Revelation 21
THREE NEW CREATIONS:
NEW HEAVEN, NEW EARTH & NEW JERUSALEM

“Behold, I make all things new .......”

As the LAST CHAPTER summarized the concluding events of this PRESENT CREATION this chapter summarizes the creation of three new things—all of which are eternal. The New Jerusalem, referred to as a “holy City and as the Bride and Wife of the Lamb, is the major theme of this chapter! There are three ‘new creations’ revealed in this chapter that will replace those things that existed before:

- New Heaven
- New Earth
- New Jerusalem

This chapter describes the following events and conditions:

- The Holy city, New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven from God and appears as wonderful as prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- The dwelling of God will be with all the redeemed and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God forever never anymore separated.
- In Heaven there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain.
- Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End declares that all things have been accomplished and He promises to give of the fountain of the water of life freely to anyone who thirsts.
- He who overcomes shall inherit all things and will be called a son by God.
- There will be no sun in the New Heaven to give light for God Himself will supply it directly to the new Universe and so there will be no nighttime.
- The New Jerusalem will have 12 Gates representing the 12 Tribes of Israel and 12 Foundations representing the 12 Apostles. The city will be a cube 1380 miles on a side and there will be a wall 216 feet high surrounding it.
- There will be no evil in the New Heaven and earth and all those who are unbelieving and perverse will be in the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone. Nor will there be any way for anything that defiles or causes an abomination or a lie to enter, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

REV. 21:1-2 ➤ THREE NEW CREATIONS
[1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.]

“And I saw.....” reminds us that John is still an observer of these things after he was ‘caught up’ to Heaven in the spirit (Rev. 4:1-2) and this vision is not over yet. Three new things or creations are mentioned: a NEW HEAVEN [Universe], a NEW EARTH and a NEW JERUSALEM, that Holy City.

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The fact that there will be a new heaven (Universe) and new earth is not anything ‘new’ (pun intended). Note that this is an Old Testament concept described in the prophecies of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22. Jesus inferred that a new heaven and earth were coming in Matt. 24:35 in the context of the Olivet Discourse in which He describes such things like the coming Tribulation, Judgment and Kingdom Age. And Peter describes the creation of a new heaven and earth in 2 Peter 3:7-11.

The new earth will have no more sea. Why? Because there will no longer be a need for a rain cycle nor will there be a need for a ‘waste disposal system’. The sea metabolizes organic waste and renews the earth with rain evaporated from it. This will be unnecessary in the new earth.

This present Universe and earth will someday “pass-way”. Astronomers do not fully appreciate how close the “death of the Universe” actually is! It will not be billions or even millions of years away.

In v.23 we are told that in the New Jerusalem there will be no need for a sun or moon “……for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb”. We will also be told in v.16 that the New Jerusalem will be in the shape of a cube and 1500 miles on a side! This city would require a sphere some 2600 miles in diameter to fit inside. To put this into perspective, the earth’s moon is 2160 miles in diameter. So the New Jerusalem will be the size of a planetary moon!

The NEW JERUSALEM is described as ‘adorned like a bride for her husband’. What a beautiful and poetic description of the Bride of Christ – His Church made up of all believers from all time! Here I believe we have the joining of both the literal and the figurative picture of the New Jerusalem. It will be a literal city, but its appearance will remind one of the holiness, the beauty, splendor, radiance and dignity of a virgin bride walking down the isle on her wedding day!

Here then is a wonderful description of a bride on her ‘special day’. She is radiant and lovely and fulfilling the purpose that Jesus has for His body—the Christian Church. It is a shame that too many Christians live their lives not acknowledging who they really are in Christ Jesus. They are in reality ‘betrothed’ to a wonderful LORD and Savior. Their lifestyles all too often do not reflect the anticipation of joining with the Bridegroom at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

In John 14:2-3 Jesus makes a promise to each believer. He is going to prepare a place for His own in the Father’s house just as a Jewish bridegroom did [see Rev. 19:7-8 notes for more on this] and He will come again to receive those who have believed in Him so that they will be with Him forever. The address of this new residence will be in the New Jerusalem—the Father’s house.

We will see this association again in v.9 where the NEW JERUSALEM is called the ‘wife of the Lamb’ and the rest of this chapter is dedicated to the description of this ‘Holy City’. Verse 27 will tell us that nothing ‘unclean’, that is, nothing unrighteous will be allowed into this city. Believers will be there because they have been ‘born from above’ {John 3:3, 7} and are ‘clothed with the righteousness of Christ’ {Gal. 3:26; Rev. 3:5; 19:8}.

So here we see the completion, the fruition, of the spiritual relationship of husband—wife that God has with all those who have said, “Yes, I do!” to His invitation of salvation. In this passage we see that the Bridegroom will come for His Bride, the Christian Church, and will take her to His permanent home. Here is prophesied the fulfillment of what Paul tells us in Eph. 5:235-27. The ‘holy honeymoon’ will have been long awaited but it will finally come—Hallelujah!
**REV. 21:3-4** A NEW ERA: ALL THINGS ARE MADE NEW—FORMER THINGS PASS AWAY

[3 …..and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; 4 he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.”]

Note that the place where God dwells, Heaven, will someday be integrated with the place where the resurrected believers will live throughout eternity.

In **John 1:14** we are told that God clothed Himself in human flesh, in the Greek this reads literally God ‘pitched His tent’ with man when He came to earth in the form of a man called Jesus {who is the Christ}. **Philippians 2:6-8** tells us this about the Son:

“……who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

In that well known Christmas passage which refers to the coming of the Messiah, we are told that “To us a child is born, a Son is given”. Note the detailed accuracy of this prophecy. Jesus as a ‘man child’ had a beginning in a manager in a little town called Bethlehem. But as the Son He had no beginning – as God He is eternal so the Son (of God) was not really born. Instead, God so loved the world that He sacrificed the Son that whosoever believes in Him would be saved {John 3:16}, “……that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures {1 Cor. 15:3} and He “…….washed us from our sins in His own blood” {Rev. 1:5} so as to “…….cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” {Heb. 9:14}.

Here we are told that the dwelling place of God, His entire ‘tent’, is someday going to reside with the resurrected redeemed from all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues. What a gathering—what a celebration that will be!

