

brimstone" (Rev. 20:10) And into this lake of fire were cast the condemned ones. Some have asked, "Is this a lake of literal fire?" If it is not, and is but a symbol, we must keep in mind that the substance is always greater than the symbol. Revelation declares this is the eternal fate and destiny of those not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

"This is the second death." Some have thought this means extinction, annihilation, but life continued after the first death. Likewise it would indicate continuation of life after the second death. The beast and the false prophet were in that death more than a thousand years and it is implied that they are still alive at the end of that time.

The fact that they shall be tormented day and night forever seems pretty solid proof that this is not a state of extinction or annihilation.

The first death was a killing of the body, but not an extinction of it. The second death must needs be still more terrific and disastrous. "There the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:44-48)

The torment is to be eternal, or literally "to the ages of the ages."

## CHAPTER XXI

### BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW

*Text (21:1-27)*

#### INTRODUCTION

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: 4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

9 And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee 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, 11 having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: 12 having a wall great and high; having 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: 13 on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and wall thereof. 16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. 17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18 And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoptase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. 23 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. 24 And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. 25 And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): 26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: 27 and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

In the preceding chapter we beheld the final judgment of the dead, both small and great. In this present Chapter we are to behold that all things are made new. We Read:

vs. 1 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away."

This "passing away" was first observed in the last Chapter we read:

“And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven *fled away*; and there was found no place for them.” (Rev. 20:11)

Peter prophesied this cataclysmic change when he said:

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” (II Pet. 3:10)

He goes on to say, “All these things shall be dissolved.”

All this seems to indicate a great change, not necessarily annihilation. When we come to think of it, nothing is really destroyed in the sense of ceasing to exist. Water brought to the boiling point turns into steam. It changes its form but does not pass out of existence. Wood burns and seems to be annihilated, but it has not ceased to exist. It has only been changed. It is turned into gas, which burning is transformed into energy.

Christ in His resurrected body had not ceased to exist. Mark said, “He appeared in another form.” (Mark 16:12)

The same word “regeneration” is used here as was used to describe the changed condition of the man who has put off the old man and put on the new in the new birth.

In II Pet. 3:11, Peter said, “All things shall be *dissolved*.” This indicates a deliverance rather than a destruction. It is the same word used by Christ when He said of the colt: “*Loose* him,” and, again, it is the same word employed by Christ at the tomb of Lazarus: “*Loose* him, and let him go.”

This harmonizes with the scriptural teaching that the present world is in a state of captivity, or tied down, “Not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope.” (Romans 8:20)

Creation and the recreated “shall be delivered from bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” (Romans 8:21)

Tremendous change in the whole physical set up of the earth and heaven is everywhere indicated, but not cessation of existence or annihilation.

Evidently the earth is to undergo a renovation, a purification, a renewal to make it a fit place for the redeemed.

The old earth was sadly out of joint. Therefore, old things are to be supplanted by new things.

"And there was no more sea." Seas have always been barriers between peoples and nations. This condition has ceased to exist.

*vs. 2* "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband."

Since this city is called the bride of Christ later in this Chapter, and since the Church is also called the bride of Christ in the New Testament, we logically conclude that this city is the glorified heavenly Church, prepared as a bride for the bridegroom. And the next voice that John hears is out of heaven:

*vs. 3* "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

This restores the condition which obtained in the Garden of Eden when sinless man had immediate fellowship and companionship with God.

After man's fall, God withdrew Himself and made His presence known in the Shekinah glory of the tabernacle and temple. There He dwelt between the Cherubim. In the future state He will make His tabernacle and dwell in companionship with the redeemed.

And now John describes the blessedness of this companionship with God.

*vs. 4* "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Someone has said that human hands are poor at drying tears. This because we can never completely and permanently dry the tears of sorrow. Only the hand of Him who made us can wipe away all tears by removing us from the cause of weeping.

"And there shall be no more death." The last enemy of our souls will have been destroyed, by Him who was able to destroy him who had power over death. "Death," then will have been swallowed up in victory."

