***The New Jerusalem, No. 4

RV247-01***

One lady this morning told me that she was terribly, terribly tired and she just came to the service to sit and take a nap. It was so exciting hearing about the New Jerusalem that she was kept awake all morning. She's still tired. We're going to see if we can do it a second time in a row to keep her eyes from drooping and keep herself awake. I hope that you will appreciate as well that we are in some very grand territory in the Word of God. We finish Chapter 21. We only have one more chapter to go, Chapter 22. And it will rapidly come to a conclusion. Revelation 21:9-27, The New Jerusalem Segment Number 4.

**Introduction**

After the initial impact on John of the Majesty and beauty of the New Jerusalem, he is surprised to note that the city has no temple in it. The most notable building in the old Jerusalem was the Temple situated on Mount Zion. The Temple and its ceremonies portrayed the person and the work of Jesus Christ in salvation. God Himself dwelt in the Holy of Holies within the Temple, and He filled it with the brilliant light of His glory. The Triune God Himself is the temple in the New Jerusalem, and so there is no formal temple building there. He is described by the title 'Lord God Almighty,' and each of those terms applying to one of the members of the Trinity. Christ, as the Lamb of God, is a representative of the Godhead. So, He is alluded to separately. In addition, since God the type is present in the New Jerusalem, there is no need for the temple, which is the anti-type. Believers in the New Jerusalem will not need a priesthood to intercede with God for them because they will have direct access to God. So, therefore they have no need for priests and ceremonies and all that was associated with that.

The New Jerusalem, furthermore John observes, has no need for a system of illumination. The glory light of God drives away all the darkness. The sun, the moon, the stars are still there on their normal course through the heavens, and the rest of the new earth goes through its cycles of night and day. But in the New Jerusalem, there's no night. It's always full day as the Shekinah glory of God fills that. Believers today, we have pointed out, are the temples of God. We are to live, therefore, by the light of the doctrines of Scripture. We have tried to dignify the fact that you are God's temple. Nobody else fills that role. It is a most serious responsibility to act in compatibility with the holiness of God since God Himself dwells within us. Personal integrity is required of the royal family of God, which is compatible with the character of God.

**The Subjection of the Gentiles**

So, this evening we begin at Revelation 21:24. Verses 24-26 deal with the subjection of the Gentiles, the conduct of the nations. Verse 24 says "and the nations." The Greek word for nations looks like this "ethnos," e t h n o s, and while it is true that that does stand for the word nations, it is more basically the word Gentile that is conveyed by the idea of "ethnos." That really would be a more helpful translation here to say, 'and the Gentiles shall walk by its light.' The reference here is not to political entities as exists during the millennium, but to believers from those political entities who are Gentiles and who are saved Gentiles. They're singled out as a separate group to be recognized in the New Jerusalem, and that they are there in the light of the glory of God.

This reminds us that God has 3 major groups of human beings that He deals with. When you read the Bible, sometimes it talks to one group, sometimes it talks to another group, sometimes it applies to the third group. If you don't separate which group it applies to, you get a lot of confusion. Those 3 groups, of course, are Israel the Jewish people; secondly, the Gentiles as such; thirdly, the Church made up of Jews and Gentiles. You cannot just willy-nilly read the Bible and apply whatever you read in there to everybody, because that's not the case. God has Scripture, which is applicable to one of these 3 groups of His special people.

And here it has been stressed to us, indeed, that the Jews are here, with the names of the 12 tribes over the 12 gates. We have been reminded that the Christians are in the city because the names of the 12 apostles are on the 12 foundation levels. So, here we're touching upon the third main group of human beings, Gentile believers, who also are in this city. We're told that these saved Gentiles are going to walk by its light. That is the Shekinah glory light of the city of the New Jerusalem. Gentile saints are attracted to the beacon of the glory light seen in the New Jerusalem. They also have participation in the city. They choose, in other words, to subject themselves to the divine viewpoint of God's laws as a consequence of their salvation.

