

The Church of the Servant King

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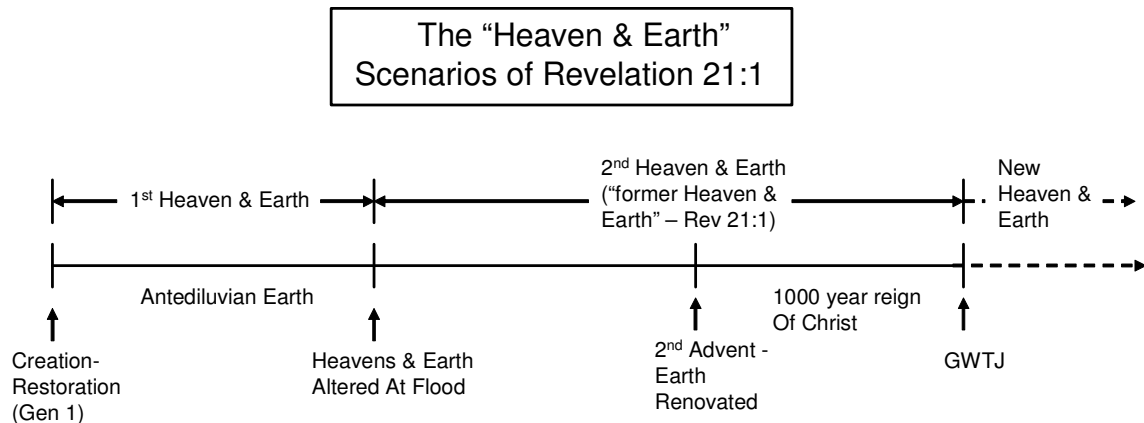
PROPHECY SERIES

(Proph21AA_Revelation_chp 21_The New Jerusalem_Pt2)

Chapter 21

As we have seen in our prior studies, chapter 20 includes a brief mention of a battle involving forces from all over the world (“Gog and Magog” – a reference to all peoples who are in rebellion against the Lord) at the end of the 1000 year, Millennial reign of Jesus Christ.¹ All enemies of Christ, human and angelic, are defeated in this final rebellion.

Following the defeat of all of Christ’s enemies at the end of the 1000 year, Millennial reign of Christ, unbeliever’s are judged at the Great White Judgment Throne (Rev 20:11-15). The whole of God’s creation then enters the eternal state. The “former” heavens and earth (Rev 21:1) are replaced with the new heavens and earth.



The “New Jerusalem” is seen by John to descend from heaven so that God “tabernacles” or dwells among all of the redeemed or righteous (Rev 21:3). It is my understanding and opinion that Revelation 21:2-3 is tantamount to “heaven” and the eternal state involving redeemed humanity and earth.

As we observed in the previous study, John provides the reader with an overview or an introduction to the vision of the New Heaven, New Earth and New Jerusalem in verses 1 & 2. In 21:3-8, John hears and records various pronouncements which we have examined.

- The loud voice heard from the throne announcing that the tabernacle (dwelling) of God is to be among men in the new, eternal order of the heavens and earth (Rev 21:3)
- That same loud voice announces that the things associated with the former earth (“...mourning, crying, pain...” which represent the effects of the Fall) will not be present in the new order of the heavens and earth
- Another pronouncement from the throne is heard indicating that all things are being made new and this pronouncement is enforced by God’s veracity – “these words are faithful and true” (Rev 21:5).
- Another pronouncement is made from the throne by Jesus Christ promising those who drink (i.e. believe, have faith) from the water of life (Jesus Christ as the provider of eternal

¹ As we have previously noted and studied, the prophet Ezekiel also references an invasion of Israel by the forces of “Gog and Magog” in Ezekiel 38 & 39. However, his description of this invasion has notable distinctions from John’s description in Revelation 20:7-10.

life) will inherit a place in the new order and will enjoy the status of “sonship” with God – including the right to be co-regents (cf. Rev 3:21)

He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Rev 3:21)

Again, some of the blessings that will be the inheritance of all believers who are inhabitants of heaven include the privilege of enjoying the “water of life” (in contrast to the Lake of Fire that awaits unbelievers) and “sonship” status with God the Father. “Sonship” with God the Father is associated with the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:12-16) and includes the authority to rule.²

When your [*David*] days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you [*Solomon*], who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom [through his lineage, the promised seed-Redeemer of Gen 3:15 would come]. 13 He shall build a house [*the Temple*] for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever [*reference to the ultimate descendant of David / Solomon*]. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he [*each of the descendants of David / Solomon*] commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever. (2 Sam 7:12-16) [*Explanatory inserts in italics are mine*]

In 21:9-22:5, John will elaborate more fully regarding the vision of the New Jerusalem.