The residents of the New Jerusalem are God’s people; He knows each one by name and they are the ‘sheep of His pasture’. **Psalms 79:13** proclaims, “So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever; we will show forth Your praise to all generations.”

**APPLICATION:**

Have you agreed with God about your sinful condition and turned to believing in Jesus Christ as LORD and Savior and confessed with your mouth that God raised Him from the dead? If not, why not? We have seen in the last chapter that you have eternity to gain and everything to lose if you do not: Throw away your pride and agree with God that you are a sinner in need of help—you need the Redeemer to save you and heal your heart and mind.

Now we are told something truly wonderful and amazing! In the New Heaven [Universe] and New Earth there will be no more of what has plagued man since the original sin in the Garden of Eden.

God will personally wipe away the tears of loneliness, suffering, pain and grief over loss and sin. God will wipe away all tears from His people’s eyes – believers who have been saved by God’s grace through faith in His Word.

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This kind of sorrow is illustrated in the story of Lazarus’ death and Jesus resurrecting him in
John 11:1-44.

Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her
weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, “Where have
you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept. (vv. 33-35)

Notice four things that will no longer exist because “......the former\(^1\) things have passed away.”

1. **death\(^2\)**
2. **sorrow\(^3\)**
3. **crying\(^4\)**
4. **pain\(^5\)**

There will no longer be any death because Death will be thrown into the LAKE OF FIRE burning
with brimstone (Rev. 20:14).

In his commentary on this passage J. Vernon McGee tells the story of a civil engineer he once
knew who, during the early 1950’s, was heavily involved in the planning and designing of the
great freeway system that criss-crosses the United States. McGee asked him what the greatest
obstacles to designing the best route across the land were. Was the mountains, the rivers or the
lakes? The answer was somewhat surprising for the engineer’s reply was that the biggest
problem was missing the cemeteries that were spread out everywhere across the landscape!

That answer reveals the universality of death – no one gets “out of here alive”. No one lives in
these bodies forever. The amazing statistic about death is that 10 out of 10 people will die.

Well in this verse we are told that will all end someday—death will be forever a thing of the past.
In the New Heaven and New Earth there will be no cemeteries. Hallelujah!

Note carefully that this is in **stark contrast** to the LAKE OF FIRE where there will be **perpetual
weeping** and **wailing** and **gnashing of teeth**. (See notes at Revelation 20:11-15).

**REV. 21:5-6 ➤ CHRIST JESUS MAKES ALL THINGS NEW**
[5 Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me,
“Write, for these words are true and faithful.” 6 And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha
and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to
him who thirsts.”]

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\(^1\) **former** [\[4413 protos (pro'-tos)\]] original (in time, place, order or importance); before, beginning, first (of
all), former: first in time, place, or rank.

\(^2\) **death** [\[2288 thanatos (than'-at-os)\]] death (literally or figuratively).

\(^3\) **sorrow** [\[3997 penthos (pen'-thos)\]] grief, mourning, deep sorrow. This word is a strengthened form of the
Greek word [\[3958 pascho (pas'-kho)\]] including [pathos] where the English derives the word ‘passion’.
The idea is **weeping**.

\(^4\) **crying** [\[2906 krauge (krow-gay')\]] an outcry (in notification, tumult or grief), clamour. The idea is **wailing**.

\(^5\) **pain** [\[4192 ponos (pon'-os)\]] toil, i.e. (by implication) anguish, great trouble, intense desire, pain.
Christ Jesus is creator and He is the Lifegiver, the Author & Finisher of our faith. As such He IS the Resurrection & Life and has the Power & Authority to make all things new. His Words are Faithful & True!

Jesus Christ is going to make all things new! Not just some things, or most things, but ALL things! We are told in scripture that the Holy Spirit is only a ‘down payment’, God’s pledge on things to come {Eph. 1:14; 1 John 3:2}. Today we have a small a foretaste of what that will be like having been made a ‘new creation’ in Jesus Christ for Paul tells us:

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.—2 Cor. 5:14-17

There are many men and women down throughout world history that have had a very powerful influence on people and institutions. Much was good but to be honest most was evil from God’s perspective. But each one, no matter how fierce, powerful or persuasive they were, eventually died and had to leave it all to others! All their hopes, aspirations and drive died with them. [This bitter truth was Solomon’s great anguish in the book of Ecclesiastes]. And things change once again.

We are told in James 4:14; “…..whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”

And that rugged fisherman, the Apostle Peter reminds us in 1 Peter 1:24 {quoted from Isa. 40:6-8} that; “All flesh is as gras, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers and its flower falls away…..”

But despite all this, a Christian has much to rejoice over and hope for because in the same passage Peter also reminds us that {quoted from Isa. 40:6-8}.

……having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever……But the word of the Lord endures forever”. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.
—1 Peter 1:23, 24

However, in the New Heaven and New Earth there will be no end due to death--the deeds and accomplishments of God's people will increase and grow without end! So we will never have to be concerned about our activities being a 'vapor' ever again.

Again, we are told that God’s Words are True and Faithful—He can be trusted without reservation. Note that Jesus Himself is called ‘Faithful and True’ in Rev. 3:14 and it is one of His holy names as we see in Rev. 19:11!

Jesus Himself tells us in John 8:32 that; “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
This ‘Truth’ is accompanied by grace for in **John 1:14** we learn that; “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*” and again three verses later in **John 1:17**; “*For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*”

In **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Jesus Christ is the Going [Way], the Knowing [Truth] and the Growing [Life].

He and He alone is absolute Truth!

What a wonderful Lord and Savior we have—Hallelujah!

This is the second time (third if you one includes **Rev. 10:7**) the phrase “It is done” or “It is finished” statements is proclaimed by Jesus in the Book of Revelation. The others are appropriately found in the execution of the 7**TH** TRUMPET JUDGMENT and the 7**TH** BOWL OF WRATH JUDGMENT:

“…..but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.”—**Rev. 10:7**

Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “It is done!”—**Rev. 16:17**.

There was another time and place where Jesus spoke these words under dramatically different circumstances. His last words before willingly giving up His Spirit and allowing His body to die on the cross were, “It is finished!” {**John 19:30**}.

