

# The Old and the New: Part 2

*Revelation 21:9 - 22:5*

## ANNOUNCE

Men's commission 20th 5:30

Midweek study

## BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Rev 21:9-27 NKJV] 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. **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. **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. **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. 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. [Rev 22:1-5 NKJV] 1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, [was] the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each [tree] yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree [were] for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name [shall be] on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

## APPLICATION

As we move through this text, you will see reasons why people tend to lean toward an allegorical interpretation of the New Jerusalem.

- In many ways, the new Jerusalem and the eternal state of redeemed humanity do bear resemblance to the church of today... as it should.
- Just as there are symbols in the OT that point to the first coming of Jesus, there are also symbols in today's church that point to the second coming of Jesus and the realities that will come to pass.

[1Co 13:10-12 NKJV] 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

- Now - all those who are in Christ are new creations. Then - All creation will be made new.
- Now - We see signs of the kingdom in the hearts of men. Then - the kingdom will be established forever on the earth.
- Now - we have peace with God and fellowship with the Spirit. Then - we will stand face to face, fully immersed in the glory of God.

So yes, there are some aspects of the New Jerusalem that resemble the church, that's because what the church is now is a foreshadowing of what is going to be the new reality of eternity.

**[1Jo 3:2 NKJV] 2 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.**

**[Heb 13:14 NKJV] 14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.**

So, let's turn our attention to the new future home of all of God's people. It's beyond the ability of the human mind to comprehend, yet we see a glimpse of what is coming.

## 1 Is Unique in its Glory

### BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Rev 21:9-27 NKJV] 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.**

## APPLICATION

Now, there are some who interpret Revelation from an allegorical perspective. This language calling the city “The Bride of the Lamb” leads some to believe that this is not a literal place at all but representative of the church.

- I Believe that this is a literal place that God has prepared. I believe that this is the place that Hebrews taught us about, our heavenly country.
- This is important because in this chapter, we see that the city is referred to as the bride. We must take into consideration, “the law of first mention.”
- The first mention of the city in verse 2 tells us that she is “prepared as a bride,” not the bride. Yet here the city takes on the characteristics of those who dwell within it, the bride of Christ, all of the saints of God.
- EXAMPLE – If I said to you, “Come see the gift I got for you.” You would come and what you might describe is, “a large box which was wrapped in green paper with a large bow on top and a tag the said to you...” Do you get my drift? The box is not a gift, but it becomes significant because of what’s inside it.

10:06



## THE NEW HEAVENS, EARTH, AND JERUSALEM

At the end of all things, we find a God who makes all things new, not only a new heart but everything new. A complete reversal of the curse of sin and all of its effects is found at the end of the story when God brings forth our eternal home.

- "Behold, I make all things new!" That was the proclamation that came from the throne last week where we left off.
- Jesus has ushered in His perfect peace. All rebellion against God has been forever dealt with.
- Now John gets a sneak peek at the eternal home of all those who follow Christ.

I was thinking about heaven and was struggling to comprehend what exactly eternity will be like... forever is a long time. There's a bit of a conundrum that's worth exploring. We talk about heaven as a place of eternal joy, goodness, and perfection, but have you considered what drives the pursuit of joy and pleasure here on earth? Part of the desire for what's good comes from the experience of what's not good.

- I get excited about my favorite meal because I understand hunger.
- Someone may get excited about a comfortable bed because they're exhausted.
- I get excited about a vacation in Florida because I spent the winter in Missouri!
- Personally, I struggle with tinnitus (ringing in my ears). It affects my sleep and focus. If I woke up one morning and it was completely gone, I would leap for joy! But if I didn't suffer, there would be no anticipation of relief.

This is one of the reasons we look forward to heaven now. Tears are no more, pain is no more, suffering is no more, and sin and its devastating effects are no more. That's something to get excited about because of our current experience. But what about after we're there? For all eternity, we won't have the memory of suffering, pain, and death.

This is why I believe heaven HAS to be more than simply your favorite earthly enjoyment on steroids. So many people tend to measure heaven with incredible shallowness. Heaven sounds like the better option than hell, and maybe there's a massive golf course up there, and I can play a few rounds with Moses. Maybe it's an eternal supply of Twinkies without the fear of gaining weight or developing diabetes. In other words, heaven is just a better version of all my earthly desires and carnal longings. The fact is that none of those things would be sufficient to sustain everlasting joy and fulfillment in a perfect environment.

