

THE NEW JERUSALEM

Long before men ever dreamt of building great cities like Hong Kong, Beijing, Tokyo, London, Mexico City, and New York City as monuments to the pride, architectural wonder, financial stability, and cultural achievements of the nations, God revealed His city which is unlike any that would be or ever has been conceived by human intelligence.

Whenever God finishes a job it is always done well and complete. This was the case when He created the world and the souls in it in six days. It is the case when He will speak these words:

“And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.” Revelation 21:6.

All of creation originates from God and He is the goal of creation. All things are created for Him. We all have a hunger and thirst for God in our lives. This ambition can be perverted to self as in the case of those who drink of the intoxicating wine which Babylon serves for the purpose of deception. This cup pays out deadly earned wages. However, drinking from the water whose source is the fountain, Jesus Christ, is a thirst quenching free gift.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” Revelation 21:7.

The one who is continually drinking of Jesus is an overcomer. He cannot but help but be an overcomer in that Jesus is the only one who can overcome sin in our lives. There is no hindrance to the Spirit of Christ. He just wants more and more of this limitless supply of water.

The inheritance of overcomers includes access to the tree of life (Rev. 2:7); escape from the second death (Rev. 2:11); the hidden manna, a white stone, and a new name (Rev. 2:17); rulership over the nations (Rev. 2:26-28); a walk with Jesus; and garments of white; their names retained in the book of life and acknowledged by the Father and angels (Rev. 3:4, 5); pillars in the temple with God's name written on them (Rev. 3:12); they sit with Jesus on His throne (Rev. 3:21). But more importantly, God is their Father and they are sons and daughters in His family.

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all

liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Revelation 21:8.

There are specific ones who are excluded from “no fly” list. The first on the list are the “fearful” because “perfect love casts out all fear” and these have not the *agape* love of God. They do not have that love because they have not faith. The sin of all sins is unbelief in Jesus Christ. From this one sin flows all the horrible torrents of human wickedness to follow.

They are “abominable.” Their belief system has been derived from the doctrines of devils taught by Babylon. Such beliefs have permeated their very nature and thinking causing them to be corrupt to the core. They justify murders, whoremongering, sorcery, idolatry, and lying on the basis of their so-called Christian beliefs. They have been taught these things by the false Christ. There are apostate Christians whose morality today fully justifies them in murdering others, committing adultery and fornication, sorcery and spiritualism, idolatry—the worship and gratification of self—and lying both to themselves and others to justify their actions.

Because of their choice in unbelief in the true Christ they have chosen the lake of fire which is the second death. Rejection of the true Christ who died their wages of sin—eternal death—can only result in the same fate.

“And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” Revelation 21:9.

The same angels who are dressed in white linen pouring out the seven last plagues are fitted to conduct us to the bridal procession. At the wedding it’s all about the bride. Everyone is focused upon her radiant beauty. And now the Lamb wants us to focus upon His bride for the rest of this chapter.

“And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” Revelation 21:10.

The Lamb is very proud of His beloved holy city. He had promised His disciples that He would “prepare a place for them.” “In my Father’s house are many mansions” (John 14:2). Now we behold this celestial urban space ship “descending out of heaven from God.”

“Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Revelation 21:11.

The first thing to be noted about this city is the source of its illumination. God is her light. When winging at night across “fly over” country, one may often see on earth’s dark surface an illuminated city. What is the source of her power? On the shore of the Grand River stands a coal-burning power plant for the city of Grand Haven, Michigan. That is the source of its power. However, the source of power for the New Jerusalem is the most environmentally friendly generator that has ever been conceived. It is God Himself from whom there is no harmful pollution. The light which He produces is white-diamond like, clear as crystal.

“And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” Revelation 21:12.

When you visit certain great cities of the world, you always want to see their world-renown monuments. Washington, D. C. has the White House, Congress, and the Washington Monument. New York City has the Statue of Liberty and the Empire State Building. Paris has the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre.

The architecture of the New Jerusalem is a monument in itself. It will stir the imagination with awe and wonder. The twelve city gates are each one larger than the Arch de Triumph in Paris. Each gate is a memorial to the twelve patriarchs and tribes of Israel.

“On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.” Revelation 21:13.

Everyone who enters the city will do so under one of the twelve gates, three on each of the four sides of the city.

“And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” Revelation 21:14.

The massive city walls rest upon twelve foundation-time capsules containing the names of the twelve apostles. God sees fit to memorialize their names written in stone for all to see. The faith of Jesus revealed to these apostles sent from God has stood the test of time on this old earth and it will endure throughout eternity.

“And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.” Revelation 21:15.