These words, especially spoken by the LORD, carry with them a sense of ‘inevitable finality’. On the cross it was the fact that “…..having obtained eternal redemption” and “He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever…..” {**Heb. 9:12; 10:10-12**} and there now “…..no longer remains a sacrifice for sins” {**Heb. 10:26**}. The purchase of our redemption is complete and a payment will nevermore need to be given-Hallelujah!

Likewise, in v.6, these words speak of the finality of God’s dealing with this present world system, the anti-Christ and false prophet, Satan, this present heaven and earth, Israel, the unsaved and saved and the establishment of a new heaven, new earth and the New Jerusalem.

Next, Jesus says He is the “Alpha and Omega” or equivalently, the “A to Z”, since they the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. He is the **Beginning and End**; meaning He is from eternity past to eternity future. **Micah 5:2** prophesies this about the Messiah that will be born in Bethlehem; “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.” The phrase ‘from everlasting’ literally means from vanishing point – that is, eternity past.
And lest someone might miss the significance of this, Jesus is also declared to be the “Alpha and Omega” in Revelation 1:8, 11; 22:13.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."—Rev. 1:8

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.....”—Rev. 1:11

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”—Rev. 22:13

Isaiah 42:8 declares, “I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to graven images” and Isaiah 48:11 states quite clearly that, “For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; for how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.”

The uniqueness of Jehovah God as the First and Last, the only Savior is also made very apparent in the following passages of scripture—all in the wonderful book of Isaiah:

“...I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise.”—Isaiah 42:8

“You are My witnesses”, says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD, and besides Me there is no savior.”—Isaiah 43:10-11

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God......Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one'.”—Isaiah 44:6, 8

“I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other.....”—Isaiah 45:6-7

For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other.”—Isaiah 45:18

“Tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior; there is none besides Me. Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”—Isaiah 45:21-22

“Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’.....”—Isaiah 46:9-10

“For you have trusted in your wickedness; you have said, ‘No one sees me’; your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; and you have said in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one else besides me’.”—Isaiah 47:10

“Listen to Me, O Jacob, and Israel, My called: I am He, I am the First, I am also the Last. Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand has stretched out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand up together.”—Isaiah 48:12-13
These passages emphatically declare that Jehovah God is unique and there is no other God besides Him! This means that when Jesus Christ speaks the words, “I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End” He speaking as the One and Only True Jehovah God”!

All of this is in contradiction to both the doctrine of Mormonism [which teaches that Jesus was a created angel and Lucifer’s “spirit brother”] and, somewhat ironically, to the doctrine of Jehovah Witnesses who teach that ‘Jesus is a lesser god’ and in their translation of John 1:1 claim that the Word {Jesus Christ} was “a god” [lower case ‘g’]. And in their New World Bible the translation of Colossians 1:16 reads, “For by Him all [other] things were created” where the word ‘other’ has been inserted. Why? Because they teach that as a lesser ‘god’ Jesus was created by Jehovah God who then in turn allowed Jesus to create all other things in heaven and on earth.

But this argument is demolished by their own translation of Zech. 14:3-4 where they insert the word ‘actually’ and reads, “And His [Jehovah’s] feet will [actually] stand on the Mount of Olives” giving Jehovah God the attributes of a man⁶—the God with us as Jesus Christ. It is His feet we are told in Acts 1:11-12 that will one day stand on the Mount of Olives at His 2nd Coming!

And lest there be any confusion concerning this matter, in Micah 5:2 Jehovah God specifically told us that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. But this verse additionally tells us something very significant. We are told that His “…..goings forth are from old, from everlasting”. The word for ‘everlasting’ here in the Hebrew is literally “from vanishing point” – that is, having no starting point and no ending point being from eternity past!

**APPLICATION:**

In Matthew 21:44 Jesus says, “And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

Here Jesus is giving people only two choices, as God has done throughout all generations. He sets before mankind the "way of life and the way of death". The stone is Jesus. If you humble yourself, repent you fall upon that stone in a 'broken' condition and receive God's awesome Grace and Forgiveness. But, if you refuse to do this, only judgment awaits you, you will be ground to powder and crushed without any Hope.

See also Matthew 10:39 and Ezekiel 33:11. This theme is found throughout the Bible, see also: Deut. 30:15,19; Isaiah 1:19-20 and Jeremiah 21:8!

Next the glorified Christ Jesus tells us that He will in no way deny anyone who is ‘thirsty’ for spiritual life. He will give to anyone who is desirous for eternal life that ‘water of life’ through faith in Him as resurrected LORD and Savior.

⁶ Jehovah Witnesses’ doctrine claims that Jehovah God is a Spirit and therefore cannot be a ‘flesh and blood’ person like Jesus Christ was. But that ignores the plain teaching of scripture related to the coming of the Messiah as a ‘man’ having all the attributes of power and authority as God [e.g., Savior, healer, creator and forgiveness of sins].
Note that all the way to the end of all things Jesus Christ will offer the gracious invitation to “…freely give of the fountain of the water of life to him who thirsts.”

The wonderful thing about this is that He is already doing that today! John 7:37-39 tells us that; On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

The ‘water of life’ is a beautiful picture of the spiritual refreshment given to those who have a spiritual thirst. Jesus says in John 4:14 that “…..whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life”. This He says in the wonderful context of His dialog with the Samaritan woman at the well. With only ‘earthly water’ a man will thirst again but with the ‘heavenly water’, the ‘living water’ freely offered by Jesus Christ a man will never thirst again!

Without physical water a person dies within a few days—without the spiritual water that only Jesus Christ can provide a person remains ‘dead in trespasses and sin’ and will one day eternally ‘die’ by being separated from God in the Lake of Fire [burning with brimstone]. Refer to Rev. 20:11-15.

Isaiah 44:6 says, “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God’.” Note carefully the context of this verse for it is the same as Rev. 21:6. This verse in Isaiah is prefixed by Isaiah 44:2-5 which alludes to ‘the fountain of the water of life’ being made available to Israel in the Millennium Kingdom:

“Thus says the LORD who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you: ‘Fear not, O Jacob My servant; and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring; They will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses.’ One will say, ‘I am the LORD’S; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; another will write with his hand, ‘The LORD’S,’ and name himself by the name of Israel.”

