

# 100. The Book of Revelation—21:7-16

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A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier  
(11-16-22)

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## Revelation 21:1–7 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. <sup>4</sup> 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." <sup>5</sup> Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." <sup>6</sup> And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and *the* End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. <sup>7</sup> He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Some Christians read how only **overcomers** will inherit heaven and they think God is saying that only those who conquer every area of their flesh and reach '*perfection*' will go to heaven—but that is absolutely untrue:

## 1 John 5:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

**"I will be his God and he shall be My son."**

We will all be God's sons in heaven—there won't be any second-class citizens there.

## Revelation 21:8 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup> **But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."**

**"But the cowardly... shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone"**

The *cowards* were the ones that were scared to accept Jesus as their Savior because of what others would think about them. (Elaborate)

But listen, most people who read this list think they're doing really well, and that this list applies to others and not to them because they are 'good people'—that is until they get down to "**and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone...**"—and then they panic!

I want you to understand that this list is not really a list of *sins*—but actually categories of sinners.

God said in creation that “Everything would bring forth after its kind”—and as Jesus said, “You will know them by their fruit.”

And so sinning doesn’t make you a *sinner*—it just proves that you are one.

A similar list is found in Revelation 22:15—

**Revelation 22:15 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

Along these lines, Paul said—

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

<sup>11</sup> And such were some of you [*not “and such did some of you”*]. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Paul is saying that sinners of all different categories can be redeemed and cleansed. Further, we know that even children of God can fall to anyone of these sins and yet be forgiven when they repent. But again, Paul isn’t talking about ‘sins’ being committed (actions)—he is talking about categories of *sinner*s whose sins are the fruit of their nature growing (being practiced) in their lives.

And while it is true that believers will sometimes sin—they will no longer ‘practice’ sin because it is no longer their nature to live in sin—they have received a new nature. (2 Peter 1:4)

Ray Stedman—

*“In this passage we find three attitudes which result in five forms of visible behavior. These attitudes and forms of behavior mark those who are lost and who will not be a part of that Holy City in the new earth.*

*First are the cowardly — those who are fearful, unwilling to take the yoke of Christ upon themselves, afraid to confess Jesus Christ, unwilling to be in the minority or on the unpopular side of things. Afraid of the risks entailed in being a follower of Christ, they turn their backs on the offer of life.*

*Second are the unbelieving, those who willfully refuse to believe what their hearts tell them is true. They reject the evidence because they don’t want God to invade their self-centered lives.*

*Third are the vile, those whose way of life has become foul and abominable. They love the stink of their own sin and would scratch and claw anyone who tried to rescue them from it. They feed their minds with vile books, vile movies, and vile music. They speak vile speech and practice a vile lifestyle.*

*These, then, are the three deadly attitudes: the cowardly, the unbelieving, and the vile—and out of these attitudes flow evil behavior: murder, sexual immorality, involvement in the occult and demonic arts, idolatry, and lying or hypocrisy. No one who, refusing redemption, gives himself or herself over to such behavior will be found in the city of God.”*

**Revelation 21:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> 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.”

We haven’t seen this angel for 1000 ‘earth’ years and yet for John it seems like it was a ‘*couple of hours ago*’, or yesterday when he watched this angel pour out his bowl of God’s wrath on the earth (Revelation16)

Now, in this passage it almost sounds like John is saying that the *city* is the bride—but the city isn't the bride—the city is being described and identified by its inhabitants.

When people sing, "*Chicago is my kind of town*" they aren't talking about the bricks and mortar—they're referring to the heart or spirit of the city—in other words its *people*.

The same is true with this city—the city isn't the bride, but it is the bride's city—the 'Bride-City.'

**Revelation 21:10-11 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> 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, <sup>11</sup> having the glory of God...

This city is so big that to see it in all of its fullness and glory God had to take John a great distance away and put him on top of a high mountain so he could take in the incredible sight of the New Jerusalem in its entirety (apparently, there will be mountains on the New Earth for all you mountain climbers to enjoy!).

**Revelation 21:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

The word '**light**' is the Greek word 'fostare' and it means *illuminator* (we get the English word 'phosphorus' from that Greek word.).

