

WHEN HEAVEN COMES TO EARTH

PART 9 THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Revelation 21:1-2 **SLIDE**

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. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Last week we saw that God is going to **recreate** a New Heaven and New Earth and that New Heaven and Earth will be a perfect place where 'Righteousness Dwells' (2 Peter 3:13)

Today we see in Revelation 21:2, when all this has been re-established, **THE HOLY CITY – THE NEW JERUSALEM COMES DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD** TO BE A PART OF THE NEW HEAVEN & EARTH.

This is a giant city of 2,225 kilometres in width, depth and height (Rev21:16)

SLIDE This is more than the size of New Zealand laid side by side 6 times, or the distance from Cairns to Sydney in Australia cubed. Imagine it standing 2,200 kilometres into the sky?

NB: THESE MEASUREMENTS ARE NOT LITERAL BUT STAND FOR AN UNLIMITED MASS ...

SO, WHAT IS THIS GIANT HOLY CITY COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD?

The holy city – the New Jerusalem, **is not an actual physical construction** ... This is a metaphor – a symbolic structure that stands for something.

LITERAL OR METAPHOR ...

In the book of Revelation, even though there are some things that are literal – *such as the New Heaven and the New Earth ... so much more of it is written in metaphor – symbolising something ... and is not literal*

E.g. *'The Woman clothed in the sun with 12 stars around her head'* is obviously not a literal woman with the real sun and real stars (this would make her gigantic).

We already saw she is 'Israel'

(See Part 5 of this series *'The Woman of Revelation 12'* Scroll down on Chris's Facebook page – facebook.com/Christopher.Lambe.5)

So here, we see a similar thing when we talk about ... **the giant holy city – the New Jerusalem.**

It is not a literal construction coming down ... it is a metaphor which describes something coming down out of heaven that has the qualities of a giant holy city.

WHAT IS IT?

THIS METAPHOR IS THE PEOPLE OF GOD THEMSELVES.
IT STANDS FOR ALL BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS **PERFECTLY UNITED TOGETHER IN DIVINE ORDER,** LIKE A GIANT CITY.
AND THE PLACE WHERE GOD HIMSELF DWELLS.

(See verse 3, *'God dwells with them'*)

(MORE ON THAT IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS)

SLIDE WE ARE THE UNITED, HARMONIOUS, GIANT & BEAUTIFUL CITY COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN TO NOW DWELL ON THE EARTH WITH GOD IN OUR MIDST.

*One commentator said ... 'The New Jerusalem: This is not a Place for People but ... A People as a Place' or A PLACE MADE OF PEOPLE ... **THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES ARE THE CITY**'*

THE METAPHOR OF GOD'S PEOPLE AS A STRUCTURE

In the following verse the apostle Peter uses metaphor to describe 'God's People' being built into a physical structure ...

1 Peter 2:5 Berean Literal Bible

*You yourselves also, as **living stones**, are being built up as a spiritual house ...*

'Living stones' – An Organic structure

WE ARE THE TEMPLE

THE PHYSICAL TEMPLE WAS ONLY A SHADOW OF THE REAL THING.

AND WE ARE THE REAL THING – THE REAL TEMPLE OF GOD.

We often get it wrong when we talk about church. We say, 'I'm going to Church on Sunday' BECAUSE WE OFTEN THINK ABOUT THE CHURCH AS A BUILDING.

SLIDE BUT IT'S NOT ... WE ARE, OURSELVES, THE REAL CHURCH

1 Corinthians 3:16

*Do you not know that **you*** are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you*? (Ephesians 2:22)*

* THE WORD 'YOU' IS PLURAL ... THE COLLECTIVE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE THE TRUE & REAL TEMPLE. SO HERE WE ARE THE TRUE & REAL CITY – THE NEW JERUSALEM.

THIS IS THE SAME CONCEPT HERE – WE ARE THE HOLY CITY.

JESUS ALSO SPOKE ABOUT US BEING 'THE HOLY CITY'

Matthew 5:14

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Let's paraphrase this and leave off the last few words so we can see it better –

SLIDE *You are the light of the world – You are a city set on a hill!*

THE COLLECTIVE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE THE CITY ON A HILL ... THE HOLY CITY FILLED WITH SHINING LIGHT ...