Without the spiritual ‘water of [eternal] life’ that only Jesus can provide a person remains dead in trespasses and sins and will one day be eternally separated from God in the LAKE OF FIRE [burning with brimstone] which is called the ‘Second Death’. Refer to Rev. 20:11-15.

Later, in Rev. 22:1, as an eternal reminder of this we are told that in Heaven there will be “…a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb”.

And in Rev. 22:17 there is a wonderful final invitation given regarding the offer of this ‘water of [eternal] life’.

And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

There is great message in the word ‘come’. It speaks of a desire to be with someone; to make a person feel welcomed and included. Like when a team captain is picking the members he wants to play—and being chosen!
APPLICATION:

When driving up Interstate 99 from Los Angeles to Sacramento one will see billboards along the highway that farmers have put up in their fields. They read ‘Food Grows Where Water Flows’. This is also so very true in the spiritual realm. A Christian grows and bears much fruit where the ‘water of life’ flows.

What is this spiritual fruit? Paul answers this in Gal. 5:22-23 where the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ is listed as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. In Eph. 5:9 he adds to this list righteousness and truth.

Living in the Spirit is only possible through the living water we receive from Jesus Christ.

Again we see that all the truths started in Genesis, elaborated on in the Gospels and taught throughout God’s Word converge in this book!

REV. 21:7 ➢ THE CHILDREN OF GOD WILL INherit ALL THINGS

[7 “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”]

Those who “OVERCOME” are the ones who will inherit all things. Who are they who overcome? John gives us the answer in 1 John 5:4-5:

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

The reason that believers overcome and inherit the blessings of God is their faith. **Table 21-1** below is a list of the things the Book of Revelation says a Christian will inherit because they will overcome through their faith:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inheritance</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Privilege to eat of the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God</td>
<td>Revelation 2:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will not be hurt by the ‘Second Death’</td>
<td>Revelation 2:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privilege to eat of the ‘hidden manna’ and a white stone with a ‘new name’</td>
<td>Revelation 2:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will receive power over the nations (ruling them with a rod of iron) and the ‘morning star’ (Christ Jesus)</td>
<td>Revelation 2:26-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will be clothed in white raiment and will NEVER have his name blotted out of the (Lamb’s) Book of Life.</td>
<td>Revelation 3:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will be a ‘pillar’ in the temple of God, receives God’s very own name and the name of the ‘City of God’ (the New Jerusalem) and Jesus’ new name.</td>
<td>Revelation 3:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privilege to sit with Christ in His throne even as He, Christ Jesus sits on the throne of the Father.</td>
<td>Revelation 3:21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This however is only a partial list since other blessings [referred to as the Beatitudes] are described by Jesus in Matthew 5:1-12 and which are summarized in Table 21-2. In Ephesians 1:3-11 Christians are blessed with spiritual blessing in the Heavenlies in Christ and 1 John 5:11-13 tells us that believers also have as an inheritance Eternal Life.

Table 21-2. The Blessings the Believer ‘Inherits’ (Ref. Matthew 5:1-12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Blessing</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>poor in spirit, humility</td>
<td>kingdom of new Heaven</td>
<td>Matthew 5:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mourning</td>
<td>comfort</td>
<td>Matthew 5:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meekness</td>
<td>the new earth</td>
<td>Matthew 5:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunger &amp; thirst for righteousness</td>
<td>will be filled and satisfied</td>
<td>Matthew 5:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>merciful</td>
<td>mercy</td>
<td>Matthew 5:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purity of heart</td>
<td>will see God</td>
<td>Matthew 5:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peacemaker</td>
<td>the name: ‘sons of God’</td>
<td>Matthew 5:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persecuted for righteousness</td>
<td>kingdom of new Heaven</td>
<td>Matthew 5:10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The LORD, the one Who is the First and Last, is now reminding us that the one who has overcome by faith is considered one of His sons!

Both John and the Apostle Paul have previously taught that those who by faith have put their trust in Jesus Christ, God’s Son, to save them are made ‘children of God’. This places us in the Family of GOD and makes us sons of GOD.

This can be clearly seen in John 1:12-13; “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Paul writes in Rom 8:16-17: “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” Notice the reminder to that we are joint heirs with Christ and need to act in Christ-like fashion since we will be glorified together.

See especially Phil. 2:1-16 where Paul gives the reasons for a child of God to live a ‘set-apart’ (sanctified) life.

To summarize our position and future hope in Christ as a son of God and have overcome, let us read once again 1 John 5:1-5:

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
The theme passage for any study of prophecy should be 1 John 3:1-3 where believers are told that; “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” The point is that we who ARE children of God need to act in way that demonstrates we are God’s children because our Lord and Savior is returning for His Bride – the Church!

That rugged fishermen, the Apostle Peter, reminds in 1 Peter 4:7 that, “But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.” And that beloved disciple, John, in 1 John 2:15-17 also admonishes us to:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Will a life sacrificed to serving, praising, testifying and worshipping our Creator and Redeemer be worth it? ABSOLUTELY!!! We can barely imagine what eternity with God will be like, but it will be AWESOME!

Here is what the Apostle Paul had to say about it in Romans 12:1,2:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The Bible teaches us that those who by faith have put their trust in Jesus Christ are made ‘children of God’ and it “......does not yet appear what we shall be but when He appears we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is” {1 John 3:2}.

But here we see something unique and wonderful. God tells the believer that he/she will be “the son to Me” [‘moi ho huios’]. This is the only place in John’s writings where a believer is referred to as ‘a son (huios)’ in relationship with God.

Jim Elliot, the missionary who was martyred for his witness and testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Auca Indians in British Guyana (South America), had this to say about it:

“He is no fool who gives up that which he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose.”

REV. 21:8➤ THE INHERITANCE OF THE FEARFUL & UNBELIEVING
[8 “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”]
Those who have rebelled against the revelation of God, either in creation or redemption, are exempt from the inheritance of the new creation. They are referred to here as those who were fearful and did not believe in the God’s Love – ultimately His Son, Christ Jesus. Their ‘inheritance’ is the LAKE OF FIRE, the ‘SECOND DEATH’. This is eternal separation from God.

