

We will be in Revelation 21 this morning.

There was a gentleman who always liked to challenge his pastor. He regularly attended Wednesday Bible study and prayer. Recently, he asked, "Pastor can you please explain eternity to me." He responded, "I could, but it would take forever."

Jerusalem. In the Bible Jerusalem is called the City of God, Jerusalem is called the City of the Great King, Jerusalem is called the City of Peace.

Jerusalem the city where Jesus walked and where He was crucified.

We know that during His earthly ministry that Jesus visited Jerusalem at least seven times and we know He wept over Jerusalem because He saw the future destruction of that city.

And Jerusalem was destroyed as Jesus said that it would be, in addition to that it's seen war over 30 times. 17 times it has been reduced to ashes. 18 times it has risen from the ashes and yet it always seems to be facing some catastrophe, or conflict. We see and hear it in the news all the time.

Jerusalem is the center of the earth. In the Bible North, south, east, and west, have there reference from the city of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 5, behold I have set Jerusalem in the midst of the nations. But it is also the center of the earth spiritually. Salvation was finished in Jerusalem, It's where Jesus was crucified. Where the sins of the world were put upon the Son of God.

Zechariah said I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all peoples. We see that in the end times, we know that Jerusalem will be the center of activity.

But our study this morning shows us the ultimate destiny of Jerusalem.

Jesus will rule and reign from Mount Zion during the millennium, the thousand year reign of Christ on earth. It says the nations will flow to Jerusalem. The law will go forth from Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

But after the millennium, a new heaven and a new earth are created and we see this New Jerusalem descending from heaven toward the new earth that God created.

There is no king in Jerusalem today.

Yet its called the throne of David. No king for over 2500 years even though God promised that somebody from the lineage of King David would sit upon the throne to rule and reign.

But one day the King will come down and take His rightful place on the throne in Jerusalem.

That's will happen during the millennium and continue after that the new heaven and the new earth. And that's what we are looking at today. It's the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven.

So as we continue this morning in our study of Revelation turn to verse 9 of Revelation chapter 21.

We are given a description of this coming city. We are given a tour of the city starting from the outside followed by a tour of the inside.

Remember, At this point in time, the rapture has already happened, the tribulation is over, the judgments are over, the millennium is over, and a new heaven and a new earth are created.

The New Jerusalem. It's a city that comes out of heaven down to the new earth.

What did Jesus tell us?, He said in My Father's house there are many mansions, it should be translated abiding places, spaces, rooms.

So what Jesus promised in John 14 is described by John in this vision given to him from Jesus Christ. Lets read beginning in Chapter 21, verse 9 I will be reading from the NKJV

First of all we see the meaning of the city. "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls," we haven't seen him for a thousand years and now he's back, "filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Now

that's different describing a city, as a bride, as a wife. We know the bride is a description of the people of God, so why is the city called the bride?

It's the description of the character of those that will occupy it. This is the bride city. This is the place that Jesus has prepared for His people. One of God's favorite names for you and for me is His bride. Think of it. Marriage lived the way God intended, is the closest possible relationship we have on earth, to this relationship that we will have in eternity with God.

God wants intimacy. God doesn't want distance. The term, the bride of Christ, is a picture of closing the gap that exists.

So many people have a long distance relationship with God. Some don't even talk about God as my Lord, my Savior.

God wants intimacy with His people. Back in verse 2 from a few weeks ago, "I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."

Where is your relationship with God right now?
What kind of intimacy are you enjoying with the Lord? What kind of daily fellowship do you have right now?