Furthermore, those nations, also from which these Gentiles came, had kings. It is pointed out that the people, Gentiles will follow, but also the kings of the earth who shall bring their glory into it. The kings of the earth refers to these saints who once bore civil authority on the earth. They're believers now. They once had great prestige, great power and great honor. Obviously, when you go to Heaven, if you have been a person of significant achievements on this earth and have carried great power, great honor, great prestige, it isn't all wiped out. Obviously, when you get to Heaven, people will recognize you, they will remember you. If you're a Martin Luther, they will know what you did and they will know what a great impact you had on humanity. If you are John Calvin, they will know who you are and what you have done in the face of God. If you're George Washington, they will remember. They will know what a great impact you have as a father of God's client nation in the final days of the Church age, the nation that is the real spokesman for the living God. So, here we have people who in their lives on earth bore a great deal of honors and influence, and they go into Heaven with this prestige. But ultimately they, like the simplest citizen, are subject to the glory, light of Heaven and the God from whom that glory radiates.

And they bring also into the New Jerusalem their own personal honors and their own personal glory. The Kings recognize that their former glory was ultimately from God, and so it belongs to Him; it is God's glory. They didn't make themselves great. God made them great. And in the old earth, political leaders and nations were deceived by Satan, and so they gave their glory to the antichrist. Now, these people who were once in civil authority, now born again, now in Heaven, now qualify for the New Jerusalem, take with them and they humbly bow their knee to Christ. With the final defeat of Satan, leaders and people of the Gentiles come to their senses and they turn to live by God's spiritual enlightenment.

With the sanctification of all mankind in the eternal state, kings and people gladly cast their crowns at the feet of Christ and they attribute their honors to Him. That's very important for you to realize that everything you are that is commendable and impressive is because God did it for you; God made it possible. What you enjoy, what pleases you, what is important to you, what you consider a great, great blessing to you personally, it came from God. And the Gentile nations and rulers who do not live by the light of God's word will continue to compliment and to praise themselves. But these Gentile nations that we are looking at and their leaders have come to their senses. Nations today do not glorify God, nor do the leaders; they glorify man, even to the point of making themselves their own gods.

**The City of No Night**

In verse 25, we have the city of no night. [Revelation 21:25] "And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed." During the day-by-day, these gates will always be open. The reason for that is that in the ancient world you didn't shut the gates of the city during the day; that was done at night. But there will never be any night time in the New Jerusalem, but only daytime because of the eternal shining of God's glory. The New Jerusalem will be under a perpetual state of high noon. The glory light of God illuminating the city will never wane, so they'll never be any terrors of night to concern people.

Night in the Bible symbolizes the absence of God's presence and of God's blessings. That's part of the symbolism of stressing here that in New Jerusalem, there is no night. For example, John 12:35 says, "Jesus therefore said to them, 'For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.'" Jesus was telling these people that He is the light, spiritual light. The time is coming when He is not going to be there, He's going to be gone and that they should be prepared to walk in the light while He is present among them. When the darkness comes, that means that He, the God-man is gone. 1 Thessalonians 5:2-8 indicate the same thing. "For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in the darkness, [You're not separated from God] that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of the night nor the darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, [meaning we are in touch with God,] let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation." So, it is interesting that in the Bible, this concept of nighttime is associated with evil and with the absence of the presence of God. So, it's quite a contrast in the New Jerusalem; there is no night, there is constant day. There is constant light indicating symbolically the constant presence of God.

And the gates are never going to be closed consequently. The gates in the walls of ancient cities were closed at night and then they were opened during the daylight hours. The New Jerusalem has, of course, no enemies to keep out, so they never have to shut the gates. All who are on the face of the earth are regenerated, so they're all welcome in the city.