What we discover today is the one thing that makes heaven the eternity worth pursuing is not the trappings: our new mansion, a big pool, or a ski trip to the best slopes. What sustains perfect joy, peace, satisfaction, and pleasure for eternity is unrestricted, unhindered access and fellowship with the fullness of God's presence and glory.

**[Psa 16:11 NKJV] 11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**

**[Psa 84:10 NKJV] 10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.**

The truth is, if you don't love God, heaven isn't for you. Heaven isn't just a better form of Earth; heaven is the amplified presence of God experienced in its fullness. It's what we have a small taste of now when we become enraptured in moments of prayer, experience His goodness and presence that surpasses understanding, and when "the things of earth become strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace."

As we look at the design of the New Jerusalem, we find that everything about it is created to magnify and display the glory of God, His covenant promises, and His light and majesty.

## 2 Is Unique in its Construction

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. 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. 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. 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.

### APPLICATION

As we've examined the bride, let's look at the bride's new home! It's quite a place. Verses 12-14 describe the beauty of the city in God's covenants:

**12 gates – three on each side of the city with the twelve tribes of Israel written on them.**

- These gates would probably resemble the formation of camp of Israel. If you were to look upon the camp of Israel from above as they wandered through the wilderness,

you would see three tribes on each end of the camp, ultimately forming a cross from above.

**12 foundations – each foundation had the name of one of the twelve apostles of the lamb.** I'm assuming that Judas's name is not there; most likely it is Paul's name.

- The significance here is that the heavenly city is built around God's two everlasting covenants.
- Heaven will be comprised of all God's saints, both from the old covenant and the new.
- The saints of old looked ahead by faith to the coming Messiah; we look back by faith at the messiah.
- Both Jews and Greeks who have placed their faith in Christ will be together as one people.

There are those who would venture to say that God is finished with Israel and that the church has now taken its place as the people of God.

- Here we see that's not the case. Salvation still comes to everyone the same way, Jew or gentile, salvation requires faith in Christ.
- But we also see that God has not forgotten or forsaken His everlasting covenant with Israel. He still has major plans for her. It would be wise for our leaders in this country to get on board with God and support and pray for Israel.

So in this new city we find a beautiful picture of God's everlasting covenants to the church and to Israel.

Verses 15 – 21: The beauty of the city in its architecture: **And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.**

Verse 15 – the angel busts out his measuring tape. Why is it so important for us to know the architecture of this city?

- I think God wants us to understand that it is unlike anything that has ever been created on this earth. It supersedes and surpasses anything that man has ever been able to accomplish.
- You can go around this world and see some engineering and architectural masterpieces, but when you hear this description, it makes everything you've seen here look like a cardboard box.

### **Verses 16-17: The measurements**

- 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.

- As a square – there are some who say this word really means pyramid, but I think, by the description, that this is literally a perfect cube.
- Pyramids have always stood for pagan worship from the ancient Mayans to the Egyptians.
- This is no small city. Stadia and furlong - ancient units of measurement roughly equating to the same distance. Its borders are somewhere between 1200 and 1500 miles in every direction. The thickness of the wall is 44 cubits = 216 feet thick
- **The city on today's globe would go from the border of Canada to Mexico and from Colorado to the eastern seaboard of the US.** Remember, this is not heaven; this is just the capital city of Heaven. I have a feeling the new earth is going to be massive compared to what we now have.
  - One mathematician used the measurements based on the size of today's cities and buildings and estimated that to scale, the earth would need to be 4 times larger than our sun in order to house this city.
- Not only would it cover that much surface area, but it would extend 1400 miles into space. NASA says that the orbital distance from the Earth is 220 miles (this is how far you have to go above the Earth to get into "Outer Space." WOW! That will need quite an elevator. Here's **your view from the first level of the city.**
- For the sake of humor, not biblical fact, I calculated (with the help of chatgpt) the amount of space each person might have. There have been approximately 2.8 billion Christians since the beginning of the church. Add the OT saints and the possibility of another billion Christians in the future. If 4 billion people inhabited New Jerusalem alone, each person would have 8.6 cubic miles. Not a bad allotment!
- Notice at the end of verse 17 he says the measurement of a man, that is, of an angel... He is trying to get the point across that this is not some symbolic measurement. I believe the angel was measuring a physical building with human measurements so we understand that it is a real place.

