

## The Book Of Revelation Study 101

### *Revelation 21:21-27 (NASB)*

<sup>21</sup> *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.*

<sup>22</sup> *I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*

<sup>23</sup> *And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.*

<sup>24</sup> *The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.*

<sup>25</sup> *In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed;*

<sup>26</sup> *and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it;*

<sup>27</sup> *and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

### *Revelation 22:1-2 (NASB)*

<sup>1</sup> *Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,*

<sup>2</sup> *in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

As if just seeing the magnificent capital city of heaven from a distance was not privilege enough. John's angelic guide took him inside.

As he entered the city, the apostle noted that **the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.**

The streets in the New Jerusalem were made of the highest quality **pure gold** which, like everything else in the heavenly city, was **transparent like glass.**

Translucent gold is not a common material familiar to most of us on this earth. But everything there is transparent to let the light of God's glory blaze unrestricted.

Once inside the city, the first thing John noted was that there was **no temple in it.**

Up to this point there has been a temple in heaven.

But there will be no need for a temple in the New Jerusalem, **for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.**

Their blazing glory will fill the new heaven and the new earth, and there will be no need for anyone to go anywhere to worship God.

Life will be worship and worship will be life.

Believers will be constantly in His presence; there will never be a moment when they are not in perfect, holy communion with **the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.**

Thus there will be no need to go to a **temple**, cathedral, church, chapel, or any other house of worship.

Believers will be the true worshipers God has always sought;

**John 4:23 (NASB)**

<sup>23</sup> **"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.**

Now, returning to the theme of God's brilliant, shining glory, John notes that **the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.**

The new heaven and the new earth will be radically different from the present earth, which is totally dependent on the sun and moon.

They provide the cycles of light and darkness and the moon causes the ocean tides. But in the new heaven and the new earth, they will be unnecessary.

There will be no seas and hence no tides. Nor will the sun and moon be needed to provide light, **for the glory of God will illumine the New Jerusalem and its lamp will be the Lamb.**

Once again in Revelation, **God** the Father and the **Lamb**, the Lord Jesus Christ, share authority.

*Commenting on the brilliant light emanating from the New Jerusalem, J. A. Siess writes:*

*That shining is not from any material combustion, not from any consumption of fuel that needs to be replaced as one supply burns out; for it is the uncreated light of Him who is light, dispensed by and through the Lamb as the everlasting Lamp, to the home, and hearts, and understandings of his glorified saints.*

*When Paul and Silas lay wounded and bound in the inner dungeon of the prison of Philippi, they still had sacred light which enables them to beguile the night watches with happy songs.*

*When Paul was on his way to Damascus, a light brighter than the sun ;at noon shone around about him, irradiating his whole being with new sights and understanding, and making his soul and body ever afterwards light in the Lord.*

*When Moses came down from the mount of his communion with God, his face was so luminous that his brethren could not endure to look upon it.*

*He was in such close fellowship with the light that he became informed with light, and came to the camp as a very lamp of God, glowing with the glory of God.*

*On the mount of transfiguration that same light streamed forth from all the body and raiment of the blessed Jesus.*

*And with reference to the very time when this city comes into being and place, Isaiah says, " the moon shall be ashamed and the sun confounded," confounded because of the out beaming glory which then shall appear in the new Jerusalem, leaving no more need for them to shine in it, since the glory of God lights it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

*(the apocalypse [reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1987], 499)*

The reference to the **Nations and the kings of the earth** has led some to view this passage as a recapitulation of the millennial kingdom.

But such an interpretation fails to do justice to the chronology of Revelation, particularly the repeated use of *kai eidon* to indicate chronological progression.

There will be living human beings in the Millennium, but no physically alive people could possible exist in the environment without the sea, sun, or moon.

**Nations** translates *ethnon*, which can also mean “People” and is most frequently translated “Gentiles”. The idea is not that national identities will be preserved in the eternal state, but rather the opposite.

People from every tongue, tribe, and nation, both Jews and Gentiles will be united as God’s people. Every believer will be fully equal in the eternal capital city.

It may be that the truth that **the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it** offers further proof of the absolute equality in heaven.

That phrase may indicate that there will be no social or class structure, that those who enter the city will surrender their earthly **glory**.

Thus everyone will be at the same level.

Another possible interpretation is that this phrase refers to the believers living at the end of the Millennium.

According to that view, the statement that **the kings of the earth will bring their glory into** the New Jerusalem refers to the translation of those believers before the uncreation of the present universe

Then John adds another detail to his description of the New Jerusalem.

Throughout the never ending **daytime** of the eternal state (**for there will be no night there**) **its gates will never be closed**.

In an ancient walled city, the gates were closed at night-fall to keep invaders, marauders, criminals, and other potentially dangerous individuals from entering the city under cover of darkness.