*This is **the spiritual forerunner of The New Jerusalem which we see in Revelation 21 coming down out of Heaven in all its perfection.***

Revelation 3:12 NIV **SLIDE**

*The one who is victorious **I will make [them] a pillar** in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.*

A PERSON THEMSELVES, BECOMES A PERMANENT PART OF THE STRUCTURE

A PILLAR SPEAKS OF A PERMANENT PART OF THE STRUCTURE.
'NEVER WILL THEY LEAVE'

*The two pillars of Solomon's temple set up in the porch are called **Jachin** (יָכִין: he will establish) and **Boaz** (בּוֹאֵז, in him is strength); see [1 Kings 7:15, 21](#) and [2 Chronicles 3:17](#). Both names signify steadfastness and permanence. (Pulpit Commentary)*

NB ALSO: THE NAME ENGRAVED INTO THESE PEOPLE IS GOD'S OWN CHARACTER ... and they are a part of The New Jerusalem.

WE ARE A UNITED STRUCTURE

Revelation 3:12 obviously speaks about 'the church' as The Lord is speaking to the church at Philadelphia.

BUT THIS NEW JERUSALEM ALSO INCLUDES ALL JEWISH BELIEVERS ... IN FACT THIS UNIQUE COLLECTIVE IS MADE OF BOTH JEWISH & GENTILE BELIEVERS ... ALL UNITED IN ONE SPIRIT & CALLED 'THE NEW JERUSALEM'.

LOOK AT *THE GATES* AND *THE WALLS* OF THE CITY

Revelation 21:10 **SLIDE**

*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.*

Revelation 21:12 **SLIDE**

*Also she had a great and high wall with **twelve gates**, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them [the gates], which are the names of **the twelve tribes of the children of Israel***

SO THE GATES REPRESENT THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL AS JEWS, THEY ARE A PART OF THIS HOLY CITY

BUT NOTICE ALSO THE WALLS

Revelation 21:14 **SLIDE**

*Now the wall of the city had **twelve foundations** and on them were the names of **the twelve apostles of the Lamb**.*

THE WALLS REPRESENT THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE LAMB.

SLIDE THE SAME STRUCTURE CONTAINS BOTH ...

OLD TESTAMENT BELIEVERS (the 12 tribes of Israel) – THE ISRAEL OF GOD AND ...

NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS (the Apostles).

WE ARE **BOTH** BUILT TOGETHER.

WE ARE THE NEW JERUSALEM.

- **NB: THE GATES OF A CITY = ACCESS TO THE CITY**

These are the Old Testament believers who first offered access to faith in God. (Righteousness by faith was first revealed to Abraham *Genesis 15:6 / Romans 4:3*)

- **NB ALSO: THE GATES WERE ON ALL 4 SIDES** (*Rev 21:13*) - that is 'east, north, south and west ... offering access to all the nations – people from the 4 corners of the earth.

SLIDE

- **NB: THE WALLS OF A CITY = BOUNDARIES**

It was the apostles that set the boundaries of the gospel with the apostle's doctrine (*Acts 2:42*)

SLIDE

- **NB: GATES OF PEARLS = GREAT UNTARNISHED VALUE**

Revelation 21:21 - Each individual gate was one pearl.

Remember The Pearl of great price? (Matthew 13:45-46)

That is Not us finding Jesus ... This is JESUS FINDING US ...

Jesus is the one who finds us and sells all He has to buy us – HE GAVE EVERYTHING FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL PERSON ... YOU ARE THAT VALUABLE ...

SO GOD IS DECLARING OUR PRICELESS VALUE TO HIM ...

THE FATHER SAYS, 'EVERY INDIVIDUAL PERSON WHO HAS ENTERED THROUGH THESE GATES IS OF PRICELESS VALUE TO ME' ... That's all his people ... But all individually valuable.

WE SEE ALL THE UNITED PEOPLE OF GOD AS THE NEW JERUSALEM – NOW RETURNING TO AN UTOPIAN EARTH

**LET'S LOOK AT
MORE MAGNIFICENT REVELATIONS
THAT GIVE US A GLIMPSE OF WHO & HOW WE WILL BE**

Revelation 21:2 **SLIDE**

*Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, **coming down out of heaven** from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband ...*

NB: We are told we will come down **'*OUT OF HEAVEN'**

**Ek - from the interior outwards*

We have been in Heaven **in an eternal realm in an eternal state ... a realm and state not subject to time ...**

But here we come out of Heaven ... and we do not leave our eternal state behind and become mortal again.