Conversely, note that one of the things the believer inherits is exemption from the ‘SECOND DEATH’ {Rev. 20:14-15} because he/she overcame the world and Satan through faith. This implies those who inherit the LAKE OF FIRE did not overcome because they were without faith. Note carefully what Jesus says about eternal life.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, “that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

—John 3:14-18

Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

—John 6:28-29

“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” —John 17:3

Here we are told the characteristics of those whose pride and unbelief in the resurrection of Christ Jesus has kept them from accepting God’s offer of salvation through His shed blood on the cross. This is a ‘grocery list’ of behaviors resulting form a rejection of God Truth and His moral standards of righteousness. Table 21-3 summarizes the description of each of these; note them carefully.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>Desperate to stay alive and enjoy life, one who is afraid to relinquish control of their life. Too timid to believe by faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbelieving</td>
<td>Mocking the Truth, refusing to accept God’s Word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abominable</td>
<td>Those who are vile and engage in detestable activities such as the exploitation of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murders</td>
<td>Having no respect for the sanctity of human life. Satan was a ‘murderer from the beginning’. {John 8:44}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually Immoral</td>
<td>Those who love physical pleasure rather than love God and mock Gods moral standards of sexual purity. Includes those involved in pornography, prostitution and homosexuality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorcerers</td>
<td>Those involved with promoting drug abuse/addiction and includes involvement with Satanism, the occult and drug sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idolaters</td>
<td>Those who worship false gods and who promote fear and respect of false objects of worship. Includes those who are covetous and who love money rather than God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liars</td>
<td>Those who have no respect for the truth and who habitually deceive others for gain in the form of status or prestige. Satan we are told is a ‘liar and the father of it’ {John 8:44}.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What a sordid list of evil inspired and promoted by Satan to destroy the apex of God’s creation by keeping man from faith, reconciliation for sin and a personal relationship with the Creator and Savior—Jesus Christ.

We are reminded here that those who are unbelievers [and engage in the enumerated sins as a result] will have as their ultimate and eternal destination the LAKE OF FIRE which burns with brimstone! We are also reminded that this is the SECOND DEATH.

This tells us that there will be no ‘Third Resurrection’ or reprieve from this state of eternal condemnation as Universalism\(^8\) teaches. There is no “second chance” in Hell; it is FINAL!


[9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife”. 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.]

Now John is shown the Lamb’s ‘Wife’ coming down out of Heaven. The privilege of doing this belongs to one of the seven angels God used to pour out one of the BOWLS OF WRATH. [And evidently, God does not think it important to tell us which one]. This reaffirms that angels are servants and messengers of God; “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire” {Heb. 1:7}.

In v.2 we saw that the NEW JERUSALEM was referred to as ‘a bride adorned for her husband’ and in Rev. 19:7 we learn that the Lamb’s wife has made herself ready for the marriage by being clothed in ‘fine linen’ representing the ‘righteousness of the saints’. Here we are again confronted with the fact that the bride, the Lamb’s wife is represented as a Great City – the Holy [New] Jerusalem that will descend from God out of Heaven. In v.16 we will actually come to realize how ‘great’ this city really is.

So who is this bride, the Lamb’s wife? Note that by answering this question we will at the same time discover the identity of the New Jerusalem!

In v.10 the Bride/Wife is referred to as ‘the Great City’ [in complete contrast to Babylon] which is the Holy Jerusalem!

The Apostle Paul gives us further insight in answering this question for in Rom. 7:4 he writes:

> Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

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\(^8\) Universalism asserts that all will eventually be saved including those in Hell after they have suffered for a great length of time. Its adherents believe in universal salvation, or, as it is now generally stated, in the ‘eternal progress’ of all souls. The sect has at various times become subdivided, chiefly by the breaking away of the Restorationists in 1831. This group was dissolved a decade later. They maintained that the wicked would pass through a temporary state of punishment after death, whereas the original Universalists maintained that for sin there is no eternal punishment because the consequences of actions in this life are punishment enough. These beliefs are contrary to the clear teaching of the Book of Revelation and Jesus in the Gospels.

Revelation 21 -14-  Copyright © 2009 K. G. Schiessel
Christian believers make up the Body of Christ, the Christian Church and are ‘married’ to Him who was raised from the dead—Jesus Christ! And in Eph 5:23 he writes:

“For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.”

So we learn that the Church has a Husband, Jesus Christ, which makes the Church His bride and wife. We gain further insight into the identity of the bride, the Lamb’s wife, from Paul’s writing in 2 Cor. 11:2 he writes:

“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

That is, Paul is speaking of the Christians who have been betrothed to be married to one Husband through their belief and acceptance of His offer of salvation. They will be a chaste virgin – never having been married before. This is significant for it is in contrast with the husband—wife relationship the LORD had with Israel but where He had to give her a ‘bill of divorce’ for treacherous and idolatrous ways (see Jer. 3:8; Hos. 2:2).

There is really quite a wonderful promise here in that the Husband, Jesus Christ, will keep true believers faithful to Himself and will never divorce them! This is in agreement with Eph. 5:25-27:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Finally, in John 3:29 we have John the Baptist’s wonderful proclamation that his ministry must decrease and the focus will shift to the ministry of Jesus Christ. In John 3:29 he refers to Jesus as the ‘Bridegroom’ and His followers as the ‘Bride’:

“He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.”

So we see that the bride, the Lamb’s wife [and the New Jerusalem] is none other than Christ’s Body – the Christian Church!

Here, at the end of the millennium and the start of the post-millennium era, the emphasis is on presenting the Bride; the Lamb’s Wife, to the New Heaven and New Earth much as a husband does at a wedding reception.

The old Jerusalem has passed away with the old earth and the old universe and so will not co-exist with the New Jerusalem (vv. 1, 5 and Rev. 20:11). This conclusion is supported by 2 Pet. 3:10-13 which tells us that this present creation will melt with a great amount of heat. There will be only one Jerusalem throughout eternity and it will be the new one; the Lamb’s Bride and Wife—the Church!
**APPLICATION:**

In Paul’s eloquent discussion regarding the gifts of the Spirit [which are given to believers for the mutual benefit of their spiritual growth] in chapter 12 of his first letter to the Corinthian believers he refers to the Christian Church as the ‘Body of Christ’ {see also Eph. 4:12}.