If Jesus could write you a personal letter it might sound something like this:

I had to write to tell you how much I love you and care for you. Yesterday I saw you walking and laughing with your friends. I hope that soon you'd want Me to walk along with you too, so I painted you a sunset to close your day and whispered a cool breeze to refresh you. I waited. You never called. I just kept on loving you. As I watched you fall asleep last night, I spilled moonlight onto your face. You didn't even think of Me. I wanted so much to comfort you. The next day I exploded a brilliant sunrise into your morning, but you awoke late, rushed off to work, and you didn't even notice. My sky became cloudy and My tears were the rain. I love you, oh if you'd only listen. I really do love you. I tried to say it in the quiet of the green meadow and in the blue sky. The wind whispers My love throughout the treetops and spills it into the vibrant colors of all the flowers. I shouted to you in the thunder of the great waterfalls and composed love songs for birds to sing for you. I warm you with the clothing of My sunshine and perfume the air with nature's sweet scent. My love for you is deeper than any ocean, greater than any need that is in your heart. If you'd only realize how I

care. My Father sends His love. I want you to meet Him. So please call on Me soon, but no matter how long it takes, I'll wait because I love you.
Jesus.

He calls you His bride. It blows me away that after 2,000 years of the church on the earth, after 2,000 years of watching us, He still calls us His bride. And He will call us His bride into eternity.

2 Corinthians 11 (from the living bible) this is what Paul says reminding us that we're the bride of Christ: I am anxious for you with a deep concern of God Himself, anxious that your love should be for Christ alone, just as a pure maiden reserves her love for one man only, for the one who will be her husband.

Are you preparing for the bride city? Are you getting ready? Or are you flirting with the world?

Jerusalem is called the great city. Your eternity will be corporate. It will be social. No social distancing, no staying away, you won't be hiding out somewhere. As believers you are destined to live in a city with other people because God made us to be social creatures, we are created to need one another, to be with each other. Also this shows me that heaven, is a real place of real activity with real people.

A new heaven, A new earth, followed by this city, the New Jerusalem descending from Heaven

I think the New Jerusalem is the Father's house. It's what Jesus promised in John 14. I am going to prepare a place for you. So there has to have been a place already existing for Him to go to and prepare. It follows then that this New Jerusalem is the Father's house.

So it comes down out of heaven and it will be awesome.
So that is the meaning of the city.

Now let's look at the magnificence of the new Jerusalem. Verse 11. It says, "having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." The main characteristic of this magnificent city is it has the glory of God.

We have nothing on earth to compare it to.

It has the glory of God everywhere. John says her light was like a most precious stone. He chose a very interesting word. The word he uses for light here, describes something in which light is concentrated and from which light radiates. It's light coming, originating, from it.

Let's go on verse 23, we are still in chapter 21: "The city had no need of the sun or the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light."

So rather than the moon having the reflection of the sun, rather than the sun generating light by combustion, the source of light is the Lamb. It's God Himself and it radiates into all of eternity. And John says it looked to me like a precious stone. When I looked at it from afar it's like this gem coming out of heaven. Like jasper.

He was probably referring to a diamond and its size, it was huge.

This huge diamond like city descending out of heaven coming to the new earth, with walls and with gates and angels..

John sees this huge, flawless, clear diamond like cube coming out of heaven.

The bride city adorned for her Husband. Beautiful city.

God loves beauty? We're gonna see that in the description of this city.

Even as we see God's love for beauty all around us even in this fallen world.

We can only begin to imagination the beauty of things to come. But He gives a peek here in revelation.

We go outside and see what God has made, and we marvel at it all, God is so creative.

In six days, God spoke into existence the present heavens and earth.

God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light and He goes on to create for six days.

Now compare that to what Jesus said in John 14. I am going to prepare a place for you. He's been working on this place for 2,000 years.

Imagine what this new city of Jerusalem is going to look like. We have a description. It's like a diamond on the outside. In verse 12: "Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

That's an overall description. It had four sides and like the tabernacle in the Old Testament you had three tribes on each side and you've got three gates with the names of the tribes of Israel all centering toward God who is in the center on the throne.

Then you've got foundations of the gates with the names of the twelve apostles on them. Now there are angels at the gates. Since we won't need their protection I think they're there to welcome us. As we come and go. Like an usher or a greeter. Hebrews says that angels are servants of God's children and they'll be standing at the gates.

