

THE VISION OF ZION

by BRIAN BAILEY

The Lord desires to plant an onward vision within us. In Habakkuk 2:2 we read "*Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it.*" In our own lives we must have a vision from God; by His Spirit, or from the scriptures, or by the anointed preaching of the Word of God. This vision will enable us to look beyond the present spiritual experience we are in. It can hold us, carry us on, and give us purpose in life.

God has a vision for every dispensation or period of time. If we would ask what time we are living in, we would declare that we are living in the last days. But it is very interesting, that everywhere in the scriptures where it speaks of the last days, we read about Zion. All the promises of God are to Zion in the last days. It is the ultimate goal of the Church! The Apostle Paul clearly states this in Hebrews 12:22 when he said "*But you have come to Mount Zion...*"

Geographically speaking, Mount Zion is the southeast part of the city of Jerusalem. In ancient times it was called the city of David, and before then it was inhabited by the Jebusites. We want to look at the spiritual significance of this mountain.

THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO ZION

We can study about the journey of the children of Israel, to gain understanding about the spiritual journey that we must take in our Christian experience. We must understand the significance of the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land.

The Old Testament "Church", the children of Israel, started to multiply in Egypt. Egypt is a type, or picture, of the world. We can see a population explosion in the world today, but there is to be a population explosion in the Church! Salvation was revealed in Egypt. The Passover lamb was slain there to save the Israelites, just as 1 Corinthians 5:7 says that, "*Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*"

After the Israelites were saved out of Egypt they crossed the Red Sea, which speaks to us of water baptism. But we read that even just after they had crossed the Red Sea, they knew their destination was Mount Zion. Exodus 15:17 says, "*You will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance,*" and Psalm 79:54 & 68 tells us that this mountain was Zion. That was always the goal!

MOUNT SINAI

We read in Exodus 19:1 that in the third month of their journey they came to Mount Sinai. The feast of the third month in the religious calendar of Israel is Pentecost. We understand that Mount Sinai represents the feast of Pentecost, or the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

It was the tremendous power on Mount Sinai that enabled Israel to go through the wilderness and come to the Jordan. We need the power that they had on Mount Sinai where the fire of God came down, so that we as leaders can get the people through the wilderness and into their inheritance. We need to emphasize the power of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But the Apostle Paul declared in Hebrews 12:18-22 that we are not called to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Zion. So we must realize that the destination of our spiritual life is not the Pentecostal experience. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is to help us along our way to Mount Zion.

Then the call of God came to Moses in Deuteronomy 10:11 "*Arise, begin your journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land.*" In Deuteronomy 2:3 the Lord also said "*You have walked around this mountain too long.*" So many churches in our days have become Pentecostal or Charismatic, and have camped around this blessing. Many times the church is satisfied with an experience. But we must not be experience oriented, we must be Christ oriented! We must go on to the fullness of what He has for us. Israel of old was told specifically that they had camped around Mt. Sinai, or around the blessing of Pentecost, for too long. The Lord said, "It is time to move on." I believe that God is speaking very clearly to the Church everywhere that it is long past time that we should have left Mount Sinai to move on with the Lord. The Israelites of old were to move on with the cloud. By the grace of God we want to follow the cloud of God's presence that has left Mt. Sinai and the Charismatic movement. God is moving on! That which was the will of God at a certain time ceases to be the will of God when the presence of God moves on! By the grace of God we want to follow His presence, and His presence from scripture is unmistakably going to Zion.

So often, we walk around these blessings and camp there for too long. There was a time when we were teaching in the United States, and the Lord spoke to us that we were to go back to Europe where we had ministered in years past. He said, "the things that I show you, you will declare throughout the world." We went back, and what we saw was that some of the great spiritual leaders in many of the countries of Europe had fallen into sin. My heart was broken and I cried out to God, "Lord, why?" The Lord said, "Because they walked around that mountain too long, and became too familiar with their present truth. The life of those truths did not continue to be expressed through them any longer, and the result is that as they walked around and around that mountain, eventually they became weak and they fell into sin." So let us

remember the call of the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 12:18-22. Our call is not to Mt. Sinai, our ultimate destination is not to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Where are we going? *"But you have come to Mount Zion."*

THE WILDERNESS

After the children of Israel left Mount Sinai, they journeyed through the wilderness. We see this same pattern in the life of Christ. After Christ was water baptized (as the Israelites were in type at the Red Sea) then He was filled with the Holy Spirit (just as the Israelites came to Mt. Sinai). The next thing that we read in Mark 1:12 is *"And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness."*

The wilderness speaks of the trials and testings that are to bring us to obedience. Deuteronomy 8:2 tells us that the Lord led Israel for 40 years in the wilderness to work within them humility, obedience, and purity. We read about the same experience in the life of Christ from Hebrews 5:8 *"Though He were a son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."* There is only one way that obedience is worked out in our life, and that is to suffer.

