

# Book of Revelation Study Part 12

## The New Jerusalem and the New Heaven & Earth

*I heard a loud voice from heaven 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. 4 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) "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isaiah 65:17)*

A. The name "New Jerusalem" indicates God's enduring relationship with the earthly Jerusalem which is His chosen possession, the apple of His eye. The place where His Presence dwelled above the Cherubim. God chose the Nation of Israel as His favorite nation and it will continue to be so throughout eternity (**Exod. 19:3-6; Deut. 7:6; Jer. 31:31-37**)

*"For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place" (Ps. 132:13). .... The prophet Joel says, "So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy..." (Joel 3:17). .... "For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually" (2 Chron. 7:16).*

*"The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29). This fact is reinforced in that the city has twelve gates, each one named after one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel (Rev. 21:12).*

B. The New Jerusalem will descend to the earth on two occasions (at the time of the Second Coming and then after the Millennial Kingdom). It descends from the third heaven to earth. *I, John, saw the holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven... (Rev. 21:2) ... 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. 21:10) The New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. (Rev. 3:12) The Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. (Gal. 4:26)*

**Rev. 20:7-15** is a parenthetical section John inserts to address the final judgment on Satan and the Great White Throne judgment that takes place at the end of the Millennium. Then in **Rev. 21** he returns to the beginning of the Millennium to describe the New Jerusalem. He opens with the same language Isaiah used to discuss Israel's Kingdom Age on Earth (**Isaiah 65:17-25**).

At the rapture of the Church the Lord will take us to His Father's house (New Jerusalem) to be with Him where He is (**John 14:2-3**). **1 Thes 4:17** says once we go there, we'll always be with Him. **Rev. 21:2** shows the New Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven and goes on to describe something far too big to be located on Earth. It must only come to just above the Earth.

In **Matt. 24:29** Jesus said the Sun and Moon would no longer shine after the end of the Great Tribulation. **Rev. 21:22-27** describes the nations walking by the light of the New Jerusalem. After the 2nd Coming the New Jerusalem will possibly the Sun as Earth's source of light. **Rev. 21:22-27** also shows the Kings of Earth bringing their splendor to the New Jerusalem, but says nothing impure can ever enter it, only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, which is a description of the Church.

The New Earth is the permanent resting place of the New Jerusalem. It has been prepared as a place all the saints will live forever in God's immediate presence (**Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:22-24**). *I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (Jn. 14:2-3)*

C. The OT saints had revelation of the New Jerusalem and lived in light of it. *16 They desire a better, that is, a heavenly country...He prepared a City for them. (Heb. 11:16)* "They" refers back to Abel (v. 4), Enoch (v. 5), Noah (v. 7), Abraham (v. 8), Isaac and Jacob (v. 9), Sarah (v. 11). You have come to... the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem... (Heb. 12:22) Abraham 'waited' for the City whose builder is God. (Heb. 11:10). The NIV says that Abraham 'looked forward' to the City. The NAS says that Abraham 'looked for' the City He waited for the City which has foundations whose builder...is God. (Heb. 11:10)

D. The New Jerusalem is called the "Bride". This is because it draws its character from its occupants. And its occupants are the eternal bride of Christ, now enlarged beyond the church to encompass all the redeemed of all the ages.

## Understanding the "New Heaven and New Earth"

In the Greek New Testament, there are two primary words translated "new." The one word is *neos*. It means "new" in time – recent, just appearing, young. When the Bible speaks of new wine, it is *neos* wine; that is, it is this year's crop – "new" in time. The second word for "new" is *kainos*. It means "new" in quality – superior to the old. In the upper room, the Lord instituted the "new" (*kainos*) covenant. It is a covenant that is qualitatively better than the old or Mosaic covenant (**1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8**). The Apostle Paul taught that a believer in Christ is a new (*kainos*) creation (**2 Corinthians 5:17**); *If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away ...* that is, he is qualitatively superior to what he was in his unregenerate state in Adam. When John speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, he uses the Greek word *kainos* and is emphasizing the "quality" of the new heaven and earth – not that it is new in time or origin. It is the same heaven and earth, but **cleansed and regenerated** from the consequence of sin. It is *kainos* – "new" in that it is qualitatively superior to the old. It is the present heaven and the present earth which, when purged during the Day of the Lord, becomes, when "touched by the Master's hand," the new heaven and the new earth.

Doctor Henry Morris, in *The Revelation Record*, commenting on Revelation 21:1, has written:

***The new cosmos [world] is not a novel cosmos [world]; it is a renewed cosmos [world]. It is just like the first, except that all its age-long ravages of decay have been expunged and it is fresh and new again. The present heaven and earth are not blotted out, not swept into nothingness; but retouched, changed, renovated, cleansed, and brightened up – regenerated from all its old disorders and imperfections.***

Joseph Seiss, in his commentary on Revelation, written more than ninety years ago wrote concerning the new heaven and earth:

***Think, then, what its regeneration must bring! – an earth which no longer smarts and smokes under the curse of sin, – an earth which needs no more to be torn with hooks and irons to make it yield its fruits, – an earth where thorns and thistles no longer infest the ground, nor serpents hiss among the flowers, nor savage beasts lay in ambush to devour, – an earth whose sod is never cut with graves, whose soil is never moistened with tears or saturated with human blood, whose fields are never blasted with unpropitious seasons, whose atmosphere never gives wings to the seeds of plague and death, whose ways are never lined with funeral processions, or blocked up with armed men on their way to war, – an earth whose hills ever flow with salvation, and whose valleys know only the sweetness of Jehovah's smiles, – an earth from end to end, and from center to utmost verge, clothed with the eternal blessedness of Paradise Restored!***