The twelve gates have the names of the tribes of Israel. That's our heritage. The Messianic age was predicted and promised to Israel. The prophets came from Israel. The foundation of the New Testament is the Old Testament, and God had a unique covenant with the twelve tribes of Israel. And to show our spiritual heritage for all of eternity, there will be the tribes of Israel inscribed on the gates of the New Jerusalem. Then there are the twelve foundations with names of the twelve apostles. This celebrates the covenant relationship God has with the church---the New Testament.

That's what Paul said in Ephesians 2: therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints, members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles. Our faith is built upon the teachings, the eyewitness accounts of the apostles at the time of Jesus Christ. They wrote the first documents and teachings of the church.

They were among the first martyrs. We look back and we can see that this is the foundation.

We need to ask ourselves is our faith apostolic? Is it built upon the apostles' teachings? I want you to think about that. In Acts chapter 2 they taught the church the apostles' doctrines. And for all of eternity in the foundations of the new city of Jerusalem the names of the twelve apostles will be honored by God.

Your faith should be apostolic.

New Jerusalem.
It's the bride of Christ.
It's described in terms of those who occupy it.
It is a magnificent city.

Now let's look at the measurement of the new Jerusalem verse 15: "And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal." Now this is very different from the Jerusalem that we know today.

This is one big place. The Greek word tetragonas, a tetragon---four-sided. It's a perfect cube. It's twelve thousand furlongs. A furlong is 600 feet. That would make the city 1500 miles wide, 1500 miles deep, and 1500 miles tall. 1500 miles the distance from here to Kentucky.

Verse 17, "Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits," a cubit is 18 inches, that's 72 yards or 216 feet, "according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The construction of its wall was jasper," once again clear, diamond-like wall. "The city was pure gold, like clear glass." Now think of that. 216 feet---sound high? Not really at least for a city reaching up 1,500 miles.

Perfect symmetry, order, balance. God is a God who brings order, symmetry, and balance. He did it in creation, didn't He? There was chaos and then God created the heavens and the earth; brought order to chaos. That's what God does.

He doesn't bring chaos to order. You can usually tell a person's whose life has been touched by God, because more and more that life should reflect the mind of God: order and balance as opposed to chaos.

It's the mind of God; it will be the city of God. So that's the meaning, the magnificence, the measurement of the city, let's look at what it is made of.

Verse 18: "the city was pure gold, like clear glass." Have you ever seen gold that you can see through? Our gold is not transparent. So this is gold that you can see through.

We have never seen gold like that, but we are gonna live in it. God radiating through the transparent gold of the streets, of the city, through the clear diamond-like walls.

I thought there won't be much privacy, but we won't need privacy. Since God is at its center and radiates through the streets and through the city and through the gates and through the walls and illuminates all of creation, You're not gonna need any privacy.

The foundation stones are given, "The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony (cal si dony), the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx (sar don eks), the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite (chris o lite), the eighth beryl (barrel), the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase (chris o praise), the eleventh jacinth (ja- sinth), and the twelfth amethyst."

Verse 21: "The twelve gates were twelve pearls". Probably where the idea of the pearly gates comes from. Each gate was one solid pearl. "The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was one pearl." It is interesting that the entrances and the exits of this city are one huge pearl. Three on each side. A pearl is the only stone, precious gem, that is formed by living flesh. That can't be said of any other stone, any other gem. It's a gem formed by living flesh and it's formed by irritation. An irritant, a piece of sand, wedges itself into the body of the oyster. The oyster must respond to the irritation. It does so by sending out secretions, it covers the sand over and over until eventually over time you have a beautiful pearl.

So that which was an irritant, that which caused suffering, becomes something beautiful and valuable.

The New Jerusalem is God's answer to humanity that has crucified His Son.

Even the gates of this city remind us of how God took our lives and covered them and made them beautiful.

These magnificent gates speak to the great cost of our salvation, showing us that the only entrance to God's presence is by the suffering of the Lamb of God.

A testimony for all of eternity. He was bruised for our transgressions, wounded for our sins. A symbol of the love of God in sending His Son to take creatures like us and save us, these pearl gates are a reminder of that.

We get to enter that city, we get to come close to God, all because of the work of Jesus Christ.

