

"RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE"

– *EZEK. 47:1-12* – *OCTOBER 8* –

"Whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely."

– **Rev. 22:17.**

IN THIS STUDY also we find that the Lord through Ezekiel gives us a picture of the Messianic Age, very similar to the one given us in the book of Revelation, seven hundred years after.

Ezekiel's picture shows Jerusalem and the Temple of God as the starting point for the River of the Water of Life; so in the Revelation account. Ezekiel shows the river deepening and broadening from a rivulet to a mighty river. He pictures it as flowing down to the Dead Sea, and carrying life whithersoever it goes.

He pictures the Dead Sea as being revived, recovered from its deadness, and full of fish. No such river has ever yet sprung forth from Jerusalem, nor can we imagine how the river would ever have its start in the mountain top and reach such proportions in the short distance.

This description, picturing a great spiritual truth, is in full accord with the picture in Revelation. It represents beautifully, forcefully, the blessings of refreshment and restitution which will issue forth from the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of Messiah, when it shall be established amongst men. Gradually the mighty influences of the reign of Messiah will extend blessings to all mankind, even to the submerged class, steeped in ignorance and superstition and degradation, fitly represented by the Dead Sea.

Revelation pictures this river as flowing from under the Throne, the New Jerusalem, clear as crystal, and having trees of life on either side of its banks, good for food. Ezekiel has the same picture in mind; he tells of the same trees, whose leaves shall not fade and whose fruit

shall not fall, but which will bring forth good fruit every month, because the water which refreshes them comes from the Sanctuary. "The fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaves thereof for healing." Similarly, in Revelation, we are told, "The leaves will be for the healing of the people; and the fruit for the sustenance of everlasting life; and the Water itself will be for their refreshment." Then, we are told, "the Spirit and the Bride" shall give the invitation – a world-wide invitation; "Whosoever will" then may come, and he who hears the invitation may say to others, "Come, and drink of the Water of Life, freely"!

NO "RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE" NOW

We are certain in our application of these symbolic pictures, that they belong to the future and not to the present time. Where is the Water of Life of Revelation [R4883 : page 362] now? Where have we anything corresponding to the life-sustaining trees and their healing leaves? On the contrary, we have the Lord's Word for it that "No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him." (John 6:44.) In other words, there is a measure of selection or election as respects the class invited to constitute "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called."

But with the end of this Age will come the end of the elective process; then the Divine Message will be Free Grace, an offering and opportunity to every creature of Adam's race. All blind eyes will be opened that all may see; all deaf ears will be unstopped that all may hear; and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth; none will need to say to his neighbor, "Know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least unto the greatest of them." – Jer. 31:34.

NO BRIDE TO SAY "COME"

The Revelation picture tells us that the Bride of Christ, as well as the Holy Spirit, will give the invitation to every creature to come and partake of the Water of Life, freely. But how could the Bride give this invitation [R4883 : page 363] before she exists? That there is no Bride

at the present time is manifest. Now is the time for calling the Bride class. Now is the time for those invited to make their "calling and their election sure;" but there will be no Bride until the Incoming Age. The name "Bride" implies a marriage; the Church is already espoused to Christ, but the marriage is promised to take place at His second coming. Then there will be a Bride, and shortly after, the Bride, in association with her Lord, will be in Kingdom power, in the New Jerusalem – the heavenly. From that City, that new Seat of earth's Empire, will go forth God's Message, gradually deepening and broadening until every member of the race shall have had an opportunity to share in its blessing of life everlasting.

In thinking of these glorious favors coming to mankind, let us remember that they will all be earthly – a restitution to that which was lost. Earthly splendor and human perfection are God's provision for the willing and obedient of mankind in general. The invitation to become members of the Bride of Christ is a limited one, having a limited time; and if our understanding of the Scriptures is correct, the end of this special opportunity is nigh – the time for the change to the condition of glory is at the door – the time for the blessing of all the families of the earth is at hand.

In view of these coming blessings foretold by the Prophet and by the Lord Himself, can we not join with the poet in singing: –

"Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming!
Rejoice! rejoice! the wilderness shall bloom!
And Zion's children soon shall sing,
'The deserts all are blossoming!'
Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming!
Rejoice! rejoice! the wilderness shall bloom!
The Gospel banner, wide unfurled,
Shall wave in triumph o'er the world,
And every creature, bond or free,
Shall hail the glorious Jubilee!"

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