

DOCTRINE OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

I. Introduction.

- A. The primary passage of the Bible addressing the New Jerusalem in detail is Rev.21-22:5.
- B. The fact of its existence has been part of OT revelation at least since the time of Abraham. Heb.11:10
- C. It has been designed and constructed by God Himself.
- D. It is a literal metropolis called the “holy city”. Rev.21:2,10
- E. It is implemented as a part of the new creation established by God. Rev.21:1-2 cp.Isa.65:17; 66:22
- F. It is the new creation that constitutes the final era of God’s program via the eternal state called the Day of God. 2Pet.3:12-13
- G. Its construction occurs sometime in past history before the eternal state as made clear with the perfect participle “*made ready*” of Rev.21:2
- H. Its preexisting condition is found to reside in the 3rd heaven. Rev.21:2,10
- I. Upon completion of creating the new heavens and new earth, the New Jerusalem will descend out of the 3rd heaven from God to meet up with planet earth.
- J. A popular misconception of the New Jerusalem is that it is a part of the Millennial scene, which is refuted in two parts:
 - 1. This view violates the chronological sequence of presentation in the book of Revelation chapters 17-22.
 - 2. The Jerusalem in the Millennium has a temple, the New Jerusalem does not. Eze.40-44 cp.Rev.21:22

II. The significance of the vocabulary as the New Jerusalem.

- A. The Greek term “new/καινός – kainos” indicates something new with respect to nature or characteristics.
- B. It does not emphasize something as 1st in sequence in time as found in the Greek term “νέος – neos”.
- C. The New Jerusalem is new in nature just as the new heavens and earth. Rev.21:1
- D. This indicates that it is not bound by the current laws of physics as understood in creation today.
- E. Neither is it susceptible to being regimented or governed according to historical traditions of present history as man might perceive.
- F. Its existence and function is dependent upon and solely regulated by the Father and the Son. Rev.21:22-23; 22:1,3
- G. Its newness is in contrast to the nature of the historical Jerusalem that exists throughout God’s program of human history.
- H. Too, its nature is new with respect to the heavenly Jerusalem as there is no temple in it. Rev.21:22 cp.Rev.11:19; 14:17
- I. The Greek term “Jerusalem/Ἱερουσόλυμα – Hierousoluma” is a transliteration of the Hebrew “יְרוּשָׁלַיִם - yerushalaim” meaning possession or foundation of peace.
- J. This highlights it as the reality of eternal peace established in the Day of God.

- K.** It is personified as a “bride/νύμφη – numphe”, a term symbolically unique to the New Jerusalem and otherwise used metaphorically of a regenerate Israel. Rev.21:2,9; 22:17 cp.Joh.3:29

III.The New Jerusalem incorporates both physical and spiritual realities as seen in:

- A.** Its two personifications of Rev.21:2,9.
 - 1.** Rev.21:2 emphasizes the physical.
 - 2.** It is there personified as a bride adorning the earth personified as her husband.
 - 3.** Rev.21:9 emphasizes the spiritual.
 - 4.** It is there personified as a bride and wife of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.
- B.** The physical is obvious through the description of its literal properties. Rev.21:11b-21; 22:1-3
- C.** Both spiritual and physical is seen in its administrative functions. Rev.21:22-27; 22:3-5
- D.** The spiritual is further illustrated through symbolic representation of its literal properties.
- E.** This is made clear by the “book end” verses introducing the description of the New Jerusalem as possessing the glory of God in Rev.21:11a and ending its literal description with the River and Tree of Life in Rev.22:1-2.

IV.A literal description of the New Jerusalem.