The Israelites failed in the wilderness, and we also cannot get through unless God brings us. If you reject God's dealings, you will spend your entire life in the wilderness and never cross it. And if you don't pass through, you will never get to your inheritance. There are no shortcuts!

CROSSING THE JORDAN

After the wilderness, the Israelites then crossed over the Jordan. This speaks about the crucified life. While the Red Sea (or water baptism) is our identification *by faith* with the crucified life, the Jordan speaks of having the *reality* of that experience working in our lives. When the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea they were out of Egypt, but during the wilderness trials they all kept wanting to go back to Egypt. In a similar way you can get Christians out of the world when they are saved and water baptized, but you still have to get the world out of the hearts of the Christians! It was only when the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the inheritance that they no longer had any desire to go back to Egypt. When they crossed the Jordan and camped at Gilgal they were all circumcised, and the Lord said in Joshua 5:9 *"This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you."* We also need to cross the Jordan and have our hearts circumcised, so that we can enter into the experiential knowledge that we are dead to sin.

One morning years ago when I was studying in my office, I had a vision of Christ upon the cross, with His back toward me. Then in

the Spirit I was caught up and I hung on that cross. I was "in Christ" on that cross. I looked down at all the people who were mocking Jesus as He was being crucified. Then the vision ceased, and as I returned to my office, from my innermost being the Spirit of God rolled forth. It rolled up in my mouth and the words came out "I have been crucified with Christ." Then I saw the veil of the temple, and I saw the veil was ripped. Then I *knew*, I *knew*, that on the cross my old nature had been crucified! It is very important that we all have a "Jordan experience" and that we walk, by the grace of God, in the light of our being dead to sin. You don't have to have a vision, but you do have to experientially *know* that your old man was crucified with Him.

CONQUERING THE INHERITANCE

When Joshua and the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land, they began to dispossess the 7 nations that lived in Palestine. It would have been very easy to take the land if no one lived there. Mount Sinai was not inhabited, showing us that there is no battle to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the Promised Land there were inhabitants and giants, there were battles to be fought, just as we now have to fight against principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

Mount Zion was the last and most difficult stronghold to capture. It was the stronghold of the Jebusites. They held out for centuries until the time of David. They had boasted that even if their soldiers were all blind and lame, that David and his army would not conquer them. But Zion was taken by David after his third anointing. There must be a work of God accomplished in us before we can move on to Zion. This third anointing is very important.

ZION, THE PLACE OF UNITY

Although Mount Zion was the last stronghold in the land of Palestine, we are told in 2 Samuel 5:7 that David captured it and made it his city, the capitol of the nation. There is a deep significance there. As Zion was the last stronghold that Israel came to, it is going to be the last place that the Church is brought to also. But there were the Jebusites who lived there. In Deuteronomy 7:1-2 the Lord said there were 7 enemy nations in the land of Palestine. God gave victory over these enemies, and the last enemy was the Jebusites. Spiritually speaking, we have the interpretation of these 7 enemies in Proverbs 6:16 where the Lord declares the 7 enemies that He hates. The last of these, like the Jebusites, was "*he that sows discord among the brethren.*"

It is interesting because we read in Psalm 133 that the brethren that dwell together in unity are like the dew upon Zion, where God commanded His blessing. So Zion is the dwelling place of the unity of the brethren. Where the Jebusites are cast down we find that discord among the brethren is laid to rest. And where there

is the unity of the brethren, the blessing of God will flow.

ZION, THE PLACE OF GLORY

Mount Zion is also the place of the Tabernacle of David. In the time of King David the Tabernacle of Moses was still at Shiloh. But the Ark of the Covenant was missing from the Holy of Holies. It was missing because it had been taken by the Philistines, and when it was retrieved by King David it was put in a tent or tabernacle upon Mt. Zion.