**WE DON'T COME OUT OF OUR ETERNAL STATE ...
WE REMAIN ETERNAL IN A NEW PHYSICAL EARTH.
Not just immortal but Eternal ...**

**SLIDE WE COME OUT OF HEAVEN'S ETERNAL DIMENSION,
EMERGING INTO THE NEW PHYSICAL DIMENSION ...
BUT WE REMAIN IN OUR ETERNAL STATE ...**

IN A PHYSICAL WORLD
WE NOW BEGIN TO EXPERIENCE LIFE ON A PHYSICAL EARTH
WHILE IN AN ETERNAL STATE ... **BUT THERE'S MORE ...**

SLIDE THE WHOLE EARTH IS ALSO IN AN ETERNAL STATE

- **THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH** (Revelation 21:4)

THAT MEANS **ALL LIVING THINGS** IN THE NEW CREATION WILL NEVER DIE ... OR EVEN AGE – WE WILL BE 'FOREVER YOUNG'.

Revelation 20:14

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Isaiah 25:8 Berean Study Bible

*He will swallow up death forever ... and remove the disgrace of His people **from the whole earth** ...*

THIS RENEWED EARTH HAS BEEN **MADE OF NEW MATERIAL** ...
IT IS ALSO ETERNAL NOT SUBJECT TO DECAY OR SIN ...
(Romans 8:19-21 – delivered from corruption)

- **THERE IS NO SUN NOR MOON** (Revelation 21:23)
THEREFORE THERE ARE **NO DAYS OR NIGHTS** ...

THE 24 HOUR TIME CLOCK HAS PASSED AWAY ...
IN FACT TIME AS WE KNOW IT WILL NOT EXIST HERE.

Isaiah 60:20 Berean Study Bible

Your sun will no longer set and your moon will not wane; for the LORD will be your everlasting light and the days of your sorrow will cease.

WE COME DOWN – WE COME BACK

This series is called '*The Second Coming of Jesus Christ*' but this particular message could be called, **THE SECOND COMING OF THE SAINTS.**

We, His people **are coming back to earth ...**

NB: We left in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52) some time before ... and I believe we have been in Heaven ever since ...

WE COME BACK TO A DIFFERENT EARTH TO THE ONE WE LEFT –

THE EARTH WE LEFT WAS IN CHAOS ...
NOW IT IS AT PEACE ... WHERE THE WOLF LIES DOWN WITH THE LAMB

WE COME BACK IN A DIFFERENT WAY TO THE WAY WE LEFT –

We left escaping in a hurry and we had to be changed.

Now we come back down in a slow descent ...

Our verse doesn't say we 'fall down' from God or 'fly down' from God but 'descend' ...

It is a completely dignified entrance into the new earth,
Slowly descending from The Father –

Not hurriedly but gracefully ...

WE ARE A BRIDE ...

WE COME FROM GOD

NB: This does not mean we are leaving God but indicates our origin – where we come from.

WE ARE FROM HIS SUBSTANCE – CHARACTER ...

*Like we would say, we are **FROM AUSTRALIA** (even while we are in Australia we say this) **OR THE PHILIPPINES OR TEXAS etc***

WE CARRY THE CHARACTER OF OUR ORIGIN

1 Corinthians 2:9 **SLIDE**

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

These verses give us a small glimpse into the most magnificent truths that have ever been told about **our eternal future**.

*They reveal in symbolic terms the most exquisite truths **about us** – about **who we will be and how we will be** in this New Earth ... ideas and concepts which are beyond our perception in our current state ... which we can only begin to imagine ...*

This New Eternal State is the final goal of everything Jesus has done for us.

It is the fulfilment of everything The Father ever desired!

*In our present state we cannot begin to understand its glory except to experience **a small taste of it** ... to receive **a sneak preview** ... to catch **a tiny glimpse** beyond the veil of this fallen world ...*

Our eternal state is far beyond anything we have ever known and it is his promise to us who are in Christ.

However, we now have an eternal spirit ... born from above and we can now start living from that place and living for that place. Our hopes and dreams here will pale into insignificance compared to what lies beyond ...

LET'S STRAIN OUR SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING TO SEE WHAT WE CAN SEE HERE & NOW ...