- A.** The new city is described in the most majestic, costly and brilliantly beautiful of terms.
- B.** It adorns the new earth as its center piece for approbation and desire of possession. Rev.21:2,7
- C.** It emanates the brilliance of absolute light that is God’s glory, His manifested essence of Deity. Rev.21:11 cp.1Joh.1:5
- D.** That because the Father and Son reside in it in manifested glory. Rev.21:22-23; 22:3
- E.** Its substance is of such it reflects and refracts God’s glory and becomes the host star of light for the new creation. Rev.21:24; Rev.22:5 cp.Isa.60:19-20
- F.** The New Jerusalem is a “beacon” for God’s manifested essence that will saturate the new creation.
- G.** The city is constructed as a single unit with emphasis on the inner city, its wall with its gates and foundation stones. Rev.21:12-13
- H.** The measurement of the city is 12,000 stadia (~1380 miles) in length, width and height formed as a squared cube. Rev.21:15-16
- I.** That the wall is great and high, we can assume it is the standard for measuring of the city proper. Rev.21:12a cp.vs.10
- J.** The wall is 144 cubits (~216 feet) thick. Rev.21:17
- K.** The material of the wall is like that of a modern day diamond indicating its translucent appearance. Rev.21:18
- L.** Incorporated into the wall are 12 gates, 3 on each directional side, each made with a single pearl. Rev.21:12-13,21
- M.** This further indicates that the new earth will retain the 4 compass points familiar today.

- N.** The gates have inscribed the 12 names of the tribes of Israel in eternal memoriam. Rev.21:12
- O.** There are 12 angels standing as honor guards at the gates in eternal memoriam to the elect angels. Rev.21:12
- P.** There are 12 foundation stones of the wall having inscribed upon them the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb in eternal memoriam to the Church. Rev.21:14
- Q.** The foundation stones are made of the most precious kind of stones known to man. Rev.21:19-20
- R.** The inner city structure is made of pure gold like clear glass. Rev.21:18
- S.** This to further facilitate the reflective and refractive nature of the entire structure emanating the glory of God.
- T.** It has a main road or artery also made of pure gold like glass. Rev.21:21b
- U.** The road leads to the throne of the Father and the Son. Rev.22:1 cp.vs.2a
- V.** Running parallel and in the center median of the road is the river of life. Rev.21:1-2a
- W.** On both sides of the river of life there exists the tree of life. Rev.21:2
- X.** The tree produces 12 kinds of fruit according to its seasonal production, which is edible per Rev.2:7.
- Y.** Its foliage or leaves have a practical application as to the welfare of the nations. Rev.22:2c
- Z.** The tree and its cycle of fruit production indicate seasonal change in the eternal state. Rev.22:2b
- AA.** All cursing experienced in present history has been voided due to its presence in the eternal state. Rev.22:3a
- BB.** The New Jerusalem is designed to host both a worship and civic program of God's administration. Rev.21:22; 22:1,3
- CC.** The worship program is in fulfillment to the promise that believers will always reside in God's temple, this in spite of geographic habitation on the new earth. Rev.3:12
- DD.** The civil or political program is a Theocracy that ultimately reigns over the Monarchical program of the nations. Rev.21:24 cp.22:1,3
- EE.** Its literal construction is designated as God's tabernacle (Rev.21:3) with the Father and Son being the literal temple (Rev.21:22).
- FF.** Surrounding the New Jerusalem exist the nations and kings inhabiting the new earth. Rev.21:24
- GG.** It functions as the center of international worship and commerce for the earths inhabitants. Rev.21:26; 22:3c
- HH.** It is designed as a commodity exchange for all extrinsic wealth in the world of which it is a recipient market for payment of tribute to the Father and Son. Rev.21:24,26 cp.Isa.60:11
- II.** Its universal nature as a commercial market is further implied in the simpler design as a "square". Rev.21:16 cp.Gen19:2; Deu.13:16, et al.
- JJ.** In turn, as an exchange market, it administers returning wealth back to the nations. Rev.22:2c

KK. The Father and the Son will reside in the New Jerusalem as their eternal home and metropolis for administration of the eternal state. Rev.21:3 cp.1Chr.29:1

