

Our Future Glorious Home

On Thursday, Nisan 14, AD 33, in the Jewish calendar, Jesus met His disciples in the Upper Room. It was the night in which Jesus was betrayed before His crucifixion, which occurred on the next day, Friday. His disciples had a Passover meal that Thursday evening. We are told the disciples began to argue about who was the greatest in the kingdom of God. What did Jesus do? Jesus washed the disciples' feet as an act of humility. Even though the message had been spoken and even though the message had been modeled for them by the example of Jesus washing their feet, the disciples either didn't understand or they did not care. They continued to pursue the question of who was the greatest. Humility was missing.

My FATHER's House. We are told in the gospels that after Judas left the Upper Room, communion was instituted as a practice for Christians. The conversation that followed was interesting because it occupies much of the gospel of John. At one point, Jesus told the disciples that He was going to leave them. Then Peter responded by asking where was He

going? Jesus told him. Please turn to John 14:1. In verse 1 Jesus responds to Peter's question. In verse one Jesus said,

Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 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. John 14:1-3 (NASB)

In verse 2 Jesus says, if I go away then I am going to come back to you. "In My Father's house are many dwelling places." The Greek word that is translated as dwelling place is *mone*. It means "home or a place to dwell." The word probably is better translated as a "modern day apartment" or "town house with a yard with it." That's probably a better way of thinking about it. The word means more than just a dwelling place. It has the idea of a place of your own and sometimes it's translated as home.

Jesus promised His disciples that in the Father's house there are many dwelling places. Some Bibles say, "Mansions." A mansion is a very large building. Now think about it for a second. Jesus was describing a huge place because not only will the disciples be there but all those who believe

in Christ and since Adam and Eve. Jesus was describing a big place. I guess the question is, "Would you like to see the Father's house?" Would you like to see where you are going to live for eternity? Our study is Revelation 21:9-22:5.

OUR FUTURE HOME. Therefore, please turn to Rev-

elation 21:9. Before we go to verse 9, let me just remind you that in our last three studies we have been given an overview. In the overview, we discovered that there will be a new heaven and a new earth. There will be a new Jerusalem and the new Jerusalem will be our new home. This study describes the details of our new home. We will discover how our new home will be constructed and its dimensions.

In Revelation 21:9 we are told,



Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” Revelation 21:9 (NASB)

The statement “one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me saying, ‘Come here’” occurs one more time and only one more time in the book of Revelation. If we look at Revelation 17:1 we discover this phrase occurs with a little modification. In Revelation 17:1 we read,

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters . . .” Revelation 17:1 (NASB)

And the verse continues. That's very close to chapter 21, verse 9. In both verses, there is an angel who has one of the seven bowls, one the seven last plagues, and he says, “Come here and I will show you.”

In chapter 17 we were told there was a great harlot and Babylon the great is that mother of harlots. In verse one we are told that she sits on “many waters.” If you were to look at verse fifteen you find that the phrase “many waters” refers to people. Now watch this, this woman, the mother of harlots, represents the world system. She represents the people of the world. This woman is not godly. She is a wicked woman and represents the unbelievers, the Christ rejecting people of the world and the people who will end up going in the lake of fire. In Revelation 21:9 we are introduced to a different kind of a woman. The verse says,

... Come here and I will show you the bride, the wife of the lamb. Revelation 21:9 (NASB)

This is a woman or bride of a completely different kind. The bride represents the saints from the Old Testament and New Testament times. The Old Testament believers and New Testament believers are called “the bride”.

If you recall when we were in Revelation 19:7 the verse says,

Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready. Revelation 19:7 (NASB)

In verse 9 we are told,



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“Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” Revelation 19:9 (NASB)

The Jewish custom in Jesus' time was that the marriage supper followed the wedding ceremony

(v. 8) and in keeping with the Jewish custom the honeymoon followed next. In this passage the honeymoon corresponds to the millennial kingdom. So, when we read Revelation 21:9, the wedding ceremony has been completed already. The symbolism is very similar to that in Ephesians 5:22-33 of Christ and the church. There the husband and wife relationship are compared to Christ and the church. So, the church is like a wife and here in Revelation 21:9 the bride is a wife. These are believers in Christ. They are joint-heirs as we saw in our last study. This is really terrific.

