

# THE NEW JERUSALEM

Revelation 21:9 - 22:5

Revelation 21:9-22:5 gives a more detailed description of the New Jerusalem, our eternal home. I want to emphasize again the physicality of our future. At the Rapture, whether we are resurrected from the dead or we are alive and translated, we will receive glorified, physical bodies. Our glorified bodies will be like the glorified body of Jesus which was very physical though it had qualities that differ from our present, mortal bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-49). Jesus invited Thomas to *touch* His scars (Jn. 20:24-29). Jesus *ate food* in the presence of His disciples (Luke 24:36-49). Jesus *talked* to His disciples and they *heard* Him by way of their physical ears. All this is to drive home the fact that just as Jesus' glorified body is a physical body so also our glorified bodies will be physical bodies. We need to get clear in our minds that our future will be a very physical experience in very physical places starting with the New Jerusalem in which we will take up residence at the Rapture.

To be clear, all Old Testament saints and Church Age saints who have died up to this moment in history are in the Third Heaven in Paradise, but they are in a disembodied state (Lk. 23:39-43; Eph. 4:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:1-10). They await the First Resurrection – the resurrection to life (Jn. 5:29). Jesus is the first stage of the First Resurrection. **Church Age saints are the second stage and will be resurrected at the Rapture.** Old Testament and Tribulation saints are the third and fourth stages and will be resurrected in the 75 day interval between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

All of us will physically live together for eternity in the physical New Jerusalem of which John is given detailed revelation in Revelation 21 starting with verse 9.

## A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE NEW JERUSALEM (21:9-11)

**Revelation 21:9–22:5 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> *Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."* <sup>10</sup> *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup> having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.*

How many of us have climbed Iron Mountain or Mount Woodside on a clear day? It's incredible how far you can see: into Mexico to the south all the way up to Camp Pendleton in the north. When you learn the dimensions of the New Jerusalem, you will understand why John was taken to a great, high mountain to view it.

As in verse 2, the New Jerusalem is described as "coming down out of heaven from God". The New Jerusalem exists presently (Gal. 4:25-26) in the Third Heaven and will come down to settle on the New Earth.<sup>1</sup> Jesus is preparing the New Jerusalem (John 14:1-3). We will take up residence in the New Jerusalem when we are resurrected / translated and taken up to the Third Heaven at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Our resurrection bodies will be physical bodies (1 Cor. 15:35-58). The New Jerusalem is a physical place. We will physically live in the New Jerusalem beginning with the Rapture. We will live in the New Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom while serving here on earth. We will live in the New Jerusalem on the New Earth in the Eternal Order.

Hebrews 12:22-24 makes clear that the New Jerusalem is the eternal dwelling of the saints. The author of Hebrews encourages his beleaguered messianic readers of their inheritance in Christ. As these verses make clear, the New Jerusalem is the dwelling place of the holy angels, Church saints (assembly of the firstborn), God and the Old Testament saints (righteous made perfect).

**Hebrews 12:22–24 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

---

<sup>1</sup> First heaven is the atmosphere. Second heaven is outer space. Third heaven is the dwelling place of God.

From his mountaintop perch, John describes the wall, gates and foundation of our future home.

## THE WALL, GATES AND FOUNDATION (21:12-21)

### Layout (21:12-14)

<sup>12</sup> *It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—* <sup>13</sup> *on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.* <sup>14</sup> *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

The security of an ancient city was directly related to the strength and size of its walls, gates and guards. Surrounded by big, high walls with gates guarded by angels, the New Jerusalem is the epitome of safety and security. Leave your deadbolts, security cameras, alarm systems, shotguns and guard dogs behind; we won't need 'em. We'll be living in the safest place in the universe (there won't be any criminals or crime anyway; they'll be in the Lake of Fire).

The gates and foundations will be engraved with the names of the twelve sons of Israel and the twelve apostles of Jesus forever memorializing these men who played such a major role in God's program for Israel and the Church. The distinction between Israel and the Church will also be remembered though there will be no functional distinction between the two in the Eternal Order.

In verses 15 through 17, we learn the dimensions of our future home.

### Dimensions (21:15-17)

<sup>15</sup> *And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls.* <sup>16</sup> *The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal.* <sup>17</sup> *He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.*

The New Jerusalem is a cube. "12,000 stadia" is 1500 miles; the New Jerusalem is 1500 miles long, 1500 miles wide and 1500 miles high.

This picture gives a sense of the size of the city.