**The earth will continue forever (Ps. 37:29; 78:69; 104:5; 105:10-11; 125:1-2; 1 Chr. 23:25; 28:8; Isa. 60:21; Ezek. 37:25; Joel 3:20).** <sup>25</sup> They shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. (Ezek. 37:25) He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He established forever. (Ps. 78:69) You who laid the foundations of the earth, so it should not be moved forever... (Ps. 104:5)

## New Jerusalem Facts

The New Jerusalem will be positioned above (during the millennium) Jerusalem and on the earth thereafter.

- i) It measures 1,500 miles on each side, length, width and height and presents as a cube
- ii) An area of 2,225,000,000 square miles
- iii) Or 3.375 billion cubic miles
- iv) If you are 1 mile away from the city, you would not see the top but might if you are 10 miles away. At 5,000 miles away, it would appear more than 130 times larger than the moon.
- v) **Rev. 21:17** says the wall around the city is about 200 feet, but doesn't specify whether this is the thickness or height. The NIV bible says this is about 200 feet thick, but the footnote says "or high".
- vi) Verse 18, "Now the material of the wall was jasper," we saw this in the Revelation 5 Throne Room where we detailed Jasper as like a diamond. There are diamond walls. "And the city," the rest of what was in it, "was pure gold like clear glass." This is translucent gold. You haven't seen it but you're going to live in it.
- vii) The Foundation stones. The first foundation stone was jasper, crystal-clear diamond with its flashing colors. The second was sapphire, a brilliant blue. The third was chalcedony... this was some kind of an agate stone, the best we can tell, sky blue with...with translucent stripes of color. And then the fourth was emerald which is, of course, a blazing bright green. The fifth was sardonyx which is a red and white stone. The sixth was sardius, a deep fiery red stone that was from the quartz family. The seventh was chrysolite, a transparent sort of lucid gold tone, or yellow tone stone.

The eighth, beryl, that's a sea green. The ninth, topaz, transparent yellow green. The tenth, chrysoprase, that's another shade of green. The eleventh, jacinth which was a brilliant shining violet color. And the twelfth, amethyst, which is purple. Now what you have, of course, is just a dazzling display of color illuminated by the light of God's glory shining through. The general picture then is one of just unbelievable beauty, indescribable beauty, a spectrum of color blazing everywhere.

- viii) The Gates. John describes the gates. Now remember, these gates could well run the full height of the city. Verse 21, "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls." Each one of the gates was a single pearl, a 1500-mile-high pearl. There is some powerful spiritual symbolism there. A pearl is a gem formed within the oyster. It is the only gem formed by living flesh. The pearl is produced by suffering. The saints as they come and go will be forever reminded as they pass the gates of glory that access to this wonderful place is only granted because of Jesus' sacrificial death on Calvary.
- ix) Angels seem to stand "guard" at the gates of the New Jerusalem to make sure that no one enters who does not have right of entry and the right to the tree of life (**Rev. 21:12, 27; 22:14-15**). The angels who guard the gates of the New Jerusalem are a parallel to the angels who guarded the entrance to Eden and the tree of life after Adam and Eve sinned (**Gen. 3:22-24**). *She had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates. (Rev. 21:12) There shall by no means enter it [New Jerusalem] anything that defiles... but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (Rev. 21:27) "And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"... So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life. (Gen. 3:22-24)*

## Two views – inside and out

The splendor of the New Jerusalem is described in Rev. 21:9-22:5. It is seen from two points of view: the external view (Rev. 21:9-22) and the internal view (Rev. 21:23-22:5).

**New Jerusalem as the ultimate Holy of Holies (21:9-21) – external view.** The City is described as a cube (**21:16**) like the Holy of Holies (layout of a cube) in Solomon's temple (**1 Kings 6:19-20**) with the precious stones in the foundation of the City (**21:19-20**) understood as fellowship with God as pictured in the ministry of the high priest in the Holy of Holies.

**New Jerusalem as the ultimate Garden of Eden (21:22-22:5) – internal view.** The beauty of the interior of the City (**Rev. 21:22-27**); the light source and illumination of the City (**Rev. 21:23-24**) and life inside the City is like the garden of Eden with face to face communion with God (**22:1-5**). The River of Life (**Rev. 22:1**) and the Tree of Life (**22:2**) point back to Eden.

## Living in the New Jerusalem

We can only imagine what it will be like to live in that glorious place. However David's words in Psalm 84

*Behold our shield, O God, And look upon the face of Your anointed. 10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly....*

- We should not think in earthly terms about living in the New Jerusalem. Only a Worshipper can truly understand the glories of that place. Only those whose hearts burn for more of Him, who desire constantly to look upon His face can appreciate the description and what it means
- Living in the New Jerusalem will be the fulfilment of David's prayer which is a prayer that is rooted in the Spirit of every man and woman.
- God's Throne will be at the center of all to which there will be unhindered access
- The light of His Glory will fill the place, there will be no darkness. The materials of the city will radiate and reflect His Glory causing us to be constantly surrounded by His Glorious presence.