The New Jerusalem has its own constant divine illumination, apart from the sun so it's not affected by the earth's rotation on its axis. And the eternal day of the New Jerusalem then means that the gates will never be closed and thus there will not be any night there. Darkness never comes since glorified bodies don't need to sleep for rest. They don't need to be reconstructed. Today we need darkness because the body needs to be able to rest and to rebuild itself, to reconstitute itself, so, we have to have that cycle of sleeping. In the New Jerusalem in glorified bodies, that will not be necessary. For some of you, that may be a great disappointment because you kind of like to take a nap once in a while. Well, we didn't say that you couldn't take a nap. We said you don't need it. But if you want a nap in the New Jerusalem, they have apartments with blackout curtains such as, God willing, we are now going to process and research and hopefully have in this auditorium soon so that we can have an auditorium in which we can say there's no day there. We can make it dark all the time whenever we need it, anyhow. But you must remember that we don't have much information of what life is going to be like in the New Jerusalem, but it's going to be a ball, it's going to be great. You are never going to look back and wish you were back here at this scene. And what will be open to you is beyond your fondest dream. Jesus, on that one occasion, for example, when He met the disciples after His resurrection at the seashore, asked to have something to eat. They said, 'yeah, we're roasting some fish here on the coals.' He asked for some and ate before them, and He could eat in His resurrected body. Those of you who are good cooks, you like to cook things and eat, you can still eat.

Life will go on but on a more magnificent scale than it is now; the only thing is, we won't have any sin anymore. You'll be back to where Adam and Eve were. You'll be minus all their restrictions, but your body will be a step up from theirs. Now, the bodies that we have are a step below the angels. Adam and Eve's bodies were a step below the angels. When we have a glorified body, we'll be above the angels and we will have their capacities and more even than that. So, these bodies in the New Jerusalem are going to be bodies that we will enjoy where we are and God will be adored through the Gentiles, who in a steady stream come into this city in order to honor Him. It is going to be a time of no waiting for daylight because we don't need the rest.

**The Citizen Parade**

In Verse 26, we are further told that they, referring to the citizens, these Gentiles, "they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it." These former Gentiles of various nations are going to bring their glory, whatever they had to enjoy on this earth in the form of prestige and honors, they're going to follow the example of their political leaders. And as the political leaders in the eternal state here, interestingly enough, will have an influence on the people. Political leaders always have an influence on the citizens of a nation. That's why it was understood by the founding fathers of this nation in the colonial days that someone who is in political office, they could say, and the state constitutions following the Revolutionary War, many of them said, in order to hold public office in this state you must be a believer in Jesus Christ as Savior, and you must believe in the inspiration of the Word of God. That was not a violation of the First Amendment, as you know, because the First Amendment only said you can't take one denomination and make it the state church of the United States, like they took Episcopalianism and made it the state church in England. You can't have a church of the United States. I want you to understand that because the liars are out there in both the legal system and in the governmental system that are telling you that the First Amendment means you can't have any influence spiritually, religiously, biblically upon the government. That's not true. So, the political leaders in our nation were quite rightly to be people that you could emulate. Why would you want to have someone who is an adulterer, someone who is a liar, someone who is a cheat, someone who is devious, someone who promotes and defends and seeks to cause abominations to prosper? Why would you want someone like that up there leading your nation and not give it a second thought? Because all the people would look to that person. The young people of the nation would look upon that person and they will consider him a role model. The Bible is very clear that those who lead in civil authority must be proper role models.

Here we get out into eternity and these people, who are role models in being leaders in civil matters before, are examples to the people of Gentile citizens even there. People follow their example and bring their honors to the glory of Christ in the New Jerusalem. The Gentiles rejoice in giving their recognition to God for what they are, for what they have achieved because they know He did it. So, God is glorified through His Gentile saints in the New Jerusalem, as He is by Israel and by the Church. A steady stream of Gentiles of all kinds will enter the New Jerusalem to make this presentation of their glories and their honors to God in humble gratitude. This is the image that you have in the Scripture of taking your crown and casting it at His feet. God is adored through Jesus Christ, by right of creation and by right of redemption. Today, the rich are proud of their skills and gaining wealth. The educated esteems their IQ. The strong love their physical virility; the elite disdain the commoners. But God hates all their pride and all of their self exaltation.

The Bible repeats repeatedly reminders of God's hatred for everything that people under Satan's guidance consider of value. Please notice Jeremiah 9:23-24. "Thus says the LORD, 'Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,' declares the LORD." Very precise, this is what Jeremiah was telling the people of Israel to appreciate what God has done for them and not to be exalting themselves. Those who are born again will take those honors and bring them to Christ in the New Jerusalem.

