

A Journey Into the Heavens
The New Jerusalem - Part 2
May 4, 2016

In our last lesson we considered the **descent**, the **description**, and the **dimensions** of the New Jerusalem. In this lesson we will continue our study of this new city.

I. The _____ of the City (21:18-21)

To describe the magnificence and beauty of the New Jerusalem, John compares the materials to the most precious minerals on earth. He says in verse 18, *And the building of the wall of it was jasper...* Jasper is usually red, yellow, brown, or green. Back in verse 11 when John first saw the walls he said they were *like jasper stone, clear as crystal*. The city itself was *pure gold, like unto clear glass* (vs.18). Also in verse 11 John said the city had *the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious*. From all this we can see that the light of God's glory will shine through the city and its walls, making it a huge Holy of Holies that radiates the presence of God.

Verse 19 says, *the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones*. The identity of some of these stones is uncertain, but we can be sure their beauty is indescribable. Our God is a God of beauty, for it is He who painted the butterfly's wings and dipped the robin's breast in red. It is He who draped the setting sun with break taking yellow and orange and made the rainbows translucent colors. God made everything that is beautiful, and the most gorgeous of all his creation will be the New Jerusalem.

Each of the massive gates was *of one pearl* (21:21). Our earth knows of no pearls such a size, just as we know of no precious stones the size of foundations. When we speak of "pearly gates," we do not mean a gate with several small pearls on it. Rather, these gates will each be made out of a single pearl. Though the Scripture does not say so, it could extend upward to the height of the great wall, permitting access to all levels of the holy city.

Verse 21 says *the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass*. The street, or more literally the “central square,” was a beautiful sunshine color of the finest gold, so pure that it was translucent, allowing the light of God’s glory to permeate the city.

II. Life _____ the City (21:22-27)

The New Jerusalem will have *no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it* (21:22). The city does not require a temple because Christ is there, and the temple was merely a shrine symbolizing God’s holiness and presence. Actually, the whole city is a temple in which God will dwell, since it is patterned after the Holy of Holies (vs.16). This seems to indicate a full and unrestricted access to Him by those within in the city. No longer will He be confined to the Holy of Holies, which could only be entered by the High Priest, and never again will there be a need for a priest to mediate on our behalf.

John reveals in verse 23, *the city had no need of the sun, neither the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*. There will be no need for natural or artificial lighting because the shekinah glory of God’s own presence will illuminate the New Jerusalem.

Verses 24-26 present a beautiful picture of *the nations* and *the kings of the earth* bringing *their glory and honor* to the new city. Apparently, residents of the New Jerusalem will have unlimited access to the New Earth. We could speculate here that the New Jerusalem will be our residence and the New Earth a place of service. There is no danger within or without the Holy City, for the gates were never shut (vs. 25). Therefore the gates are entrances, not barriers.

John further describes what life will be like in the New Jerusalem by saying, *there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worth abomination* (evil), *or taketh a lie...* (vs.27). This does not imply that sinful people will be roaming outside the Holy City, but rather it is a warning to those who read this book that the only way to participate in the activities of the New Jerusalem is by having one’s name *written in the Lamb’s book of life* (vs. 27).

Those that defile, workers of evil, all liars, and anyone who does not have their name in the Book of Life have already been dispatched to their eternal home.

III. The _____ of the City (22:1-5)

In John 22:1 John moves inside the city and begins to describe the beautiful landscape. First, he says there is *a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal* (22:1a). The phrase *clear as crystal* is frequently used in this section to emphasize that heavenly entities in the New Jerusalem are free of all impurities and are therefore clear and sparkling. This scene is reminiscent of the river in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:10). The source of the *water of life* is *the throne of God and of the Lamb* (22:1b). The *throne of God* is the source of life and pleasure to those who have their names written in the Book of Life.

Not only is there a *river of water of life*, but also *in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life* (22:2). Apparently, the tree can be picked from either side of the river.

This tree of life seems to be similar to the tree we find in Genesis 3:22-24.

The tree *bore twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month* (22:2). There is no end to its fruit-bearing, as the tree of life provides variety and delight without interruption to the inhabitants of the city for all eternity. Not only does the tree produce luscious fruit, but *the leaves of the tree were or the healing of the nations* (22:2). This raises an interesting question as to the necessity for healing where sickness no longer exists. The explanation lies in the proper translation of the Greek word (THERAPEIA), which is translated healing here, but actually should be “health giving.” Thus, it seems that the leaves of this tree will give invigoration and exhilaration so we will enjoy perfect physical and mental health.

The phrase *And there shall be no more curse* in 22:3 takes us back to where all the problems began in Genesis 3:16-19.

The phrase *and his servants shall serve him* indicates the Holy City will not be just a place of rest and singing, but also productivity and service!

As we seek to serve Him here on earth we are hampered by our selfishness, pre-occupation with the world, and sin, but in heaven all hindrances will be gone. However, more important than the absence of evil will be the privilege of seeing God forever.

Moreover there are even more blessings, as John says in 22:4, *And they shall see his face*. This fulfills the promise of the following Scriptures:

Matthew 5:8 - _____

I Corinthians 13:12 - _____

I John 3:2 - _____

John also says in Revelation 22:4, *and his name shall be in their foreheads*. This could be similar to the priestly attire of Aaron in Exodus 28:36-38.

However this is done, it will be our privilege to have the Lord's Name on our foreheads forever!

Although previously mentioned, John again says *And there shall be no more night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun* (22:5). This means there will be no need for light either inside or outside, *for the Lord giveth them light*. (22:5).

Not only will we serve the Lord in heaven, but we will also *reign forever and ever* (22:5). This could mean each of us will have an assigned dominion to develop and use for the good of the eternal kingdom. However very few details are given. (Rev 1:6; 5:10).

Serving the Lord is not a temporal event, it is an eternal event, so let's us serve the Lord with gladness!