Any construction supervisor worth his medal must engineer the project with precision to within millimeters. Nothing in this wall is out of plumb.

“And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand

furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.” Revelation 21:16.

The city is a perfect cube with twelve edges each exactly 1400 miles long. This would cover an area roughly from the Pacific Coast to the Mississippi River.

“And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.” Revelation 21:17.

The thickness of the wall is 216 feet. This wall must support a height of 1400 miles upwardly soaring parapets. When visiting Chicago the Sears Tower is the highest building, a landmark that can be seen when flying into O’hare airport. It pierces into the sky topping out at 1707 feet, but it has nothing over the walls of the New Jerusalem.

“And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.” Revelation 21:18.

Cost is no factor in the construction materials of this city. The walls are completely see-through, being made of jasper clear as crystal. What a dazzling jewel the whole appearance must be! Indeed, the inner city is built out of “pure gold.” So the yellowish hue of gold radiates outward through the translucent walls.

“And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.” Revelation 21:19, 20.

The twelve foundations each memorializing the twelve apostles is composed of twelve precious quarried stones. King Solomon’s mines had nothing in them in comparison with the mines out of which God’s quarries His precious stones.

“And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.” Revelation 21:21.

The gates of the patriarchal tribes are each one made of one solid pearl. That must be some big oyster to produce such a pearl! An oyster gets a little irritation of a grain of sand over which it secretes layer after layer which hardens into pearl-like material. Wonder of wonders God must have a tremendous Monterrey Aquarium somewhere in His universe that you are going to want to visit to see how these pearls are produced!

And where does God get all that gold just to pave the streets with? Men on this earth have sacrificed their lives and fortunes spanning the continent in the gold rush of California and the Klondike. They have panned streams in the foothills and denuded the hills in placerite mines just to find an illusive few grains of gold nuggets. The largest gold brick minted on Montgomery Street in San Francisco, 1857, went down with the “Ship of Gold” in the Atlantic. It was 80 pounds and was worth \$17,000.00 in its day, now worth \$10 million. And here gold is so plentiful in God’s inventories that He uses it for paving stones as the Romans used quarried rock for paving stones on their ancient highway system.

“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” Revelation 21:22.

We understand that there is a temple in that city now (Rev. 16:17).¹ When the city descends from heaven that temple is gone and God and the Lamb compose the temple. The reason being that the necessity for a heavenly sanctuary to make atonement for sin is no longer needed, hence the temple is gone from the city at the millennium. Jesus no longer needs to offer His sacrifice for the sins of the people. They no longer need the forgiveness of their sins and the cleansing power of His blood to overcome sin.

When we go to church in the New Jerusalem, God and the Lamb will be the house of worship. Oh, what a marvelous privilege it will be to worship truly, in the house of the Lord! To see the Lamb every Sabbath day and the cross will be a perpetual reminder as to whom we owe our redemption and restoration.

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” Revelation 21:23.

Since God and the Lamb are the source of light for the New Jerusalem the sun which rules the day and the moon which rules the night will be rendered useless within the city limits.

“And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.” Revelation 21:24.

Upon entering the city everyone will be within the embrace of God’s light. Since everyone of the redeemed is a king in the earth made

¹ James White, “Thoughts on the Revelation. Chapter XXI (Concluded),” *Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald* 21, 9 (January 27, 1863), p. 68.

new they will bring with them their entourage of “glory and honor” to combine with and be absorbed by the light of God and the Lamb.

“And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.” Revelation 21:25.

“It is in the city alone, probably, that there is no night. There will of course be days and nights in the new earth, but they will be days and nights of surpassing glory. The prophet, speaking of this time, says, ‘Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.’ Isa. 30:26. But if the light of the moon in that state is as the light of the sun, how can there be said to be night there? Answer. The light of the sun shall be seven fold; so that, although the night is as our day, the day will be sevenfold brighter, making a contrast between day and night there, equal to what there is at the present time.”²

“And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.” Revelation 21:26.

“The nations are the nations of the saved; and we are all kings in a certain sense, in the new-earth state. We possess a “kingdom,” and are to “reign” forever and ever. But it appears from some of our Saviour’s parables, as in Matt. 25:21, 23, that some will occupy in a special sense the position of rulers, and may thus be spoken of as kings of the earth, in connection with the nations of the saved. These bring their glory: and hence into the city, when, on the Sabbaths and new-moons, they there come up to worship. Isa. 66:23.”³

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Revelation 21:27.