Next, Revelation 21:9 introduces us to the wife. He says, “Come here, and I will show you the bride, the wife of the

Lamb." From verse 10 through the rest of our study the outline is, verses 10-14 provide a general description of the city. It has more detail than we were given in the earlier part of this chapter. Then from verses 15-17 we are given the dimensions of the city. Verses 18-21 give us the construction material. From verse 22 to Revelation 21:2 our life on the new earth is described. Then Revelation 21:3-5 describes our relationships in heaven. That is the outline.

Let's start off with the general description which is verse 10-14. Verse 10 says,

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God . . . Revelation 21:10

The first thing I want us to notice is that the apostle John is taken to a high mountain and he is in the Spirit. Think about this. This is the new earth and a new heaven and he is on a high mountain on the new earth. What does that tell you about the new earth? It has mountains.

We already saw in verse one of this chapter that there will not be a sea. There is no sea or ocean, but there will be mountains all around. That means there is a lot of space on this planet -- on the new earth. John was taken to a high mountain and he saw Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven from God. Now if you are thinking about what the angel just said in verse 9 you might be a little confused because the angel said,

I will show you the bride, the wife of the lamb . . . Revelation 21:10 (NASB)

Then the next thing we read in verse 10 is that there is a city coming down out of Heaven. Notice that the bride is the saints of all of the ages who put their faith in Christ. You might say, "Well, how is it that this city is all of the saints?" Well, what we are supposed to understand is that the saints are inside. Therefore, guess where your future home is? It's in the city. That's where your home is. That's the Father's mansion. Remember that Jesus said in John 14, "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places"? Well, the Father's house is the new Jerusalem. That's where the Father will be living and we are going to be there. So, the city will not only be the place where we will be living but it also represents the saints of all ages of all time. Verse 11,



... having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear . Revelation 21:11 (NASB)

THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE GLORY OF GOD. The city has the glory of God. Anytime you think about a jewel or a

city, think about light that shines and reflects off of it. We have lights this morning in the ceiling and it enables us to read. What is happening is that the light rays reflect off your page and you are able to see what is on the page. You are able to see things. You are able to read. You are able to see one other. You are able to see your clothes. You are able to see your hands. You are able to see because of the fact that it is reflected light. The Greek word for brilliance has the idea that the light is radiating from the city outward. It is not reflected light, so that tells us that God is inside because the light is coming from inside the city outward.

So, when the angel says, "Having the glory of God is the glory of God is shining through the walls," think about it this way. It's "like a very costly stone, a stone of crystal clear jasper." The closest thing I can think of for crystal clear is a diamond. Just think about that. The city is like a jewel of crystal clear jasper. The brilliance is like a very costly stone as a stone of crystal clear jasper. That's the brilliance of the new Jerusalem, our new home. Donald Barnhouse writing about the phrase, "the glory of God" says,

The light from the fires of judgment does not light the Holy city. Rather it is the glory of God and of the lamb. God had given to the world glimpses of His light to his ancient people Israel his glorious light shown in the Temple through the incarnation Jesus became the light of the world and in the

Millennial King-dom through God's anointed Messiah the light shown in royal brilliance. But now at last, in the heavenly city the prophesy of Isaiah comes to its complete fulfill-ment. Arise, shine, for your light has come. The glory of the Lord is shown upon you for behold the darkness shall

cover the earth and shows darkness to people but the Lord shall rise upon you and His glory shall be seen upon you and the Gentiles shall come to your light and the Kings to the brightness of your rising. Isaiah 60:1-3¹

What's the point? The point is that this is the glory of God. It's just shining and glowing through the city.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WALL. Now verse 12 gives us a

description of the wall around this city. It says,

It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. Revelation 21:12 (NASB)

What does that tell us? The city that is gleaming with the glory of God has a high wall and it has twelve gates. In fact, if you recall, in ancient days the reason cities had walls and gates was for protection. It was to keep the bad guys out. And so, they would close the gates at night to protect the people who are living inside. In verse twelve we are told there will be twelve angels beside each gate. That is the general description of the wall.



Jasper – Something Like a Diamond

The wall will have gates and there will be twelve angels guarding each gate. Then we are told that the names of the twelve tribes of Israel will be on the gates. Now think about the twelve tribes for a minute. There are those who teach "replacement theology". They believe that the church has replaced Israel. Now

if that is really true, why are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel on the gates? The answer is that God is not through with Israel. God has a covenant relationship with them. They are going to be in a millennial kingdom. They will have a future, and even in the new -- watch this -- even in the new heaven and the new earth, in the new Jerusalem, God still has a special place for the nation of Israel.