THE NEW JERUSALEM (21:9-21)

9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. 12 It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And the one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements,

² What is commonly referred to as the “Davidic Covenant” is in reality an amplification of the “seed” portion of God’s covenant with Abraham. In 2 Samuel 7:12-16, God promises David that a son (Solomon, the offspring of David’s adultery with Bathsheba) would be the one to build God’s “house” – a Temple. God also promised to establish the throne of Solomon’s kingdom forever (1 Chron 22:6-10). This did not mean that Solomon would rule forever, rather the right to rule would always belong to his descendants. There would always be a male heir of David, through Solomon, who would continue the claim to the throne and would culminate in David’s ultimate descendant, the Messiah Jesus. God would retain the right to discipline David’s lineage to insure that the ultimate descended, the promised seed-Redeemer (Gen 3:15) would come. God’s mercy toward this lineage would not be removed as had occurred with David’s predecessor – Saul.

which are also angelic measurements. 18 And the material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone 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, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Verse	Phrase	Notes
9-10	“And one of the seven angels who had the seven plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.”	<p>In Rev 21:2, John observes the “New Jerusalem” descending from heaven “made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.” In verses 9-10, that “New Jerusalem” that is an integral part of the new, eternal order of the heavens and earth is specifically identified as “the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”</p> <p>Earlier in Revelation, John is taken into the wilderness to see a vision of the harlot city – Babylon (Rev 17:1-3). Here, John is taken to a mountain to see the Holy City. The wilderness is always associated with separation from blessing in Israel’s history. The mountain is associated with a view into the eternal, e.g. Moses’ receipt of the Law.</p> <p>This is a literal city, a position reinforced by the detail John provides in the following verses. It is not an allegorical, figure of speech. It is also important to note that this city is a part of the new, eternal order of the heavens and earth. Everything described in chapter 21 thru 22:5 relates to the eternal order.</p> <p>This new order of the heavens and the earth including the New Jerusalem will contain believers of all dispensations. (See APPENDIX A for a development of this point).</p> <p>The glory of this city, this Holy City, is referred to in many passages, e.g. Isaiah 54:11-12; 60:3, 14, 19, 20.</p>
11	Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.	<p>John struggles to describe the brilliance and beauty of this city. Jasper is not a clear stone, even though it is a beautiful. Jasper is opaque. It is found in all colors including: red, brown, pink, yellow, green, grey/white and shades of blue and purple. It often contains organic material and mineral oxides which give it interesting patterns, bands and colors. Many of these patterns resemble landscapes with mountains and valleys, thus the name “picture” is part of the name of many well know jaspers. Picture jasper is a petrified or silicated mud that dripped into gas pockets in molten lava. It became superheated and then solidified forming the unusual banded patterns which are typical of this stone. In John’s attempt to describe what he saw, the city may have had some of the multiple color schemes of jasper, but rather than being opaque, it was crystal-clear.</p>
12-14	It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the	<p>These verses are very interesting to say the least. The Twelve Apostles here are the eleven who followed Jesus on earth during His incarnation plus Matthias who satisfied the criteria to replace Judas (Acts 1:24-26).</p> <p>They are distinct from the apostles who are associated with the new Gentile-centric, Pauline-oriented dispensation of the Church Age Body of Christ (Eph 4:11-15).</p>

	<p>wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.</p>	<p>Since there will be (and were) Twelve Apostles to Israel, the correlation to the Twelve Tribes is a virtually foregone conclusion (cf. Matt 10). Paul's name will not be included here and neither will any of the apostles of the early portion of the present age – a transition period.</p> <p>It is also interesting to note that directions (i.e. north, south, east and west) will exist in eternity and it is likely that some type of chronology (time) will also exist; however, to go much further is to speculate too much. Just as there will be a new heavens and new earth with directional and spatial orientation, so there may be a logical chronology even though there is no day or night there (21:23). The eternal state will not be subject to the present space-time constraints and there will evidently be a new space-time dimension in the new order.</p>
<p>15-17</p>	<p>15 And the one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements.</p>	<p>The gold measuring rod is probably symbolic of the high value of this city since only utensils of gold were used in ancient Israel's Holy of Holies in both the Tabernacle and the Temple.</p> <p>The dimensions of this city is 1500 miles and the description allows for either a cube shape or a pyramid shape. However, the fact that the Holy of Holies in the Temple was a cube is persuasive.</p> <p>Ezekiel described a Temple in Ezekiel 40-43; however, that Temple is to be the Temple of the Messianic Kingdom.</p> <p>The walls will be about 72 yards thick – almost as thick as a football field.</p> <p>John's reference to "angelic measurements" are simply a way of highlighting the fact that even though an angel was doing the measuring, human measures and angelic measures were the same.</p>
<p>18-21</p>	<p>And the material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone 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, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.</p>	<p>Clear glass was the best quality glass in John's day, so evidently, the city had a transparency to it and that it had no impurity. The entire city seemed to glow as does gold in the sun.</p> <p>Jasper – see previous description.</p> <p>Sapphire - a corundum (a crystalline form of aluminum oxide), too, and, its physical and chemical properties are virtually identical to those of ruby. It is fractionally harder than ruby. Curiously, all corundums that are not rubies are classed as sapphires, which means that this particular gem exists in many colors, from blue to green, pink to mauve, white, grey, violet, yellow and orange.</p> <p>Chalcedony - has a waxy lustre, and may be semitransparent or translucent. Its color is usually white to gray, grayish-blue or a shade of brown ranging from pale to nearly black.</p> <p>Emerald - come in many shades of green and bluish green. There is a wide spectrum of clarity, dependent on the inclusions and fractures in the crystal.</p> <p>Sardonyx - a banded variety of chalcedony. The colors of its bands are white and brownish-red.</p>

