



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"You Are Now Entering the New Jerusalem"

21:2-8

Introduction

One list of the five most beautiful cities in the world reads like this:

- #5 Tokyo
- #4 New York
- #3 Shanghai
- #2 Chicago
- #1 Hong Kong

Regarding Hong Kong one author said, "apparently having 4 of the 15 tallest towers in the world will make you the #1 city! It is beautiful at night though, the magnificent architecture of the high rise buildings... is breath taking..."

I've been to Hong Kong. I must have missed something!

Another list names, from #5 to #1, London, LA, New York, Venice, and Paris.

The most beautiful city in the world hasn't been seen yet. We get a glimpse at it in chapter twenty-one of the Revelation.

Revelation 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The New Jerusalem is the crowning jewel of the new creation. In subsequent verses we'll see that it is made mostly of jewels and precious stones.

It will come "down out of Heaven from God." It's being constructed in Heaven and will be moved into place when the time comes.

It is being "prepared" in Heaven "as a bride adorned for her husband." The city is not the bride; **you** are. The city is an adornment that reveals the wonder of His love for you. It is the place that Jesus has been away preparing for us collectively and for each of us individually. It will be the real estate in which your mansion is being constructed.

Romantically speaking, your bride walking down the aisle is the most beautiful thing you will ever see. This city is like that to us.

Today we mostly prefer the country. We want to get away from people, to find solitude with one or a few others. But that's only because we are all so weird!

In the future we will enjoy the city life as it was intended - in perfect fellowship with one another.

We can't have that until the New Jerusalem. It must come down from Heaven.

We can have a taste of it on earth in the church. To the extent we are submitted to God and to one another, filled with the Spirit of God, we can at least begin to have a sense of the future fellowship promised us in the New Jerusalem.

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ 21:2-8
"You Are Now Entering the New Jerusalem"*

Revelation 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

God's original purpose for the human race will be restored - to enjoy a personal, face-to-face relationship with Him. Everything that occurs between the fall of man in Genesis three until Revelation twenty-one is to prepare a people to enjoy fellowship with God.

Do you enjoy God? Charles Spurgeon wrote,

I do not think the glory of Eden lay in its grassy walks, or in the boughs bending with luscious fruit-but its glory lay in this, that the 'Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day.' Here was Adam's highest privilege, that he had companionship with the Most High.

Revelation 21:4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Life today is characterized by "death," "sorrow," and "pain." It produces "tears" and "crying." Jesus will "wipe away every tear." Have you ever had someone wipe away your tears when you were crying? It's a tender gesture that only someone who is very close to you should attempt. It is symbolic of their desire to alleviate your sorrow. With Jesus, it's not symbolic - it's sincere in the truest sense as all of your pain and suffering come to an abrupt end.

It is exciting to know we will be free from death and pain. It is impossible, though, for me to begin to fathom what it means to be without sorrow. What if, for example, someone I love is not in Heaven but is in the Lake of Fire? How can it be I would not have sorrow?

It has caused some to speculate that God will alter my memory. The "former things will pass away" means, they say, we won't remember them. That doesn't seem right. It's not truthful. It's not the nature of God.

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ 21:2-8
"You Are Now Entering the New Jerusalem"*

Others, and we've discussed this, believe that the unsaved will be annihilated and cease to exist. That's not biblical.

We are so fallen that it's impossible to understand certain things. We simply take them as truth because of their source which is God. You will be without sorrow of any kind over any person or thing.

Revelation 21:5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

"Behold" is a great word. I think it should be used only by God to describe things He's done. You "behold" and are astonished and amazed.

"All things" will be made "new." For "new" we might use the word *fresh*. The sense I get is that all things will remain fresh. Things are great when they are brand new. Then they immediately start to deteriorate. Not so in Heaven. "All things" there, though they will go on eternally, remain fresh.

Calvary Pastor David Guzik said something I thought profound:

Our instinct is to romantically consider innocence as man's perfect state, and wish Adam would have never done what he did. But we fail to realize that redeemed man is greater than innocent man; that we gain more in Jesus than we ever lost in Adam. God's perfect state is one of redemption, not innocence.

We can see this transformation at work on *this side* of eternity. In Second Corinthians we read, "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day . . . Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all *things have become new* (4:16, 5:17).

By the way. Speaking of all things being made new. If you were the apostle John and you saw the new heavens and the new earth, how old would you think they were?

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ 21:2-8
"You Are Now Entering the New Jerusalem"*

The *appearance of age* in the things which God created is a much-debated issue in contemporary Christian scientific circles. Can God - or more accurately - *would* God create something which at the very moment of its creation has the appearance of age?

