, [*Dead Sea with the Jordan River*], ... And the **south side**, [*River of Egypt*], ... And the **west side**, [*Mediterranean Sea*], ...

Ezekiel 48: 8-20 And alongside the border of Judah, from the east side to the west side, shall be the **heave offering of land** which you shall offer, twenty-five thousand reeds in width, and in length just like one of the portions of the tribes from the east side to the west side; and the sanctuary shall be in its midst. The heave offering that you shall offer to Jehovah shall be twenty-five thousand reeds in length and ten thousand reeds in width. And for these, that is, for the **priests**, shall be the holy heave offering - on the north twenty-five thousand reeds in length, on the west ten thousand reeds in width, on the east ten thousand reeds in width, and on the south twenty-five thousand reeds in length; and the **sanctuary** of Jehovah shall be in its **midst**. This is for the priests who are sanctified from among the sons of Zadok, who have kept My charge, ... And alongside the territory of the priests, the **Levites** shall have a portion twenty-five thousand reeds in length and ten thousand reeds in width. ... And the five thousand reeds remaining of the width, alongside the twenty-five thousand reeds, shall be for **common use**: for the city, for dwellings, and for suburbs; and the city shall be in its midst... And the city shall have **suburbs**: ... And the remaining length, alongside the holy heave offering, shall be ten thousand reeds to the east and ten thousand reeds to the west, and it shall be alongside the holy heave offering. And its produce shall be food for those who **labor** in the city. And those who labor in the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall work it. The entire heave offering of land shall be twenty-five thousand reeds by twenty-five thousand reeds. You shall offer the holy heave offering, a square, including the possession of the city.

Ezekiel 48:31-35 (Now the gates of the city shall be according to the **names of the tribes of Israel**) three **gates to the north**: the gate of Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi, one; And **on the east side**, which is four thousand five hundred reeds, another three gates: the gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one; And **on the south side**, which measures four thousand five hundred reeds, another three gates: the gate of Simeon, one; the gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one; **On the west side**, which is four thousand five hundred reeds, their three gates: the gate of Gad, one; the gate of Asher, one; the gate of Naphtali, one. It shall be eighteen thousand reeds all around, and the name of the city from that day shall be, **Jehovah Is There**.

Rev. 21:12-13 It had a great and high wall and had **twelve gates**, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are the **names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel**: On the **east** three gates, and on the **north** three gates, and on the **south** three gates, and on the **west** three gates.

THE LAND

At the end of the book of Ezekiel there are two things: the holy **land** and the holy **city**. The **temple** depends upon the land. The temple typifies the **church**, and the land typifies **Christ**. Without the experience of Christ, there is no possibility for us to have the church. The church is the issue of the enjoyment of the riches of Christ.

A History of the Land

The land is first mentioned in Genesis 1. On the **third day** of the Lord's recovery of His creation, the land was recovered. The **land emerged** from the waters of death. But on the third day the Lord caused the land to **rise up out** of the death waters. The land in Genesis 1 typifies Christ. **Christ was resurrected from the dead on the third day** as the all-inclusive land. Every kind of life, whether vegetable, animal, or human, came out of that land. Because the land signifies Christ, it means that all the living things come out of Christ. Christ is the good land which God prepared for man.

However, **man fell** and became degraded, causing God to judge the earth again. During the time of Noah, the **land was flooded** and once more was covered by the death waters (Gen. 7:19). This means that the human race lost the land. Once again, however, the Lord **brought the land out of the death waters**, and the family of Noah was given the right to enjoy the land. But the descendants of Noah fell and gathered at Babel to build a tower of rebellion against God (Gen. 11). From Babel God **scattered** the people and called out Abraham from that fallen place and **brought him into Canaan, the good land** (Gen. 12). At that time God promised Abraham that the land of Canaan would belong to him and to his children. However, the **descendants of Abraham also fell**. Human history is a record of man's fall. They fell from the good land into Egypt. The whole house of Jacob went down into Egypt and again they lost the good land. But four hundred years later, by **God's deliverance**, they experienced the Passover and, passing through the Red Sea, they left Egypt (Exo. 12). After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, they passed through the Jordan **into the good land**. There they fought against all the inhabitants and recovered their lost land. Upon that recovered **land**, they built the **temple**, and God's glory descended and filled the temple (2 Chron. 5:14). Later, though, due to their falling away and their degradation, they were **carried away from the land** again. They lost the land once more.

