

207—WATER FROM UNDER THE TEMPLE

(Ezekiel 38–48)

The prophet Ezekiel was privileged to see many of the events of the latter days in vision and he foretold many events that would precede the Savior's Second Coming. He learned from Jehovah that, after the house of Israel has been gathered back to the promised land and has embraced the gospel, a vast army will come from the north to fight against them. This terrible army will be led by Gog, from the land of Magog.

Ezekiel also learned that these invaders will fail in their purpose because Jehovah will stand against them, sending a great earthquake that will throw down mountains and cause great walls to crumble to the ground. He will also send pestilence and a great storm of hailstones, fire, and brimstone to consume the enemy. The casualties will be so great that it will take the children of Israel seven months to bury the dead of this invading army, and they will gather no firewood for seven years while they burn the weapons of those who have fallen.

Jehovah then took Ezekiel and set him upon a high mountain in the land of Israel, where he showed him a vision of a great city.⁵⁹ As Ezekiel beheld the city, a man who looked to be made of brass came to him with a line of flax and a measuring stick the length of a reed⁶⁰ in his hand. The man stood at the gate of the city and commanded Ezekiel to observe carefully and then to declare to the house of Israel all that he would see.

The man then proceeded to show Ezekiel the city and all of its gates in great detail as he took the measurements of them. He also showed him a temple in the city, together with its form and measurements. He showed him the inside of the temple in complex detail, with its forms and measurements, including the sanctuary or holy of holies.

When Ezekiel had seen the details of the temple, his guide took him to the city's east gate where he beheld the glory of Jehovah, the God of Israel. And he heard Jehovah's voice speaking to him like the noise of many waters, and he saw the earth shine with Jehovah's glory.

"Behold the place of my throne," said Jehovah, "and the place of the soles of my feet. This is where I will

⁵⁹ The city Ezekiel saw was Jerusalem.

⁶⁰ A reed was an ancient Hebrew linear measurement equal to about six cubits, or about nine feet (2.74 meters). It is not clear what the line of flax was for, but it probably had something to do with taking measurements also.

dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever, and the house of Israel shall defile my holy name no more—neither they nor their kings." And Ezekiel bowed down with his face to the ground.

"Show this temple to the house of Israel and let them measure its pattern," said Jehovah to Ezekiel. "If they are ashamed of the iniquities that they have done, then show them the form of the house and the fashion of it. Show them the comings in and the forms thereof and all the ordinances and the laws. Write all these things in their sight that they may keep the ordinances of my house."

Jehovah then told Ezekiel that a priest of the lineage of Zadok⁶¹ would make a burnt offering—a young bullock for a sin offering—on the altar of the temple that day. Other offerings were also specified for seven days. And many other things did Ezekiel both see and hear.

Then, when Ezekiel's brass guide brought him back to the east door of the temple, he saw that water came out from under the temple threshold on the east side. He saw that the water originated under the right side of the temple on the south side of the altar. Then the guide measured out 1,000 cubits from the temple and took Ezekiel through the water—and it was up to his ankles. He measured another 1,000 cubits and took Ezekiel though the waters again—and it was up to his knees. After another 1,000 cubits the water came up to his loins, and when the next 1,000 cubits after that were measured, he was unable to cross the water because it was a mighty river.

The guide then took Ezekiel along the bank of the river where he saw many trees growing on both sides. And he said to Ezekiel, "These waters issue out toward the east country and go down to the desert and into the Dead Sea. They will heal the waters of the sea, and everything that moves—wherever the river goes—shall live."⁶²

⁶¹ Zadok was the high priest in the days of King David.

⁶² Though I have no doubt that this prophecy of water flowing from under the Lord's temple in Jerusalem will be literally fulfilled in due time, I also believe that there is a symbolic fulfillment of this prophecy at every temple of the Lord. Living water flows out of every temple through blessings, ordinances, and covenants, giving both life and healing to all that it touches. The depth of the water depends on how often we avail ourselves of its benefit.