

# The Voice of Truth # 541

## The Tabernacle of God is With Men

In our last study, we looked at God's announcement, **Behold, I make all things new**, there in Revelation 21:5, and the contrast between the old and the new order of things when God delivers all creation from the presence of sin and completely wipes out the remembrance of sin, sickness, death, crying, and sorrow. He gathers together in one, all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:10) things both in heaven and on earth. And he dwells with his people forever, with none to put asunder what God hath joined together, because sin and Satan and wicked men are disposed of forever.

Let's turn to Revelation 21:1 and read the first three verses again. **And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

The time has now come in our study of the book of Revelation that the Lord Jesus Christ comes into the full realization of the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, Ephesians 1:18. When he shall inherit the portion which is his people, Deuteronomy 32:9, and all nations, and shall tabernacle among them as the God of his people. In Exodus 25, the Lord told Moses, Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them, according to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle in the heavens. Back in the council of eternity, the Lord God purposed to form a people for his own purpose, among whom he would dwell; and the tabernacle in the wilderness foreshadowed his eternal purpose to be wrought out in mankind. Solomon's temple was a further unfolding of God's dwelling in the midst of his people in the splendor and glory of a king. In the days of the apostasy of God's people, Israel, the Lord promised, **behold, a virgin shall**

**conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel**, which means God with us. When Immanuel was born, then God came to dwell with men. According to Matthew 18:20, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Christ and his disciples, or the church on earth, is Christ among his people. This truth is brought out in the first chapter of Revelation, where Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, or the seven churches. All these scriptures point to one great event, that glorious age in which the tabernacle of God is with men in the eternal kingdom.

In our last study, we called your attention to the fact that God makes all things new, and delivers the heaven and the earth from the presence of sin, by a fiery destruction of both the heaven and the earth. And God creates a new heaven and a new earth. We also saw that God creates a new Jerusalem to be the capital city of the new earth from which he will reign in righteousness and holiness.

At this time, we want to show you God's picture of the new Jerusalem. Let's read Revelation 21:9. **And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 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, having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.**

This is the same angel who spoke to John in Revelation 17:1 saying, **Come hither, I'll show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.** Then he carried John away into the wilderness and showed him a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast. Then in Revelation 17:18 he says, **The woman which thou sawest is that great city Babylon, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.** We showed you then that God could not reveal the true bride of the Lamb until the harlot wife of the Antichrist was revealed and brought to judgment. So now at this time, the earth has been completely cleared of every vestige of Babylon's fornication, which is religious idolatry, and all the corruption and abominations that go with it and the Lord God is showing or displaying the

bride of the Lamb prepared by the grace of God as a bride adorned for her heavenly bridegroom.

Before we look at the description of the new city, the heavenly Jerusalem, I want to call your attention to this fact that I hope to make clear to our hearts and minds. It is this, when the angel showed John **the great whore that sitteth upon many waters**, the false bride, the angel plainly tells us that the harlot wife is that great city Babylon. The name of the material city always stands for the community formed by its inhabitants. This is true in our everyday conversation. In other words, the city of Babylon, with every aspect of its society, its social and economic and political organization, is pictured under the figure of a harlot woman, which reveals her spiritual relationship to God as alien, corrupt, and unfaithful. So also, when the angel says to John, come hither, I'll show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife, we find that the description given is of a city, the New Jerusalem. This is because the city stands for the community of saints that make up the bride of the Lamb. And what we are shown here is the contrast of Christ's great society, made up of individual members, called out from among mankind, delivered from the penalty, the power, and at last, the presence of sin; and dwelling in their eternal glorified state. Let's not get away from the fact that it's a real city on the new earth wherein dwelleth those redeemed by the blood of Christ, that is, the bride of Christ. My mind goes back to that scripture in 1 John 3:2, **Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.** In passing, let me call your attention to this thought, the fact that the bride is a city indicates definitely that in the resurrection the believer does not lose his individual identity. This contrast between the bride of the lamb and the harlot wife of the antichrist is set forth in the contrast between these two cities, Babylon the great, and the heavenly Jerusalem, is all the more significant because it follows the description of the two classes of eternal inhabitants as set forth in Revelation 21:7,8, the overcomers and the eightfold wicked dead. Listen to God's word, **he that overcometh shall inherit all things and I will be his God and he shall be my son.** We saw that the overcomer is the born-again believer according to 1 John 5:4. Now what do the born-again ones overcome, and why do they inherit all things as heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ? Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. I want you to read carefully the letters to the seven

