

Zion's King Shall Reign Victorious! - 34

The temple which Ezekiel describes stands at the south of an area around Jerusalem, about forty-two miles from east to west, and about seventeen miles from north to south. This district will be occupied by a class described as “the sons of Zadok,” who were faithful in ancient times.

To the south of this, there is a similar tract of country measured off for the Levites, whose duty it will be to perform the more physical and laborious duties connected with the temple worship. Again, to the south of this, measuring forty-two miles from east to west, and between nine and ten miles from north to south, a strip of country is allotted for THE CITY and land for fields and gardens - Ezekiel 48:17-19.

The measurements of the city show it to be extensive and magnificent. Lying four-square, it will occupy an area of about eighty square miles. In each wall, there are three gates, at equal distances, each gate being named after one of the tribes of Israel. The land lying east and west of the city, appropriated for the raising of produce, contains about two-hundred-and-seventy square miles, forming an adequate provision for the wants of this great city, which will be known from that day by the name, Yahweh-shammah = the Lord is there - v. 30-35.

The temple stands on the site of ancient and modern Jerusalem, crowning the hill of Zion, concerning which we read in Psalm 132:13-14 -

“THE LORD HAS CHOSEN ZION; He has desired it for His habitation: 14 This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it”.

The city lies about thirty-two miles to the south of the temple, into which the glory of the Lord will enter. The whole territory, 25,000 reeds (not cubits as in modern English versions) square, is called in Ezekiel 45:1 the “holy portion” or “holy oblation.” In the encampment of Israel under Moses, the tabernacle was in the centre, with the tribal tents surrounding it. In like manner, under David's promised “seed”, the “holy portion” will be in the centre of the Promised Land, with the tribal lands surrounding it, as described in Ezekiel 48.

It is unfortunate that most commentators have been unable to apply the details given by Ezekiel, particularly the size which is so greatly enlarged over the temple built by Solomon. But when the necessity for this can be perceived, that this is no longer a national centre of worship, but an international one then the given dimensions will make sense.

While the law of Moses included animal sacrifices, these were a means to teach the spiritual facts concerning sin and its consequences - but why are such sacrifices offered again?

•“The law [of Moses] was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith [in the facts concerning Jesus Christ] has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through [not animal sacrifice, but] faith in Christ Jesus” - Galatians 3:24.

•“The law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect...4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” - Hebrews 10:1-4.

So what reason can there be for the reestablishing animal sacrifice during Christ's reign?