

New Jerusalem

Revelation 21-22

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” ⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.”

Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

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.” ¹⁰ 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, ¹¹ having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

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 – 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 on them were the

NOTES

twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel’s measurement. ¹⁸ The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 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, transparent as glass.

²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day – and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

^{22:1} Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Hebrews 11:13-16

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for **he has prepared for them a city.**

Hebrews 11:9-10

⁹ By faith Abraham 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. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to **the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.**

Isaiah 65:17-25

¹⁷ “For behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create **Jerusalem** to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. ¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. ²⁰ No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. ²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²² They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. ²³ They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them. ²⁴ Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. ²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says the LORD.

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.

Zechariah 14:20-21

²⁰ And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “Holy to the LORD.” And the pots in the house of the LORD shall be as the bowls before the altar. ²¹ And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the LORD of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them. And there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.

Genesis 2:8-12

⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.

Ezekiel 47:12

And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.

Jeremiah 31:12

They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more.

Genesis 3:24

He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

1 Peter 2:5

You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house

1 Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Isaiah 2:2-4

² It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, ³ and many peoples shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Romans 8:19-22

¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Notes:

Introduction – “The Dwelling Place of God”

Greatest hope of humanity is to dwell with God.

In Eden, Adam and Eve walked with God, but because of their sin, they were driven out.

The gospel in the OT is that God reestablished the Garden amidst his people through Tabernacle and Temple.

But the Tabernacle and Temple, while signifying God’s presence with his people,

also created layers of separation because of the problem of sin. This is why no one could enter Holy of Holies.

But the promise of the gospel is that one day, God would dwell with his people forever.

Thesis of this series:

Eden → Tabernacle → Temple → New Jerusalem

The New Jerusalem is the realization of the whole trajectory of the Bible

Hebrews 11

An amazing passage because the writer is saying that all of the Old Testament saints never truly came home – they never settled down in the land that was ultimately promised in the gospel (Abrahamic Covenant). It’s a remarkable statement because didn’t Israel take possession of the Promised Land? Didn’t Israel have Jerusalem and the temple? Yes, but they were only shadows of the ultimate reality to come. All along, the people of God were exiles and strangers (even as they lived in the land of Israel)!

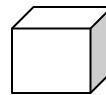
All along, their true home was a city – New Jerusalem. Even the name, “New Jerusalem,” indicates the meaning, because “new” in the Bible is not “new, as in out with the old,” but “new, as in fulfillment of old.” The earthly Jerusalem was always a type. The tabernacle and temple were actually small-scale replicas of the final reality. God was showing his people all along the final hope and joy of salvation – New Jerusalem.

This is the vision of **Isaiah 65**. Isaiah is writing near the end of the Davidic monarchy – shortly before exile and judgment. But the promise in Isaiah is that God will recreate the Promised Land and provide a new Jerusalem in which extravagant blessings will be poured out on God’s people.

Details of New Jerusalem

(1) The city is a cube – v. 16

- stadia – little under 200 meters
- 12,000 stadia = 1,400 miles (half length of US)
- mega-city stretches across half the US



(2) City is made of pure gold – v. 18, 21

- golden cube: should remind us of the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 6:20)
- gold signified the presence of God
- tabernacle/temple – outer court, bronze; inside temple, pure gold

Meaning: entire city is the Holy of Holies

v. 22 – “no temple in the city”

- seems at first to negate the argument here
- but remember the temple was designed to keep people separate from God; barriers of holiness
- no longer a temple, because now, the entire city is the Holy of Holies

Zechariah 14

End of his book, he makes this audacious prophecy. The entire city of Jerusalem will become the temple. So that even horses will have inscribed on their bells – “Holy to the Lord,” which only the temple priests had. And even ordinary pots and bowls will become like the holy vessels of the temple.

Meaning: Our glorified future is to live in Holy of Holies forever. We will forever be in presence of God. We have re-entered Eden. The barriers of holiness are forever torn down.

(3) Precious stones in the New Jerusalem – v. 18-21

- **Genesis 2:10-12** – what seems like random details about Eden suddenly come alive
- one of the distinctive attributes of Eden are the presence of these precious stones: gold, onyx, bdellium
- this is why in the high priest’s ephod, there are 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel, and each stone is a precious gem (because the temple was a return to Eden)
- the list of precious stones in **Revelation 21:19-20** are nearly identical to this (differences may have to do with variances in names between Hebrew and Greek)

Meaning: the New Jerusalem is Eden

(4) The New Jerusalem is a garden-city (22:1-2)

- **Genesis 2:8-9** – first, Eden was a *garden*. Second, distinctive feature was *rivers* and *Tree of Life*.
- the New Jerusalem is a city, but it is a garden city
- **Ezekiel 47:12** – vision of a future temple. In this temple, a river will flow, and along this river trees will grow. But these are no ordinary trees. They will be for healing and restoration.
- we see the same thing in **Jeremiah 31:12**. A garden was not just a pleasant and beautiful thing. It was a metaphor for a life full of gladness, prosperity and free from illness and disease.

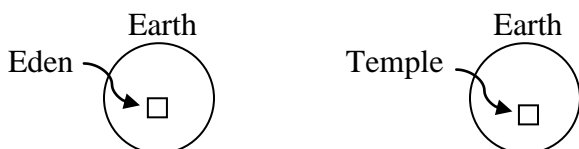
The New Jerusalem will be a garden, in which all the brokenness and wretchedness of humanity will be healed. And just like Eden, the New Jerusalem will have rivers flowing – but these waters will give life and restoration. And finally, in the New Jerusalem, there will be the Tree of Life, which was the promised reward if Adam had passed the test. But now all God’s people will partake of the Tree of Life.

(5) The cherubim of the New Jerusalem – v. 12

- **Genesis 3:24** – cherubim guarding way back into Eden
- cherubim still have same role (guarding New Jerusalem), but this time, protect people of God
- great high wall signifies protection (of course, no threat of attack, but symbolic)

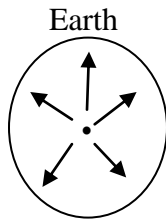
(6) The New Jerusalem will fill up all creation || New Creation and New Jerusalem are one and same

- prior to the New Jerusalem, God’s presence on earth was always localized, restricted to one place



- but God had always intended for his presence to extend over all the earth
- and with the church, this is accomplished in part
- **1 Peter 2:5** and **1 Corinthians 3:16** – church is the Temple
- and in Acts 1:8 – Jesus commands this people-temple to spread over all the earth, extending his presence

So that the temple now extends over all the earth



This is finally fulfilled in the New Jerusalem

- v. 1-2, John sees the New Creation, and then he sees the New Jerusalem (one and the same)
- more than that, how could there be a place in all creation where God does not dwell?

(7) Nothing impure and unholy will be in the city – v. 8, 27

- remember only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only with a sacrifice
- all creation will be restored and purified because nothing in rebellion against God will remain
- the whole of creation will be the Holy of Holies – and therefore, nothing immoral will remain

(8) Therefore, the curse will be reversed || no more tears

- 22:3 – “no longer will there be anything accursed”
- 21:3-5 – “wipe away every tear,” everything evil and unjust will be undone || death will be no more

(9) Finally, the nations will stream in

- a city is a place where there is incredible diversity and creativity
- 22:2 – healing of the nations