In the midst of the captivity, Ezekiel was **brought back to the land** by the Spirit (8:3). Before the building can be recovered, the land must be recovered. **The recovery of the land signifies the recovery of the enjoyment of Christ**. Although Christ Himself can never be lost, Christ in our experience can be lost. At the time we were saved we received Christ, but not long afterward we fell away and lost Christ in our experience. The recovery of the land is the recovery of the experiences of the riches of Christ. Hallelujah! The land was recovered! Then the house was built on the land.

I. **The holy temple and the holy city, which typify the church** (Ezek. 47:13; 1 Cor. 3:16-17), **are the issue of the Holy Land, which typifies Christ; the church is the issue of the enjoyment of the riches of Christ** (Eph. 3:8):

Eph. 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the **unsearchable riches of Christ** as the gospel.

When God's chosen people partake of and **enjoy** the riches of Christ, they are **constituted** with those riches to be the church, through which God's multifarious wisdom is made known to the angelic rulers and authorities in the heavenlies; hence, the **church is the wise exhibition of all that Christ is**.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the **Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!
 John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the **grain of wheat** falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
 Romans 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God **through the death** of His Son, much more we will be saved **in His life**, having been reconciled,

The good land is a land flowing with milk and honey, typifying the riches of Christ; both milk and honey are products of two kinds of lives—the animal life and the vegetable life. **Milk** is produced by cattle that feed on grass, and **honey** is made by bees from the nectar of flowers. **Milk and honey** signify the riches of Christ, which come from the two aspects of His life—**His redeeming life** for **His judicial redemption**, typified by the animal life (John 1:29), and **His generating life** for **His organic salvation**, typified by the vegetable life (12:24). Thus, the good land is a spacious land of the all-inclusive Christ in **His full salvation**—in His judicial redemption and in His organic salvation—cf. Rom. 5:10.

Deut. 8:7-9 For Jehovah your God is bringing you to a **good land**, a land of waterbrooks, of springs and of fountains, flowing forth in valleys and in mountains; A land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees with oil and of honey; A land in which you will eat bread without scarcity; you will not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and from whose mountains you can mine copper.
 Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the **allotted portion** of the saints in the light;

The **recovery of the land** signifies **the recovery of the enjoyment of Christ's riches**; Christ Himself cannot be lost, but in our experience Christ can be lost (Gal. 5:2-4). Once the land has been recovered, the temple and the city can be built on the land; the good land, the land of Canaan, is a full, complete, and consummate type of the all-inclusive Christ, who is the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9) realized as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17), **as the inheritance allotted to God's people for their enjoyment** (Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; Gal. 3:14; cf. Deut. 8:7-9).

By enjoying the riches of the land, the children of Israel were able to build up the temple to be God's habitation on earth and the city of Jerusalem to establish God's kingdom on earth; likewise, **by enjoying the unsearchable riches of Christ**, the believers in Christ are **built up to be Christ's Body, the church**, which is Christ's fullness, His expression (Eph. 1:22-23), and which is also the habitation of God (2:21-22; 1 Tim. 3:15) and the kingdom of God (Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17).

The sanctuary, the **temple**, is **God's house** for His **rest**, and the **city** is **God's kingdom** for His **authority**; both typify the church as God's house and God's kingdom, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem in eternity for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy—Ezek. 48:8, 15; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 21:2-3, 22; 22:1, 3, 5.

II. **The good land is situated between the waters of the Medi-terranean Sea on the west** (Ezek. 47:15) **and the waters of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River on the east** (v. 18):

Phil. 3:7-11 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ. But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith, To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.

For the land of Canaan, an elevated land (20:40-42; 34:13-14; 37:22; Deut. 32:13), to be surrounded by water indicates that it is surrounded by death; thus, the good land typifies the resurrected Christ, who was raised, elevated from the dead; this also indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is closely related to His death, and it must be in the sphere, the territory, of His death (cf. Phil. 3:7-11).

Psalms 133:1-3 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell in unity! It is like the fine oil upon the head That ran down upon the beard, Upon Aaron's beard, That ran down upon the hem of his garments; Like the dew of **Hermon** That came down upon the **mountains of Zion**. For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: Life forever.

On the **north side** of the good land, there is no river as a border; instead, there is **Mount Hermon**, a high mountain, which signifies the heavens, from which the dew of God's grace descends on the mountains of Zion, typifying the local churches (Psa. 133); the elevated good land with Mount Hermon signifies the resurrected Christ, who has ascended to the heavens.