This city doesn't just *reflect* and *refract* light—it absorbs and radiates light!—

**Revelation 21:23 (NKJV)**

<sup>23</sup> 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.

The New Jerusalem seems to absorb and radiate the glory ('light') of God—the same way Moses' face absorbed and radiated God's glory after he spoke with Him face to face on Mt. Sinai.

John describes the city like one big jasper stone—'**clear as crystal**'—think of a diamond or one big Swarovski crystal. We all know what happens when you shine a bright light through a multi-faceted diamond or crystal—it's a prism and shoots multi-colored light in all directions.

In 1 Peter 4:10 Peter mentions the "*manifold grace of God*"—the word '*manifold*' means '*multi-colored*'.

I mean—what did John see?! It's hard to imagine just what this city is going to look like the first time we see it!

Bible teacher Dave Hocking said that he submitted a description of the New Jerusalem to a professional gemologist who teaches at the University of Los Angeles.

After reviewing the information, he said, "*If this is true this is going to be the most spectacular sight that the human eye has ever seen. And in fact, I doubt seriously that without a radical change of the human eye that we could possibly stand the sight of it for all of its brilliance!*"

**Revelation 21:12-13 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> 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: <sup>13</sup> three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

### **Ezekiel 48:30–35 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup> “These *are* the exits of the city. On the north side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits* <sup>31</sup> (the gates of the city *shall be* named after the tribes of Israel), the three gates northward: one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah, and one gate for Levi; <sup>32</sup> on the east side, four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan; <sup>33</sup> on the south side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun; <sup>34</sup> on the west side, four thousand five hundred *cubits* with their three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali. <sup>35</sup> All the way around *shall be* eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from *that day shall be*: **THE LORD IS THERE.**

There are those who believe that because this is the ‘Bride-city’ and they think of the Bride as only referring to the Church (the Bride of Christ)—that the inhabitants of this city will be made up solely of Church Age Christians (those saved from Pentecost to the Rapture).

But verse 12 seems to indicate that believing Israel will also be a part of this city’s occupants.

The fact that the gates into the city have the names of the 12 tribes on them is significant because our access into this city is in effect through the nation of Israel—**“Salvation is of the Jews.”**

### **Romans 9:4-5 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; <sup>5</sup> of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.

### **Revelation 21:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> **Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

It seems from verses 12 and 14 that—both the Old Testament and New Testament saints will be citizens of the New Jerusalem.

There is some debate about who the 12<sup>th</sup> apostle is going to be—Matthias or Paul?

### **Revelation 21:15 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> **And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.**

There are many who argue that this ‘city’ isn’t a *real* or a *literal* city—that it is ‘symbolic’ and they spiritualize everything away.

I personally believe that this city is literal not *symbolic*—and I believe that in part because of the fact that measurements are given which I believe would serve no purpose if this wasn’t a real city but was only a symbolic or allegorical depiction. (*Listen for Ezekiel 40-43 reference*)

### **Revelation 21:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> **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 results of the angel’s measuring revealed that the city is laid out as a giant cube—its height, depth and width all measuring 12,000 furlongs (Greek is ‘stadia’).

A stadion was about 650 feet—thus, the city walls are about 1,500 miles in height, depth and width—a perfect cube.

Some commentators have suggested that the city is in the shape of a *pyramid*—however, it is best to see this as a *cube* and not a *pyramid*.

Even as Henry M. Morris points out:

*“Such an interpretation is quite forced, however, the language of the passage being much more naturally understood to mean a cube, with the length and breadth and height all the same....The pyramidal shape ... (whether as in Egypt, Mexico, or the stepped-towers of practically all ancient nations), seems always to have been associated with paganism, with the pyramid’s apex being dedicated to the worship of the sun, or of the host of heaven. The first such structure was the Tower of Babel, and the Bible always later condemns worship carried on high places (Leviticus 26:30) whether these were simply natural high hills or artificially constructed hills in the form of a pyramid or ziggurat. The cube ... was the shape specified by God for the holy place ... in Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 6:20), where God was to “dwell” between the cherubim. Both the language and the symbology thus favor the cubical, rather than the pyramidal, shape.”*

We’ll pick this up next time.

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