The apostle Paul had the same emphasis about recognizing that God is the one who gives us all the blessings and all the capacities that we have. For example, notice what Paul says in Romans 12:3, "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith." Recognize that your thinking has to be based upon the judgments of God, then it's straight thinking. Don't think of yourself as some independent, wise, highly capable individual who's accomplishing all these good things that have come into your life.

1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul goes on and says "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." Paul in comparing himself to the other spiritual workers of his day, said, I know that I have accomplished some great things as a missionary, but I know that God did it and I know that my capacity to do that was given to me by the grace of God. I was pleased to knock myself out for the Lord. Did you get that? God gave him this grace and it did not prove vain; it wasn't a useless investment on the part of God. Paul says, 'I labored more than all the rest of them. When I saw God do that for me, when I saw God put opportunities and possibilities and capabilities in my hands, I went gung ho for it all the way!'

2 Corinthians 3:5, Paul says "Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from the Lord." How explicitly true that is. Then when he's writing to the Philippian Christians, Philippians 2:13 he adds this: "for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." So, while the people of our world today complement and credit themselves with their great achievements and their achievements may be great, the Christian who has divine viewpoint insight knows that God is the source of that. Enjoy what He enables you to do. Enjoy the capacity He is giving you, but never forget that they have come from Him.

So, in the New Jerusalem, God is adorned with the gifts of one's glory and honor, which were the result of the life capacities He gave us. That's all it's saying. God has given us great life capacities and whatever blessing, and honor, and privilege, it has brought us, it's a great thing to be able to stand up before Him and say, 'Father, Christ my Lord, here it is. I bring these honors which have been given to me and I recognize that they came from you.'

**Those Excluded From the New Jerusalem**

Then, a very sober verse as we conclude Revelation, Revelation 21:27. God, once more pauses to make clear that there are some exclusions from the New Jerusalem. Not everybody is going to go to Heaven. God is not the Father of every human being. There is no such thing as the universal brotherhood of man, which will ensure that all will go into Heaven. This verse makes it very clear that some people are not going to make it into the glory land of the New Jerusalem. New Jerusalem is so large that it obviously makes it clear to us that there's an enormous number of people from the time of Adam who have been saved. But as great as that will be, Jesus also said that that's the small number. Most of them missed the gate and never got on the road to Heaven. So, have you ever stopped to think how enormous the Lake of Fire must be? It's probably going to be wherever Hades is now. Probably Hades is in the center of the earth. We have good reason to think that that's where the fire and the flame is now.

But the Lake of Fire undoubtedly will be someplace out in space. Of course, space is so enormous. That's the first thing that God, the Creator made you know. He made space so that He had a place to operate with the rest of His creation. And out there someplace is this enormous, enormous lake, the prison for the unbelievers of all times. It's going to be infinitely greater than is the New Jerusalem, as sad as that may be. Revelation 21:27 says "and nothing unclean." The word “nothing” looks like this: it's 2 Greek words, "ou me'". And perhaps you may recognize by now that in the Greek language there are 3 primary negatives. The first one is "ou," which means "absolutely not." It's a definite no. The second one is "me'"; that kind of means "may be". "No, I won't marry you, Sam. I don't think. Tell me a little more. Do you really love my eyes?" And so she's saying 'coax me, I may change my mind.' But if she says 'ou', that means "get up and go. She's not going to change her mind." Now, God the Holy Spirit in creating the Greek language, put these together and this is the absolute no; "ou me'" means "no way, don't even consider it, don't give it a second thought. It is out." So, when you see this in the Greek Bible, it is a significant word and that's what you have here.

"Nothing unclean." The word unclean here, looks like this in the Greek Bible, the word kaios, k a i o s, and the word "kaios" means "what's filthy." A 'kaios' thing is morally filthy. The most filthy things that a human being could think of and perform is represented by this word. It connotes the vilest expressions that the sin nature is capable of committing against the holy character of God. It includes, of course, the filthy mental attitude sins that people are guilty of. It says, 'absolutely nothing morally filthy will be in the New Jerusalem, and no one, absolutely no one who practices, who performs as a lifestyle, anything that God calls an abomination.'