churches in Revelation 2, and 3 again, and note the messages to the overcomer in each church age. To overcome the world (and John says we overcome by faith) means to escape the pollution of Satan's world order, which God calls the abominations and filthiness of her fornications. My friend, it means something to be delivered from the power of Satan and the love of the world. If you'll go back and reread our studies on 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation, you'll see more clearly Satan's Great Society in contrast with the redeemed in the Heavenly Jerusalem, who have overcome the world through the faith of the Son of God. Then as we look at the eight classes of the wicked dead who are cast into the lake of fire, we see what kind of people will not inherit this new city. Listen, **the fearful, unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**

Now that we have seen Satan and his entire kingdom of rebel angels, demons, and fallen men, judged and cast into the lake of fire, and we have beheld the new heaven and the new earth come into view, and have seen the new Jerusalem, the city out of God from heaven, let's follow John in the spirit, to **a great and high mountain**, where we get a nearer and fuller view as it descends to a spot near the mountain. Listen to the comforting words of Emmanuel, God with us: **Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions: If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.** This is the city that Abraham looked for: **And he looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.** It is such a place as we would expect King Jesus to build for his bride. It is not heaven itself, for it comes down out of heaven. No man's hand has had anything to do with its construction. It's builder and maker is God. My friend, oh, if you only believe God's word, you would not be interested in anything else but getting saved, because this earth is going to pass away, and with it everything that you hold dear, you would flee to Christ for salvation.

The last verse of that 21st chapter says, **And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.** Is your name written in

the Lamb's book of life? Well, you say, I don't know. Well, turn to Christ and find out, will you?

The first thing we notice as we watch the heavenly city descend, is the glory of God. This is not merely a heavenly brightness, but the Shekinah glory, the very presence of God himself. This is the Lord God in the midst of his people, and his presence radiates a light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal. The crystal-like jasper of ancient times seems to have been like a brilliantly flashing diamond. It is so bright and radiant that **the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.** In the fourth chapter of Revelation, we find these words, **And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone.** This is the same Shekinah glory of God that dwells in the New Jerusalem, who is the light of the new city. This does not mean that the sun and the moon and the stars will not shine by day and by night to the rest of the earth, but the new city is lighted by God's glory, which will be brighter than the sun, and will shine continuously throughout the city, so that there'll be no night there. There'll be day and night over the rest of the earth, but in the new city there'll be no night there.

As the city comes nearer, we notice the wall, great and high, which has twelve gates, three on the east, three on the north, three on the south, three on the west. On the gates are written the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and an angel stands guard at each gate. When the tabernacle was set up in the wilderness, the twelve tribes of Israel were assigned places round about it, three tribes on each side. When God drove man out of the garden of Eden, he placed angels at the east gate, with a flaming sword to guard the tree of life so that man could not re-enter the garden and partake of the tree of life and live forever in his sinful state. In the new city, we find 12 angels not guarding the tree of life with a flaming sword, but for one purpose, that they may keep pointing men to the tree of life. They keep pointing men to the tree of life by keeping the gates open day and night, for there's no night there. The verses 24 and 26 hint that the nations and their kings bring their glory and honor into the city day and night.

As our eye moves along the wall from gate to gate, we notice the foundations of the new city. Notice there's not one foundation, but foundations, 12 foundations. In the foundations are the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Ephesians 2:20 tells us the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. We see from Ephesians that the Lord Jesus with the apostles are built into the superstructure that is the church, the bride of Christ. Here I want to bring to your attention the fact that the apostles are not the foundation, **for other foundation can no man lay than that which is already laid**, which is Christ. Can you get this picture? In the wall are three gates on each side of the city, which lieth four square. Beneath that wall are twelve huge stones, each resting under that part of the wall between the gates. When the apostle Peter makes his confession, in Matthew 16, **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God**, the Lord turned to him and said, **Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood is not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** The rock is the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is a memorial city to the twelve sons of Israel and the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Then the next thing our attention is called to is the size of the city. Listen, an angel, one that said, **I will show thee the bride**, hands John a golden reed, about 10 feet long, to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. **And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth, and he measured the city with the reed, 12,000 furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel.** The city lieth foursquare, in the shape of a cube. The holy of holies, get this thought now, the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple at Jerusalem, where God's Shekinah presence dwelt, was a cube thirty feet long, 30 feet wide, 30 feet high. (1 Kings 6:20) The New Jerusalem will be 1500 miles square. It would occupy more than half of the United States. No wonder God will have to create a new earth to take care of this city. Think of it, 1,500 miles wide, 1,500 miles long, 1,500 miles high. The wall is 216 feet thick.

