

# The Revelation of Jesus Christ

## The New Jerusalem

### Revelation 21:9-11a

#### INTRODUCTION:

Last week we "saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away". And we got a glimpse of "the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."

This week we will get a very glorious vision of this bride.

Once we get past all of the horrors of the **beast**, and the **false prophet**, and the **harlot**, and the **red dragon**, and the **trumpets**, and the **seals**, and the **bowls**, and all of the chaos that is going to happen in these "last days", and we begin to cross over into this new age to come and we just sit back and soak in the glories that await us.

When Christ returns then we will be able to stand, once again, before God in all of His glory with our new bodies. When Christ returns there will be no more mourning, no crying, no pain, and no grief. Righteousness will rule. There will no longer be any sin. These former things have passed away along with our present heaven and earth. We will be able to receive all the eternal rewards and blessings promised to the faithful.

#### All Stand and Read Scripture

##### **Revelation 21:9-11a (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

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<sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup> having the glory of God....

#### Prayer

This world, with all its evil, pain, and difficulties, has now passed away in John's vision. Now we are at home with the Lord. Paul tells us of this transformation.

##### **2 Corinthians 5:1-10 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup> For indeed in this *house* we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, <sup>3</sup> inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. <sup>4</sup> For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal

will be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup> Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight— <sup>8</sup> we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

## **BODY:**

### **I. THE BRIDE**

One of the glories is the picture of this "**New Jerusalem**" which is the bride of Christ, the church.

#### **Revelation 21:9-10 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "**Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**"

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<sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

John sees one of the seven angels who had poured out one of the bowls of wrath. The angel tells John that he is going to show him the bride, the wife of the Lamb. We already know from the scriptures what is going to be described to us. **Revelation 19:7-8** told us that the marriage of the Lamb has come and the bride is ready. The bride is defined for us as the saints, God's holy people, and the fine linen the bride is wearing represents the righteous deeds of the saints.

Paul makes the same connection, describing how husbands love their wives just as Christ loves the church. Christ is the husband, the groom and the church, the people of God, are the wife, the bride. The description the angel gives is not a literal new city to be built in Palestine. The city, new Jerusalem, represents the people of God.

The angel carries John away in the Spirit to show him the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. Being carried in the Spirit reminds us that John continues a visionary sequence. John has not been literally carried anywhere. He is seeing a vision from God. The holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven connects back to **verses 1-2** where we saw the **new heaven, new earth**, and the **New Jerusalem** introduced. **Verses 3-8** gave more details about the new heaven and new earth. The rest of the chapter gives more details about new Jerusalem.

### **II. NEW JERUSALEM'S WALLS AND GATES**

#### **Revelation 21:11b-14 (NASB)**

...Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. <sup>12</sup> It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names *were* written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. <sup>13</sup> *There were*

three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. <sup>14</sup> And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them *were* the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

John sees the New Jerusalem having the glory of God, full of radiance like a rare jewel, clear as crystal. The people of God are symbolized as a great city coming down from heaven, shining with the glory of God.

Verses 12-14 describes the walls and the gates of the city. The great, high wall represents how the unclean and wicked cannot enter into fellowship with God. Notice this point is clearly made in verse 27.

### **Revelation 21:27 (NASB)**

<sup>27</sup> and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The walls show that no one can enter unless they are in fellowship with the Lord.

I have avoided references to the Old Testament prophecies due to time constraints during the sermons, but this morning I would like to show you a few of them in order to show how consistent the scriptures are throughout the Bible. The walls and gates also pictures the prophecy that Isaiah made.

### **Isaiah 26:1-2 (NASB)**

<sup>26</sup> In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; He sets up walls and ramparts for security. <sup>2</sup> "Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter, The one that remains faithful.

The other prophetic references come from Ezekiel's vision of the new temple in **Ezekiel Chapters 40-48**. In Ezekiel's context the physical temple has been destroyed and the people carried into captivity. Ezekiel in a vision is taken to a very high mountain like John was for this vision in Revelation. Ezekiel sees a great new temple. Revelation borrows many images and descriptions from Ezekiel's vision showing the fulfillment of what Ezekiel prophesied. Ezekiel's vision describes the actual presence of God within the temple of the new community. **John** sees **twelve gates** guarded by twelve angels. Inscribed on the gates were the **names of the twelve tribes of Israel**. **Ezekiel saw the same thing (Ezekiel 48:30-35)**. There are three gates on each side of the city, each inscribed with a name from the sons of Israel (**Jacob was renamed by God to Israel**). In addition to the twelve gates, there are twelve foundation stones. On the foundation stones were inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The apostles were the foundation of the city of God, the new Jerusalem. **Jesus sent his Holy Spirit to the apostles who were guided into all truth.**

### **John 16:13 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

When we obey the teachings of the apostles recorded for us as the holy scriptures, then we will become part of the household of God and citizens in this great and glorious city of God. As the apostle Paul said to the Ephesians,

### **Ephesians 2:19-20 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, <sup>20</sup> having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*,

The inclusion of the names of the twelve sons of Israel with the names of the twelve apostles shows the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan. The faithful people of God from both the covenants are part of God's family and are in fellowship with the Lord.

