

# REVELATION

Descriptions of the  
New Jerusalem  
(Revelation 21:9~21)

*Hebrews 11:8-10: By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.*

Revelation 21-22 doesn't give us every detail of the eternal state, but it does give us more details than anywhere else in Scripture.

*Revelation 21:2: And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*Revelation 21:9-21: Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels,*

*and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia.*

*Its length and width and height are equal. He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl,*

*the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.*

Christ is making a wonderful place for us to dwell with Him.

# 1. The reality of the New Jerusalem

A. Some take this description to be a symbolic picture of the church.

1. They see some of the physical descriptions as too unbelievable to be taken literally.

❖ Our lack of understanding about the physics of the New Jerusalem does not negate the promise of an omnipotent God.



# 1. The reality of the New Jerusalem

A. Some take this description to be a symbolic picture of the church.

2. Typically in Scripture, the “bride of Christ” refers to the church.

❖ God can use the same illustration in different contexts to represent different things (Matt 13:33).

❖ This idea makes a symbol (bride of Christ) represent another symbol (New Jerusalem) then represent something concrete (believers in the church).

# 1. The reality of the New Jerusalem

B. John saw an actual city that he describes in great detail.

- ❖ John described many things a city would have, such as walls, gates, and streets.
- ❖ Believers are in the city, but John focuses on describing the city itself.
- ❖ John MacArthur: “The truth about the heavenly city is more than is described, but not less and not different from what is described.”

# 1. The reality of the New Jerusalem

C. Why is the city described as the bride of Christ?

- ❖ Revelation 21:9: Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.”
- ❖ Revelation 17:1: Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters.”

# 1. The reality of the New Jerusalem

C. Why is the city described as the bride of Christ?

- ❖ Revelation 17-18 described the fall of Babylon, which included people, but also a physical city.
- ❖ Revelation 19 described the people of the bride of Christ, and Revelation 21-22 describes the city of the bride of Christ.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

A. The city is surrounded by a great wall.

❖ Revelation 21:12: It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed.

❖ Revelation 21:17-18: He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

A. The city is surrounded by a great wall.

❖ What does it mean by “an angel’s measurement” in verse 17?

❖ The Greek phrase points to the angel doing the measurement.

❖ Holman Christian Standard Bible: Then he measured its wall, 144 cubits according to human measurement, which the angel used.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

### B. The wall had twelve gates in it.

❖ Revelation 21:12-13: It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

B. The wall had twelve gates in it.

- ❖ The wilderness tabernacle was surrounded by families of Levites, and then three tribes on each side of the tabernacle (Numbers 2-3).
- ❖ During the Millennium, Jerusalem will have twelve gates named after the twelve tribes of Israel (Ezekiel 48).



## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

B. The wall had twelve gates in it.

- ❖ Revelation 21:21: And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
- ❖ Who do many people think is at the pearly gates?
- ❖ Who does the Bible say is actually there?

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

B. The wall had twelve gates in it.

- ❖ Where else in Scripture does an angel guard the entrance to a particular place?
- ❖ Revelation 22:2 shows the tree of life in the New Jerusalem, but in contrast to Eden, these angels do not prevent believers from accessing the tree of life.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

### C. The city has twelve foundations.

- ❖ Revelation 21:14: And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
- ❖ Revelation 21:19-20 record that each foundation is made of a different kind of precious gem.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

### D. The dimensions of the city are massive.

- ❖ Revelation 21:15-16: And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal.
- ❖ The Greek measurement *stadion* varied in different places, but was typically a little over 600 feet.

A map of North America, including parts of Canada, the United States, and northern Mexico. A large yellow rectangular box with a black border is centered over the map, containing the text "Welcome to New Jerusalem". The map shows major cities, rivers, and lakes. In Canada, cities like Vancouver, Seattle, Portland, Toronto, and Ottawa are visible. In the US, cities like Sacramento, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Diego, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Atlanta are shown. In Mexico, cities like Tijuana, Mexicali, Hermosillo, Chihuahua, Monterrey, and Miami are labeled. The Gulf of Mexico is at the bottom. A scale bar in kilometers is in the bottom right corner.

# Welcome to New Jerusalem

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

D. The dimensions of the city are massive.

- ❖ The width, depth, and height are all equal. Where else in Scripture are we told of something built in a perfect cube?
- ❖ 1 Kings 6:20: The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high, and he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid an altar of cedar.
- ❖ Only the high priest could go into the holy of holies, but the gates of the New Jerusalem are never closed.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

E. The streets of the city are made of pure gold.

- ❖ Revelation 21:21: And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, **like transparent glass**.
- ❖ The verb form of “transparent” speaks of seeing the light of the Gospel (2 Cor 4:4) and the day dawning (2 Pet 1:19).
- ❖ Scripture often compares a clear reflection to a reflection in a glass.

## 2. The description of the New Jerusalem

E. The streets of gold of the city are made of pure gold.

- ❖ Gold that is very pure and bright would give a strong reflection of God's glory.
- ❖ In the Old Testament, what was overlaid with gold?
- ❖ Priests walking through the temple were walking on a floor of gold, just as we will walk on streets of gold.



# Conclusion: What do we do with what God has revealed?

- Christ is making a wonderful place for us to dwell with Him.
- John 14:1-3: Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

# **Conclusion: What do we do with what God has revealed?**

- How can we live today as a citizen of the New Jerusalem?
- John 13:34-35: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

NEXT TIME:

Revelation 21:22-27

- The Temple and  
Light of the City