

THE NEW JERUSALEM

BIBLE TEXT : Revelation 21: 1-27

LESSON 466 **Senior Course**

MEMORY VERSE: "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Revelation 21:27).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Revelation 21:1-27

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which

Bible References:

I All Things New

1. John beheld a new Heaven, new earth, and New Jerusalem, Revelation 21:1, 2

Isaiah 65:17

17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Isaiah 66:22

22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

John 14:2, 3

2 And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

3 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve

II Peter 3:13.

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

2. John heard a Voice from Heaven describing the blessedness of God's dwelling with men, Revelation 21:3, 4

Revelation 7:15-17.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

3. The Judge upon the Throne extends a glorious invitation to life eternal; but to those who reject, the consequence is the second death, Revelation 21:5, 8

Revelation 20:14, 15

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 22:17.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

II Description of the New Jerusalem

1. John was taken by an angel to a closer view of the New Jerusalem, Revelation 21:9, 10

Hebrews 11:10, 16

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly:

burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

11 Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass.

wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Hebrews 13:14.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

2. The city descends out of Heaven; its overall appearance and size are told, Revelation 21:10, 18.
3. The city's foundations are of precious gems, its gates of pearl, Revelation 21: 19, 21.
4. God and the Lamb are the Temple and the source of illumination for the city, Revelation 21:22, 23

Isaiah 60:19, 20.

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

5. Only the saved shall enjoy the blessings of that sacred city, Revelation 21:24, 27.

Notes:

The New Heaven and the New Earth

We have studied about the great White Throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away. For all the unredeemed sinners who have ever lived upon the earth the verdict of judgment was guilty, the sentence was the second death, and they were cast into the lake of fire. But what a vastly different story for those who are saved! They witness the ushering in of a new Heaven and a new earth so glorious that it defies the human tongue to completely describe or the human imagination to visualize.

In the beginning God came down and walked and talked with man, His creation. John now hears a great Voice out of Heaven stating that this is to be the blessed condition again in the new creation, for God Himself is to dwell in sweet communion and blessed fellowship with His own. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" will truly be fulfilled.

The Apostle John then hears Him who sat upon the Throne speak and confirm that all things shall be new. He states that He is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega. Then, wonder of wonders, this Holy One interjects a grand and glorious invitation to all who dwell upon the earth: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." That Fountain is open today. That Water of Life is flowing even now, and, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." The blessed invitation to the new Heaven and the new earth is open wide. The only qualification is that one truly thirst for the things spiritual from Heaven. With the invitation comes the declaration of the alternative --the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. This category takes in the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, and the idolaters; but not only them -- it also states that the fearful and the unbelieving and all liars are included in this number.

The New Jerusalem

In the second verse of our text, John spoke of seeing not only a new Heaven and a new earth, but a new city -- the holy Jerusalem -- coming down from God out of Heaven. His description is that it is "prepared as a bride adorned for her

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

husband." An angel took John in the spirit to a great and high mountain and showed him a closer view of this glorious city and called it "the bride, the Lamb's wife." This heavenly city is Christ's Bride, not because of what makes it a city, but because of the sanctified and glorified ones who inhabit it. Mere edifices and avenues do not make a city. You cannot have a living city without people to inhabit it, and you cannot have a city without the edifices and avenues arranged in some fixed patterns for the accommodation of those who make up its population.

Men of faith down through the ages of time have looked forward to this city. It is stated of Abraham, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). And of the ancient saints we read: "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:16). The Apostle, speaking for all Christians of his day, said, "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:14). Jesus Himself no doubt spoke of this city in the 14th chapter of John:

"In my Father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Does not this indeed sound like the Bridegroom-to-be, speaking His promises there to the Bride-to-be?

John states that he sees this city "coming down from God out of heaven." It is of celestial origin. It is a direct product of Almighty power and wisdom. He who made the worlds is the Maker of this city. No mortal hand was ever employed in its construction. It has no architect nor workman but God. The splendour and beauty of this city is hard to describe or visualize, from it radiates the glory of God. John described it as of a most precious gem, a jasper stone, clear as crystal. A jasper stone is variegated with the various colours of the rainbow, but it is opaque. This city has a jasper appearance but without the opacity. It is like a most precious diamond, crystal clear, perfectly transparent.

It has a "wall great and high" which is built of jasper, and that wall stands on twelve foundation stones, each a separate and distinct jewel. There are certain substances in nature found in very small quantities, which are so rare, beautiful and enduring that they are called gems. Twelve kinds of these gems make up the foundations on which the jasper walls and the city itself are built. Through these walls are 12 openings with 12 gates; each of these gates is made of one solid pearl.

Men have built some very grand cities, the buildings of which they have constructed of all manner of costly stone and steel, which are dressed and polished to degrees of great excellence; but with all this they are as nothing compared with this city. There is one part of every earthly city which men are satisfied to have of baser material, the part, which is trodden under everyone's feet. It therefore gives a very high touch to the splendour of this celestial city that its very streets are pure gold. In fact the gold is in perfect purity such as cannot be reached by any earthly refinement; gold with a peculiar heavenly quality — transparent like the most perfect crystal.

The very size of this glorious city, along with its magnificent construction, truly staggers the human imagination. From the best authorities of ancient measurement, one of our miles would equal eight furlongs. This computation would mean

that the city would be 1500 miles across in each direction. Imagine a city that would stretch from the Canadian border to the Mexican border; from the Pacific Coast almost to the Mississippi River. But this is not the end: we are told that, "the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." This Holy City that John saw was in an probability built streets over streets, stories over stories, up, up and up, to a height of 1500 miles. This is the city of "many mansions" that was promised.

Within this city there will be no hospitals, for there will be no "sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." There will be no funeral parlours, for there is to be "no more death" within its boundaries. Police stations, jails, and reformatories are not included in this city's construction, for "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie."

As wonderful an invention as the electric light is, in this grand city there will be no need for lights—no, not even the light of the sun nor of the moon, for we are told that "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Within this city John saw no temple. This was not because worship was then to cease nor that communion with God was no longer to exist. While God lives, love and adoration of Him cannot cease nor acts of worship be discontinued. Rather, God Himself and the Lamb are the Temple of this city. The worshippers there hold direct communion with God in His manifested glory which encompasses them and all their city alike. As consecrated priests they will then have come into the Holiest of All, into the very cloud of God's overshadowing glory. Oh, what a glorious future awaits those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life!

"O Lord, the goal that lies before my longing eyes, Keep Thou before my heart till breaks the morn; Let wings of faith and love still bear me safe above Till crowns of victory my brow adorn."

QUESTIONS

1. Describe briefly the blessed conditions of the new heavens, new earth, and New Jerusalem.
2. Why did John use the term "bride" in describing the New Jerusalem?
3. What were the dimensions of this city?
4. Describe the city's construction.
5. Who are the citizens of this city?
6. What provision is made for religious worship in this Holy City?