This word abomination is a word that is very explicit in the Bible. It's the Greek word "bdelugma." We've been looking at that before, b d e l u g m a. "Bdelugma" refers to acts which are disgusting and revolting to God. They are acts which the Bible tries to convey to us in human terms and it says they are the things that make God want to vomit. They are so absolutely disgusting, so offensive, so loathsome, and they're very explicit in the Bible. For example, the Bible says that one of the most loathsome things described by this word "bdelugma" is homosexuality. Compare that to what our government leaders and people of entertainment influence, and people of American society, people in positions of decision making, what they think about homosexuality and lesbianism. God says it's an enormous offense and He uses this word. He doesn't call everything a "bdelugma"; He calls some of those things a "kaios", something that's morally filthy. But this word is reserved for that which brings the utmost disgust and with it, rage from the holiness of God.

Homosexuality is listed. Blasphemy, of course, is listed. That is making yourself a God and claiming that you will be a God. This one thing alone should have been a clue to the Mormons that they are on a satanic track because Satan is the one who tells people that you are God and Mormons teach people that they are all going to be God someday. Well, God says that's blasphemy. Idolatry - God says that's an abomination. Occultism, contact with the demonic spirit world, that's an abomination. Dishonest business deals are listed in the Bible as an abomination, where you cheat people in business matters. Civil rulers who support evil are condemned by God. What they do in their support is called an abomination. That's interesting. Ahab and Jezebel were an abomination to God because of the evil that they were supporting in Israel as government leaders. When you pray out of temporal fellowship, of all things, and I showed you this some time ago, the Bible says that's a disgusting thing to God. That's an abomination for you to come and talk to God as a child of God when you're out of temporal fellowship. And false religion is a great abomination. And, of course, sacrificing of children was an abomination. Under Baalism, where they took their infants and threw them into the burning flames, we can understand that that is a disgusting, loathsome thing to God and He labels that as an abomination. But it's the death of the children that is the issue, not just how they were done. And abortion, you see, falls under that condemnation. Abortion is a great abomination. Here we are, our government now sponsoring a conference in Cairo. I don't know whether most Americans are even aware of the fact that the core of that conference is to be able to establish abortion as a widespread practice in every nation on the face of the earth, to make it available in order to control population numbers. God says sacrificing children is an abomination. So, it is understandable that people of this type are not going to be in the New Jerusalem.

Then He adds another category of evil, and that is ones who tell lies, people who practice lying. The Greek word is "pseudos", p s e u d o s. This is an act of deceiving. Proverbs 6:17 says that God hates a lying tongue.

Here's 3 specific categories, so to speak, of sin to cover the whole gamut of sin, but these are the worst. If anybody guilty of these is not allowed in the New Jerusalem, you know that those guilty of lesser evils are not going to be there. "They shall not come into," nothing morally filthy, no one who practices loathsome, disgusting abominations, and no one who deceives shall ever come into it, that is into the New Jerusalem. Sin in any form is excluded from the New Jerusalem. Nothing can be hidden in that glory light. Those who practice such evil as a lifestyle, we have already seen, have been removed from the scene by being sent into the Lake of Fire. Revelation 20:15 told us that all these people who practice this as a lifestyle, which is characteristic of unbelievers, are going to be put in this Lake of Fire with no parole. These evil people cannot contaminate God's Holy of Holies cube, the New Jerusalem, because they're not even around. He's not telling us here that there are people that the wall is going to keep out, that the angel guards at the gates are going to keep out. He's simply telling us that people who practice this as a lifestyle, people who are characterized by this, are unbelievers. While a believer might fall into these sins on occasion, they're not the lifestyle. The way this is presented is that this is lifestyle living.

