

## Message Six

### **The New Jerusalem—the Eternal Bethel**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 28:10-22; John 1:51; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 21:3, 22

**I. Jacob's dream was a dream of God's goal, a dream of Bethel, a dream of the house of God (Gen. 28:10-22), which is the church today (1 Tim. 3:15) and which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the eternal dwelling place of God and His redeemed elect (Rev. 21:3, 22):**

- A. God had a dream, and that dream was to have the New Jerusalem, a built up city, as the consummation of His economy—Rev. 21:2.
- B. Our dream is to become the New Jerusalem as the consummation of God's economy—vv. 9-10.
- C. The principle of a dream is that in it something impossible happens to us—cf. Luke 1:37; 18:27; Job 42:2; Psa. 126:1; Jer. 32:27:
  - 1. Every spiritual vision is a dream; every spiritual experience is a dream.
  - 2. Most heavenly visions come in times of suffering, when we are cut off from what is of man and put our trust in what is of God—cf. Gen. 28:10-11.
  - 3. The center of every spiritual dream is Christ as the ladder, the One who brings heaven to earth and joins earth to heaven—John 1:51.
- D. Jacob's dream in Genesis 28 is the most crucial word in the revelation of God.

**II. Christ, in His being the heavenly ladder at Bethel, speaks to us how God desires to have a house on the earth constituted with His redeemed and transformed elect, that He may bring heaven to earth and join earth to heaven, to make the two as one for eternity—John 1:51; Gen. 28:10-22.**

- A. In His humanity Christ became a joining ladder, to join heaven (God) and earth (man) into one—Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:1, 51:
  - 1. By His coming through incarnation the Lord Jesus brought God into man—John 1:14.
  - 2. By His going through death and resurrection the Lord Jesus brought man into God—John 14:6, 20.
- B. The building of God, the house of God, is the mutual abode of God and man; God's home is man and man's home is God—Isa. 66:1-2; 1 Cor. 3:16; Psa. 90:1; John 15:5; 14:23:
  - 1. The main principle of the building of God is that God is brought into us and we are brought into God.
  - 2. God became man through incarnation (bringing heaven to earth), and man becomes God through transformation (joining earth to heaven):
    - a. God's referring to Himself as the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac implies that He would also become the God of Jacob—Gen. 28:13.
    - b. The God of Abraham is the God of justification, the God of Isaac is the God of grace, and the God of Jacob is the God of transformation through the discipline of the transforming Spirit—Rom. 8:28-29; 12:2.
    - c. Eventually, the God of Jacob became the God of Israel (Gen. 33:20; Exo. 5:1), the God of the transformed Jacob—Gal. 6:16.

- C. In eternity future the New Jerusalem will be standing in the whole universe as something uplifted toward the heavens upon which the angelic family will ascend and descend to bring heaven to earth and join earth to heaven for the divine traffic, the divine fellowship, between God and man—2 Cor. 13:14.
- D. God's economy will consummate in such a ladder, a city, and this city is an incorporation of God in man and man in God—Rev. 21:3, 22.
- E. Whenever we turn to our spirit, we sense Christ bringing God (heaven) to us and joining us to God (heaven); thus, Christ as the heavenly ladder is the stairway to bring God to us and join us to God—John 14:6; Eph. 2:22:
  - 1. Since today our spirit is the place of God's habitation, it is now the gate of heaven, where Christ is the ladder that joins us, the people on earth, to heaven, and brings heaven to us—Eph. 2:22; 2 Tim. 4:22; cf. Acts 7:5-56.
  - 2. Whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter through the gate of heaven and touch the throne of grace in heaven through Christ as the heavenly ladder—Heb. 4:16.
- F. As the duplication of Christ, we are a heavenly ladder bringing heaven to earth and joining earth to heaven, moving with God in the unshakable power of the Spirit—cf. S. S. 3:6:
  - 1. When we minister Christ to sinners, they will appreciate Christ and receive Christ; this is to bring heaven to the earth—Rom. 15:16.
  - 2. When we help them to grow, we are joining them to heaven—Col. 1:28-29.

**III. In the account of Jacob's dream, the stone (Gen. 28:11, 18, 22), the pillar (v. 18), the house of God (vv. 17, 19, 22), and the oil (v. 18) are outstanding items:**

- A. The stone symbolizes Christ as the foundation stone, the topstone, and the cornerstone for God's building, His spiritual house—Isa. 28:16; Zech. 4:7; Acts 4:10-12.
- B. It also symbolizes the transformed man, who has been constituted with Christ as the transforming element to be the material for the building of God's house, which is the church consummating in the New Jerusalem—Gen. 2:12; Matt. 16:18; John 1:42; 1 Cor. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 21:11, 18-20.
- C. Jacob used a stone for a pillow, signifying that the divine element of Christ constituted into our being through our experience of Him becomes a pillow for our rest, the solid support within us—cf. Matt. 11:28.
- D. After awaking from his dream, Jacob set up the pillow-stone as a pillar, signifying that the Christ whom we have experienced and on whom we rest becomes the material and the support for God's building, God's house—1 Kings 7:17, 21; Gal. 2:9; Rev. 3:12.
- E. Eventually, Jacob poured oil, a symbol of the Spirit as the consummation of the Triune God reaching man (Exo. 30:23-30; Luke 4:18), on the pillar, and it became Bethel, the house of God (Gen. 28:17, 19, 22).
- F. Today in the church life we are in the reality of Bethel, in the fulfillment of Jacob's dream with the heavenly ladder, the stone, the pillar, God's house, and the oil; this will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the eternal Bethel, the eternal house of God—1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 21:3, 22:

1. The house of God is constituted of God and man united, mingled, and incorporated together as one—John 14:23; 1 John 4:15-16; cf. Acts 17:24.
2. In God's house God expresses Himself in humanity and both God and man find mutual and eternal satisfaction and rest—Psa. 132:13-14.