In that context we are told {Eph. 5:28-29} that husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies because he who loves his wife loves himself and in so doing nourishes and cherishes it, “even as the Lord does the church.”

Here in the closing pages of God’s Word we are reminded that Jesus Christ has always cared for and protected His Church as a faithful and loving Husband. It therefore behooves each and every Christian to remain faithful to their Husband and remain committed to the One who has placed them into this very special relationship as the ‘bride’ and ‘wife’ of the Savior and the Creator of the Universe!

A Christian debating whether or not to behave as a one betrothed as a bride to her Husband to would be wise to remember that he/she has been invited to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb {Rev. 19:7-9} and answer the question that the LORD poses found in Jeremiah’s prophecy {Jer. 2:32} in the negative:  

“Can a virgin forget her ornaments or a bride her attire?”

The city itself is endowed with the ‘glory of God’. What does this mean? Simply this; the New Jerusalem, the eternal abode of the Church, will be an extension of the majesty, purity and uniqueness of God!

Here also we are told that the light of the City was like the brilliance of a ‘precious stone’, in this case like a jasper stone ‘clear as crystal’. This immediately conjures up an image of a flawless diamond which sparkles and magnifies the brightness of the light passing through it. Note that in v.23 we are told that the City will have no artificial or natural light [as from a new sun] but that the radiance of God Himself will be the light of it. The picture is of something wholly pleasing to the soul.

The light of New Jerusalem is not reflected light nor the result of some type of internal combustion. The light is actually emanating from the city itself because, as we are told in v.23, the ‘glory of God illuminates it’ and the ‘Lamb is its light’.

J. Vernon McGee say in his commentary on this verse; “The New Jerusalem is a diamond in a gold mounting. The city is the engagement ring of the bride; in fact, it is the wedding ring. It is the symbol of the betrothal and wedding of the Church to Christ.”

Indeed, it could not be said any better than this.

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9 The word for ‘jasper’ in this verse is a transliteration of the Greek word ‘iaspis’ which is a word of Semitic origin. This has been identified with the topaz, clear quartz or diamond with the latter probably being the case since we are told that the appearance of the wall is ‘clear as glass’. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that this word is similar to the usage of the Hebrew word [‘qorach’] for both ‘crystal’ in Ez. 1:22 and also ‘ice’ [Job 6:16; 37:10; 38.29].

Revelation 21

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REV. 21:12-14 ★ DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

[12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.]

Now details of the New Jerusalem’s design layout and structure are given.

Around the Great City is a great and high wall that we are told in v.17 is 216 feet [144 cubits] high which makes the Great Wall of China look puny in comparison. Around this great wall are twelve gates which means that there are three gates on each side.

These gates have angels guarding them and they face the four points of a compass. [It is interesting to note that even though the old earth and heaven have been replaced with the new, there is still a sense of direction].

We are told that the twelve gates of the wall are inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel [i.e., Jacob]. This layout is reminiscent of the ordering of the Tribes of Israel around the Tabernacle as described in Numbers 2 during their nomad years in the wilderness. Remember that twelve tribes are mentioned by name in Revelation chapter 7 with Joseph being substituted for Ephraim [refer to Rev. 7:1-8 notes].

Now this is remarkable because as a memorial throughout eternity God will recognize and we will be reminded of the mighty work He did through those twelve tribes of Israel!

In his commentary on this passage McGee states that the significance of this is that the Old Testament saints, comprised primarily of the children of Israel, will come into the New Jerusalem to worship God through these gates [presumably each one according to the tribe they came from]. However, after they worship they return to the New Earth where they dwell. He also states that the Church, comprised of New Testament saints, will worship and reside in the New Jerusalem because they are the ‘Lamb’s Wife’ living in the Bridegroom’s ‘home’.

As logical as that may sound, I do not think that is the case. Israel was also considered as the Wife of the LORD (e.g., Isa. 54:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 8, 14; Hos. 2:16, 19-20) and I do not believe that Christ will make a distinction such as that since He is no respecter of persons and shows no partiality in His kingdom (e.g., Deut. 10:17; Job 34:19; Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 2:6; Eph. 6:9; Col 3:10-11).

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10 The Great Wall of China varies in size from place to place and is approximately 4200 miles long. Its wall is 16 to 20 feet wide and typically varies from 16 to 26 feet in height [about 2 stories high]. The Great Wall of the New Jerusalem is probably over 5500 miles long [allowing for 1 mile space between the wall and the City] and 216 feet high [about 21 stories high] so it is much more immense in comparison.

11 The twelve Tribes of Israel, actually thirteen because the tribe of Joseph was divided into Manasseh and Ephraim, were arranged with three tribes on each side of the fence surrounding the Tabernacle. The tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun encamped on the east side. The tribes of Ruben, Simeon and Gad encamped on the south side. The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin encamped on the west side. The tribes of Dan, Asher and Naphtali encamped on the north side. The priestly tribe of Levi resided in the middle of the other tribes inside the fence surrounding the Tabernacle and administered the daily sacrifices and performed other duties of the priesthood.
I believe that all believers, from all periods of time, will have their residence in the New Jerusalem. We will see in v.16 that there is plenty of room for this. So why the names of the children of Israel? I believe it is simply to serve as a reminder and a memorial of how the LORD worked under the Old Covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [Israel]. Similar to this is the naming of bridges and highways to memorialize some person or event.

Thus, the names on the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem represent the inclusion of Old Testament saints of God who will reside in the ‘House of the LORD’ forever\(^\text{12}\) {i.e., Psalms 23:6; 27:4}.

We are also told that the New Jerusalem has twelve foundations which are named after the twelve apostles of the Lamb [Jesus Christ]. John the Baptist declared, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” {John 1:29}.

The twelve apostles are not specifically named but they are, according to the Matt. 10:2-4 and Acts 1:26, Simon Peter, Andrew [his brother], James [the son of Zebedee] and John [his brother], Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew [the tax collector], James [the son of Alphaeus], Lebbaeus [whose surname was Thaddaeus], Simon [the Canaanite] and Matthias.

These were indeed the foundation of the Church and the message of the Gospel. Paul tells us in Eph. 2:20 that the Church is “…..built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone.” The twelve apostles will be forever memorialized by the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem.