### **Verses 18-21 – the construction materials:**

- The entire city is made up of crystal clear gold. What is that? I have no idea, but again, notice its transparency in order to reflect God's glory.
- The twelve foundations are made up of twelve precious stones, all of which are opaque in nature. As God's light hits this foundation, it shoots for brilliant and beautiful colors throughout heaven.
  - Jasper - a multicolored gem - reddish from iron oxide, white, yellow, green, orange,
  - Sapphire - blue clear
  - Chalcedony - greenish with stripes



- Emerald - bright rich green
- Sardonyx - reddish white
- Sardius (Carnelian) - Firey red
- Chrysolite - light green
- Baryl - sea green
- Topaz - greenish yellow
- Chrysoprase - aqua marine
- Jacinth - violet
- amethyst - Deep Purple
- Isotropic gems - become dark when light hits them because of how the angles refract light (diamonds and rubies). Anistrophic gems enhance light. All 12 gems mentioned are anistrophic, which means they are designed to enhance light.
- I'm not sure what all these stones represent, but I have a feeling that each one will remind us of Jesus when we see them.
  - Three primary colors - Red, Yellow, Blue.
  - The human eye can perceive 1000 shades of light. 100 levels of red/green. 100 levels of yellow blue shade.
  - 10 million different shades of color.
  - What is heaven has other colors that we haven't even seen?
- Maybe we'll see the sardius stone (red stone) and be reminded of the blood of Christ that cleansed us.
- Maybe we'll look at the purple amethyst and be reminded of God's majesty and glory.

Verse 21 – the “pearly gates” comes from this verse.

**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.**

- Each of these 12 gates, probably 1300 miles in height, is made out of a single pearl.
- That takes one big oyster... not really, just one big God.
- Out of all the precious stones used, the pearl is the only one that is created from flesh.
- A single grain of sand gets stuck inside the oyster. It irritates and injures the oyster. The oyster secretes a substance onto the foreign object, and over time, a beautiful pearl is created.
- Maybe every time we walk through those gates, we will be reminded that Christ bore an injury in his flesh from our sin, but out of it came our beautiful salvation.

Streets of Gold – there apparently is one street that runs through the city that is pure, clear gold

### 3 Is Unique in its Nature

#### BIBLE PASSAGE

**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.**

#### APPLICATION

This is the most significant and wonderful aspect of heaven. Many say they can't wait to get to heaven to see their mansion or to walk on those streets... I can't wait to get to heaven because that's where God is, in all of His glory.

Verse 23 – No more need for day and night, sun and moon because the glory of God lightens up heaven for all eternity.

- The Bible tells us in 1 John that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
- Out of all the stars that have been discovered the one that is the brightest to date has been called "**Sirius [image].**" Sirius is 23x brighter than our sun... and our sun is pretty bright as stars go believe it or not.
- The brightest star in our galaxy, and all you see of it is a little spec in the sky. The brightest star in the universe is probably not even visible from Earth.
- The glory and brightness of God is so bright that the entire new universe will not have a speck of darkness anywhere!

Verses 24-26: This is difficult to interpret. Will there be nations and kings on the new heavens and new earth? It's hard to say. I believe that this is a picture of what happens after the 1000-year reign of Christ. Those kings and nations that did not rebel against Christ have now come into the New Jerusalem. The glory of each nation, and each culture is now combined into one:

- There will be no more ethnic separation
- There will be no more social separation
- The gates will never be shut: Gates to a city only had to be shut at night because of thieves and enemies. There will be more night and no more evil, so there is no reason to ever shut the gate.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

**[Rev 22:1-5 NKJV] 1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.**

### APPLICATION

In chapter 22:1-5 we see several items that are in heaven. When we go there we will see these things.

- **River of life**
- **Street of the city**
- **Tree of life**
- **No more curse**
- **Light of God**

Do these things sound familiar? They should, they all perfectly represent Jesus:

- Christ has become for us the river of life.
- Christ has become for us the path to God.
- Christ has become for us the tree of life.
- Christ has become for us the curse.
- Christ is for us the light of God.