

(1) Discuss for a few minutes the issue of whether the New Jerusalem is physically literal or is figurative and symbolic? What evidence is there in the passage that it is symbolic? But being symbolic doesn't mean it isn't real. It symbolizes something very real. That leads to the next question.

(2) Read Revelation 21:2, 9-10. John explicitly identifies the holy city or the New Jerusalem with the Bride or wife of the Lamb. In other words, the New Jerusalem symbolizes the people of God. We don't merely live in this city. We **are** this city! What evidence is there in the passage that would lead us to conclude that the New Jerusalem is the one people of God, believing Jews and believing Gentiles together as one covenant people?

(3) What does it mean to say that the glory of God himself will illumine or shine in this city so that there would be no need for sun and moon? How is it that we will not be destroyed or consumed or vaporized by the revelation of this glory? Read Exodus 33:18-23 and contrast the experience of Moses with our experience in the New Jerusalem.

(4) Only those written down in the Lamb's book of life will enter and live in this city. Read Revelation 13:8 and 17:8. What is this "book" and how might we know if our names are written in it?

(5) What are the practical benefits, if any, that come from meditating on this vision of the New Jerusalem? What spiritual good comes to us from thinking much of the new heaven and new earth?