## **III. NEW JERUSALEM'S MEASUREMENTS**

### **Revelation 21:15-17 (NASB)**

<sup>15</sup> The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. <sup>16</sup> The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. <sup>17</sup> And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, *according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements.*

John now sees the angel with a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates, and its walls. When Ezekiel saw this vision he also saw an angel with a measuring rod in his hand (Ezekiel 40:3). Ezekiel 40:5 shows this angel going around the outside of the temple area and measuring the various aspects of the temple. The measuring of the city (and the temple in Ezekiel's vision) is to **show the security found in this city**. These vast measurements of the city are to show that the people of God are secure and safe.

The length, width, and height of the city measure to 12,000 stadia. Many translations convert this measurement for us to help us understand the size of the city. The NASB translates it as 1500 miles. Unfortunately, this loses the symbolic meaning of 12,000. Notice the measurements of the city are also perfect in dimension. These measurements should immediately cause us to realize that we are not looking at a literal city that is 1500 miles high. The perfection of the city is being emphasized with the number of 12,000. We have noticed in our study of Revelation that 12,000 is a powerful, perfect number. We saw that the number of the servants of God sealed from each tribe was 12,000, bringing the number to 144,000. There was only one other thing that was in perfect dimension of God's buildings. The Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple was perfectly square (1 Kings 6:20). The Holy of Holies was 20 cubits long, wide, and high and was overlaid with gold. This room represented the presence of God. New Jerusalem with its perfect dimensions in equal length, width, and height represents God's presence with his people who have been made perfect.

Thus, a human measurement is the same as an angelic measurement because God is dwelling with his perfect people.

## **IV. NEW JERUSALEM'S BUILDING MATERIALS**

### **Revelation 21:18-21 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. <sup>19</sup> The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; <sup>20</sup> the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl;

the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. <sup>21</sup> And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

The description of the building materials for the New Jerusalem are simply amazing. The walls are like diamonds, clear as glass, while the city was made of pure gold. Just as the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple was overlaid with gold and the whole temple was laid with gold (1 Kings 6:20-22) so also is new Jerusalem made of pure gold. The various precious stones continue to amplify the beauty and glory of God with this city.

This is the city that reflects the glory of God. This is the dwelling place of God. The twelve gates were twelve pearls and the street of the city was made of pure gold, transparent as glass. Everything is perfect. Nothing is marred in this city. The holy people of God are with the Lord in perfect fellowship where there is no evil.

## **V. NEW JERUSALEM'S TEMPLE**

### **Revelation 21:22-27 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup> I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. <sup>25</sup> In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; <sup>26</sup> and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; <sup>27</sup> and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Now John sees something very unusual about this holy city. There is no temple in the city. The reason is that the temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. There is no need for an intercessor between us and God. God is the temple. We have direct access and fellowship with the Lord. This is the reality of what the prophets promised.

### **Haggai 2:6-9 NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> For thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. <sup>7</sup> I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the Lord of hosts. <sup>8</sup> 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the Lord of hosts. <sup>9</sup> 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the Lord of hosts."

The New Testament has taught us the same imagery.

### **Acts 4:11 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, *but* which became the chief corner stone.

### **Ephesians 2:19-20 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, <sup>20</sup> having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

Further, the city has no need for the sun or moon because the glory of God gives it light and the lamp is the Lamb. The glory of God is incomparable to any source of light. God's glory is sufficient for us for living. Once again, the imagery of verse 23 shows the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

The chapter concludes revealing that this great glory, security, and fellowship are available for all people. The nations walk by its light and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. They will bring the glory and the honor of the nations (21:26). Isaiah also prophesied of this moment.

**Isaiah 60:3, 5, 11-12, 19 (NASB)**

3 "Nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising....

5 "Then you will see and be radiant, And your heart will thrill and rejoice; Because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you, The wealth of the nations will come to you....

11 "Your gates will be open continually; They will not be closed day or night, So that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, With their kings led in procession. 12 "For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve you will perish, And the nations will be utterly ruined. ...

19 "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory.

**CONCLUSION:**

We saw that the great, high wall represented that the unclean and wicked cannot enter into fellowship with God.

**Revelation 21:27 (NASB)**

27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Our names must be written in the Lamb's book of life.

How do we get our names written the Lamb's book of Life?

The Bible is very clear on how we should respond to God's free gift of salvation.

- Hear God's Word.
- Believe in the Lord Jesus.
- Repent of our sins.
- Confess Jesus as our Lord.
- Be buried in the waters of baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
- Live for Christ.

Only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life can enter into this glorious fellowship with God.

**This is the Day!**