

Week 5 - The New Jerusalem:

Tonight, we will be studying a place so amazing, so unbelievable, we will never comprehend it.

Why Jerusalem?

By human standards it makes no sense. It is arid, little of its land is good for agriculture, off the beaten path.

It is the most contentious city in the world. People love it, people hate it, but everyone is fascinated by it.

But Jerusalem is God's chosen city. His love. It is even described as God's bride.

The earliest indications of it appear to be when Abraham meets Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:1 *"For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God met Abraham." ... "the translation of his name king of Righteousness., and then he is also king of Salem, which means King of Peace. Without [any record of] father, mother, nor ancestral line, nor any beginning of days (birth) nor ending of life (death), but having been made like the Son of God, he remains a priest without interruption and without successor."* Hebrews 7:1-3 (AMP)

Jerusalem means City of Peace.

God has chosen it to be his city, his home, the place from where he will reign over the universe:

He has chosen it to be his dwelling place forever, the place he will rule from, a gift to his son, Yeshua.

Psalm 48:1-2, *"Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."*

Psalm 132:13-14, *"For the LORD has chosen Jerusalem; he has desired it for his home. This is my resting place forever" he said. "I will live here, for this is the home I desired."*

Isaiah 9:7, *"Of the increase of his government and peace There will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward and forever."*

Zech. 8:3, *This is what the Lord says, "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the mountain of the Lord Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain."*

Isaiah 2:2-3 and Micah 4:1-5, *"But it will come to pass that in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be [firmly] established as the highest of the mountains; and will be exalted above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house (temple) of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For the law will go out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."*

Prophecies of a New Jerusalem:

Heb. 11:9-10, regarding Abraham... *"By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country ... For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God."*

Heb. 12:22-24, *"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel."*

Isaiah 65:17-19, "See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people and the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more."

What Revelation tells us about the New Jerusalem:

Revelation 21 and 22:1-5

A Walking Tour:

Our arrival ...

Isaiah... 35:8 (NIV), "And a highway shall be there, and it will be called the Way of Holiness." 35:10, "And the ransomed of the Lord will return, and enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."

As we approach the city it will shine with the glory and magnificence of God, like jasper, as clear as crystal.

A study of 12s ...

- 12 gates, on the gates the names of the 12 tribes. 12 angels at the gates.
- 12 foundations of precious stones, the names of the 12 Apostles on them.
- An angel measured the city, 12,000 stadia in length, height, and width.
- Walls 144 cubits thick (12x12) = 216 feet or 72 yards.

The city is made of pure gold, as pure as glass.

The walls are decorated with every kind of precious stone.

Entering in ... we will enter through the gates, each a great pearl, greeted by angels.

The city is luminous, not needing sun or moon. God's glory will be its light (the nations will walk by its light).

We might enter with kings of the earth who are bringing their splendor into it (Vatican Museum analogy).

Only those whose names are written in Lamb's Book of Life may enter.

How Big is the New Jerusalem?

1,400 miles from one side to other (Vancouver BC to Mexican border). Ground floor almost 2 million square miles.

If you walked at a brisk pace of 3.5 mph for 10 hours per day it would take you 40 days to walk across.

If you drove 55 mph it would take you three 8 to 9 hour days.

As tall as it is wide. 2.7 billion cubic miles.

Mount Everest extends 5.5 miles above sea level. The New Jerusalem will be 255 times taller.

Earth's atmosphere, the Karman line is 62 miles. 99.99997% of earth's atmosphere is below this point. If this remained as it is now, more than 95% of the city would extend beyond.

Henry Morris in his book, The Revelation Record, calculated that if 20 billion people lived there and their homes and property took up a mere 25% of the space of the city, each individual would have a cubical block of about 75 acres of space on each face! The rest of the colossal city would involve streets, parks, public buildings and the like.

A walking tour inside:

Likely God's throne is in the very middle of the city. Surrounded by the sea of glass mixed with fire, and millions upon millions of angels.

The River of Life flows from throne of God and the Lamb, down the middle of the great street of the city.

On each side of the river will stand the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. The Garden of Eden is now within the New Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 47 describes the River of Life flowing from beneath the temple. It grows deeper and deeper as it flows toward the eastern region where it eventually empties into the Dead Sea, where it turns the salt water fresh. He tells us of great numbers of trees lining its shores and a great number of fish and fishermen lining the shores.

Noteworthy:

To a Jew, the 12 stones would conjure thoughts of breastplate of high priest.

The city being a perfect cube of gold like the Holy of Holies in God's temple.

The city is Holy ... set apart. Essentially the entire city is a temple, the ultimate temple

Built for the victorious, but not prepared for us only. Prepared by God, for God, and for his Son.

In times past people built temples as dwelling places for God. God now builds his own dwelling place.

His servants will serve him, they will see his face and his name will be on their forehead (is that us? Will we each have an opportunity to serve him?).

A few thoughts:

God is a creator and he created us to be creators! The first person God described as being filled with the Spirit was a craftsman, Bezalel, who crafted the amazing things for the tabernacle of Moses.

The gifts, skills, passions, and tasks God grants each of us will not only be for His glory and our good but also for the good of our larger family. God will rejoice as we thrive together, interdependently, in the New Earth's culture.

It is said we currently use only 10% of our brainpower. Imagine using 100%. And we'll never have to worry about dementia or Alzheimer's.

Questions:

Will we dwell there?

What does it mean that we will rule and reign with him?

How do you envision spending your time?

Will there be science? Geology? Archeology? Rebuilding ancient ruins? Will we explore the universe?

Conclusion:

Isaiah 60:1-5 *"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy;"*