

THE NEW JERUSALEM

BIBLE TEXT : Revelation 21: 1-27

LESSON 466 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7).

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 burneth with fire and brimstone:

Notes:

A Glorious Vision

The Apostle John had seen visions of horrible events taking place -- terrible judgment poured out upon Christ-rejecting people. But when it was all finished, a scene opened before him with a glory that must have erased all other thoughts from his mind. He saw the new heavens and a new earth. The old earth where there had been so much trouble and sorrow and evil works, where Satan had had so much power, was all gone. God, who made the first earth, had made a new one in which there was no sin. John was seeing into the future when Satan will have been consigned to the lake of fire, and will not be able to cause any more trouble. With him will be all the wicked people, "the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars. . . ."

Yes, it means all liars. God will not have any liars in His Kingdom. Many people are dishonest today and do not seem to think it very wrong to tell lies, but God does. All those who tell lies or even act lies, will have their part in the lake of fire -- fire that will never go out, punishment that will go on and on forever.

How glorious the new earth will be! We will be able to trust everybody. All will be peace -- no more war. No grief -- God will wipe away all tears from the people's eyes. People will live forever; there will be no more death. What a happy place that will be in which to live! But more than that, it says that God will dwell among the people -- not only Jesus, but God the Father. Now we may think of God as being very far away, and hard to approach. We cannot come to the Father except through Jesus. But then He will dwell among His people: "They shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." And to think that each one of us can now prepare to live in that new world!

We must overcome sin in this life in order to be prepared to live in the new world with God. Anyone who wants to drink of that "water of life," and live forever, may do so. But each must make the effort -- must set himself to live for Jesus. We must come to Jesus now, and obey His commandments. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7). All things. Jesus is in Heaven now preparing mansions for His children. It hasn't entered into the heart of man what He has prepared for us. It is better than anything we could imagine.

Even more glorious than the new earth will be the New Jerusalem which John saw coming down from God out of Heaven. The Bible does not tell us how far down it came, but it does say that the nations of the earth walked in the light of it. It glowed with heavenly light. The Bride of Christ will live in it.

The Bride of Christ

The Bride of Christ is a special order of Christians. They are those of the Holy Ghost Dispensation -- the New Testament Dispensation -- who were born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:7; and are sanctified wholly, as Jesus prayed for His disciples on His last night on earth (John 17); and they have received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter whom Jesus promised when He went away.

The fact that we have once had the baptism of the Holy Ghost is not enough. We must always live according to the Word of God, and keep the victory in our heart. If we lose the fervour and zeal for

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.

the Lord's work that we once had, if we live carelessly, if a bitter and criticizing spirit has crept in, if we are more interested in the things of the world than the things of God, we have lost the love of God out of our heart. There is only one way to get it back: start at the bottom, ask Jesus to forgive the sins, pray again for sanctification, and then the baptism. We must be overcoming Christians in order to live in the New Jerusalem.

The 120 in the Upper Room were the first to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Others received it during the preaching of the Apostles (Acts 10:44-48; Acts 19:6). That was called the Early Rain. Through the centuries that followed there were times when individuals and groups of people would receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but it was not poured out in abundance until the year 1906, when the Latter Rain began to fall. We are those "afar off," about whom Peter spoke on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:39). After we are wholly sanctified we are ready to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. In fact, we are commanded to receive it. Through the baptism of the Holy Ghost we have more power to overcome sin; we have the Spirit in our lives to guide us in Christian conduct, we have the Comforter to help us in times of trouble; we have power to be effectual witnesses for the Lord while we live in this world; and when the Lord comes to rapture the Bride, we will have that in our hearts that will respond to His call, and we will leave this world alive.

The City Four Square

We are given a beautiful description of the New Jerusalem. We are even given its size. It is fifteen hundred miles long, fifteen hundred miles wide, and fifteen hundred miles high. There will be plenty of room for all who are worthy to dwell there. Its streets are of transparent gold. There will not be anyone in that day who would sell his soul for gold. All will have learned the true values of life. Gold will merely be paving stones.

There will be three gates (each a huge pearl) in each wall, making twelve in all. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel will be in the gates. This illustrates that God first gave His Gospel to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites. They were the ones through whom the Gospel was to be preached in the world. They were the "gates" into the Kingdom of God.

The gates into the New Jerusalem will never be shut. Those who live there will be free to come and go whenever they wish. The glorified saints will have bodies like Jesus had after He arose from the dead, and will be able to go anywhere by merely desiring to go there. The overcoming saints will be made kings and priests unto God, "and we shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10). There will be no night in the New Jerusalem. The glory of God will make it light -- there will be no need for the sun or moon.

As John beheld this stupendous scene before him, he saw the foundation stones under the walls. There were twelve of them, each of a different stone, and in each the name of one of the Twelve Apostles. And his name was one of them!

The Call of John

How much had happened since that day that Jesus had called John and his brother James as they were fishing with their father! "They immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him" (Matthew 4:22). Jesus was then the "lowly Nazarene," whom few cared for. He was hated by the church people. Following Jesus was a disgrace. James and John never questioned the call of Jesus. They lost interest in gaining things for themselves. They wanted only to help Jesus in furthering His Kingdom. They were willing to follow Jesus in His humility, and to suffer death for His cause. They never realised the blessings that would pile up in their favour.

John did not know that day on the shores of Galilee that he

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.

would someday write books that would be read by millions -- the Bible is today the best-selling book in all the world, after almost two thousand years; and many more Testaments, also containing the books that John wrote, are being distributed into all the world in more than a thousand languages.

If John had not answered the call of Jesus that day, hardly anyone would ever have known that he lived. His family and friends would have died with him, and no one else would have cared about him. Because that humble fisherman obeyed the call of Jesus, millions of people know about him today. He wrote things about Jesus "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). He did not write to make a name for himself, but that Jesus might be lifted up and draw many sin-sick souls unto Himself.

Then after John had suffered much for the cause of Christ, he saw his name in the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem! He knew his troubles would soon be over. He would soon be with Jesus. By the time he saw these visions he knew he would be one of the Apostles who would sit on the twelve thrones, judging Israel. What rewards awaited him!

And what rewards await us! Each will be rewarded in his own order, according to his calling and faithfulness. But all the faithful ones will be satisfied with the reward they receive. What glory it will be to hear Jesus say to us: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

QUESTIONS

1. After the Judgments were finished, what did John see?
2. What happened to the wicked people? What happened to the liars?
3. Who created the world? What did God say He would do after the old world was destroyed?
4. Where is God going to live?
5. What must we do to have a part in the life of the new world?
6. What will the overcomer inherit?
7. How big will the New Jerusalem be, and where will it come from?
8. What will be the light in the New Jerusalem?
9. Describe the gates of the New Jerusalem
10. What did John see in the foundation stones?