V. The New Jerusalem doctrine.

- A.** The physical existence, substance, functions and furnishings of the New Jerusalem are highly symbolic.
- B.** Found in the symbolism is doctrine of which the New Jerusalem represents by virtue of her designer and builder as God. Heb.11:10
- C.** In this vein, the New Jerusalem is an eternal memorial in tribute to God and the plan of God.
- D.** Its symbolism points to doctrine in time while the literal existence denotes its eternal fulfillment.
- E.** The spiritual symbolism is first introduced in its 2nd personification as being the “*bride, the wife of the Lamb*”. Rev.21:9
- F.** As an inanimate object, it is the doctrine inherent in the symbolism that interprets the personification.
- G.** That it is symbolic of Bible doctrine follows the OT personification picturing wisdom as a woman. Pro.3:13-15ff; 4; 8; etc.
- H.** The personification as Christ’s bride first looks to doctrine that establishes a permanent union with Christ.
- I.** This symbolizes the doctrine of salvation in its culminated effect (Ph_{1,2} and ₃) that of necessity can only be realized co-joined with the Person of Christ. 2Tim.2:10; 3:15; Heb.9:28; etc.
- J.** That she is His wife looks to the purpose for the marriage as bringing glory to God in conformance to His Person. 1Cor.11:7 cp.Eph.5:22-24,26 cf.Rev.21:10-11a
- K.** These cognate titles personifying the New Jerusalem celebrate her existence as the doctrine of salvation architected by God realized in an everlasting union with Christ glorifying His and the Father’s Persons for all eternity. Heb.11:22 cp.Rev.21:22-27; 22:3-5
- L.** This is the primary doctrine of which all further symbolisms of the New Jerusalem articulate in further detail.
- M.** These principles include but are not limited to:
 - 1.** Rev.21:11: Her brilliance looks to the manifested glory of God as absolute light. 1Joh.1:5; 1Tim.6:16
 - a.** Light symbolizes God’s +R (Psa.97:6) and the truth of BD (Joh.1:4,5; 2Cor.4:4,6).
 - b.** This celebrates God’s +R found in the truth of salvation.
 - c.** That it is likened to a very costly stone looks to the sacrifice of Christ’s work on the cross in spiritual death sacrificing His +R as the Word (Joh.1:1) on behalf of men. 1Pet.2:21-22; 1Joh.3:5; 2Cor.5:21
 - d.** The brilliance is pictured as the “backbone” to salvation as God’s glory fills the New Jerusalem. Rev.21:23
 - 2.** Rev.21:12a: The wall is symbolic of security in salvation. Isa.60:18
 - a.** This celebrates the doctrine of eternal security. Cp.Joh.10:27-29