		<p>Sardius - A precious stone that is a variety of cornelian, varying in color from pale yellow to reddish orange.</p> <p>Chrysolite – a.k.a. Olivine and is usually named for its typically olive-green color (thought to be a result of traces of nickel), though it may alter to a reddish color from the oxidation of iron.</p> <p>Beryl - Green beryl is called emerald, red beryl is bixbite or red emerald or scarlet emerald, blue beryl is aquamarine, pink beryl is morganite, colorless beryl is goshenite, and a clear bright yellow beryl is called golden beryl. Other shades such as yellow-green for heliodor and honey yellow are common. Red beryl is extremely rare and is not used in jewelry as the crystals it forms are very small.</p> <p>Topaz – a transparent, straw-yellow colored gemstone.</p> <p>Chrysoprase – a gemstone variety of chalcedony (fibrous form of quartz) that contains small quantities of nickel. Its color is normally apple-green, but varies to deep green.</p> <p>Jacinth - a red transparent variety of zircon used as a gemstone.</p> <p>Amethyst - a moderate, transparent violet that is a form of quartz.</p> <p>A pearl is and was considered especially valuable since it required no human intervention or workmanship. Evidently, the gates to the city are solid pearl.</p> <p>Old Testament priests who ministered in Solomon's temple walked on a gold floor (1 Kings 6:30).</p>
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APPENDIX A – THE INHABITANTS OF THE NEW ORDER OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH³

Just who are the inhabitants of the new order of the heavens and the earth? From which dispensations of human history are they derived? How and where do believers of the Body of Christ fit in this new order when everything in the context of Revelation 21 is Israel or Jew-centric in orientation? (In particular, note the names written on the twelve gates to be the twelve tribes of Israel – 21:12 – and the names of the twelve apostles on the twelve foundation stones – 21:14). Therefore, where do we find believers of the present age, the Church Age Body of Christ?

Paul teaches that the Church Age Body of Christ will have a responsibility of judging and co-regency with Christ in such passages as Romans 8:16-21; 1 Corinthians 6:1-3; and 2 Timothy 2:11-12. These passages are most likely references to our responsibilities during the Millennial age; however, it is unclear whether they extend into the eternal new order or not.

Regardless, during the eternal, new order of the heavens and the earth, as members of the Body of Christ, we are a part of the Bridegroom himself (the Body of Christ) and the New Jerusalem and her inhabitants constitute the Bride. Believers from the Age of Israel looked

³ For a good discussion of the subject of dispensational distinctions in the eternal state and dwelling places in the eternal state, see Charles F. Baker, *A Dispensational Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Grace Publications, 1994), 664-669.

forward to a heavenly country and city with foundations whose builder was God (Heb 11:10-16) and they considered themselves pilgrims and strangers on earth (cf. Gen 23:4; 1 Pet 2:11). That city was the New Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ, the Lamb.

Therefore, even though Revelation 21-22:5 is very Israel and Jewish-centric, I believe we can infer from other passages of Scripture that believers of the present Church Age Body of Christ are represented here by virtue of their identification as the Body of Christ. Believers of the Age of Israel (and probably the Millennium too) will have access to and be a part of the Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem.

Summary

“Bride of the Lamb” = the New Jerusalem and its inhabitants (believers of dispensations other than the present Body of Christ with particular focus upon believers from the Age of Israel and Millennium)

“Bridegroom” = Jesus Christ and His Body (the present Church Age Body of Christ).⁴

⁴ John the Baptizer identified himself as a “friend of the Bridegroom” in John 3:29.