

SOUL FOOD

DECEMBER 30, 2016

REVELATION 21 THE NEW JERUSALEM

At last we reach the climax of redemption as John sees “a new heaven and a new earth.” Here we see not only the complete redemption of God's people, but we also see redemption applied to the non-human aspects of creation. We see this depicted in many different ways.

- (1) The absence of any sea. The sea is symbolic for chaos, the old order, and death. And so the sea is gone. That place from which the beast came is gone! Just as God brought order out of chaos in the original creation so we see chaos removed from the New Earth.
- (2) John also sees “the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.” This depicts the reality that God will IMMEDIATELY be with His people. No longer will there to be a mediator between us and God. Earth will truly be the visible Kingdom of God. Now, we see the Kingdom in believers' lives and we see semblances of it in this fallen world. But, the time is coming when the Kingdom of Heaven will be on earth. THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. This is also seen in the marriage supper of the Lamb—and here the bride is the New Jerusalem. All can see that the consummation will involve perfect intimacy between the Lord Jesus and the people He has redeemed.
- (3) It is difficult for us to imagine the perfections of the New Jerusalem. But one way of getting at them is by discussing what will not be present there: there will be “no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”
- (4) The city is a perfectly social reality. The New Jerusalem will not be a place of lone-ranger spirituality. This city, the New Jerusalem, is described in many symbolic ways to depict its glory. We need to note that it is built as a perfect cube. The cube is symbolic. It is most reminiscent of the Most Holy Place of the temple, where only the priest could enter once a year, bearing blood for his own sins and for the sins of the people. Now the entire city is the Most Holy Place. In the New Jerusalem all of God's people are forever in the imminent splendor of His glorious presence.

As followers of Christ we taste now the New Jerusalem, for we are new creations in Christ. Now we live in faith, love, and hope of that coming reality. The day is coming when faith and hope will no longer be needed!