

## Revelation 21:9-27 “New Jerusalem”

The story of the world is **not a tragedy** that ends in death and shame but a comedy that ends in cosmic renewal and the marriage of the Lamb and his bride. Those who believed on Jesus and surrendered their lives to His Lordship will now know ETERNAL Joy and fellowship with the God who made us. Yes, We will live “Happily ever after!”

Oh, the wonder of the first 4 verses in chapter 21... note that in verse 1 **“the first heaven and the first earth had passed away”**, and then at the end of verse 4, **“the former things have passed away.”** These two statements bracket 21:1-4 and indicate that their main thrust is that *the old is gone*. And then the next section, 21:5-8, opens with God asserting, **“I am making all things new.”** So, we could summarize these 8 verses with Paul’s phrase, **“THE OLD HAS PASSED AWAY; THE NEW HAD COME”**

**Verse 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.” **Pray**

**We left off after verse 8 so let us join chapter 21 beginning in verse 9** Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” **10** And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, **11** having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. **12** Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: **13** three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. **14** Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. **15** And he who talked with me

had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. **16** The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. **17** Then he measured its wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. **18** The construction of its wall was *of* jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. **19** The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation *was* jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, **20** the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. **21** The twelve gates *were* twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. **22** But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. **23** The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. **24** And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. **25** Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). **26** And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. **27** But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

**FORT KNOX** is famous for being the stronghold where America's gold is held. It is thought to be an impregnable fortress. The United States Department of the Treasury has held the nation's deposit of gold bullion there since 1937. Gold bullion is 99.9 percent pure gold in bulk form, such as bars. It is not possible for humans to extract 100 percent pure gold. As an interesting side note, all the gold that has ever been mined has an estimated value of just under six trillion dollars.

The gold vault is lined with granite walls and a blast-proof door that weighs twenty-two tons. People cannot be trusted, so "No single person is entrusted with the entire combination to the vault. Ten members of the depository staff must dial separate combinations known only to them. Beyond the mail vault door, smaller internal cells provide further protection. Several fences surround the facility, and armed guards are present. Fort Know holds 5,050 tons of gold, worth roughly 173 billion dollars.

**Revelation 21 verse 9** Then one of the seven angels who had the seven-bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” **10** And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

The language in 21:9 and 10, which opens the section on the bride, matches the language in 17:1-3, which opens the section on the harlot. These parallel phrases invite us to learn from the contrast between the harlot’s outcome and the bride’s glory. Just as “one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls” full of the seven last plagues invited John, saying, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute” in 17:1, so now one of those angels invites John, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb” in 21:9. And just as the angel carried John away in the Spirit and showed him the harlot in 17:3, so in 21:10 John writes, “And he carried me away in the Spirit” Back in 17:3 the angel carried John “into a wilderness” where he saw the whore and the blasphemous beast. Now the angel carries John “to a great, high mountain, and showed [him] the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal (21:10b, 11). Unlike Babylon’s now worthless “gold and jewels and pearls” in 17:4 and her wasted luxury in 18:7, the glory of the holy city will never fade.

**11** having the glory of God. *The city is like God – shining with his own radiant glory. The city looks like God and has his glory because of its conformity to his character.*

Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

Hebrew word... **crystal is like “ICE”** suggests a diamond. A diamond in a gold setting—appropriate for the bride. Imagine, a huge, glimmering diamond floating down out of the heavens!

**12** Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, **THE WALL IS NOT NEEDED FOR DEFENSE, BECAUSE THERE ARE NO MORE ENEMIES.** and twelve angels at the gates, The fact that there are angels at the gates seems to recall key angelic figures seen in the Old Testament: the cherubim guarding the way to the tree of life in Genesis 3:24, the angel with a drawn sword encountered by Balaam as he approached the camp of Israel

(Numbers 22:22-35), and the man with a drawn sword Joshua encountered as the people prepared to enter the promised land (Joshua 5:13-15).

