

righteousness - shall be filled." In the city where there is no night, either physical or spiritual, "the fountain of the water of life" has been opened. God invited all inhabitants to partake.

Verse 7

Here we learn of God's demand for victorious Christian living. Can a man once saved ever be lost? The exhortation found in this verse would have no relevance whatsoever if it is impossible for a Christian pilgrim to become lost in his journey to new Jerusalem. Who shall inherit all things according to John? "The overcoming one (the one who continually overcomes) shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

Verse 8

What are some of the characteristics of those who shall not inherit sonship and citizenship in the heavenly city?—The cowardly and unbelieving and having become foul, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars" shall be cast into hell. Paul tells the Churches of Galatians the same thing in Gal. 5:16-26. Paul says, "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (vs. 21). These practices are in diametrical opposition to the spiritual conditions of the dwellers in the new Eden.

The Vision of the New Jerusalem Chapter 21:9-27

Verse 9

The heavenly messenger who bore the seven bowls of anger appeared again. John was invited to see "the bride, the wife of the Lamb." Keep in mind that John saw "the new Jerusalem coming down—as a bride having been adorned for her husband." Now, John is commanded to "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

This verse through 22:5 gives us the description of the city.

Verse 10

What did the angel show John on "the great and high mountain?" Here we have a clear identification of the Church of

Jesus Christ as being object of the imagery of New Jerusalem (also the bride). New Jerusalem is no utopia where men live in peace which they have created by intelligent planning, and rational discussion; it is rather the body of Christ His triumphant Church. (See 17:7 where John speaks of his vision of the great harlot city).

Verse 11

The city of the redeemer has a permanent quality which all mortal cities lack. "Having (permanent possession) the glory (this is the very presence of the living God - Exodus 40:34) of God; the light of it was like. . .jasper." The jasper was the last stone on the breastplate of the High Priest. It was used in the walls of New Jerusalem 21:8; and also the foundation of the city where new men dwell.

Verses 12-27

The following block of scripture, in which we find the figurative description of the house of the holy, is largely self-interpreting. All of the things which men value are used in the construction of the city. (See Ezekial 48:31ff.) The number twelve appears repeatedly throughout this section. It was probably a symbol of perfection. The measurements given are unfamiliar to most of us. Verse 16 mentions 12,000 furlongs. This distance would be approximately 1238 miles. Verse 17 speaks of 44 cubits. Originally a cubit was represented by the distance between the elbow and the tip of the middle finger (approximately 18 inches).

Only "the ones having been written in the Lamb's scroll of life" shall inhabit the holy city.

We shall provide a skeleton outline of the chapter.

- I. The Description of the Spiritual Conditions which exists in the City 21:2-8.
 1. From God, not man; 21:2.
 2. Tabernacle of God among men, 21:3.
 3. No Pain nor sorrow, 21:4.
 4. New 2:5.
 5. Eternal Life, 2:6.
 6. For those who are more than conquerors, 2:7,8.
- II. Physical Description of the City, 21:9-22:5.
 1. The Bride, the wife of the Lamb, 22:5.

2. Perfect Cube of 1500 miles, 22:16,17.
3. 12 Gates represents 12 tribes of Israel, 22:12,13.
4. 12 Foundations, 12 Apostles, 22:14.
5. No physical Temple, 21:22.
6. Glory of God lights the city, 21:23; 22:5.

III. The Unique Marks of Identification of the City.

1. The City of God, place where the saved dwell.
2. The Body of Christ.

Discussion Questions Chapter 21

1. What is the origin of the holy city according to vs. 2?
2. What other N.T. book uses the metaphor of the church as the bride - see vs. 2?
3. Discuss the relationship of human efforts to create a better world and the fact that only God can make things new - vs. 5.
4. What does vs. 7 say for or against the denominational doctrine of "once in grace always in grace?"
5. Are the bride and the new Jerusalem the same - vs. 9?
6. What other city did John see in a vision - vs. 10?
7. Discuss the physical imagery John used to describe the spiritual city of God in chap. 21.
8. What hope would chp. 21 have given the persecuted Church in the 1st century? What hope does it give us today?

Special Study

Jerusalem in History and Imagery

Jeremiah cried out—"Is it nothing to you all ye who pass by" (Lam. 1:12) as he observed the city of Jerusalem in ruin. The greatest events in human history have occurred in that city.

The twentieth century man's eyes are filled full of slain cities. The city of Jerusalem has been slain often. God chose to erect the throne of His kingdom outside the walls of that city. Jerusalem (in fact all of Palestine) is strategically (geographical) located - (see F. M. Abel, *Geographie de la Palestine*, 2 volumes, Paris, Libraire Lecoffre, and his *Historie de la Palestine depuis la conquête d'alexandre jusqua 'l'envasion Arabe*, 2 vols, Paris, 1952. The religious significance of Salem