

New Jerusalem
Revelation 21:1-22:5
April 5, 2015

Introduction

For this Easter service, I want us to see the ultimate end of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His resurrection culminates in the New City coming down from heaven as John saw it and records it in Revelation. This is the city that Jesus has been preparing for us when He went back to heaven.

John 14:1-4 *Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going.*

Jesus prepares us a place in heaven. It is our eternal home where we will be with Him forever. It is because of His resurrection that we have this hope! It is through His resurrection that we have an eternal place where we live in security and sinless. We are not the only people who long to be with our Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says that the Old Testament saints long for such a place.

Hebrews 11:8-10 *By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

It is because of His death and resurrection that we have a place to come look forward to.

Hebrews 12:22-24 *But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

We long for the eternal city that is not of this world!

Hebrews 13:14 *For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.*

What does this city look like? John tells us the best he can what this city looks like!

Revelation 21:1-27

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

- First heaven and earth passed away
 - According to Peter in **2 Peter 3:4-12**, heaven (universe) and earth will be burned up in fiery heat enough to melt everything
 - Similar to flood that wiped the world of sin
 - After the final rebellion, everything needs to be purged—why?
 - Whole universe is tainted with sin

Isaiah 24:5 *The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant.*

- God will recreate everything

2 Peter 3:13 *But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.*

- Everything will be sinless, never touched by evil
- His promise

Isaiah 65:17 *Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.*

- What does “new” mean? Different (not as in opposite of old—think old nature to new nature)

2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

- New Jerusalem coming down from heaven
 - From third heaven (according to Paul (**2 Corinthians 12**))
 - Already built
- Bride city
 - City identified by the saints (bride city)
 - All of His people from Adam to the end of the age—those who believe by faith will be there
- Why city?
 - To Abraham, he was a nomad, a stranger
 - City represents stability and security

11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

- Glory of God
 - This is the most important aspect of this city
 - This is God's throne and His glory shines throughout the New Jerusalem
 - No need for sun or moon
 - So brilliant
- Like jasper, clear as crystal
 - City was translucent—where God's glory shines through
 - Jasper—translucent crystal—light shining through it causes much reflection and refraction of light!

12 It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

13 There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.

14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.

16 The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long.

17 He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using.

- Wall with gates

- Specific dimension
- Real, physical place laid out symmetrically
- Gates with names of the 12 tribes of Israel and foundations with apostles' name
 - God's favor with His redeemed people under the old and new covenant
- Angel at each gate—to attend God's glory and to serve His people
- Measurement
 - The city is laid out as a cube (same distance length, width, and height)
 - Completely different from our concepts of cities (length and width)
 - Similar to Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle—a cube
 - Angel measures the city
 - John says that the heavenly measurements and the earthly measurements are the same!
 - Stadia = multiple stadion; 1 stadion = 607 feet
 - Measurement about 1,380 miles in each direction!
 - Walls are 72 yards thick (cubit = 18 inches: $18 \times 144 / 36 = 72$ yards)
 - How high are the walls—unknown because John does not say
 - Why walls and gates?
 - Bible does not say why God places a wall around the city and have gates
 - Wall symbolizes protection, safety, of inclusion and exclusion
 - Gates implies people can come and go

18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

19 The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

- Transparency!
 - Pure gold like glass—we do not have that here on earth
 - God's glory is blazing through every square inch of the city
 - Different precious stones—different colors
- Gates of pearl
 - Large pearl for each gate—not made by oysters but God Himself
- This is a city of beauty and this city is to stir the hearts of glorified men and women for eternity
- God has placed the love of beauty in our hearts—the richness of what He has planned for us!

22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

26 The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- No more temple
 - The temple is the presence of God
 - From now to the coming down of the Holy City, there is a Temple in heaven
 - When the new City comes down, there will be no need for the Temple
 - Because God's glory will shine throughout the new Heaven and Earth
 - We will be in their presence for eternity, even when we travel the furthest reaches of the new Heaven, we are still in their presence!

- Kings of the earth—His redeemed people!
 - Fully equal and reigning with God forever
 - Their splendor—we will all submit to Christ the King of kings
- Who will be in the New City?
 - Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life!

22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him.

4 They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever.

- River of life
- Tree of life
 - Healing of nations—not healing of sickness, but of well-being (like vitamins)
 - We will probably eat in heaven, not because to fill our hunger, but to enjoy the food
- The glorious fellowship with God
 - No more curse
 - Curse is what separates us from God
 - John says that this will be there no more!
 - See His face
 - Now we do not see Him since we only know Him by faith
 - That day when our faith becomes sight
 - This is our comfort and joy for all eternity
 - His name
 - In the Bible, having someone's name on someone is ownership
 - We belong to Him

***Isaiah 49:15-16** Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! **16** See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands; your walls are ever before Me.*

Coram Deo

How can we claim the beautiful, glorious New Jerusalem as our home? When Jesus told the disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them, they did not know what He was talking about.

***John 14:5** Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we don't know where You are going, so how can we know the way?"*

How can we enjoy sweet fellowship with God if we do not know the way?

***John 14:6** Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*