Their names will be on the gates. The entrance into the city will be a reminder of God's love and devotion and commitment to the nation of Israel. You know what that tells

1. Donald G. Barnhouse. Revelation. Ministry Resource Library. 1971. p. 404.

me? God's faithful. God keeps his word. He is faithful to us even when we are unfaithful. Israel was unfaithful but God was still faithful to them. Verse 13 says,

There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. Revelation 21:13 (NASB)

What does that mean? That means there are three gates on each side of the four walls. We're going to find out in a little while that the city is a square, and there are three gates on each of the four sides of the wall.

Verse 14 states,

And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Revelation 21:14 (NASB)

Now we are told that the twelve names of the twelve apostles are on the foundation stones. The foundation stones are supporting the wall. Now we have the nation of Israel and the apostles. We have the church and Israel together. That's a stunning reality for those folks who believe that the church has replaced Israel. Why do we see both the church and Israel in the new heaven? It is really interesting to see that.

DIMENSIONS OF THE CITY. Then we come to verse 15. Here we are given the dimensions of city. So, from verses 10 to verse 14, we are given the general description of the city. We are told that there is a city and God is living in it by the implication that brilliance is radiating from the city. Then we are told that there is a wall around it. The wall has gates

with angels beside them. Some names are written on the gates and there are names written on the foundation stones of the wall.

Then in verses 15 to 16, we are given the dimensions. First of the city and then of the wall. Verse 15 tells us how the measuring is done.

The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. Revelation 21:15-16 (NASB)

We are told that the width and the height and the length are all equal. That tells us the city is a cube. The base is a square.



The New American Standard Bible states that the length of one of the sides is 1500 miles. But that is not correct. The actual Greek text says 1200 stadia.

Henry Morris states that there are 607 feet to a stadia, or 0.115 miles to a stadia. That translates to 1380 miles on one side. Some Bibles say 1500 miles

but that is wrong. Now that is a huge city. Think about it. Almost 1400 miles on one side, 1400 miles on another side and then 1400 miles straight up. That is a big cube. If we placed that city on our world today, it would extend from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the east coast of the United States of America to the state of Colorado. That's a huge city. But that is just the ground floor. It is bigger than New York. Or if we were to draw a diagonal from one corner to the city to the opposite corner the city would extend from

England to Greece. Again, that would be the base.²

It is estimated that about 100 billion people have lived on planet earth the beginning of creation. And let's assume that 20% of those people became Christians. If we assume the numbers are true and we tried to put all those people into this cube, then we could give every person a third of a square mile on the ground floor. One third of a square mile is a fair amount of land and we haven't even gone up in elevation yet.

And we don't know how God designed the inside of the city. We do not know if there are elevators. We do not know if we will be like angels so that we can just go up and down from our place. We have no idea how this thing is designed on the inside. The bottom line is that it is a huge place. We will have our own mansion within the mansion-city. There will be a lot of space in this city using reasonable estimates.

DIMENSIONS OF THE WALL. Verse 17 is the measurement of the wall.

And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. Revelation 21:17 (NASB)

The last part of this verse is difficult to understand. Most commentators struggle. We will not explore the alternate views about the meaning of the passage. What is clear is that the first part of the verse tells us the wall is seventy-two yards. We're not told if it is seventy-two yards high or seventy-two yards wide. Most likely it is seventy-two yards wide since in the Old Testament the dimensions of the walls of a city are described in terms of its width. In Ezekiel 40:5 and Ezekiel 42:20 the dimensions of the wall are given in terms

of width. The length of the city determines the length of the wall. If this is wrong and the dimension is height, then we are not going to care when we get to heaven anyway, right? Now that will be a huge wall. That will be a wide wall. One of the reasons it's kind of important is that the city of Babylon had a monstrous wall. That was the talk of the ancients.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS – FOUNDATION STONES.

When we come to verse 18, we are given the construction materials.