At the ark there was the literal presence of God between the cherubim, where the cloud of the shekinah glory of God covered it. Therefore associated with the Tabernacle of David on Mt. Zion, is the visible glory of God.

At times God has chosen to manifest His glory. A friend of mine was talking to me of the cloud of glory that came into their service. I also remember a time in France a number of years ago when the ministers were praising God on the platform, and a cloud of great glory covered them. There have been touches of it, but what is going to happen is that we shall see the literal glory cloud coming into the churches. We must lift our vision higher! We must not limit God but we must see what the Word of God declares for the Church in the last days. In 2 Corinthians 3:7 it declares that the glory that was manifested in Moses was done away, but the ministration of the Spirit shall be greater. Isaiah declares "*and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon you.*"

I have seen the glorious Church on earth in a vision. I also saw the Church led by Jesus, coming with Him down from heaven. Oh, that glorious, heavenly Church. I have seen it descending, and I have seen the Church on earth rising- and they were both identical. Praise God, there is going to be a mighty experience for the Church, to get us ready to meet the Lord!

ZION, THE PLACE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

There arose around the Tabernacle of David all the worship that is associated with David. They entered into a realm of praise and worship there on Mount Zion that the people of God had never seen before. In the last days God is also going to cause us to enter into praise and worship to a degree that we have never known before. In Psalm 65:1 it says "*Praise waits for Thee in Zion.*" This praise and worship is waiting to be revealed, when the Church ascends to Zion!

ZION, THE PLACE OF TEACHING

Zion is also the place of teaching in the last days. In Isaiah 2:2 we see that in the last days the mountain of the Lord's house

will be exalted, and all nations will flow to it. This is speaking about Zion, and of how the Church of Jesus Christ shall be lifted up in these last days. Then Isaiah 2:3 tells us that the people who come up the mountain of the Lord will say "*He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths*" This is what God is going to reveal to us in these last days, His ways. Psalm 103:7 says that the children of Israel saw the acts and the miracles of God, but only Moses knew His ways. Yet in our day God is going to reveal His ways to those who go up to Zion.

ZION, THE PLACE OF THE LAW

Isaiah 2:3 also goes on to say that "*out of Zion shall go forth the law.*" The Lord has spoken to me as I have gone around the nations, how He is going to honor His law in the last days. The nations have passed law after law in the last few years, to change the standards of society away from the 10 commandments. But God is going to exalt His law amongst the nations and in His Church in these last days.

In 2 Kings 10:30 we find that Jehu had fulfilled the ministry for which he was anointed, but in verse 31 we read "*But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of God.*" You can be anointed by God, you can fulfill a ministry, but also you can walk contrary to the law of God. The fact that you are anointed and fulfilling a ministry does not mean that you are accepted in the presence of Almighty God! It is important to give heed to the law of God in these days because we are going to see great sin and deception. Psalm 119:165 encourages us that "*Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.*"

ZION, THE PLACE OF REVIVAL

Isaiah 25:7 tells us "*He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.*" We have heard much in recent years about the fallen angels that rule over nations, cities, and towns. Because of them, the gospel does not have full liberty in those areas. But where those powers of darkness have been bound- where the veil has been broken- then the anointing and the power of God comes down. And so it is that as we go up to Mount Zion that we shall have the power to break the veils over the nations of this world. We shall have power with God to break the ruling princes over the cities in which we live, and cause an outpouring of the Spirit of God to come upon that city. That is the key to revival, it is the tearing and destroying of the veil upon a city or a country. When that veil is gone the Spirit of God is poured out, the people are convicted, and revival flows everywhere.

There was a national revival in Sweden where they had this kind of breakthrough in the early part of the century. People would walk literally tens of miles through the snow, because they were

convicted in their homes of sin. They were looking for a church that was open that could tell them of Christ and His salvation that would cleanse them from their guilt. When God opens His heavens upon a city or upon a nation, the Spirit flows in every home!