"Neither shall there be any more sorrow, nor crying." Isaiah also spoke of this new heaven and this new earth and said: "And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard." (Isa. 65:19)

"Neither shall there be any more pain." Pain is a part and portion of this life of sin, although some try to delude themselves into thinking there is no pain here. There, with sin, and its penalty-death-removed, pain will be unknown.

The former things—sin, pain, sorrow, death—will have passed away.

*vs. 5* "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." How could it be otherwise when there is a new heaven and a new earth and a new Jerusalem!

"And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

This is the third instance in the Book of Revelation, after the letters to the seven churches in Chapters Two and Three, that John is commanded to write. The other two instances are Rev. 14:13 and Rev. 19:9. And both of these two former occurrences a matter of great import is under consideration. The first of the two is a pronouncement of blessedness pronounced upon the dead who keep His commandments and die in the Lord, the second refers to the blessedness of those who are called to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

This third instance of the word "write" is to call our attention to the wondrous words that follow describing the eternal City of God.

*vs. 6* "And He said unto me, It is done." All the details of the divine plan have been filled in. There is nothing left to be done. It is finished!

"I am Alpha and Omega. These words add force to his words "These words are faithful and true." They declare also that all things begin with God—He is the originating source and cause of all things. Also they proclaim that He is closing the drama of human history. These words show that Christ is the speaker here.

"I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

The fountain of the water of life is now available. Here is fulfilled the inspired prophecy of Isaiah, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money; come ye buy, and eat; yea come buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. 55:1).

The words point forward to the copious river flowing from the everlasting source—the throne of God and of the Lamb as described in (Rev. 22:1).

*vs. 7* "He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

This is the first time, after the second of the seven letters to the

seven churches, that we meet with the promise given to him who overcomes. This is the consummation of Paul's declaration:

*All things* are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world of life, or death, or things present, or things to come; All are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. (I Cor. 3:21-23).

Now by way of contrast Christ presents the awful doom of the lost.

*vs. 8* "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."

Since there is no resurrection from the second death, these described in verse eight can never enter nor disturb the peace of the New Jerusalem. As the blackness of the storm cloud brings out the rainbow in sharp contrast, so these of the second death furnish a sharp contrasting backdrop to the glory of the redeemed.

*vs. 9* "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 you the bride, the Lamb's wife."

These words are familiar to us. You will remember that one of the seven angels which had the seven last plagues called John's attention to Babylon, the harlot and Apostate Church which was also called a woman and a city and claimed to be no widow, but a bride.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me saying unto me, come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." (Rev. 17:1).

This referred to the Roman Church, the apostate, Babylonish Church. The angel of Chapter Nineteen calls John's attention to the true church, the Lamb's bride. This vision is thus linked with the one in which John was carried away in the spirit into the wilderness that he might behold the judgment of Babylon. No one can fail to notice the parallelism of the two visions, each of a woman and a city.

*vs. 10* 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.

To behold this celestial city John was again carried away in the spirit. He was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day to behold the

vision of the seven churches. (Rev. 1:10.) He was in the spirit to behold the vision of the throne set in heaven. (Rev. 4:2). And here he is in the spirit to behold the Holy City.

What a vision burst upon his eyes! John could only get a clear view of it by being spiritually transported to the top of a great and high mountain. Rev. 21:11. "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal." It is perfectly transparent. This recalls the appearance of Him who sat upon the throne. Rev. 21:12 "And had a wall great and high.

Verse 18 informs us that these walls were made of Jasper. Since this is a book of symbols, this speaks of the utter security of the happy inhabitants who live therein!

Isaiah in his vision of this city said:

"But thou shall call *thy walls salvation*, and thy gates, praise." (Isaiah 60:18)

"And had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel."