So, verse 12 says, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: **The names of the tribes on the gates communicate the unity and heritage that the people of God have with Israel. God will never forget the tribes of Israel, even unto eternity.** **13** three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. **SOME HAVE THOUGHT THE ARRANGEMENT OF GATES LOOKS BACK TO THE CAMP LAYOUT USED DURING THE EXODUS (NUMBERS 2).** **14** Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. **15** And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. **THE ACT OF MEASURING IS IN THE DEPICTION OF THE FULFILLMENT OF EZEKIEL 40.**

**16** The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. **The New Jerusalem's length, height and width are equal. This means that it is either a cube or a pyramid. A cube is reminiscent of the Holy Place of the tabernacle, suggesting that the entire city is the Holy Place. HENRY MORRIS, GUESSING THAT THERE WILL HAVE BEEN 100 BILLION PEOPLE IN THE HUMAN RACE, AND THAT 20% OF THEM WILL BE SAVED, CALCULATES THAT EACH PERSON WOULD HAVE A "BLOCK" WITH ABOUT 75 ACRES TO "CALL THEIR OWN."**

**JOHN IS SAYING THAT THE WHOLE WORLD IS GOING TO BECOME THE HOLY OF HOLIES THE PLACE WHERE GOD DWELLS.**

**17** Then he measured its wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. **WALL WOULD BE JUST OVER 200 FEET HIGH.**

The size of the New Jerusalem is enormous; **twelve thousand furlongs** equals 1,500 miles. This is the same distance from Maine to Florida; the square footage would approximate the size of the Moon.

**18** The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. **Think of the wealth of resources necessary to build a wall of jasper.** The precious material corresponds to the sanctity of the place.

**19** The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, **20** the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

Verse 18 tells us, “The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. **The gold is so pure it’s transparent.**”

“The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones:” And note the colors in heaven...

**“JASPER”** (perhaps a diamond, or maybe a greenish stone),

**“SAPPHIRE”** (blue),

**“CHALCEDONY”** (aqua),

**“EMERALD”** (a bright green),

**“SARDONYX”** (a brownish red),

**“SARDIUS”** (a deep, blood red),

**“CHRYSOLITE”** (yellow),

**“BERYL”** (another green),

**“TOPAZ”** (yellow-green),

**“CHRYSOPRASE”** (apple green),

**“JACINTH”** (violet), and

**“AMETHYST”** (a blue-red, or rich purple).

Five of the 12 colors are some shade of green. Hey, if you’re going to heaven, you’d better get used to green! Heaven will be a kaleidoscope of color – a **rainbow!**

These precious stones were set in four rows of three on the high priest’s breastplate (Exodus 28:17-20), and they are also associated with the Garden of Eden (Ezekiel 28:13, 14; Genesis 2:12). Solomon also laid the foundation of the temple with precious stones (1 Kings 5:17; 7:9-10). What John describes in 21:18-20 fulfills what Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 54:11-12.

***<sup>11</sup> "O you afflicted one, Tossed with tempest, and not comforted, Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, And lay your foundations with sapphires. <sup>12</sup> I will make your pinnacles of rubies, Your gates of crystal, And all your walls of precious stones.***

**Morris: John's use of material riches to describe the city is his way of bringing out the very great value of what God has for His people**

21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. **That's a bunch of massive clams that coughed out those pearls.** Such gates would be priceless, and beautiful, and in this holy city they are safe from vandalism and theft.

Verse 21 continues... And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

There once was a rich man who was near death. He was very grieved because he had worked so hard for his money and he wanted to be able to take it with him to heaven. So, he began to pray that he might be able to take some of his wealth with him.

An angel hears his plea and appears to him. "Sorry, but you can't take your wealth with you." The man implores the angel to speak to God to see if He might bend the rules.

The man continues to pray that his wealth could follow him. The angel reappears and informs the man that God has decided to allow him to take one suitcase with him. Overjoyed, the man gathers his largest suitcase and fills it with pure gold bars and places it beside his bed.

Soon afterward the man dies and shows up at the Gates of Heaven to greet St. Peter. St. Peter seeing the suitcase says, "Hold on, you can't bring that in here!"

But, the man explains to St. Peter that he has permission and asks him to verify his story with the Lord. Sure enough, St. Peter checks and comes back saying, "You're right. You are allowed one carry-on bag, but I'm supposed to check its contents before letting it through."

**St. Peter opens the suitcase to inspect the worldly items that the man found too precious to leave behind and exclaims, "You brought pavement?!!!"**

*Again, the end of verse 21... And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. Notice it's not "streets" (plural), but "street" (singular). There is only one way to God, and only one street in heaven... It's a street paved with pure gold.*

Walvoord "The constant mention of transparency indicates that the city is designed to transmit the glory of God in the form of light without hindrance."