In the Welsh revival, when the meetings started in certain towns, the people in the taverns could not pick up their glasses to drink beer because the Spirit of God fell on them even in the taverns. They sometimes had to crawl to the meetings to get deliverance from their sins! That is the type of revival that we want to see. I once visited a very godly pastor who had been part of that revival. When he whispered the name of Jesus, the sweet fragrance of Christ would fill the room. I walked through his city, and in his city there was a certain holiness there. You walked on the streets, it was different than any other city around, there was a holiness of God that was still there from the revival years before. We walked down the street, and he said to me "Do you see that building?" I said, "Yes." He said, "That used to be a tavern, but it is no longer a tavern because there are no customers." He then pointed to tavern after tavern, about a dozen that we passed that were all shut up because the Spirit of God had cleaned them all out. The pastor also said "Our church was not big enough for the crowds that came, so the local theater manager gave us the keys to his cinema because he had no customers either!" There is a power when the veil is destroyed, and that is why God wants us to go up to Zion. There is power in Zion that can sweep a nation into God!

A brother was recently speaking to me about the tremendous sin there is in his country. I once saw the prince that rules there, he was a tremendous dark angel, but I believe the time is coming when God is going to dispossess him and set the people free. We are going to experience what David experienced when he reigned in Zion. Every time that he went into battle, he won. He did not lose even one battle.

Deuteronomy 28:13 tells us that the Church is to be the head, not the tail. As the Church ascends to her full inheritance, there is going to be a lifting up of the head for the church. No longer is she going to be the tail, conforming to every desire of this world. She shall be the head giving direction to governments, and presidents, and to those in authority. This is already happening in certain nations. The government officials are going to the church for guidance because they don't know which way they should go. In the last days many shall get their directions from the Church!

ASCENDING AND ABIDING IN ZION

There are conditions or qualifications for going up to Zion. Psalm 24:3 says "*Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who*

may stand in His holy place?" This hill was the mountain of Zion, which became the holy place because the ark had been put in David's Tabernacle there. The qualifications in verse 4 are *"He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."* The qualifications for us to ascend to Zion are all based on righteousness.

When they were praying for revival in the Hebrides Islands, God spoke these verses to them from Psalm 24. As they humbled themselves before the Lord to follow these verses, the Lord suddenly poured forth His Spirit. In town after town there was great conviction of the Spirit of God, because some of God's saints had gone up to Mount Zion!

In Psalm 15:1 we are asked the question, *"Lord, who may abide in your tabernacle? Who may dwell in your holy hill?"* In this psalm we see there are further qualifications of righteousness for those who desire to abide and dwell on Mount Zion. Psalm 24 tells us the conditions for us to be able to go up or ascend to Zion, but we must qualify further to remain and abide in the holy hill!

We must let the Spirit of God search our hearts and bring conviction. Some of you are making a choice as you read this, which is going to determine your eternity. Not to determine whether you are saved or lost, but it will determine whether you will qualify to dwell on Mount Zion. Those who have been invited to have a deeper, holier walk with God, must make a choice that will determine whether they will qualify for Zion or take a lower place.

This is a time of decision. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. Some of you are being weighed in the balances. The response from your heart will determine your eternal future, whether you will continue onwards to the fullness of God's purposes for your life or whether you will remain where you are. As you make the decision to stand for righteousness, God will give you grace. God will bring you onwards. You shall dwell in His holy hill!

BEING BORN IN ZION

In Psalm 87:4-7 it speaks three times about those who were born in Zion. It says *"And of Zion it will be said, This one and that one were born in her."* The Lord wants to birth within us the vision that Zion is our home. He is calling us to catch a vision of where we are to spiritually go, both for our personal lives and also for our churches.

I trust that these things are being birthed within you, because God desires to give to each of us an onward vision. The question we must ask ourselves is *"Lord, where am I on the journey?"* As we

ask in sincerity, the Spirit of God will show us. Are you already saved from Egypt, and water baptized like the Israelites at the Red Sea? Are you also baptized in the Holy Spirit? Hebrews 6:1 tells us that we must go past these first foundations in our Christian experience, and go on to perfection! We need to learn humility and obedience to overcome the trials of the wilderness. We need to experience the crucified life and cross the Jordan so that we can begin to possess our inheritance. We need to experience the anointings that David had, to go up and conquer the final enemies so that we can ascend and live in Zion! But irrespective of where we are in the journey, God can birth within us the vision of Zion. The Holy Spirit can conceive within you the vision that you were born for a greater destiny than you have yet experienced. A desire in your heart that will never be satisfied until you come to Zion! May that onward vision be birthed in each of us that will cause us to run the race with patience until we appear before God in Zion. As He then delights in us, we will be used for His glory and will see nations turn to Christ.

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