There were as many gates as there were tribes of Israel and had on the twelve gates the names of the twelve tribes. Doubtless, these were typical of the true Israel of God, according to the spirit and not the flesh. (Gal. 6:15, 16). And at the twelve gates were twelve angels as gate-keepers to guard the holy city.

Judging by Ezekiel's description of the new city, then the names on the gates were as follows:

On the three gates northward, Reuben, Judah and Levi; on the three gates eastward, Joseph, Benjamin and Dan; on the three gates southward, Simeon, Issachar and Zebulun; on the three gates westward, God, Asher and Napthali. (Ezekiel 48:31-34).

vs. 14 "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

How fitting, since the twelve apostles are the foundations of the church with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone!

vs. 15 "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof and the wall thereof."

The reed is the divine standard of measurement and the city conforms to the divine standard. We found in the eleventh Chapter, the first verse, that the Church was also measured with a reed. It seems that both the earthly and heavenly institutions must conform to the divine standard.

vs. 16 "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." The city was a cube, picturing perfection.

The city is regular and symmetrical and its dimensions vast. He indicates the city is twelve thousand furlongs long, twelve thousand furlongs wide and twelve thousand furlongs high. A furlong is one-eighth of a mile, therefore, twelve thousand furlongs would be fifteen hundred miles. That would mean the city was fifteen hundred miles long, wide and high.

Whether these measurements are intended to reveal the exact size of the Holy City, or are but symbols in this Book of Symbolism, extreme vastness of the size of the New Jerusalem is portrayed.

vs. 17 "And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubets, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel."

Again we meet with the number twelve, this time squared.

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

And the foundations of the walls 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, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topas; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."

This city well may be made literally of such precious stones. Again this is a book of majestic symbols and these precious stones may be symbols used to convey to our finite minds the wondrous beauty of that City. The costliest gems known to man are named in order to give us, at least a dim idea and conception of the glory of the Eternal City.

One cannot read these preceding verses without being struck by the oftrecurrence of the favorite Hebrew number—*twelve*. By counting twelve occurrences of that number are discoverable.

In Verse 12, we have *twelve* gates, *twelve* angels and *twelve* tribes, making *three* occurrences of the number twelve.

In Verse 14, we find *twelve* foundations and *twelve* apostles, making *two* occurrences of this number *twelve*.

In Verse 16, the length, breadth and height of the city are



*twelve* thousand furlongs each, making *three* more occurrences of the number *twelve*.

In Verse 17, the wall of the city is 144 furlongs, a multiple of *twelve*, making *one* occurrence.

In verses 19 and 20, there are *twelve* foundations described, making *one* occurrence.

In Verse 21, *twelve* gates and *twelve* pearls are mentioned, making *two* more occurrences of the number *twelve*.

This makes twelve occurrences in all. And the number "*twelve*" is closely associated with the Israel of God of both the Old and New Testaments. There were twelve tribes in the Old Testament Israel of God, and twelve apostles in the New Testament Israel of God.

The former twelve are associated with the gates of the Holy City and the latter twelve are associated with the foundations.

*vs. 21* "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl."

How significant that the gates—the means of entrance into the Holy City—were all made of pearl!

One of the most precious and beautiful gems in all the world is the pearl. Other gems are produced by chemical action, heat and pressure in inanimate nature, but pearls come from animate life.

The finest specimens command almost fabulous prices. The origin of the pearl found within the shell of the pearl oyster was, to the ancients, a matter of deepest mystery, but today we understand it.

We have learned that the pearl comes from irritation caused by some foreign substance, like a piece of sand, getting within the shell of the oyster, and results from the wonderful and mysterious power of the mollusk to obtain relief from things that irritate it by covering them with a secretion of pearl, until there is no longer any irritation.

What a beautiful symbolism and lesson here for the annoyances, irritations, and things that hurt and disturb us—to make pearls out of them instead of allowing them to go on hurting and vixing us!

And what a revelation is here that the entrance into the Celestial City is by the way of gate of pearl! Only those who are "overcomers," who have transformed their irritations, vexations, and trials into a pearl are able to enter that fair city.