III. The picture portrayed by the **allotment of the land** (Ezek. 48:1-35) shows that, in the restoration from Dan in the north (v. 1) to Gad in the south (v. 27), all the Israelites will enjoy Christ, but their **nearness to Christ will not be the same**:

The **nearness** of the tribes to Christ is determined by their importance; the most important are the **priests**, who are the closest to Christ and who maintain the **fellowship** between the people and the Lord; the **Levites**, who maintain a **service** to the Lord, are next in nearness to the Lord. Then the **workers** for the city, who maintain God's **government**, are the third closest to the Lord; in addition, there is the **royal family** with the king and the kingship.

The fellowship of the priests, the service of the Levites, the work to maintain God's government, and the kingship all come out of the riches of the land; according to spiritual significance, this means that in the church all the fellowship, service, work, government, royalty, lordship, and kingship **come out of the enjoyment of the riches of Christ**. The more we enjoy Christ, the closer we are to Him; and the closer we are to Him, the more important we are in His purpose. The most important are the priests and the kings; according to the New Testament revelation, all the New Testament believers should exercise to be priests and kings—1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rom. 15:16; Phil. 3:3; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 22:3b-5.



FIGURE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF THE HOLY LAND

Of all the twelve tribes, Judah and Benjamin were most dear to the Lord. When the twelve tribes were divided, only **Judah and Benjamin** remained with the Lord and did not participate in division. For this reason they were **located close to the Lord's habitation**. Because of Gad's poor condition, the tribe of Gad was placed in the extreme southern portion of the land.

We should have confidence in the Lord's judgment and estimation concerning us. Others may be mistaken concerning us, but the Lord cannot be mistaken. He is fair, and **He knows whether to put us** in the north or in the south. He can never be wrong. With respect to the church life, we do not know where we should be, but the Lord knows where to put us. For example, no matter how much attention we may give to where we should go in the migration for the spread of the church life, eventually **we will be in the best place under the Lord's sovereignty**. He knows whether we are Dan or Benjamin, Judah or Gad. We should not blame others but recognize and submit to the Lord's sovereignty.

Dan, however, was never satisfied with where he was placed. In Revelation 7 the name of Dan is not mentioned in the list of the tribes of Israel because of Dan's idolatry and degradation (Judg. 18). Temporarily the Lord removed his name from the list of the tribes.

Today we need to learn to enjoy Christ, we should care for the riches of Christ. We have been predestined to the enjoyment of Christ. Therefore, we need to learn to enjoy the riches of Christ as the good land. Day by day we should enjoy Christ by eating, drinking, and breathing Him. This is the way for us to go on.

IV. The **city with twelve gates** (Ezek. 48:31-34; cf. Rev. 21:12-13), on which are the **names of the twelve tribes of Israel**, must be Jerusalem; this city will be the dwelling place of the restored Israel with God in the **earthly part** of the millennium; as such, it typifies the overcomers in the church and the overcoming saints of the Old Testament, who will be the New Jerusalem as the mutual abode of God and the overcomers in the **heavenly part** of the millennium (cf. Rev. 3:12), which is the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens:

Revelation 3: 12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the **temple** of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the **New Jerusalem**, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

That the number of the gates is twelve, composed of three times four, signifies that God's holy city, the New Jerusalem, is **the mingling** of the Triune God (three) with His creature man (four). The number twelve also signifies absolute **perfection** and eternal **completion** in God's administration; this indicates that the New Jerusalem is not only the eternal **mingling of divinity with humanity but also a perfect government** that comes out of this mingling; this city will exercise full authority for God's complete administration in eternity—22:1, 3, 5.

V. The history of Israel is a full type of the **history of the church**:

The **history of Israel** began with Israel's corporate experience of the **passover** during the exodus from Egypt (Exo. 12) and will continue with the Lord's second coming, at which time Israel will be restored and will build the earthly Jerusalem with the twelve gates.

The **history of the church** also began with the **Passover**, which is the Christ who has been sacrificed (1 Cor. 5:7), and will go on until the millennium, in which the overcoming saints will be the heavenly Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem, with its twelve gates. After the one thousand years the heavenly Jerusalem will be enlarged to become the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and the new earth; she will include all the redeemed ones from both Israel and the church to be the expression of God and the mutual dwelling place of God and His redeemed in eternity future (cf. Dan. 12:1, footnote 3).