- b. That it is made of the same substance describing God's glory (Rev.21:18a cp.11) indicates that salvation finds its security in +R and truth.
- 3. The number "twelve" is used no less than 10x in Rev.12-21 and in numerology its looks to God's noncompulsory administration for His plan of salvation.
- 4. This celebrates the dispensational realities of God's plan.
- 5. The two primary dispensations in view are Israel and the Church.
- 6. Israel is memorialized by the 12 gates of the wall. Rev.21:12b,d
 - a. The gates celebrate the plan of salvation as found in Israel.
 - b. Gates are symbolized as praise or thanksgiving. Isa.60:18
 - c. This celebrates the extrinsic glory given to God for the free gift of salvation. Rev.21:24,26 cp.Rom.6:23 cp.8:20:21
 - d. It highlights Christ's appearance at the 1st Advent. Luk.1:46-55; 2:13-14
 - e. That gates are located on all 4 sides of the wall celebrates the doctrine of unlimited atonement. Rev.21:13 cp.Eph.1:5-6; 1Tim.2:3-4; 4:10; Tit.2:11
 - f. Their continually open posture recognizes the fulfillment of eternal freedom found in salvation and Christ. Rev.21:25 cp.Gal.5:1; Joh.8:31-32
 - g. That the gates are of pearl symbolizes salvation as found through a suffering and living organism (pearls produced by oysters).
 - h. This celebrates that salvation is from the Jews in the form of a living and suffering Messiah. Joh.4:22 cp.Isa.53
 - i. The 12 angels associated with the 12 gates celebrate true Israel as the focal point of the angelic conflict and angelic service to the plan of salvation. Heb.1:13-14
- 7. The Church is memorialized in the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb inscribed on the foundation stones of the wall. Rev.21:14
 - a. That the Church is associated with the foundation of salvation celebrates her role in proclaiming the reality of salvation being fulfilled through the historical Person of Christ.
 - b. It is the reality of Christ in hypostasis upon which salvation stands.
 - c. It recognizes Israel's right of administration forfeited through their rejection of His Person. Joh.1:11
 - d. That the foundation stones are made up of 12 precious stones parallels the Church with Israel dispensationally. Rev.21:19-20 cp.Exo.28:17-20
 - e. This celebrates salvation as realized in the dispensational forms of Judeo-Christianity. Rom.11:11-24
- 8. The measurements of the city and wall as divisible by 12 along with its basic blue print as a square celebrates all God's dispensational realities. Rev.21:15-16
- 9. The fulfillment of all historic dispensations is recognized in the eternal dispensation of the Day of God. Cp.1Pet.3:10,12-13
- 10. The form of the New Jerusalem as a perfect squared cube parallels the tabernacle of the OT. Rev.21:16 cp.1Kgs.6:10
 - a. This indicates the city as a whole is the fulfillment of its earthly type, which is based on its heavenly prototype. Heb.8:5
 - b. It celebrates the plan of salvation both physically and spiritually realized in the eternal state.

- c. It celebrates salvation as the culminating act of bringing both spiritual and physical realities of God's creation together.
 - d. That the Father and the Son become the permanent temple of the city tabernacle realizes the fruition of this principle. Rev.21:22
- 11.** The gold of the city and street celebrate the plan of salvation in its Divine design. Rev.21:18b,21b
- a. The city of gold celebrates the infrastructure of His predetermined plan for salvation to conform mankind to the image of His Son. Rom.1:29
 - b. It looks to the ultimate result of salvation in producing resurrected believers as one body of royal priesthood to reign with Christ in His eternal economy. Rev.20:6 cp.21:24-26
 - c. The street celebrates the way of salvation bringing one to the Father and the Son. Rev.22:1b-2a
 - d. There is only one street and only one way and that is through faith in the Son. Act.4:12
- 12.** The river of life centered in the street celebrates eternal life. Rev.22:1
- a. Coming from the throne of the Father and Son indicates eternal life is found in God through Christ. 1Joh.5:11
 - b. That it is in the center further celebrates eternal life as the vein of life found in the way of salvation. Joh.3:16
- 13.** The tree of life celebrates the blessings of eternal life. Rev.22:2
- a. The tree of life is unique in that it is viewed as multiple trees with a single root system, such as the modern day Aspen, and it produces 12 kinds of fruit.
 - b. The single root system symbolizes Jesus Christ as the root of eternal life and ultimate source of all blessings the fruit and leaves symbolize. Isa.11:1; Rom.15:12; Rev.5:5; 22:16
 - c. Its diversity of fruit indicates the diversity of individual Ph₃ blessings.
 - d. That a believer can loose out on their participation of the tree of life and New Jerusalem looks to the doctrine of the Importance of Bible Doctrine. Rev.22:19
 - e. The leaves of the tree celebrate God's government providing blessing on a universal basis.
 - f. That they appear the same teaches the normal blessings associated with all believers on a national level in the eternal state.
 - g. Together, the fruit and leaves of the tree celebrate both the normal and SG₃ blessings found in salvation. 1Cor.3:11-15
- 14.** The perpetual daytime of the New Jerusalem celebrates the plan of salvation bringing men out of darkness into light. Eph.5:8
- 15.** The no need of a sun or moon celebrates the reality of salvation as manifested in the glory of the Father and Son. Rev.21:23; 22:5
- 16.** It celebrates that in the eternal state, no longer will believers operate on faith of things not seen, but will be face-to-face with God. Rev.21:3; 22:4
- 17.** Nothing unclean in the city celebrates the purification of believers through salvation a reality void for unbelievers. Rev.21:8,27,15; Tit.3:4-7