Christ is the pearl of great price because he conquered as none other overcame and declared Himself to be the door by which we must enter. He is the way the truth and the life and no man cometh

unto the Father but by Him. Therefore, we come into the Holy City, where God makes His dwelling place, by a gate of pearl.

While there is but one door of entrance, so there is but one foundation and Christ is both the door and the foundation.

But in this book which is written in divine sign-language the one door, or gate is represented as twelve gates, and the one foundation as twelve foundations. Earlier in this book of symbolism, and for the same reason, the one Spirit is represented as seven Spirits.

Completing the twenty-first verse, we read: "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

Now we know that gold is not transparent, but what is here stressed is the absolute purity of gold. Also transparency is a symbol of purity. Nothing could enter, nor walk upon the gold-paved streets of the Holy City that is impure.

vs. 22 "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

John seemed deeply impressed by this fact.

He had been accustomed to considering the glory of the earthly City of Jerusalem to be its magnificent temple. But one of the sublimest peculiarities of the Holy City was its lack of a temple.

A great and precious thought is contained herein. God is here revealed as bringing His saints into a closer relationship to Him than that of dwelling in a temple, however glorious, to worship Him therein. In that eternal city we are to be brought into a perfect union with the Father Himself. This recalls the Lord's own prayer:

"That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (John 17:22, 23).

When we remember that this city is the Bride, the Lamb's wife, a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:1), then why there could be no distinct and separate temple. God and Christ and the saints *are one*. There is no need for an outward temple to commune with God, or to have fellowship with the Lamb. The worship there is immediate and direct. *Rev. 21:23*. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

As there was no need of a separate temple in which to worship, neither was there any need of some system of illumination. Evidently with the creating of a new heaven and a new earth, the

starry sky and its pale moon passed away. They were physical systems of ministering to material organs of perception.

How well did Isaiah write, "the moon shall be ashamed and confounded"—ashamed because of the infinitely more glorious sh'ning of the light of God and of the Lamb, in whom there is no darkness at all.

vs. 24 "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."

The redeemed of all nations shall walk in the light of that brilliant city. For the first time in all ages there will be truly Christian nations living and walking in the ineffable light of God.

The kings of the earth are said to bring their glory and honor into it because the kings then will be Christ and his glorified saints, since we are to be Kings and Priests unto God.

We are not to understand by the word "Bring" that these nations mentioned are *without* the City, but rather within and are being illuminated by its light. At that time all nations are either in the New Jerusalem or in the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone. Symbolically, they *bring* their glory and honor into it, laying it at the feet of the Lamb.

vs. 25 "And the gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there."

This is an emphatic way of saying that the gates will never be closed. Why should they be? Nothing that would defile can enter that Holy City.

vs. 26 "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it."

All nations as one man, shall bring all their reverence and devotion. Since this verse is almost identical with the latter part of the twenty-fourth verse, it would seem this repetition is made in order to emphasize an experience never known before in all history of man, in that all men shall be fully and completely devoted to God and the Lamb.

vs. 27 "And there shall in no wise enter into anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of Life."

Since the devil, the Father of all lies, the originator of all that defiles and is abominable, has been cast into the lake of fire, there can be only holiness and righteousness within this Holy City.

Did Jeremiah have such a thought in mind when he, describing

the City beautiful, said, "And the name of the city from that day shall be, **THE LORD IS THERE**?"

God is righteousness and where God is there can be nothing that is unclean.

Only those may enter this city whose names are "written in the Lamb's book of life." This is the seventh time this book has been mentioned in the scriptures. The other references are: Psalms 69:29; Daniel 12:1; Philippians 4:3; Revelations 3:5; 13:8; 20:12.

Not to be enrolled in the Lamb's book of life means utter loss; to have our name written therein bestows upon us all that the infinite wealth of God can give.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS LIFE

*Text (22:1-21)*

1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; 4 and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. 7 And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. 9 And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. 12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man accord-