That **there will be no night** in eternity, and the **gates** of the New Jerusalem **will never need to be closed**, depicts the city’s complete security.

It will be a place of rest, safety, and refreshment, where God’s people will “rest from their labors”

The kings will not be the only ones to surrender their earthly prestige and glory when they enter heaven.

The **glory and the honor of the nations** will also dissolve, as it were, into the eternal worship of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Like the twenty-four elders, all who enter heaven “**will cast their crowns before the throne of God (4:10)**”

All in heaven will be perfectly holy. Thus, **nothing unclean, and no one who practices abominations and lying, shall ever come into** the New Jerusalem

The **only ones** there will be those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

John’s angelic tour guide next showed him a **river of the water of life**.

with no sea in the eternal state, there could be no hydrologic cycle, and hence no rain to fill a river.

Thus, the **water of life** is not water as we know it; it is a symbol of eternal life;

**Isaiah 12:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup> **Therefore you will joyously draw water From the springs of salvation.**

**John 4:13-14 (NASB)**

**13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;  
14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become  
in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."**

**John 7:38 (NASB)**

**<sup>38</sup> "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"**

Like everything else in the city the river was clear as crystal so it could reflect the glory of God.  
It cascaded down **from the throne of God and of the Lamb** in a dazzling, sparkling, never ending stream.

It's pure, unpolluted, unobstructed flow symbolizes the constant flow of everlasting life from God's throne to God's people.

The phrase **in the middle of its street** is best translated in the middle of its path and connected with the following phrase **on either side of the river was the tree of life**.

**The tree of life** is the celestial counterpart to the tree of life in Eden, and this tree provides for those who are immortal.

The **tree of life** was a familiar Jewish concept that expressed blessing, and the celestial tree symbolizes the blessing of eternal life.

That the **tree bears twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month** emphasizes the infinite variety that will fill heaven.

The use of the term **month** does not refer to time, since this is the eternal state and time is no more.

It is an anthropomorphic expression of the joyous provision of eternity couched in the familiar terms of time.

Then John makes the intriguing observation that **the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations**.  
**At first glance**, that seems confusing, since obviously there will be no illness or injury in heaven that would require **healing**.

**Healing**, here is the word *Therapeia* which does not imply illness.  
Perhaps a better way to translate it would be life giving, health giving, or therapeutic.

The **leaves of the tree** can be likened to supernatural vitamins, since vitamins are taken not to treat illness, but to promote general health.

Life in heaven will be fully energized, rich, and exciting.

The text does not say whether the saints will actually eat the **leaves of the tree**, though that is possible.  
Angels ate food with Abraham and Sarah, as did the Lord Jesus Christ with His disciples after His resurrection.  
It is conceivable that the saints in heaven will eat, not out of necessity, but for enjoyment.

## THE PRIVILEGES OF ITS INHABITANTS

### *Revelation 22:3-5 (NASB)*

**3 There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;**

**4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.**

**5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.**

As John toured the New Jerusalem, he couldn't help but notice that life was very different for its inhabitants.

The most dramatic change from the present earth is that **there will no longer be any curse.**

As noted in the earlier chapter the removal of the curse means the end forever of sorrow, pain, and especially death, the most terrible aspect of the curse.

As we noted earlier there will be no temple in the New Jerusalem, **the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it.**

**God the Father and Jesus the Lamb** will reign throughout eternity.

Since God will continue forever as heaven's sovereign ruler, **his bond-servants will serve Him forever.**

They will spend all eternity carrying out the infinite variety of tasks that the limitless mind of God can conceive.

Incredibly, as the parable in Luke 12:35-40 indicates, the Lord will also serve them.

The saints in the New Jerusalem **will also see God's face.**

**Being** perfectly holy and righteous, they will be able to endure the heavenly level of the blazing, glorious light from God's presence without being consumed, something impossible for mortal men

The redeemed will also be God's personal possession; **His name will be on their foreheads.**

That identification will leave no doubt as to who they belong to forever.

John repeats the earlier description of heaven's magnificence: **there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them.**

Then he adds a final crescendo describing the saints; heavenly experience:

It will never end, because **they will reign forever and ever.**

That will be the fulfillment of Christ's promise in 3:21

### *Revelation 3:21 (NASB)*

<sup>21</sup> **~'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.**

Paul wrote to Timothy;

### *2 Timothy 2:12 (NASB)*

<sup>12</sup> **If we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us;**

The eternal capital city of heaven, the New Jerusalem, will be a place of indescribable, unimaginable beauty. From the center of it the brilliant glory of God will shine forth through the gold and precious stones to illuminate the new heaven and the new earth.

But the most glorious reality of all will be that sinful rebels will be made righteous, enjoy intimate fellowship with God and the Lamb, serve Them, and reign with Them forever in sheer joy and incessant praise.