

“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.” – Revelation 21:22-23

Overview:

Revelation 21:6, Jesus declares “It is done!” and now John receives an invitation to come and see the “bride, the Lamb's wife.” In describing this experience, John says he is carried away “in the Spirit” to a great and high mountain where he sees the holy Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. For the rest of Revelation 21, John describes the city to his readers.

The most immediately noticeable quality of the great city is God's glory, expressed in terms of light. The city is surrounded by a great wall which speaks of the protection of God. The wall has 12 gates, three on each wall, with angels stationed at the gates and the names of the 12 tribes of Israel written on each of the gates. Entry to the new Jerusalem has always come through Israel.

The city's dimensions form a perfect cube with the length, width, and height measuring out to be 1,500 miles long. The city wall has 12 foundations with the names of the 12 apostles on each foundation. The foundations are adorned with all kinds of precious stones. Unlike Jerusalem in John's time, the new Jerusalem doesn't have a temple because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple (v.22). Also, there is no need for the sun or moon because the glory of God provides the light (v.23). Everyone whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life may enter into the city (v.27).

References:

Rev 21:9 – A vision of the bride, the Lamb's wife

- The church (John 14:1-3, 17:24-25)
- Contrasted with Revelation 17-18 – The judgment of Babylon

Rev 21:10 – The heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12)

Rev 21:11 – Glory of God (Exodus 40:34-38)

Rev 21:11 – Like a jasper stone (Revelation 4:3)

Rev 21:12 – Names written on them (Ezekiel 48:30-34)

Rev 21:14 – The foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10-11)

Rev 21:14 – The Lamb (John 1:29)

Rev 21:19-20 – The different precious stones

- Corresponding to the breastplate of the high priest (Exodus 28:15-21)
- Lucifer also adorned with these stones before the fall (Ezekiel 28:13-14)

Rev 21:21 – Gates were twelve pearls (Matthew 13:45-46)

Rev 21:23 – Glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. (John 17:1-4, John 12:28)

Questions:

- * What is the most amazing item in John's description of the new Jerusalem? Why?
- * The city is constructed out of gold, pearls, and precious stones. What does this teach us about our wealth?
- * Compare the garden of Eden, Genesis 2 with Revelation 21-22. What things are the same? What things are different?

Additional Study:

Rev 21:11

- * Her light (*phoster*) – bright shining radiance
- * The glory (*kabod*) – Hebrew

Rev 21:14

- * Twelve apostles (*apostolos*) – messenger

Rev 21:15

- * Had a gold reed (*kalamos*) – no length given

Rev 21:18

- * Of jasper - (*iastis*) – clear stone more like diamond

Rev 21:19

- * The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned (*kosmeo*) – to beautify