Now come with me and take a look inside.

Verse 22: "But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

The first thing John looks for inside the city, is a place to worship so naturally he looks for a temple. The city of Jerusalem had a temple. But this New Jerusalem has no temple and it doesn't need one. Doesn't need a church. Doesn't need a cathedral because God is ever present with His people, and Revelation 7 says He will spread His tabernacle over them. He will expand His temple so that the entire universe is His temple. There will be perfect communion.

The light, we've already seen, in verse 23. It says the Lamb is its light. Now in eternity Jesus Christ, the Lamb, will be having the glory that He had before He came to earth. Remember He prayed, Lord, give to Me the glory that I once had with You before the world was? Here the prayer is answered. Light emanates not only from the Father but from the Son. The Lamb is its light. When Jesus was on the earth, He was God, He was deity, but the deity was veiled. He still created miracles. He could still read minds but it was veiled. And every now and then the veil was lifted and it blew the disciples minds.

On the Mount of Transfiguration they see Jesus transfigured in brilliant light like the light of the sun, transfigured with Moses and Elijah. In eternity, the veil is lifted and the Lamb is the light of eternity. Notice the access of this city to everyone. All the nations. It says all the nations will walk in its light and they bring their glory into it, verse 26.

The nations. Gentiles, Jews, people from every tribe, every tongue, every nation gather together..

All of the people of God.

Lets Look at the first five verses of chapter 22 and Main Street New Jerusalem.

Verse 21. "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him."

eternity will not be boring. You'll be busy. What will I be doing? Serving. How will I serve Him? I don't know what all that will include.

But there will be many ways.

There are twelve different fruits on these trees that yield fruit monthly. "They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever."

When you read, tree of life, it reminds us of Genesis 3. That's where we first saw the tree of life in the Garden.

Here we see the New Heaven, we see the New Earth, we see the New City Jerusalem and now, there's the tree of life.

The history of the world hangs on three trees? The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree of life, and the tree Jesus was crucified on.

The first tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the place man sinned and became spiritually dead.

The second tree, the tree of life, was kept from man lest he live forever in his sin. But that third tree, the cross of Jesus Christ, was the tree that brought us back to life and now, in the end, in heaven, there is the tree of life and twelve kinds of fruit. One for each month. I think that's put there to show us there are going to be cycles. It's going to be different. Twelve different cycles or phases and it's put into terms we can relate to.

It says there's no curse, so why do they need healing? It says it's for the healing of the nations. There's no death, no curse, no disease. Why do you need healing? The word used for healing means therapy. It's something that adds vigor to life, health to life. So it means health-giving, life-giving. It will enhance your eternal life.

So what a city. We could talk and conjecture about the rest, but we do have this description of the inside and outside. That's the Father's house. A house Jesus prepared for you.

What a city! Better than any city we have ever known.

Jerusalem has always been God's choice.

And when you choose God, He has prepared this city for you. And this city will always satisfy you it says there's the river of water of life, clear as crystal coming from the throne of God. It has spiritual significance. Jesus said a man must be born again of water and the Spirit. Jesus said, in John chapter 7, to all of the people in Jerusalem on the feast, that if you believe in Him out of your innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

It's spiritual refreshment. And when you come to Jesus Christ, there's spiritual refreshment.

Whatever you drink of in this world, you'll always thirst again.

Things of this world will never completely satisfy us. There not meant too. We always have to have more and we can become trapped by them.

But a life following Jesus Christ satisfies you now, and overflows to those around you and follows you into eternity where there will be this water of life.

It speaks of the perfect relationship we will have with with God in eternity.

If you don't have that today, you can come to the waters.

The invitation to come is open. One day it will be too late, but if your hearing this message it's not too late. We live in time and space. What we have looked at this morning is in eternity.

In time and space you've got a choice. In eternity, you will not.

But God has given you this opportunity and if you don't know Jesus Christ, come to Him for the water of life.

Thank you for joining us this morning. We will close with 2 songs both songs of invitation. Tune in next Sunday as we finish our study in Revelation.