The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. Revelation 21:18 (NASB)

The description of the New Jerusalem is laid out as an engineer would do. First, we were given the general description. Then we were given its dimensions. Now the building materials are described. In verse 18 we are told that the wall was made of jasper. Think about that. This wall surrounds the city and it is made of jasper. Jasper is like crystal clear diamond. Just like a diamond. And

the city was pure gold, like clear glass. In ancient days glass wasn't clear like it is today. We have glass manufacturing down to a perfected science today but not in the ancient days. They could make glass but it wasn't very clear. It might be a little milky or a little bit foggy. I was at a mine some years ago and saw some glass that was manufactured in an older era. It was kind of fuzzy or milky. Well, the glass that was manufactured in ancient days was not clear. But what is being described here is crystal clear glass. Clear! Think about this - transparent gold. Whoever heard of that? That does

2. Henry Morris. The Revelation Record. Tyndale house. 1983, p. 450-451.

not exist in our world but it will exist in the new city you are going to be living in for eternity. Think about it.

Verse 19 now introduces us to the foundation stones of the city.

The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald, the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysotile; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. Revelation 21:19-20 (NASB)

We are told that the foundation stones of the city were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper, and the second was sapphire, and John continues describing them through verse 20. The colors of the stones are like a rainbow. Jasper, as we have already discovered is crystal clear like a diamond. Sapphire is blue. Chalcedony is green. Emerald is green. Sardonyx is red. Sardius is red. Chrysotile is yellow. Beryl, topaz, and chrysoprase are green, and jacinth and amethyst are blue stones. There are a lot of different colors in the foundation stones of this city. Now watch this, God is into color. He likes rare materials. These stones are not small stones. These are monstrous stones supporting the foundation walls. There are huge stones. Think about the cost of buying one today.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS - GATES. In verse 21 we read,

And the twelve agates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. Revelation 21:21 (NASB)

Now, let's talk about the construction of the city gates. The city gates are twelve pearls. Therefore, there are twelve gates, twelve pearls, and a single pearl. Now let's think about the single pearl and think about the width of the gates. They are going to be huge, huge pearls. Think about the cost to of the pearls. Now, you might say, "Well, is the single pearl and a black pearl or is it a white pearl? Is it a gray pearl?" We do not

know. The single pearl may be a white pearl to correspond to the purity of the saints, but we do not know. I am guessing. But nevertheless, it is a single pearl.

We are also told that the streets of the city will be pure gold. The Greek word for street has the idea of a wide street. Remember Jesus' parable about the narrow way and the wide way in Matthew 7:13-14? The word for street here in Revelation 21:21 has the idea of a wide street. It is like a freeway. This is an enormous street, and they are all transparent like glass. In addition, we are told they are made of transparent gold. Just think about this city. It is an unbelievable city. It is an unbelievable place in which we are going to live. Everywhere we will walk will be an absolutely amazing experience. Everything we will see will be amazing.

In the next series of verses from Revelation 21: 22 to chapter 22, verse 2 we discover more information about what life will be like in the new heaven and new earth. So, let's see what life will be like in eternity. Verse 22 tells us,

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. Revelation 21:22 (NASB)

I found this verse to be interesting because in the Old Testament the Israelites built a tabernacle. God had directed them to build the temple. We are told that God came and His Shekhinah glory illuminated the tabernacle. Then the Shekhinah glory moved to Solomon's temple after it was built. Later when the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem, the Shekhinah glory left. Ezekiel 11:22-23 states that the Shekhinah glory left the temple, moved east to the Mount of Olives and then departed. Later another temple was built, Zerubbabel's temple, after the Israelites started returning to Jerusalem. Before and during the time of Christ another temple was built, called Herod's Temple. We have already discovered in our study of Revelation that there will be another temple in the millennial kingdom. The message is -- God likes temples. But when the new heaven and the new earth appears, what will we discover in our new, future eternal life? We will discover that there will not be a temple made of wood, marble or some other material. There will not be a structural temple. There will not be a physical temple

with doors, windows, wood and gold. There will not be a building called the temple because the temple is going to be God the Almighty and the Lamb. God the Almighty and the Lamb are the temple.

The next verse tells us that the Shekhinah glory of God will be in the temple.

And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Revelation 21:23 (NASB)

That is, there will not be any need for light bulbs. There will not be a need for streetlights, flashlights, or any kind of lights because God's going to be all the light that we will need. Talk about energy conservation, there is no need for it. God will be the light, and His Shekhinah glory will illuminate everything. He'll provide all the light that you need.

Verse 24 says,

The nations will walk by its light, and the

kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it . . .