VI. The New Jerusalem contrasted to the heavenly Jerusalem. Gal.4:26-27; Heb.12:22

A. Similarities:

1. Both are personified as a woman. Gal.4:26 cp.Rev.21:9
2. Both find existence in the 3rd heaven. Gal.4:26; Heb.12:22 cp.Rev.21:2,10

B. Differences:

1. The heavenly Jerusalem is personified as a woman giving birth to offspring. Gal.4:26-27
2. The New Jerusalem is personified as a new bride and wife of the Lamb whose marriage is initiated with the new creation. Rev.21:2,9
3. The heavenly looks to the spiritual reality of salvation in time.
4. The New looks at the physical consummation of both heavenly and earthly realities as a result of salvation in eternity.
5. The heavenly city is the spiritual Mt. Zion and is the home of myriads of angels. Heb.12:22
6. The New is only viewed from a great and high mountain and only 12 angels are mentioned for permanent co-habitation with it. Rev.21:10,12
7. The heavenly has a prototype earthly temple. Rev.14:15,17; 15:5,6,8; 16:1,17
8. The New has no temple. Rev.21:22

C. Conclusion:

1. Possibility one: The heavenly is set up for the present history of salvation, the New was separately created to be implemented for use in the eternal state.
2. Possibility two: They are one and the same and the heavenly is modified to reflect the nature of the New.
3. This interpreter cannot find a Biblical passage that is conclusive one way or the other.
4. Applying logic, one might consider that for the heavenly to undergo a change in its manifested design to accommodate the New is incompatible to the perfect nature of the heavenly to begin with.
5. The question is, how can one modify perfection? If something is already perfect in nature or character, any modification seems moot.
6. That the New Jerusalem is created before the dissolution of our present universe would indicate an entity already in place most importantly without a physical temple in it, contrasted to the heavenly Jerusalem.
7. It appears as a physical parallel to its spiritual heavenly counterpart prepared for implementation in the eternal state as an eternal memorial of fulfillment of the spiritual in a physical and literal way.
8. It would seem logical that God would retain the perfect nature and setting of the 3rd heaven as an angelic estate continuing service to God. Cp.Joh.1:51 having further eternal fulfillment?
9. The heavenly in contrast to the New would serve as an eternal memorial in the angelic realm of God's completed success in resolving the A/C.
10. That God's glory is manifested throughout the immensity of the new heavens and earth and the 3rd heaven in its infinitival state would indicate a sovereign rule of government both in the human and angelic realms.
11. However, God is free to change His administrative realities to conform to the program of His plan.

VII. Conclusion.

- A. The New Jerusalem is beyond the scope of our imagination as to its complete reality while resident in our earthly bodies.
- B. It intertwines spiritual realities with physical realities and the finite with the infinite that embodies its very creation and existence.
- C. It is a part of the normal blessings that all resurrected believers irrespective of dispensation and Ph₂ success will enjoy and participate in. Rev.21:7
- D. It is the obvious residence of the Father and the Son in an eternal face-to-face relationship with resurrected humanity. Rev.21:3
- E. It functions as the center for all worship and civil service to God. Rev.21:22,24,26
- F. It celebrates an eternal state of deliverance for all void of suffering, pains, etc., that was a part of life in present history. Rev.21:4
- G. It is the beacon of eternal and everlasting peace in the Day of God.
- H. It is a physical, spiritual and living memorial to the Plan of God for salvation.

*“He who overcomes shall inherit these things,
And I will be his God and he will be My son”.*
Rev.21:7