So, these are the practices of Satan which characterize human societies today. Gentiles from nations practicing, condoning and protecting these 3 great evils cannot enter the city of God. So, Gentiles who are unsaved and whose life is characterized by these things are not going to be in that New Jerusalem. Moral filthiness, abominable acts, and lying constitute the way of life of Satan and of the unregenerate who are his children.

**Contrasting Cities Built by Men to the New Jerusalem**

All the cities of mankind today glorify men. They have been places of moral filthiness, abominable acts and deceit, no matter how civilized, cultured, scientific, sophisticated, glamorous, intelligent, wealthy, and politically free they are. The cities that men build are characterized by these terrible things. Here you have a city, the New Jerusalem, in contrast, is a city of absolute holiness, radiating the holy glory of God's holiness. You and I, even in our sinful state but as believers, have a different frame of reference. You know how mad sin makes us on occasion, how disgusted we are with the consequences that we must bear of sins of people that are imposed upon us. How great to think of living in a society for all eternity where we'll all be free of that again. There is no place in the New Jerusalem for moral filth and violation of God's laws. There's no tolerance for what God condemns as an abomination. There are no liars in that place of truth. The sanctity of God's New Jerusalem was proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets. Isaiah 52:1 and Ezekiel 44:9 point out that God's eternal dwelling is a holy place. This was echoed by the New Testament apostles in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 2 Peter 3:13.

The unregenerate with their evil lifestyles would really not be happy in a place like the New Jerusalem. We know that because during the Millennium unbelievers will not be happy in a world of enforced righteousness and therefore they will rebel against Christ at the end of the Millennium, when Satan is released to lead them once more. Unbelievers don't like to live in a clean society. Unregenerates in the New Jerusalem would detest the place, they'd flee from it, or else they would try to contaminate the New Jerusalem in order to suit their evil natures. Those who love their evil deeds and thoughts more than God's salvation are simply going to be excluded from the New Jerusalem.

"Nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying will ever come into it." But, there are some people. The exceptions are "but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." This, you know, is the final version of the Book of Life, which records the names of all those who have been conceived into the human race. The Lamb's Book of Life contains the names remaining after the unbelievers, upon their death without Christ, are erased from the book. Only those recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life may enter the New Jerusalem. That confirms to us what we've been telling you before that these evil deeds and evil people are not around. It's just saying that this is a place that will not tolerate people of that kind. They're already in the Lake of Fire. Those in the Lamb's Book of Life possess absolute righteousness through Jesus Christ. They're devoid of the Old Sin Nature. Therefore, they are now as holy as God and they are impeccable in their lives. Communion and fellowship with God is only possible for the regenerated of mankind who are recorded in this Lamb's Book of Life. Everyone who enters a New Jerusalem does so then, as a result of God's elective grace. Those in the Lamb's Book of Life have been conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29). So, they are as morally pure as Christ is (1 John 3:3).

**New Jerusalem Is Not Multi-Religious**

The New Jerusalem is indeed a magnificent place in appearance and an atmosphere. But the New Jerusalem is not multi-religious. No one walks the streets of transparent gold who is not in the Lamb's Book of Life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No one is in the Lamb's Book of Life who rejects Jesus Christ as God incarnate and as personal redeemer and Savior. There are a lot of people in society, were they here tonight, that would be outraged by what was just said. No one is in the Lamb's Book of Life, which qualifies one for entrance into Heaven and participation in the New Jerusalem, who has rejected Jesus Christ as God incarnate and as personal Savior. That's exactly what John 14:6 says. Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." Where does that leave the Muslim? ... outside of the New Jerusalem. Where does that leave the Jews today? ... outside of the New Jerusalem. Where does that leave the Buddhists? ... outside the New Jerusalem. Where does that leave the New Agers? ... outside the New Jerusalem. All of Hinduism, which claims that people are becoming God, rejects Jesus Christ as the entrance into Heaven. He's just one of the avatars, one of the human beings who became godlike. That leaves Hinduism completely out. Where is Islam that says God's great prophet is Muhammad, not Jesus Christ? They reject Christ as the only way to the Father. That leaves all the Muslims outside of the New Jerusalem. Can you see how enormous the Lake of Fire must be? And can you see how great is the doctrine of divine election? Why us and not them? Many of them have greater capacities, greater intellects, greater backgrounds, greater character, greater possessions. They should be there, but they're not. Anybody who rejects Christ is not in the Lamb's Book of Life. So, no religious hypocrites are going to get away with their pretensions in the New Jerusalem, while their defiant toward God's word, the Bible. You see, sinful man never can learn this principle: he is not free to devise his own religion to qualify him for the Lamb's Book of Life that will gain him entrance into the New Jerusalem. Unsaved man in his natural, sinful capacity, cannot devise his own plan for being accepted in the New Jerusalem. Only those who are redeemed by the Free Grace Salvation are free to enjoy God's New Jerusalem to their heart's content.

