

## Revelation 21:15-21 – Restoration: The Beautiful Bride 2

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: I hope you remember from the last time that we looked at the location of Christ's Bride: that she was dwelling on earth though she had Divine origins. We also looked at the description of the Bride of Christ: she was glorious, solid...built upon the Apostles, she had welcoming gates, and she was secured...secured by high and strong walls and has a guard of angels to welcome strangers and protect believers. Today we will continue to look at this beautiful Bride...We will look at her measurements...and the fullness of her beauty.

Why does the Lord use these 2 other ways to describe his church? Beauty is often described by measurements and substance. When you look at a building, for instance, there are some that are instantly seen as beautiful because they were built in proper proportion that are esthetically 感觉的 pleasing. You also recognize beauty by the construction material...whether it is made with sticks or stones. And that is what Jesus Christ wants you to realize about this Bride: That she is substantively made.

Our headings are: The Dimensions of the New Bride and the Substance of the New Bride

Our goals are: That you will be left in awe seeing what the Lord Jesus has prepared for the Bride he redeemed with his own blood...so you would be motivated to love him more and serve him better.

### The Dimension of the New Bride

15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed 芦苇 to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.

1. God limits you in what you may know about of heaven. Why? God does not want you to become preoccupied with heaven.

You have work to do in this world. You have to live an evangelistic life. Keep this in mind so that you don't spend time day-dreaming or night dreaming about heaven.

2. Now let's investigate what the Bride's measurement. First of all, why measure the Bride?

**a. Measuring of the Bride was to teach separation from the wicked** – where the wicked lived and where the godly lived. How do we know this? In Chapter 11, the sanctuary (the temple) was measured to show how **holy** it was and how protected it was. (1<sup>st</sup> sermon, Revelation 11). This showed those who were outside of God's people.

**b. The increase in size of the Bride that we see here (from a temple to an entire city) showed that there were many more people inside than before.** Just as you saw the wall of the crown expanded to walls of the city, so the walls of the temple were expanded to be walls of the city.)

3. Now this city temple was built upon a mountain just as was prophesied 750 years before John wrote by Isaiah.

Isaiah 2: 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains. And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares 犁, And their spears into pruning hooks 修枝刀; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

And with the evangelistic thrust of Isaiah 2:3, you can know that this was a city on earth, not a city in heaven. There is no repentance or faith in heaven. And then again:

Isaiah 25: 6 And in this mountain The LORD of hosts will make for all people A feast of choice pieces, A feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow 骨髓, Of well-refined wines on the lees. 7 And He will destroy on this mountain The surface of the covering cast over all people, And the veil that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.

Isaiah described the "good stuff" with which foreigners would be rewarded. They would not get vines blasted 枯萎 with wind, but that which gets the gentle rains. So the grapes are good. And consider Ezekiel's similar prophecy:

Ezekiel 36:35 "So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' 36 "Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken it, and I will do it."

Daniel spoke to this as well as he saw the dreams of the destruction of all man-made kingdoms!

Daniel 2: 44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall

never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. 45 "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Since these promises were never fulfilled, you must wait with anticipation for the fulfillment of this promise. Consider one more similar prophecy.

Micah 4:1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. 2 Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares...

16 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 (长度单位=201米). Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

4. The height, length, and width of the city are equal. So the city is a perfect cube. This was not surprise. Chilton describes the New Jerusalem as "a cosmic Holy of Holies." He meant that it was now a world-sized inner sanctuary.

1Kings 6: 19 And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. 20 The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the altar of cedar.

5. Of course these measurements were not literal. It is illogical to take these measurements literally. If you do, you lose the significance of the text. Whenever you see multiples of twelve you must note that God is drawing your mind to the majesty, vastness巨大, and perfection of the thing he is describing. So he is saying here that the church is majestic, large, and perfect.

## **The Substance of the New Bride**

18 The construction of its wall was of jasper碧玉; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

1. To illustrate the beauty and substance of the New Bride, Jesus described the city in terms of jewelry. This was simply appealing to that which was before. Gold and precious stones surrounded the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2: 10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there.

Ezekiel 28: 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz黄玉, and diamond, Beryl绿宝石, onyx玛瑙, and jasper, Sapphire蓝宝石, turquoise绿松石, and emerald翡翠 with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

2. The walls were jasper and city was pure gold. Jasper and gold reflected the image of God and were used in the tabernacle and temple. Gold was used on the clothes of the priests.

Revelation 4:3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth红锆石, and the twelfth amethyst紫水晶.

3. The 12 precious stones were basically the same as those on the high priestly breastplate and represented all the people of God, and they were set in a gold setting – just as the New Bride is. (Exodus 28:15-21). These types of costly stones were probably used in the foundation of Solomon's temple as well.

1Kings 5: 17 And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn

stones, to lay the foundation of the temple.

The Bride, the new expanded temple of God, is being presented as rich and full of children.

4. What was curious for me was not the 12 precious stones by themselves, but the order in which they were listed. John did not stick to the exact order of the high priestly breastplate. It seems that he simply grouped the stones together based on similar sounds...or similar endings – like some ending with “os.” This shows that the order was not of particular significance. See the general description by Isaiah!

Isaiah 54: 11 "O you afflicted one, Tossed with tempest, and not comforted, Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, And lay your foundations with sapphires. 12 I will make your pinnacles 尖顶 of rubies, Your gates of crystal, And all your walls of precious stones.

21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

5. And what about the pearly gates? Notice that these were not gates of heaven, but of the church. So much for all the stories of the “pearly gates” of heaven! (And further, do you see the insanity of those who argue that you have to take all measurements literally. Where would the oysters come from that would make these pearls? How big would those oysters have to be? But what this points to is the wealth of the city...and wealth – the substance- that was given to it by the Lord himself. The church only has value because Christ gives it value.

Matthew 6: 33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

The Scarlet Harlot was dressed in jewels but she did not have the righteousness. So she was rightly destroyed.

6. This new city – this new Bride of Christ - is strong and beautiful. That is no surprise: The Builder is fabulously 难以置信地 wealthy, and supremely confident against attacks against his Bride. And the builder truly loves his Bride.

Ephesians 3: 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

7. Brethren, are you looking forward for this city coming down from heaven in fullness? There is absolutely no guarantees that you will ever see it. But God’s promises never fail.

2Peter 3: 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

### **Conclusion:**

What great holiness marks the church! She is separated from the world and preserved in Jesus Christ. She is filled with beauty and riches so that you may rejoice in being part of her...and she is attractive. And no one can destroy her because her Husband is the Lord – Jehovah.

Brothers and Sisters: Consider some lessons God wants you to learn today.

1. Remember Ps 16:11 “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Long for others to come and receive the blessings of the Lord and that Christ’s kingdom might expand. Long to enjoy being in God’s kingdom yourself. See if there are things that are robbing you of the joy you ought to have...like viewing the world through human eyes.
2. Considering the holiness of this new Bride, let me urge you to live with all holiness before the Lord. Love his law. Obey his law. Show that you belong to him.
3. Learn to discipline your children when they don’t walk in the way of the Lord... following Matthew 18 so that Christ’s Bride will remain pure.

Finally: No one outside of the city enjoys the Tree of Life...he will die in his sin without hope. But Jesus is that Tree of Life. If you desire to eat of him – receive with a believing heart that he lived and died for you – then you will be renewed in your heart and brought into the kingdom where there is fullness of joy.