VI. At the end of Ezekiel God obtains a **holy temple** (chs. 40—44) and a **holy city** in the **Holy Land** (chs. 47—48):

1 Cor. 3:16-17 Do you not know that **you are the temple of God**, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, and such are you.

Heb. 12: 22-23 But you have come forward to **Mount Zion** and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to myriads of angels, to the universal gathering; And to the church of the firstborn, who have been enrolled in the heavens; and to God, the Judge of all; and to the spirits of righteous men who have been made perfect;

Rev. 21:3,22 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, **the tabernacle of God is with men**, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. And I saw no temple in it, for **the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb** are its **temple**.

God dwells in the temple, and He dwells also in the city; in the temple God has fellowship with His people, and in the city God reigns among His people; this indicates that in the temple and the city God has come down from heaven to live with man. The temple and the city typify the church in the present age as the center for the fellowship with God and for the reigning of God—1 Cor. 3:16-17; Heb. 12:22-23:

In the church as the temple and the city, which is in Christ as the good land, God has His expression, and God and His people enjoy one another and have mutual satisfaction. The church as God's temple and God's city will ultimately consummate in the New Jerusalem for eternity—Rev. 21:3, 22.

VII. **"The name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah Is There"** (*Jehovah-shammah*, Heb.)—Ezek. 48:35:

Matt. 1:21,23 And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins. "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name **Emmanuel**" (which is translated, **God with us**).

The New Testament economy begins with **Jesus**, Jehovah the Savior and **God with us** (Matt. 1:21, 23), and ends with the **New Jerusalem**, "**Jehovah Is There**" and "the City of Jehovah," the city of the great I Am (Ezek. 48:35; Isa. 60:14). Jehovah is a person, and *There* is a person; *Jehovah Is There* means that Jehovah **is in His** redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified tripartite people and that they are in Him—Rev. 21:3, 22. **Because Jehovah is *There*, when people see Jehovah, they see us, and when they see us, they see Jehovah.**

"**Jehovah Is There**" is actually the presence of Jehovah Himself **united, mingled, and incorporated** with His redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified tripartite people to be one entity, a great corporate God-man; this corporate God-man is the mutual abode of God and man, the dwelling of God in man and man in God—vv. 3, 22. By enjoying Him as grace, as everything to us for our enjoyment, every positive thing in the universe will praise God for what He has done in us to make Him and us one entity, the New Jerusalem, the city of glory—Eph. 1:6; Rev. 21:10-11:

At that time, the whole universe will be filled with the praise of *Jah* (a shortened form of Jehovah); for all that He is to us, for all that He is doing in us, and for all that He will do for us for the sake of His heart's desire, we must declare in thanksgiving and worship to Him, "**Hallelu-Jah, Praise Jah, Praise Jehovah!**".

We must exclaim with the psalmists:

"**Let everything that has breath praise Jehovah. / Hallelujah!**"—Psa. 150:6.

"Blessed be Jehovah the God of Israel, / From eternity to eternity. / And let all the people say, Amen. / Hallelujah"—Psa. 106:48.

ALL PRAISE

Psalm 150: "Hallelujah! / Praise God... / Praise Him." In this psalm we have ten different ways to praise the Lord:

- (1) "Hallelujah! / Praise God in His sanctuary." We must praise Him in the church, **in the sanctuary**;
- (2) "Praise Him in the expanse that manifests His power";
- (3) "Praise Him for His mighty acts";
- (4) "Praise Him according to His vast greatness";
- (5) "Praise Him with the blast of the trumpet";
- (6) "Praise Him with the harp and lyre";
- (7) "Praise Him with the tambourine and with dancing";
- (8) "Praise Him with the stringed instrument and the pipe";
- (9) "Praise Him with the loud cymbals";
- (10) "Praise Him with the loud clanging cymbals."

Then the psalmist exclaims, "**Let everything that has breath praise Jehovah. / Hallelujah!**" Of all the ten ways to praise Him, notice that the first is **to praise Him in His sanctuary, His house**. Hence, Psalm 150 is a psalm for the house. Praise the Lord, at the close of the Psalms we are left in the "hallelujah house."

Psalm 150 is not merely the conclusion of the Psalms; it is the consummation of the entire Bible. The whole Bible ends in this way. When we have read all the psalms, from Psalm 1 to Psalm 150, we have read from Genesis to Revelation in abbreviated form, passing from the law, to Christ, to the house, and eventually to the city with the earth. Then we have the Hallelujahs.