Revelation 21:24-26 (NASB)

In these three verses, we are told that the nations will walk into the city. What does that imply? We already know that there is no sea. We already know that there will be mountains. There will be a city, and we are going to be able to walk into it. That implies that we will also be able to walk out of it. We will be able to go different places. I suspect there will be trees for us to see. There will be trees inside the city and outside. I expect that there will be a variety of vegetation

(Revelation 22:2). We are going to see many different and wonderful things. We think the Grand Canyon is great. But wait! You haven't seen anything yet! We are only guessing. We are only dreaming about the good things. Wait until you get to the new heaven. Wait until you get to the eternal heaven and see what is there.

In verse 25 we are told, "It's gates will never be closed." The Greek word for never is a double negative. It is *ou me*. The double negative implies an emphasis. It means that the gates will never be closed. We will always have access to our God.

Verse 26 says, "And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it." The word nations is interesting.

What does that mean?" The answer is revealed in verse 27. The verse helps us understand what the word nations means because we are told,

... and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in



the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 21:27 (NASB)

So, what are the nations? They are believers! All the nations are believers. It is wonderful to realize that God is going to include many different kinds of peoples. I couldn't help but think about Galatians 3:28 which tells us that there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor slave nor -- and it goes on. God is not partial to one race or nation when it comes to salvation. As far as God is concerned, if you believed in Jesus Christ, it doesn't matter what nation, what race, whether you are male or female, every type of person will all have a place in heaven. I also found it interesting that we are told in verse

27, "And I found nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination or lying." It is fascinating that John says that those who practice lying and abomination will not be able to get into heaven. We will love to live in heaven where no one lies and commits sin. This should be a wake up call for people who think they are Christian and lie and practice sin.

Next we are told in Revelation 22:1-2,

Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:1-2 (NASB)

In verse 1 we are told that John saw the throne of God, and from the throne of God a river flowed. The water that is flowing is called the water of life, and it is clear as crystal. And where does the river flow? It flows right down the middle of a street. The Greek word for street is once again a wide street. But we do not know how wide it will be. It could be extremely wide, or it could be narrow. The water of life will be there and what does that imply? It implies that we will be able to eat and drink in our future heaven. In fact, we are told that the tree of life will bear twelve kinds of fruit. Maybe a different type of fruit each month. Then we are told the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Now maybe you are wondering, will there be food in the new heaven? If so, the answer is that there will be food. Why would God provide twelve kinds of fruit? This means God believes in variety. He has designed something for us to drink, something to eat, places to walk in and places to travel outside the city. There will be mountains and there will not be a sea. What an interesting place heaven is going to be.

Probably the most difficult part of verse 2 is the last part of this verse because we are told, "And the leaves of the tree were for the." the New American Standard says, ". . . the healing of the nations." What does it mean the healing of the nations? The Greek word for "healing" is better translated as "life-giving." So, it has the same idea as the water of life and

the tree of life. They are all life-giving because we will be living where? We will be living in eternity, and so it is consistent. The leaves are for life sustenance or continuance of life.

Verses 3 and 4 are about personal relationships in heaven. Verse 3 tells us that God will be in the new heaven and new earth,

There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him . . . Revelation 22:3 (NASB)

Therefore, if you weren't sure where the throne of God and the Lamb will be, we are told explicitly in this verse. In the next verse we are told that we will see God's face in the new heaven.

. . . they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. Revelation 22:4 (NASB)

Now this will be wonderful. Think about it. God will be in heaven, and we will be there. We will serve Him. And we will get a chance to see something that the saints of the ages have dreamed about and longed for. They wanted to see God's face.

I have a question for you. Are you looking forward to seeing God's face? I am! And we are told here we are going to be able to see His face. And then we are told His name will be on our foreheads. That's a promise from God. That implies ownership. God is going to own us. He wants to own us! I'm going to welcome that. This implies a relationship between God and Christians.

Verse 5 says,

And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. Revelation 22:5 (NASB)

This verse describes a relationship that we will have with God. Heaven will be an unbelievable place made with unbelievable materials. We will have unbelievable experiences,

and we will be eating, drinking, walking, talking, seeing one another and seeing God face to face. It will be a glorious time. I am looking forward to getting out of this place called earth and going there. This world is not my home and I am just a-passing through.

So how shall we respond this morning? This is very simple! Our response should be one of praise and thanks to our God for our new, future home. Revelation has given us a promise, and He keeps His promise. Let us pray!