Thus, the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem represent the inclusion of the New Covenant saints of God who will dwell in their ‘mansions’ as Jesus promised {John 14:2-3}.

What will we be doing in the New Jerusalem? Serving the LORD and worshipping Him and when we are not doing that I believe God will have assignments for activities on the New Earth and in the New Heaven [Universe]. One thing is for sure—there will be no boredom in Heaven!

\(^\text{12}\) Interesting to note is that the earthly city of Jerusalem has gates with names such as the ‘Sheep Gate’, the ‘Damascus Gate’, the ‘Dung Gate’ and the ‘Gold Gate’.

**REV. 21:15-17 ➤ THE SIZE OF NEW JERUSALEM**

[15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

Now John is given another measuring rod [compare Rev. 11:] to measure the Great City, its gates and wall but this one is made of gold! The New Jerusalem is four-square in construction meaning its height, width and length are equal.

We need to get some appreciation of the sheer size of this Great and Holy City.
The Greek word used for measurement of distance here is the ‘stadion’ [where we get our English word ‘stadium’ from]. Since a Greek *stadion* was approximately 606 ¾ feet long and there are 5280 feet per mile, 12,000 *stadion*\(^{13}\) is equivalent to about 1380 miles! The New Jerusalem is in the shape of an immense cube 1380 miles on a side\(^{14}\). To put this in perspective, it would take a sphere almost 2400 miles in diameter to completely contain a cube of this size. The earth’s moon is 2160 miles in diameter so each corner of this city would stick outside the moon by about 120 miles! Refer to Figure 21-1 for a perspective on this.

\[\text{Figure 21-1. Depiction Of The New Jerusalem Inside A Sphere.}\]

If the New Jerusalem actually comes down onto the New Earth it would mean that the New Earth is much larger in size than the present one which is slightly less than 8000 miles in diameter. [Unless it is suspended in the New Heaven over the earth as McGee believed was the case].

In *John 14:2-3* Jesus tells the believer that; “*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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*”

Now engaging in some speculative analysis, let us suppose that each believer’s mansion is comprised of a living space that is 100x100x100 feet in size. That is equivalent to a mansion 10,000 square feet in area with a vaulted ceiling of 100 feet. But let us also allow for corridors, hallways and even streets which would still leave a large ‘living area’ for each person.

Then, taking this city at 1380 miles on a side, the volume of the New Jerusalem would be able to contain over 385 trillion such mansions! This number is slightly more than 56,000 times the current [2009] estimated world’s population\(^{15}!!\) I do not think the New Jerusalem will be too small to house all the believers from all time – do you?

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\(^{13}\) According to Nelson’s Bible Dictionary, a ‘furlong’ [in the KJV translation] was approximately one eighth mile which is 660 feet or a little over two football fields in length and making the New Jerusalem 1500 miles on a side. However, according to Unger’s Bible Dictionary a Greek *stadion* is 606.75 feet long which would make the New Jerusalem about 1380 miles on a side.

\(^{14}\) It is interesting to note that the Holy of Holies (the holiest place in the Tabernacle and later the Temple) was also in the shape of a cube 20 cubits (~30 feet) on a side {*1 Kings 6:20*}.

\(^{15}\) According to the U.S. Census Bureau the 2009 world’s population is approximately 6.8 billion people.
As we can see there will be plenty of room left over in the New Jerusalem for other uses besides residences. The other space must be used for something else and one of those will probably be an enormous worship area!

Now we are given the size of the wall which is 144 cubits high and since a cubit is approximately 1 ½ feet the wall is 216 feet high or about as tall as a 21-story building. Allowing for a 1 mile space between this Great Wall and the New Jerusalem this makes the wall over 5500 miles long—about 1300 miles longer and 190 feet higher than the Great Wall of China!

**REV. 21:18-21 ➤ THE DESIGN OF NEW JERUSALEM**

[18 The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.]

This is a city who’s designer, maker and builder is God! It is a **heavenly city**, the **permanent home** of all those who by faith have entered into the relationship of rest with God that He offers by His grace. Note that Abraham (who lived between 2200 – 2050 B.C.), the one whom Paul uses as the model of “**salvation by faith**” in Romans 4:1-8 and Galatians 3:1-18, knew of this **Holy City**:

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

......These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.—**Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16**

Thus, Abraham knew of this heavenly city 4000 years ago and it changed the way he lived and the attitudes he had related to this world! It was a hope that kept him going strong in the Lord. Believers throughout the ages have gone through hard times and trials – only by trusting God’s promises and grace will we receive the wisdom and power to remain encouraged to continue on. Jesus prior to his departure for the cross and his victory in the resurrection reminds us of our future hope of glory;

“**Let not your heart be troubled; you 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also**”.

– **John 14:1-3**
Because a believer has these promises of God, who does not lie, he/she has the sure hope of inheriting all things in Jesus Christ (refer to previous notes), living with him in the New Jerusalem and reigning with him forever, a believer’s life today should be characterized by the same faithful perseverance that marked the wonderful example of Abraham.

Note very carefully that the materials desired and valued by this world, gold and gem stones including pearls, are counted as building materials on the New Earth and in the New Jerusalem. In v.21 we are told that gold will be the ‘asphalt’ paving the streets of the New Jerusalem!

The New Jerusalem’s primary building material will be pure gold looking as it were like ‘transparent' glass’. Since pure gold is opaque, this could be referring to a highly polished, mirror-like, surface which reflects its surroundings making it appear as though it were transparent. Indeed, it is the city’s light [reflective of God’s glory] that we are told in v.11 was “…..like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

Compare this with the streets of the city in v.21 which have the same appearance. In any case, this city is an utterly amazing wonder to behold—dazzling to the eyes!