The city is coming closer now, and we see the walls are made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, like unto clear glass. The foundations of the wall, that is the apostles' foundations, are adorned with every precious stone. Get it now. The first foundation is Jasper, the second Sapphire, the third Chalcedony, the fourth Emerald, the fifth Sardonyx, the sixth Sardius, and the seventh Chrysolite, the eighth Beryl, the ninth Topaz, the tenth Chrysalis, the eleventh Jacinth, and the twelfth Amethyst. Now will you do a little studying? If you look up these stones or precious gems in the dictionary, you'll find that they'll make up the basic colors of the rainbow. Now that's an interesting study. Everywhere we turn we find that all we have, and all that we are, flows from the fountainhead of the grace of God. Just as the salvation of our souls is through the grace of God, so our resurrection and deliverance from the presence of sin is an act of the grace of God; and the new city, the home of the redeemed, will be a gift of grace, an act of mercy. Just think that because of the grace of the sovereign God, he sent his son in the world, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the cross as our substitute and pay our sin debt in full. He sent the Holy Spirit to open our blinded eyes and our darkened souls and let us see who we are by nature and what we are by nature and the judgment we are under. Then, he granted us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, bringing us into the blessings of the atonement, delivering us from Satan, and translating us into the kingdom of God. And when he comes back, he'll give us our new bodies for Jesus' sake, and let us reign with him for a thousand years on earth, then escort us into the new city which will be our future home throughout eternity. What grace, what mercy, what goodness! We have everything to gain and nothing to lose by being a child of the Son of God. I'm glad I know Christ. I'm glad I'm a child of the King. Are you?

As we gaze down from our mountain top, while we are watching that city descend with the old apostle, we see it come to rest upon the earth. Let's go a little closer and enter in at one of the gates. Look, it is a solid pearl! Each gate is a separate pearl. We enter the gate and behold the streets and they are pure gold, which is as transparent glass. Solomon had the walls and floors of the Holy of Holies overlaid with fine gold. No doubt the homes in the new city have walls, ceilings, and floors of pure gold. According to that 18th verse, God's children will live in palaces of pure gold. What grace! Folks go crazy down here in this world about a little gold ring studded with diamonds. And they think it's wonderful to have a

gold inlaid tooth. Down here, gold is on top! But there we'll live in houses of pure gold. It cost Solomon 17 million dollars to overlay the walls of the Holy of Holies with fine gold, and it was just a room 30 by 30 by 30. What do you think a home in heaven would cost built of pure gold? And the pearls! We think it's marvelous to behold a string of pearls costing several hundred dollars, but the Lord Jesus Christ puts the best that heaven has into the home for his beloved redeemed wife. No wonder we'll behold the beauty of our Lord, and marvel throughout eternity that God ever selected us and redeemed us with his own precious blood. No wonder we will admire him for such grace manifested in our own lives in our redemption. But my friend, never forget this one thing, it cost the Lord Jesus Christ his precious blood shed on Calvary's cross, and only blood-brought sinners will be there.

In closing, let me call your attention again to this question. Who are the inhabitants of this new city, this new earth? As we said, they're the overcomers. The bride dwells in the new city with her Lord. Since this is the fulfillment of all the prophecies to Israel, and all Israel shall be saved during the kingdom age, then the nation Israel will be there, encamped about the city, and the covenant shall be fulfilled to a thousand generations. I won't have time to go into that, but next Sunday, I want to show you how that the kingdom age will last 33,000 years, a perfect kingdom age.