

The Cedars of Lebanon

A Lesson presented to the Fairview Memorial Winter Bible Study February 7, 2015

Hebrews 11:13-18

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

Revelation 21:1-3

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

Psalms 104:16

The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

Introduction

God created the heavens and the earth, and they were perfect. God walked upon the earth to commune with the creatures (Adam and Eve) He had made in His own likeness. They fell from the law and the earth was sin-cursed. God cannot dwell among sin. However, God still gave Adam and Eve access to Himself through the atonement of their sins. They were instructed of necessity of the death of a sacrifice for them regain peace with and access to God. The sacrifices they offered at the command of God, of course, were merely a type of the Blood that saves. Hebrews 10:4, *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.* God even desired a place, a Holy Place, where that He could dwell among His people; sinners who have repented and believe in Him.

I. The Tabernacle

Exodus 25:8

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

1. God provided the plans for His dwelling place to Moses on the mountain.
2. God provided the materials for the building by spoiling the Egyptians.
3. God provided the craftsmanship for the building.

Exodus 31:1-5

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,

To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.

Note: Only Bezaleel could "devise" cunning works.

4. Among the materials were forty-eight gold covered boards of shittim wood to make up the walls. Each gold covered board was ten cubits (15 feet) by one-and-one-half cubits (27 inches) and had two tenons on the bottom.
5. These boards had once been alive and part of the earth. To become a part of the sanctuary they had to be:
 - A. Cut Down--separated from the earth;
 - B. Dried Up--the old sap of carnality must be dried up before any good work could be wrought in them;
 - C. Cleansed--everything about them that would hinder them from filling a place in the House of God had to be removed;
 - D. They were covered in gold.

Romans 3:22

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

- E. Fitly Framed Together--when placed in the atonement foundation they were closely joined together to form the sanctuary.

Ephesians 2:21

In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

6. In the inside of the Tabernacle, and later the Temple, wood was always used in combination with another material. Man alone cannot be in the Holy presence.

II. The Temple and the Church

1. The Tabernacle was portable and was moved by the command of God being directed by the movement of the pillar of cloud/fire. But, later a more "permanent" structure was made by hands of man, under the direction of God, to provide God a sanctuary among men.
2. The Temple plans were given to David who laid up some materials and established treaties with other countries to provide other necessary materials. Among those materials were the Cedars of Lebanon.
3. The Temple was several magnitudes greater than the Tabernacle, but was itself an image of greater things to come.
4. Jesus, in the fullness of time, came according to the plan laid down by the Godhead before the foundation of the world, and using materials prepared by John the Baptist, built a holy sanctuary on earth.

5. The Lord's Church is a "place" God claims as His. It is on the earth but is heavenly in origin and substance. It is the place on earth where God dwells with men.
6. The Holy Spirit, much like Bezaleel, has continued to work on this living building. Generations of saints have become a part of this living building. They each have served their generation by being a part of this living building that Jesus promised to be with until the end of the world, and then to come back and receive unto Himself..
7. As glorious as today's church is, there is something far greater just ahead.
John 14:1-3
Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you.
I go to prepare a place for you.
And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
8. He is preparing today! In what fashion? Is He creating a parallel universe somewhere? He could speak such a thing instantly into existence! Does He have a little workshop in the corner of heaven?
9. His church today is made up of His Children. The church then, His Bride, that City, the New Jerusalem, will be made up of his glorified saints. As children sing, "He made the sun, moon, and stars, Jupiter and Mars"--in a week--"but He's still working on me." He's still working on His saints, and His church.
10. In all the years of the construction of the Temple, there was not heard the sound of a hammer. All the cutting, shaping, and carving of the materials was done before getting to the building site. He's shaping the components of that great city today--He's preparing an eternal place for Himself and His children.

III. The Cedars of Lebanon (Psalm 104:16)

Of the materials used in the construction of the Temple, the Cedars of Lebanon will be considered as a type of materials being prepared by Jesus for His Most Wonder Work.

1. These trees only depend on God.
 - A. God Himself planted these trees. God puts a seed into a prepared heart and a tree grows.
 - B. God waters these trees. They are not dependent on man. Only by perpetual irrigation does man preserve a little green spot.
 - C. God protects these cedars. They are suffer snow, exposed position, goats, and fierce lightning. Christians are exposed to: temptation, Satanic influence, earthquakes of doubt and fear, and thunderbolts of affliction and desertion. Only the Eternal God protects them. The Christian is weak and less than nothing, but these cedars say: Romans 8:37, *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
 - D. These trees' exultation is all for God and not man. Fig trees produce fruit for the cultivator. The vine provides grapes. The cedar thanks God who planted, watered, and dressed it. God purchased Christians, preserves them, and will one day take them home, to glorify the Great Planter.

- E. The Cedars of Lebanon expect nothing from man but depend on He who hung the world on nothing.
- 2. The Cedars of Lebanon demonstrate divine care.
 - A. They enjoy abundant supply. No river or canals run by them, yet they want for nothing. They are saturated--full of the Lord. By living by faith, Christians possess the richest part of the Land of promise.
 - B. These trees are always green. Christians are not subject to change.
 - C. These trees are large in size (40' girth, 100' height).
 - D. These trees are fragrant. God's trees sweeten all that is around them. A believer who waits on the Lord is acceptable to God, and his brethren; and, even the world will perceive the smell of the blessing of God.
 - E. These trees stood for thousands of years with no one, except the Great Husbandman to look out for them.
 - F. These trees will one day be honored by the ungodly. When the wicked shall rise to shame and contempt, these cedars shall have their time of honor, and acknowledged that they belong to the Lord.
- 3. The trees of the Lord are living (full of sap).
 - A. Without the sap (the Holy Spirit) it is not a tree; just a dead post. The sap makes it exist and flourish. Without the Holy Spirit in him, no man is a Christian.
 - B. The sap works mysteriously within the tree. Great is the mystery of Godliness. Things occur that cannot be seen or comprehended.
 - C. The Christian's should always be active, stirring down deep inside. The hand may not always be moving, but the blood must.
 - D. There is abundant resin in the wood, the bark, and even the cones. There should be some outward evidence of the inward life.
- 4. The purpose of these cedar tree will soon be manifested before all creation.
 - A. These trees were planted, watered, nourished, and then cut down. Hiram cut God's cedars down so they could become part of the Temple.
 - B. A greater building, one not made with hands, is being prepared.
 Hebrews 11:8-10
By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.
By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:
he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.
 - C. These cedars were glorious as they stood in Lebanon, but they became much more glorious at the hands of the craftsmen (the Holy Spirit); and were overlaid with gold (God's glory). God will glorify Himself with these trees taken from this earth and prepared with eternal glory.