The foundation of the Great Wall is embedded with twelve different kinds of gem stones. Table 21-4 below compares the precious stones that were used on the High Priest’s breastplate\textsuperscript{17} [Ex. 39:8-14] with those listed here in the Book of Revelation. It should be noted that the Hebrew identification of some of the stones is uncertain. For example the ‘agate’ on the priest’s breastplate may be a form of chalcedony and ‘onyx’ may be a form of sardonyx. The ‘turquoise’ and ‘diamond’ might actually be forms of chrysolite and chrysoprase.

| Table 21-4. Comparison of Stones on High Priest’s Breastplate and the Foundation Stones of the New Jerusalem. (The Colored Boxes Indicate Gem Stones Common To Both.) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Exodus 39:8-14                  | Revelation 21:19-20             |
| ruby                           | topaz                          | emerald                         |
| turquoise                      | sapphire                       | diamond                         |
| jacinth                        | agate                          | amethyst                        |
| beryl                          | onyx                           | jasper                          |
|                                 | jasper                          | sapphire                        |
|                                 | sapphire                       | chalcedony                      |
|                                 | emerald                        | sardonyx                        |
|                                 | chrysolite                     | beryl                           |
|                                 | beryl                           | topaz                           |
|                                 | chrysoprase                     | jacinth                         |
|                                 | jacinth                         | amethyst                         |

These precious stones are depicted in Figure 21-2.

\textsuperscript{16} Transparent [5675 diauges (dee-ow-gace')] This Greek word is found only in Rev. 21:21: clear, transparent. This word was not included in the original Strong’s Dictionary but is found in other Greek lexicons. Alphabetically it belongs between Strong’s number 1306 and 1307.

\textsuperscript{17} Some Bible scholars believe these stones may have been equivalent to the U’rim and Thum’mim [Lights and Perfections] mentioned in Ex. 28:30.
The brilliance and variation in color of these twelve stones embedded throughout the wall’s foundation will provide a ‘feast for the eyes’; or putting it in more recent vernacular, they will be the ultimate expression of ‘eye candy’. It is little wonder that the New Jerusalem is referred to as ‘a bride adorned for her husband’ in v.2.

The twelve gates in the Great Wall [that have the names of the twelve tribes of Israel] are made of individual pearls. Obviously these are some enormous pearls and they testify of the awesome creative power of God! Like the gold street of New Jerusalem, these pearls are simply used as another kind of construction material; yet in contrast consider what price the present world system would put on such objects.

An interesting characteristic about pearls is that it takes time to make a pearl and the larger the pearl the longer the time. These pearls represent great age even though they are ‘new’ and will serve as a reminder that in the New Heaven and New Jerusalem time will be measured by eternity.

Note that although gold is highly valued in our present world, in the New Jerusalem gold will be the paving material, the ‘asphalt’, of choice! God is making a powerful statement that there are much more important things in Heaven than those things valued in this present world. Things like salvation and eternal life and the LORD Himself!

[22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.]

Now we are told something rather startling; especially to one who is of Jewish heritage. There will be no temple in the New Jerusalem! Previously we saw that there is a Temple in God’s Heaven {Rev. 8:3; 9:13; 11:19} in which the original GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE and ARK OF THE TESTIMONY reside. The implication being that the other Temple furniture is also there.

Indeed, we are reminded in Heb. 8:5 and 9:23-24 that the earthly Tabernacle and the items in it were only a ‘shadow’ or pattern of things in Heaven. But in the New Jerusalem there will be no need of a temple because Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple in it! The glory or radiant power of God will provide illumination to this Holy City.

Do not miss the identification of the Lamb with the Lord God Almighty! We have seen this name for God used before in Rev. 4:8; 11:17; 15:3 and 16:7. This name for God is significant\(^\text{18}\). In the Greek and Hebrew this is:

- **Kurios Theos Pantokrator**
- **Adonai El Shaddai**

‘**Kurios**’ = master, owner, supreme in authority, a title of great respect.
‘**Theos**’ = deity, supreme divinity, all powerful.
‘**Pantokrator**’ = to hold all, the ruler/curator of all, to have strength.

This name for God emphasizes the following characteristics:

- **Strengthener**
- **Satisfier, All-sufficient One; the one who not only enriches but makes fruitful.**
- **One who chastens and disciplines His ‘children’**.

Christians will one day worship the LORD in the New Jerusalem in His Temple—worthy is He to be praised!

\(^{18}\) Note that it was **El Shaddai** who appeared to Abraham and first confirmed the **covenant of the promised Seed**, the Messiah and associated blessings {Gen. 17:1}. In the Old Testament, this name for God is the one that was primarily used before the giving of the covenant of Law!
APPLICATION:

The fact that the LORD will be the Temple in the New Jerusalem is appropriate because a believer is joined to Him by repentance, faith and confession and is therefore an extension of that Greater Temple:

In 1 Cor. 3:16-17 believers are referred to as the temple of God and that the Holy Spirit dwells in them:

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”

In 1 Cor. 6:15-20 believers are told that their bodies are members of Jesus Christ that their bodies are the ‘temple of the Holy Spirit’:

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

In other words, Christians are carrying around with them a sacred and holy place made that way by the very presence of God. That is why Paul admonishes believers to avoid engaging in sexual immorality because Christian is joined in a holy union to the Lamb of God, the LORD Jesus Christ!

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Therefore “Come out from among them and be separate”, says the Lord. “Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”—2 Cor. 6:16-18

It is also why we are reminded in 1 Cor. 6:9-11 that the characteristics of the non-believer will not characterize a Christian’s lifestyle because we have inherited eternal life. Nothing that defiles [i.e., causes to make unholy] will be allowed to be present in the New Jerusalem.

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

Refer also to Gal. 5:19-26.
In the first creation God made the sun [the greater light] for the daytime and the moon [the lesser light] for the nighttime {Gen. 1:16}. In the second creation, where the former things have all passed away and all things are new, there will be no need for sun or moon. Therefore there will be no more seasons since there will be no need for planting and harvesting. There will be no sea {v.1} which is consistent with no sun needed to generate a rain cycle.

The gates of the New Jerusalem will never be shut because there is only day [light] there and there will be nothing allowed that can harm or frighten—it will be a place of perfect peace and safety—the Eternal Paradise! Hallelujah!

In the Bible ‘death’ means separation. Those who overcame through the blood of the Lamb by faith receive God’s grace and inherit eternal life in eternal presence of the Lamb. Those who inherit eternal death in the eternal separation from the Lamb.

In the New Heaven and New Earth, there will be nothing that defiles, works an abomination, or lies. See also Revelation 22:14-5.

Bibliography

(2) Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, 1 Corinthians-Revelation, Vol.5; The Book of Revelation, J. Vernon McGee, pp. 876-1080, copyright © 1982