

Fairview Memorial Winter Bible Study

January 31, 2019

“The City of God”

Presented by

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Lesson Scripture: Revelations 21:10

Introduction: Paul said, “I knew a man in Christ (in spiritual union with Christ) about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.... How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. (2 Corinthians 12:2-4)

I have never been to heaven, either in the body or out of the body. I have never seen Jesus with my natural eyes; I have not heard him speak in an audible voice. But I know that Jesus the God/man is real, and he has spoken to my heart many times. I might also add, I have never, to my knowledge, seen an angel, but I do believe in angels. I also know that there is a real Heaven. I know these things because **the written Word of God has revealed them, and confirmed them.**

I am nothing more than a sinner saved by grace, and called to preach and teach the **written Word of God.** I believe the Holy Bible that I hold in my hand is a copy of the **very word of God;** divinely inspired, and written by Holy men of God as the Holy Spirit revealed it to them. I believe it to be **infallible and inerrant in the original languages.** That means **the Bible is truth without any mixture of error.** That’s what Jesus said; “...thy Word is Truth” (John 17:17)

I believe that some of the Scriptures are to be understood literally. Some scriptures have a spiritual meaning and application, not literal. Some of the scriptures are written in parables; given as an illustration. Some scriptures are metaphors, and are to be regarded as representative or symbolic. Some scriptures are allegories; a story or word picture for comparison and contrast.

Having said these things, I want to present my lesson “The City of God” from three different scriptural perspectives:

1. Jerusalem, Israel, “The City of God”
2. The Church, “The City of God”
3. The New Jerusalem, “The City of God”

Jerusalem, Israel as the City of God: In the Old Testament Saul, David And Solomon reigned over the united kingdom of Israel. After the division Rehoboam reigned over the Southern Kingdom known as Judah, and Jerusalem was the capital city. The name Jerusalem is believed to have had its origin by combining Jireh, from the words Jehovah-Jireh, spoken by Abraham (Ge. 22:14) and the King of Salem, or King of Peace, to whom he path tithes. (Ge. 14:18-19) In fact 1 Kings 14:21 tells us that Rehoboam ... reigned in Judah, beginning when he was forty-one years

old and reigned 17 years in **“Jerusalem, the city the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there”**.

Paul contrasts this earthly Jerusalem, which was in bondage with her children with the Jerusalem which is above, and free, and who is the mother of us all. He begins with Abraham who had two sons; the one born by a bondwoman, representing the Old Covenant and the other by a free woman, by promise; representing the New Covenant; and Paul calls this an Allegory, a story that paints a word picture.

Jerusalem, Israel was a city in bondage with her Children in the days of Jesus and still is! Jesus came to that city and they rejected him. (John 1:11-13) He wept over that city, saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem; ... how often would I have gathered thy children together...but ye would not! **Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.** (A place deserted and in a state of bleak and dismal emptiness. And the Scripture says, cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. (Galatians 4:22-31)

The Church as the City Of God: Now the Scripture also sets forth the church as the city of God. A community of **born from above** children of God, **redeemed** from the **bondage** of sin, by the **blood of the Lamb**, and set free, **free indeed**; Baptized, and continuing steadfast in the apostles doctrine and fellowship. Jesus, in his sermon on the mountain side, said, “Ye are the light of the world. A **“City”** that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. (Mt. 5:14) Let your light shine!

The New Jerusalem as the City of God: Here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come. (Hebrews 13:14) “Abraham, looked for a City which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Hebrews 11:8-10) Isaac and Jacob, were heirs with him of the same promise, and we are heirs with him, of the same promise also. They were seeking a “Better Country” that is an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a City.” (Hebrews 11:16)

Now we turn to Revelations Chapter 21:1-2: “I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away;” This was not a renovation, this is a brand new, creation. **“And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband”**. A wedding is about to take place! **“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready”**. (Rev. 19:7)

“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” (Revelations 21:10)

Now I can't give you physical description of that city, because we don't have a physical description. What we have is a vision, a spiritual overview, of the New Jerusalem, described in what I believe to be symbolic terms. Oh Yes, I believe that great city, the holy Jerusalem, is real; and I believe it is **holy**, because when it descends out of heaven, from God, everyone there will be in a redeemed, glorified body. “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things

new. And he said unto me, write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, **It is done...**" (Revelations 21:5-6) The last function of redemption will have been completed.

Paul quoted a verse of Scripture from The Old Testament, "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for them that wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4 and 1 Corinthians 2:9-10)

When Jesus stated to the disciples, "If ye believe in God, believe also in me, he was speaking not to them as individuals, but to the church. When he informed them that he was going to prepare a "special" place for them, he was speaking concerning the bride of Christ; the church.

For he had previously said, In my fathers house are many mansions, or dwelling places; and at that time, millions of saints were already living in the fathers house. So, I believe Jesus was speaking specifically of the Holy City, The New Jerusalem as the place he was going to prepare.

What did John see? A City that was the abode of God and his people; The spotless bride of Christ adorned in spotless perfection. He saw God himself dwelling with, and among his family. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know when he shall appear we shall be like him, for ***we shall see him as he is.*** (1 John. 3:2)

John saw a perfect environment, a place where sin can never enter, (Rev. 21:27) Eternal joy and happiness, for the former things will have passed away and will never come into our minds. (Revelations 21:3-4)

The beauty and splendor of the city are unimaginable and beyond comprehension. Walls of Jasper, security and safety, 12 Gates of pearl, 4 gates on each side of the city, that remain open all the time with a guardian angel at each gate. On the gates are the Names of the 12 tribes of Israel. Why? Israel was the vehicle used to bring Christ to the world. The City has 12 foundations, garnished with precious stones and engraved with the names of the apostles of the Lamb. Why are their names engraved on the foundations? They laid the doctrinal foundation of the church.

The dimensions of the city is 12 thousand furlongs, that's fifteen hundred miles, and the length and the breadth and the height are equal. The city is a perfect cube. The city had no need of the sun or the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. (Revelations 21:23)

There is a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, that flows out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. The tree of life is there, and the leaves are for the healing of the nations. There is no temple, no place to go for worship: for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple of it. (Revelations 21:22 There will be no more curse: but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. (Revelations 22:3-4)