Dr. Henry Morris, founder of *The Institute for Creation Research* made some interesting calculations concerning the New Jerusalem:

*Henry Morris... estimates that the total population of the world, past, present, and future, will be about one hundred billion. If 20 percent ultimately become residents of the New Jerusalem, then the city will have to accommodate twenty billion people. If residences occupy 25 percent of the space in the city (leaving 75 percent for avenues, parks, public buildings, and other areas), then each residence, or cubical block, would be about one-third of a mile on each face of the cube. Compare one-third of a mile, or 1,760 feet, to the width and depth of lots (which might range anywhere from 60 to 250 feet) on which homes are typically built today. Obviously, there will be more than ample room for all who will live in the New Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>*

The wall will be 216 feet high. John mentions that a human cubit (approx. 18") is the same unit of measure that the angel was using in measuring the size of the city and the height of the wall.

Verses 18-21 reveal the composition of the wall, its gates and the street of the city.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Charles Ryrie in *Revelation- Everyman's Bible Commentary* (Everyman's Bible Commentaries) (Kindle Locations 2161-2169). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

**Composition (21:18-21)**

<sup>18</sup> *The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.* <sup>19</sup> *The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,* <sup>20</sup> *the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, 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 of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.*

This is one artist's rendering.



Verses 22-27 reveal things that will not be in the New Jerusalem.

**THINGS NOT IN THE NEW JERUSALEM (21:22-27)**

<sup>22</sup> *And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.* <sup>23</sup> *And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.* <sup>24</sup> *By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it,* <sup>25</sup> *and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.* <sup>26</sup> *They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.* <sup>27</sup> *But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

**No Temple (21:22)**

One of the most prominent structures in an ancient city was its temple(s). Athens and the Parthenon, Ephesus and its temple to Athena (Acts 19:35) and the temple of Jerusalem are some examples. In the New Jerusalem there will be no temple because God the Father, Son and Spirit will dwell personally in our midst. We will be pure and holy and therefore will be able to have direct, personal interaction with our holy God.

**No Need for Sun or Moon – No Night (21:23-25)**

The New Jerusalem will have no need of the sun or moon to light the city; the *Shecinah Glory* of God will light the city. This doesn't mean there will be no sun or moon – the text simply says there will be *no need* for the sun and moon as sources of light for the city. In fact, there will be no night in the Eternal Order. We won't need to lock our doors at night. The gates of the city will never be shut; there will be no need because there will be no night and there will be no criminals or criminal activity so much of which happens under cover of darkness.

**Nothing Unclean (21:26-27)**

Finally, no person or thing which is unclean, impure or evil will ever enter the New Jerusalem. Instead, those who were kings on the old earth and Gentile saints (better translation than "nations") will bring glory and honor to the city. Only those written in the Lamb's book of life will dwell in the city.

Finally, in verses 1-5 of chapter 22, the things John is shown reveal that the things lost in the Garden of Eden will be restored in the New Jerusalem.

**PARADISE RESTORED (22:1-5)****The Tree of Life (22:1-2)**

<sup>1</sup> *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb* <sup>2</sup> *through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of*

*life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

From the throne of God and the Lamb a river of crystal clear water will flow through the middle of main street.

The Tree of Life from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:11, 24) will be planted with its trunk extending to both sides of the river. The Tree of Life will bear fresh fruit each month of the year. This indicates there will be some type of dating system (days, weeks, months, years) in the Eternal Order.

The leaves of the tree will be for the “healing of the nations”. The Greek word translated “healing” is the source of our English word “therapeutic.” Some Bible students see this as evidence of the New



Jerusalem's involvement in the Millennial Kingdom: the leaves of the Tree of Life will be used medicinally upon the earth during the Millennial Kingdom. Other Bible students understand this to mean that the leaves will not be for healing existing sicknesses - there will be no sickness in the Eternal Order - but rather, the leaves will be for health-giving to the nations (lit. Gentiles). In other words, there will be no sickness in the Eternal Order because of the leaves of the Tree of Life.

### **The Curse Removed (22:3-5a)**

<sup>3</sup> *No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.* <sup>4</sup> *They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.* <sup>5</sup> *And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light,*

The essence of the Curse is death – separation. First and foremost spiritual death; separation from our holy Creator. Second, physical death; the separation of our souls from our physical bodies. The Curse will still be operative during the Millennial Kingdom – not amongst resurrected saints, but amongst the mortal citizens of the Kingdom. But in the Eternal Order, the Curse will be lifted. Death will be no more. We will never again be separated from God and Jesus. We will worship Him, see Him face to face and bear His name. He will be our light.

### **Dominion Restored (22:5b)**

*...and they will reign forever and ever.*

Adam and Eve were originally given dominion over the creation (Gen. 1:28). In falling to the temptation of Satan their authority was usurped and Satan became the ruler of this world (Jn. 12:31). When the New Jerusalem settles on the New Earth, mankind will once again exercise dominion over God's creation. The consequences of the Fall will come to a complete end and Paradise will be regained.