When Jesus referred to “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place” (Matt. 24:15), he had a twofold application in mind both to the near future when Rome would destroy the temple, and when in the far distant future the greater abomination would take place of the papacy’s attempt to garner the worship of the world from Jesus and His sanctuary in heaven. Such man-made worship could only lead to abominable apostasy and unspeakable acts of violence. Such defiling, disgusting, unclean acts

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

would all be based upon lies. Such are excluded from the list of entrance into the holy city.

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Revelation 22:1.

The city by the Bay is a jewel on the West coast of a great nation. Surrounded by mountains and water of natural beauty, it stands out like an island as a monument of human achievement born during the gold rush.

God’s great city has a Central Park unlike that of New York City. At the head of it stands the throne of God and the Lamb. In the very heart of God’s city the very focal point from which all the streets radiate outward, the grand circle in the center is the throne and the cross—the sacrificed Lamb.

This is the headwaters of the great River of Life. Here you have the Father, the Lamb, and the Holy Spirit. It’s amazing that this river does not start out as does the Mississippi in upper Minnesota as a small stream that one can cross on flag stones by foot. This is a grand and broad river at its very source. It’s headwaters coming from the city itself indicates an amazing attribute of its waters. They are crystal clear. You can drink from these waters without using purification tablets or filtration system. They are crystal clear.

“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” Revelation 22:2.

The General Sherman tree stands 275 ft, the largest living organism, of all the monarchs of the forest. The fourteen-story, fifty foot wide, Disney tree of life, is a theme park man-made wonder. God’s tree of life is unlike any tree on this earth. Its base spans the waters of the great River of Life rising up over Central Park.

It was this tree which Adam and Eve shunned in preference for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.⁴ As a consequence God restricted their access to eating of the tree of life otherwise the eating

⁴ “The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and immortality. . . .

“The tree of life was a type of the one great Source of immortality. Of Christ it is written, ‘In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.’” Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, pp. 233, 234.

of it would have immortalized sin. That tree was later transplanted in heaven and incorporated into the landscaping of the New Jerusalem.

This amazing tree produces twelve different kinds of fruit monthly throughout the year. When granted access to this tree, it will sustain life for the redeemed for ever. We will make regular visits to this tree, and the river, and this wonderful park. It will be a perpetual reminder to us that we are sustained by God. We are not self-perpetuating immortal beings. We are immortal because of the gift of God in Christ Jesus.

Why are the leaves of the tree needed for “the healing of the nations”? There will be no disease or deformity in the new earth. The leaves of the tree will be for the ongoing service to the nations of promoting their health and longevity.

“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.” Revelation 22:3.

The curse fell upon Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when they were banned from access to the tree of life and communion with God resulting in the wages of sin which is eternal death. Jesus bore the curse of death in order to restore fellowship with God. The fellowship which man enjoyed in Eden with God will be restored in the earth made new.

“And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.” Revelation 22:4.

A warm up exercise to get acquainted with fellow classmates is to stare into the face of a seatmate for two minutes. It is almost impossible. It's like looking into the soul of another. I dare say that we now could not look into the face of God, but when we are changed we shall have that privilege to see Him face to face without shame. To have the divine name in their foreheads is a symbol of ownership. They are consecrated to Him.

“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 22:5.

Although there is no sun in the New Jerusalem because God is the light source, it does not mean that the sun and moon will not exist to mark the times and seasons outside the city in the new earth. “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord” (Isa. 66:23).

“In the City of God ‘there shall be no night.’ None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning and shall ever be far from its close. . . . The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which unmeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.”⁵

“And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done.” Revelation 22:6.

Just as God sent the Holy Spirit to reveal to the ancient prophets things regarding the coming Messiah, so the Spirit has opened to John the future coming of Christ in glory and that which precedes it. The message of those prophets was fulfilled in that the Messiah did come, therefore it is certain that everything written regarding His future coming will soon come to pass.

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Revelation 22:7.

These are the words of Jesus, “Behold, I come quickly.” I had an elder one time ask me, What does Jesus mean when He says, “I come quickly”? It has been almost two millennia since His words were recorded.

The problem of the delay in Christ’s coming has been hotly contested by Christians. The reasons for it has run the gamut all the way from God has a time peg on the celestial clock and when it strikes midnight, He will send Jesus; to the delay is the failure of response from His bride to make herself ready. God is too merciful to expose His people for the crisis of the last plagues and Armageddon when Jesus comes to deliver, for He knows that they are not ready. Nevertheless, Jesus’ words stand true, “Behold, I come quickly.”

Here is the sixth of seven beatitudes in the book of Revelation. To keep the sayings of this prophecy is a blessing. These words will change our experience in anticipation of His coming.

“And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things.” Revelation 22:8.