Today I was asked what happens to somebody; one of our youngsters asked me what happens to somebody who is not a believer, who is not a Christian, but who says, 'I believe in Jesus Christ the Savior because I just want to cover my tracks. But just to be sure, I perform all the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. Just to be sure, I do all these good works and try to live a good life.' I said, 'well, Romans 11:6 says if it's of works, it's not of grace. If it's grace, it's not of works. Ephesians 2:8-9 says God will take you into the New Jerusalem on the basis of a grace gift, and that's all.' So, this is kind of shocking. She understood it, but it was sobering to realize that people who claim to be trusting in Christ but add their own good works, have by that very act, ensured that they will be in the Lake of Fire. Think of these denominations, one big one that has churches all over this city, where the preachers stand up and say 'no water baptism, no Heaven.' Yet if you say, 'do you trust in Christ as Savior?' 'Yes sir, we trust in Christ as Savior, but we must add our personal work of water baptism or it doesn't count.' You realize that if you sat in those churches, you could look across that whole congregation, wealthy and money galore, and facilities galore, and realize that these people who listen to that preacher, and add to their grace faith their human good work of water baptism, have thereby ensured that they will be in the Lake of Fire.

Understanding Bible doctrine is serious business folks, and God has closed this 21st chapter of Revelation to try to make it very clear to us that the New Jerusalem is a prepared place for prepared people, but a people prepared God's way.

Jerusalem, the golden
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath the contemplation
Sink heart and voice opprest:
I know not, O I know not
What social joys are there;
What radiancy of glory,
What light beyond compare!

For thee, O dear dear country,
Mine eyes their vigils keep;
For very love, beholding
Thy happy name, they weep:
The mention of thy glory
Is unction to the breast,
And medicine in sickness,
And love, and life, and rest.

O one, O only mansion!
O Paradise of joy,
When tears are ever banished,
And smiles have no alloy!
The cross is all thy splendor,
The Crucified thy praise;
His laud and benediction
Thy ransomed people raise.

O sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country
That eager hearts expect!
Jesus, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest,
Who art, with God the Father
And Spirit, ever blest.

Beernard of Cluny - 12th century.

Lo! What a glorious sight appears
To our admiring eyes!
The former seas have passed away,
The former earth and skies.

The God of glory down to men
Removes his blest abode;
He dwells with men; His people they,
And He His people's God!

Isaac Watts - 1674-1748.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me,
When shall my labours have an end
In joy and peace, and thee?

When shall these eyes thy heaven-
built walls
And pearly gates behold,
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold!

Joseph Bromehead - 1748-1826

Forever with the Lord!
Amen, so let it be:
Life from the dead is in that word;
'Tis immortality.
Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home.

My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul, how near!
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy gates of pearl appear!
Ah! then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above!

James Montgomery - 1771-1854.

**Benediction**

God our Father, we do thank Thee for this poetic appreciation and expression of the grandness of the New Jerusalem and our special consideration from Thee that we have been made part of that. We thank Thee for what we have learned this night and we pray that it shall carry us rejoicing through the ups and downs of this week. We asked Thee to guide us in sharing our financial wealth with the needs of God's work here through the offering boxes at the door. We pray that that which is given will be blessed and multiplied to honor Thee. Carry us safely to our homes, rejoicing and looking forward to our time before entering the New Jerusalem. We ask in Jesus' name.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1994

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