**22** But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. **HERE, THE TEMPLE IS NOT REMOVED, BUT EXPANDED. EVERYTHING AND EVERY PLACE IS HOLY AND THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD.** Here's the end of religion... The Jewish Temple epitomized the do's and don'ts, rules and rituals, symbols and sacrifices of all religion – but in the end, none of that will be important. When it's all said and done - all that matters is the Lord and the Lamb! **23** The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. **In heaven, none of our joy, beauty, or knowledge will be based on created things, but only on the Creator. By faith, you can have it that way now. You can decide to trust in God so completely that your joy, what you consider beauty, and your foundation of knowledge are all based on Jesus, and not on anything created.**

**Light speaks of joy, for in the Scriptures light and joy go together. Light speaks of beauty, because without light there is no beauty. Light speaks of knowledge and in heaven we will all know Him as He knows us. The treasure in the new heaven and new earth is God.**

The temple in Jerusalem was the focal point of pilgrimage, and the sun is the light by which people see, by which they walk and work. In the new city sun and temple are replaced by God and the Lamb.

**24** And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, **Now God and the Lamb are what the temple was: they are the holy in the midst of the world, and there is not a particular building that is the temple because the world itself has become the temple.**

and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

Some think that the kings of the earth in view here are formerly rebellious kings who were converted at the coming of Christ. That may be so, but it seems more natural to see this as describing either those who reign during the millennium of 20:4 – resurrected martyrs – or those who reign in the new heaven and new earth.

**25** Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). **NO ATTACKS... NO THIEVES!** **26** And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. *Isaiah 60:5 will be fulfilled: “the wealth of the nations shall come to you.”* **27** But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. *In this verse Isaiah 35:8 is fulfilled: “the unclean shall not pass over it,” along with Isaiah 52:1 “there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean.”*

Bought to be Freed

Back in the 1800s, a young Englishman traveled to California in search of gold. After several months of prospecting, he struck it rich. On his way home, he stopped in New Orleans.

Not long into his visit, he came upon a crowd of people all looking in the same direction. Approaching the crowd, he recognized that they had gathered for a slave auction. Slavery had been outlawed in England for years, so this young man’s curiosity drew him to watch as a person became someone else’s property. He heard, “Sold!” just as he joined the crowd. A middle-aged black man was taken away.

Next a beautiful young black girl was pushed upon the platform and made to walk around so everyone could see her. The miner heard vile jokes and comments that spoke of evil intentions from those around him. Men were laughing as their eyes remained fixed on the new item for sale.

The bidding began.

Within a minute, the bids surpassed what most slave owners would pay for a black girl. As the bidding continued higher and higher, it was apparent that two men wanted her. In between their bids, they laughed about what they were going to do with her, and how the other one would miss out. The miner stood silent as anger



welled up inside him. Finally, one man bid a price beyond the reach of the other. The girl looked down. The auctioneer called out, "Going once! Going twice!"

Just before the final call, the miner yelled out a price that was exactly twice the previous bid. An amount that exceeded the worth of any man. The crowd laughed, thinking that the miner was only joking, wishing that he could have the girl himself. The miner opened the bag of gold he had brought for the trip. The auctioneer shook his head in disbelief as he waved the girl over to him.

The girl walked down the steps of the platform until she was eye-to-eye with the miner. She spat straight in his face and said through clenched teeth, "I hate you!" The miner, without a word, wiped his face, paid the auctioneer, took the girl by the hand, and walked away from the still-laughing crowd.

He seemed to be looking for something in particular as they walked up one street and down another. Finally, he stopped in front of some sort of store, though the slave girl did not know what type of store it was. She waited outside as the dirty-faced miner went inside and started talking to an elderly man. She couldn't make out what they were talking about. At one point the voices got louder, and she overheard the store clerk say, "But it's the law! It's the law!" Peering in, she saw the miner pull out his bag of gold and pour what was left of it on the table.

With what seemed like a look of disgust, the clerk picked up the gold and went in a back room. He came out with a piece of paper, and both he and the miner signed it.

The young girl looked away as the miner came out the door. Stretching out his hand, he said to the girl, "Here are your manumission papers. You are free." The girl did not look up.

He tried again. "Here. These are papers that say you are free. Take them."

"I hate you!" the girl said, refusing to look up. "Why do you make fun of me!"

"No, listen," he pleaded. "These are your freedom papers. You are a free person."

The girl looked at the papers, then looked at him, and look at the papers once again. "You just bought me ... and now, you're setting me free?"

"That's why I bought you. I bought you to set you free."

The beautiful young girl fell to her knees in front of the miner, tears streaming down her face. “You bought me to set me free! You bought me to set me free!” she said over and over.

The miner said nothing.

Clutching his muddy boots, the girl looked up at the miner and said, “All I want to do is serve you – because you bought me to set me free!”

At one time, we were all slaves to sin and death. But Christ came down to redeem us – to pay for our freedom. He bought us with His own blood, that we might be free. “<sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1 Peter 1:18-19).