

Session 8 The Beauty of God in the New Jerusalem

I. THE NEW JERUSALEM IS INDESCRIBABLY BEAUTIFUL

- A. **Review:** We are to search out God’s beauty as seen in what the Scripture says about *His Person* and *His court* and in expressions of it in *His creation, redemption, and leadership*. Creation includes the New Jerusalem and our resurrected body as well as the natural heavens and earth.
- B. John saw the New Jerusalem, the dwelling place of all the saints after they die. Our inheritance is to live in face-to-face relationship with God in the New Jerusalem on the new earth forever.
¹I saw a new heaven and a new earth...²I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned [made beautiful] for her husband. (Rev. 21:1-2)
- C. **Adorned:** A bride is extravagant and overlooks no detail in her beauty preparations.
- D. **Came down:** The New Jerusalem is where the saints in resurrected bodies will live forever. However, they will reign in the government on the millennial earth (Mt. 19:28, Lk. 22:29). The saints will easily travel between the New Jerusalem and the earth, even as angels do now.
- E. Some view the New Jerusalem as the Father’s gift to His children and/or Jesus’ diamond City (wedding gift) for His Bride.
- F. The City’s construction: walls (21:12, 15-18), foundations (21:12, 19-20), gates (21:12-14), and streets (21:21; 22:2). Jewels of the high priest (Ex. 28:17-20) pictured his nearness to God.
- G. The City’s dimensions are 1,380 miles (7,286,400 ft.) in length, width, and height (21:12-14). A furlong, or stadia, is a measurement equaling 600 feet. The walls are 216 feet thick (21:15-17).
- H. John presents two views of the New Jerusalem—relational and functional (21-22).
1. The description of the City is given in *relational terms* or in nearness to God (21:3-8). It describes resurrected saints in the City in face-to-face relationship with God.
 2. The description of the City is given in *functional terms* as the ultimate Holy of Holies and the garden of Eden (21:9-22:5).
- I. The City is called the Bride which refers to the people and the City in relationship together. The very components of the City—the food, water, color, smells, fragrances, music, etc.—will renew and inspire love in the Bride of Christ for Jesus.
- J. Seven negatives on this earth will be removed from the new earth: There will be no sea (21:1), death, sorrow, crying, pain (21:4), curse (22:3), or night (21:25; 22:5).

II. THE CITY IN RELATIONAL TERMS—NEARNESS TO GOD (REV. 21:3-8)

- A. John highlighted 10 declarations by the Spirit in 21:3-4 (five in 21:3 and another five in 21:4).
³I heard a loud voice from heaven [Holy Spirit] saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain...” (Rev. 21:3-4)
- B. Declaration #1 *The tabernacle of God is with men*—This declares a new order of life. The Father’s ultimate plan for the human race was to establish His throne on the earth forever.
- C. Declaration #2 *He will dwell with them*—His people will permanently experience His manifest Presence in a way that tenderizes and energizes them in love and righteousness.
1. One of the ultimate, greatest privileges for God's people is to see His face.
⁴They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. (Rev. 22:4)
 2. The glory of God was manifested in a unique way in Solomon’s temple (2 Chr. 5-7) and as a mighty rushing wind of the Spirit in the upper room at Pentecost (Acts 2).
- D. Declaration #3 *They shall be His people*—He will openly and continually manifest His abundant provision and direction for them.
- E. Declaration #4 *God Himself will be with them*—His people enjoy a deep interaction, partnership, and relationship with Him. He will walk with them as He walked with Adam in Eden (Gen. 3:8)
⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden... (Gen. 3:8)
¹These things says He who...walks in the midst of the...lampstands [churches]... (Rev. 2:1)
- F. Declaration #5 *He shall be their God*—His people will trust, worship, and obey Him.
- G. Declaration #6 *He will wipe away every tear*—God’s tender care is communicated to each person.
- H. Declaration #7 *There will be no more death*—no more death for people (and probably animals?)
- I. Declaration #8 *There will be no more sorrow*—no shame, no sting of past trauma or failure
- J. Declaration #9 *There will be no more crying*—no rejection, regret, or sense of loss
- K. Declaration #10 *There will be no more pain*—no injury either physically or emotionally

III. THE CITY IN FUNCTIONAL TERMS—HOLY OF HOLIES & GARDEN OF EDEN (21:9-22:5)

- A. The New Jerusalem will function as the ultimate Holy of Holies and the garden of Eden. These are the two places on the earth in which God dwelt with His people throughout history.
- B. John sees the City from a high mountain from two views: from an *external view* as the ultimate Holy of Holies (21:9-21) and an *internal view* as the ultimate garden of Eden (21:22-22:5).