Nowhere is the appearance of age and pre-existing process more interesting than in the sudden creation of the first human being. The Bible tells us that Adam was completely formed (presumably as an adult) before there was ever a woman on the earth. At the very moment of his creation Adam would surely have appeared to us to be the product of a long growth and development process.

The short answer to this question may be: *How else?* How, indeed, could God create anything that did not appear to us to be aged at the moment of its creation.

“And he said to me, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’” I’m so glad John wrote what he saw. Normally we say that a picture is worth a thousand words. In this case, because the words are inspired by God, they paint for us a thousand times a thousand pictures.

God is “faithful” and will bring each of His saints to this city to live with Him.

God is “true.” There is a use of the word “true” we have lost. It means (by dictionary definition) to *make level, square, balanced, or concentric*. Let me give you an example. Bicycle wheels have adjustments on each spoke. A cyclist adjusts them to true the rotation of the wheel.

In this sense of the word “true,” everything God has promised and said will not just come to pass but will be true to His nature and character.

I’m getting ahead of myself but let me say this about our mansions in the heavenly city. They each will be trued to your individual

The Revelation of Jesus Christ 21:2-8
“You Are Now Entering the New Jerusalem”

personality. All things they are made from and all things in them will be true to you in giving you the greatest sense of the joy of the Lord's love for you.

Revelation 21:6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

Jesus identifies Himself as the "Alpha and the Omega" four times in this book. They are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet; Jesus is everything there is to say or communicate; He is the fullness of life.

I'd like to share an interesting tidbit I came across in my studies this week.¹ In the first verse of Genesis, after "God," in the Hebrew there are two characters dangling there that go untranslated. Bearing in mind that Hebrew is read from right to left, those two characters are the Aleph and the Tau, the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Their equivalent in Greek would be the Alpha and the Omega. "In the beginning, God" - the Alpha and the Omega "created the heavens and the earth." **Jesus is God.**

Jesus promises "the water of life freely to him who thirsts." He first made that offer in the Gospel of John. It is the offer of the eternal Spirit to those who receive Him as Savior and Lord. Eternity will be populated by those who freely received Him.

Drinking and thirst are common pictures of God's supply and man's spiritual need. Drinking is an action, but an action of receiving - like faith, it is *doing* something, but it is not a merit-earning work in itself.

Revelation 21:7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

¹ <http://www.khouse.org/articles/2000/196/print/>

Believers are called “overcomers.” It’s a word that makes us think of a great struggle. We think ‘Overcomers Anonymous.’ We think failure.

How do you overcome? First John 5:4 says it is by “faith” in Jesus Christ. Since you are a believer in Jesus you can walk by faith through this world and not by sight. You look forward to the return of Jesus, and this looking ahead changes the way you walk around!

You will “inherit all things” the same way a son would be left with all the possessions of his father. Only in our case we get to enjoy it all with our heavenly dad!

Absent from eternity will be all those who rejected salvation by grace alone through faith:

Revelation 21:8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

This is a brief listing of the kinds of things nonbelievers get entangled with. Man will devolve into all sorts of aberrant behavior without the presence of God in the heart. All the things listed are really extensions of self and selfishness.

- “Cowardly” doesn’t mean, for example, that a firefighter who is unsaved can’t act heroic. Of course he can. It refers to those who by their behavior proved they were not overcomers. They could not walk by faith because they did not exercise saving faith in Jesus.
- “Unbelieving” indicates there is sufficient evidence to believe but there is a refusal to do so.
- “Abominable” means *to incite disgust*. Sin is bad enough but there are some things people do that absolutely disgust.
- “Murderers” reminds us of increasing violence among men and mankind.

- “Sexually immoral” is a category society is working hard to do away with. God has His standards, sets His boundaries, for our good and His glory.
- “Sorcerers” can most definitely be applied to the wrong use of drugs.
- “Idolaters” would refer to all false religious activity.
- “Liars” - that’s pretty broad! Remember that this verse is describing folks who won’t be in Heaven. No lying in Heaven. No half truths. More to the point, your words and everyone else’s will be true. And there won’t be folks you’d rather avoid or not talk with!

Nonbelievers rejected Jesus as Savior and Lord and, in chapter twenty, were cast into the Lake of Fire. It wasn’t because of their lying or idolatry or sexual immorality. It was because of their unbelief. Those things are the inevitable results of unbelief.

Jesus offers eternal life. It’s not just living forever; everyone will live forever. He offers eternal life as a quality of life, both now and forever. He offers you Himself as the source of life.