

## The Revelation –The New Jerusalem

Last week's lesson brought about the culmination of all things. Today we go back a thousand years in time to the time just after the return of Jesus to earth. Revelation 21 says:

- (1) 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.
- (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- (3) 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.
- (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
- (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
- (6) And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.
- (7) He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.
- (8) But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.
- (9) And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.
- (10) And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,
- (11) Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;
- (12) And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:
- (13) On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.
- (14) And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
- (15) And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.
- (16) And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.
- (17) And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

- (18) And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass.
- (19) And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;
- (20) The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysopterus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.
- (21) And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.
- (22) And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
- (23) And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.
- (24) And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.
- (25) And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.
- (26) And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.
- (27) And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

As we begin this chapter we find that a new heaven and a new earth has been created. God has made “all things new.” Old things are passed away. You see, in the beginning God created a beautiful heaven and earth and looked upon it and said that it was very good (Genesis 1:31). Soon after this creation, though, war erupted in heaven, and Lucifer was cast down to earth. He entered the Eden paradise that God had created and became the tempter. Man rebelled against God and brought pain, suffering, disease, and death upon the earth. No longer was the earth perfect. It needed restoration. This time, then, is the time of restoration of all things. It is the recreation of God’s perfect paradise.

The description given here is what most people think of as Heaven, but this is not Heaven. “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9). You see, while it’s hard to imagine what this city actually looks like, we at least have a glimpse, and John saw it. Heaven, though, is beyond our imagination.

There are a few things that I would like to make note of here. First of all, there are twelve gates with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel written on them. You see, “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26). Now this doesn’t mean that everyone who is physically descended from Jacob will be saved. Israel is the heir to the promise, the Jews, and we’re told that this is not physical but spiritual (Romans 2:28-29). So these gates are for those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life, and only for them.

But what about the Old Testament believers? They must be saved in the same way. You see, they could not be justified by the works of the law because by the law is no man saved. They were justified by faith. That faith is in Jesus Christ.

Next we see that the twelve foundations have the names of the twelve apostles. These, of course, are the eleven and Paul. While Matthias was numbered with the twelve the Scriptures are clear that Paul is the apostle of Jesus Christ, and there can only be twelve.

Thirdly, the size of this city is enormous. A furlong is, by definition, 1/8 of a mile, so 12,000 furlongs is 1500 miles (~2400 km). No city in the world today would be anything more than a speck compared to this city. For the first time in history Israel will cover all of the area that God promised to Abraham (Nile River to the Euphrates River, Genesis 15:18).

What is even more unimaginable is the height of this city. The top of this city will be high enough to be in orbit. Obviously the earth is different than it was before, with a denser atmosphere.

Much of this chapter is self-explanatory, so I'm not going to spend a great deal of time on it. If you have questions I encourage you to contact me and I'll either answer them privately or give the answer in a future lesson.

Also, I would be very interested in hearing about your salvation experience. When did you come to know Jesus as your personal Savior? Where were you? What prompted you to come to Jesus at that time? The Scripture teaches that we are to always be ready with our testimony.

If you've never received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior now is the time. If you'll call upon his name, repenting of your sins and believing on Him for the salvation of your soul you will receive the gift of everlasting life. Won't you pray today?

Yours in Christ,

Bro. John Rich