⁹Then one of the seven angels...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... (Rev. 21:9-10)

IV. THE CITY AS THE HOLY OF HOLIES—EXTERNAL VIEW (21:9-21)

- A. John highlights the visual beauty of the City’s splendor (21:10-11), her gates and foundations (21:12-14), her walls made with precious stones (21:15-17), and her streets of gold (22:2).
- B. The City is described as a cube (21:16) like the Holy of Holies in the temple (1 Kgs. 6:19-20).
 - 1. Fellowship with God is pictured in the ministry of the high priest in the Holy of Holies.
 - 2. The City is described having some of the same precious stones that the high priest wore on his breastplate when going into the Holy of Holies (21:19-20).
 - 3. God’s throne was prophetically seen in the ark of the covenant (22:3-4).

- C. The City’s glorious splendor (21:10-11): Jesus’ Bride radiates great beauty (Shekinah glory). The jasper stone that is clear as crystal points to the Shekinah glory of God (21:11, 23; 22:5).

¹⁰...the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,¹¹having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. (Rev. 21:10-11)

- D. The City’s gates and foundations (21:12-14): The City’s design includes 12 gates (21:12b-14), high walls (21:12a, 15-18), and 12 foundations (21:12, 19-20).

¹²Also 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:¹³three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.¹⁴Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Rev. 21:12-14)

- E. The City walls are 1,380 miles high (21:16) and 216 feet thick (21:17).

¹⁶The 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 [1,380 miles]. Its length, breadth [width], and height are equal.¹⁷ Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits [216 feet thick]. (Rev. 21:15-17)

- F. John described the beauty of the walls (21:12, 15-18), foundations (21:12, 19-20), gates (21:12-14), and street (21:21; 22:2). The jewels of the high priest (Ex. 28:17-20) are seen in the City.

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...* 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. (Rev. 21:18-20)*

- G. Eight of the foundation's precious stones were also on the high priest's breastplate when he went into the Holy of Holies (Ex. 28:17-20; 39:10). The high priest's breastplate spoke of how the Lord desired that His people be near to His heart.

- H. When we see this "diamond-like City," then the glory of our plastic trophies on earth fades.

V. THE CITY AS THE GARDEN OF EDEN: INTERNAL VIEW (21:22-22:5)

- A. John gives us an internal view of the City as the ultimate *Garden of Eden*. He describes the City's beauty (21:22-27) and privilege of face-to-face communion with God (22:1-5).

- B. It is a worshipping City without a temple (21:22; 22:4a); an illuminated City with no sun (21:23; 22:5); a governmental City with God's throne (21:24, 26; 22:3-5d); a servant City that works (21:25b; 22:3c, 5a), and a holy City without any sin (21:27, 8; 22:14-15).

- C. John described the Millennial kings of the earth bringing their glory into the City (21:22-26). John also described the beautiful light source of the City as Jesus Himself (21:23-24).

²³*The city had no need of the sun ...for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.*

²⁴*The [millennial] nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the [millennial] earth bring their glory and honor into it. ²⁵Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). ²⁶And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. ²⁷But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles... (Rev. 21:23-27)*

- D. John highlighted life inside the City (22:1-5) being empowered by drinking the water of Life (22:1) and eating from the tree of Life (22:2). This parallels life in the garden of Eden. Her gates and streets are described in Revelation 22:2 as viewed from a distance.

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. ²In 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. (Rev. 22:1-2)*

- E. The saints shall serve God in a face-to-face relationship filled with holiness (22:3-5). God's light will impart power, wisdom, and holiness to those ruling with Him (22:5).

³*And there shall be no more curse, but the throne God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. ⁴They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵There 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. (Rev. 22:3-5)*