



# The New Jerusalem The Bride of Christ

Revelation 21:9-22:5



# **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**

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*Main Idea: God perfects and adorns us in glorious richness and perfection as suffering, sin, and sickness become things of the past.*

Behold the wonder and majesty of the Bride of Christ!

As the angel shows John the bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem becomes clear. In fact, the angel takes John to a high mountain in order to understand the scope of the New Jerusalem. Her scale is massive all whose names are written in the book of life are residents. On the gates are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, representing those saved under the Old Covenant. The foundations are inlaid with the names of the twelve apostles, symbolizing those saved under the New Covenant. All epochs of creation find their restoration in eternity by the victory of Jesus Christ. We are all on equal footing as parts of the bride of Christ. Jerusalem acted as an embassy and representative of God to the world. Now, stepping in to eternity, we exist fully in the perfected presence of Christ. God perfects and adorns us in glorious richness and perfection as suffering, sin, and sickness become things of the past.

## **The Adornment of a Bride**

John's vision spends a significant amount of time describing the adornment of the New Jerusalem. Each jewel is representative of riches and opulence. The arrangement of the jewels appears similar to the breastplate the priests would wear as they served in the temple to stand before God. Now, however, the temple itself bears witness to the presence of God as the people reside fully in the presence of God. The New Jerusalem is no longer the representative of Jesus Christ but united fully with Christ as His beloved bride. Furthermore, the walls and streets are made up of pure gold. It should be noted that we, in our current world, pure gold cannot be obtained but only approximated. Now we see gold in perfection to the point that its reflection shines bright

and transparent. This is no small portion but the massive size of the New Jerusalem displays the massive riches as an iota of the inheritance that comes to Jesus Christ and His bride.

Yet, we cannot forget that the bride did not dress herself. God prepared the bride in her adornments. The wealth of God is imputed to the church. Our own perfection, glory, and righteousness is not our own doing. In fact, as the great reformer Jonathan Edwards described it, “[We] contribute nothing to [our] salvation except the sin that made it necessary.” By the grace of God we are saved and by the grace of God we are made perfect and presented to Jesus Christ as a beautiful bride. The grace of God extends beyond simply purifying mankind of their sins but preparing us all for eternity.

## **The True Light**

Anyone who attempts to look directly into the sun will immediately feel the effects of the brightness. Yet, equally, during the night, everyone seems to fear what they cannot see. The light reveals the truth of everything it touches. During this life, the sun provides a glimpse of the radiance of God. While it may be miles away, the sun still manages to illuminate the the world. At some point, though, the sun will fail to earth as a part of the judgment of God poured out on the earth. For all its power and strength, the light of the sun will grow dark, but those whose name is written in the book of life will not experience darkness.

In eternity, however, the world will not need an additional source of light. God being the True Light provides the illumination at all times. Darkness, throughout scripture represents the absence of God’s presence. Now, spiritually and physically, mankind will not be in darkness as we will experience the fullness of God’s presence at all times. This light will guide all who reside within the wall and will be an ever present reminder of the greatness and fullness of God’s presence.

## **The River of Life**

At the outset of creation, God created Adam and Eve and placed

them in the garden of Eden. At the center of the garden there was the tree of life alongside the tree of the knowledge of Good and evil. (Genesis 2) This tree provided for the health and fullness of mankind. Yet, Adam and Eve broke the one commandment and ate from the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil. At the time, they walked in the presence of God as one would walk with a friend. Yet, the consequences of sin expelled them from the presence of God. Death became the consequence of living outside of God's presence.

As Christ declared victory after sin and death, the payment for the sins of mankind are complete. Those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior have their names written in the book of Life and death and return to a perfected Garden of Eden. The complete body of scripture is bookended with mankind walking in the presence of God. The tree of life gives the sign that we stand in the presence of God in perfection. At the outset, our sin separated us from the holiness of God. Here, at the end of time (and the beginning of eternity) we see that same tree of life and return to the fullness of God's presence. No more sickness, pain, or darkness for the saints. We will be in need of nothing as we will have everything we need in God.

## **Discussion Questions**

- What is the source of the Bride's appearance? How does this describe the the relationship between God and man?
- Why is it significant that there is no longer a need for a sun or other source of light? What does this tell us about being in the presence of God? Describe the benefits of this relationship.
- What parallels do you see between Revelation 22:1-5 and Genesis 1-2? How are they similar? How are they different?
- What does it mean if someone has their name written in the book of Life? What does this look like in their daily life?
- How does your life different from your perfected state in eternity? How can you represent your future destiny to the world?