Again, John is humbled by the revelation of the New Jerusalem.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 676.

The grandeur of the vision completely overwhelmed him. The angel had been quoting to him the words of Jesus.

“Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.” Revelation 22:9.

Like the prophets of old John is moved with the spirit of prophecy, as is his angel guide. This, however, does not constitute them as worthy of worship, which the angel rightly refuses.

“And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 22:10.

Revelation is not a sealed book. There is food here for hungry Christians throughout the entire Christian era. Its prophecies have been fulfilled throughout history and are yet to meet their climax in the days ahead.

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11.

When will this decree be spoken? Clearly there is a distinction between the unjust and filthy and the righteous and holy. There are only two classes. There are only two choices in the end: the false christ and the true Christ. The choice will determine the character. This decree will go forth when Christ’s people perfectly reflect His character.⁶ The decree comes at the conclusion of the cosmic Day of Atonement and the investigative judgment. After probation closes, those who have sent their sins on beforehand to judgment will never fail again, because their sins will have been eternally blotted out of the books of heaven (Acts 3:19). After this decree there is no second chance for repentance and change of heart.

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12.

There are no conversions during the seven last plagues or at the battle of Armageddon when Christ comes to deliver His people. The determination has already been made regarding the sheep and the goats. The reward is to be gathered up into the air with Jesus in immortal life and incorruption.

We are saved by the blood of the Lamb. The faith of Jesus saves.

⁶ “When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 69.

We are not saved by our works. It is His “faith which worketh by love” (Gal. 5:6), in us. “We are His workmanship” (Eph. 2:10). These works are the outward evidence of an inward principle of God’s love. Actually, the righteous will be oblivious to these works and will consider themselves unworthy. However, God takes note and rewards them appropriately.

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” Revelation 22:13.

In so many ways it is emphasized that creation and redemption are one in Christ. Through Christ all things were created in the beginning and through Christ all things restored to God through His redemptive work.

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14.

Here is the final beatitude of the Revelation. Christ is the perfect law of liberty. The blessing of commandment-keeping is Christ in the heart by faith. The ten commandments are new covenant promises in Him.

These ten commandments are the name of God written on the forehead. They are the keycard to the security system at the gates of the New Jerusalem.

“For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Revelation 22:15.

This exclusionary list is similar to Rev. 21:8. These sins are the opposite of the principles of righteousness found in the ten commandments.

“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” Revelation 22:16.

The angel Gabriel is the messenger to the churches. Jesus is revealed by the name Sprout or shoot of David. This emphasizes His human connection with King David as well as His royalty. Jehovah had promised David that he would never lack for a descendant of his to sit on the throne of Israel.

As the bright morning star, He is explicitly the brightest star in the whole galaxy. He is the one whose return will remove the cold and dark hour before the sunrise and bring in the perfect day of God.

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth

say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17.

The invitation to come and drink of the river of life comes from all quarters. The Holy Spirit bids us come. The bride of Christ bids us come.⁷ And those who respond are to bid others to come and drink. If you sense your need for a thirst quencher, then come. Jesus invited the woman at the well to drink the water that he would impart and she would never thirst again and “the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.” Revelation 22:18, 19.

To receive the teachings of Babylon is to take away from the words of this prophecy. Babylon has felt very keenly the force of Revelation’s teachings regarding it. The papacy has sought to invent interpretations of Revelation which deflect its pinpoint accuracy. By the preterist interpretation it says that the prophecies are all history which has taken place in the early days of Christianity. By the futurist interpretation it applies all the prophecies of antichrist to the future, hence the antichrist has not yet come and is some future person. These two theories have been adopted by most Protestants in their interpretation of Revelation. The only true understanding of Revelation is its ongoing fulfillment throughout the course of the Christian age to climax in the near future with Christ’s second coming.

“He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Revelation 22:20.

Again, the assurance to those who hold true is that the Lord is

⁷ “The bride also says, Come. But the bride is the city, and how does that say, Come? If we could be strengthened to behold the living glories of that city and live, and should be permitted to gaze upon its dazzling beauty, and be assured that we had a perfect right to enter therein, and bathe in that ocean of bliss and blessedness, and revel in its glory forever and ever, would it not then say to us, Come, with a persuasion which no power could resist? Who of us in view of this could turn away and say that we had no desire for an inheritance there?” James White, *Ibid*.

coming soon. The canon of Holy Scripture ends with the second coming of Jesus.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”
Revelation 22:21.

This promise of Jesus’ benediction is full of good news. Whatever may come as foretold in the Revelation, Jesus has promised to be with you. If we can but know that His presence is with us we can do all things into which He may lead. Amen.