

“The Bride, the Lamb’s Wife Described”
Revelation 21:9-21

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰ 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, ¹¹ having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹² Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³ three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

¹⁴ Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 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. 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. ¹⁸ The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 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 chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 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. Revelation 21:9–21 (NKJV)

What the Angel is showing John in this passage, is the bride, the Lamb’s wife ...

Now, we know the Lamb is not a literal lamb, but the Lamb is our Lord Jesus Christ. He is called “the Lamb” and “the Lamb of God” John 1:29, “who takes away the sin of the world” ... because like the Old Testament sacrificed lambs, He died for our sins!

Now, the Bride is not a literal bride either, the bride is the true church. She is called a bride, because like a bride, she is in a Covenant relationship with a husband Who cares for and provides for her ...

She is compared to a city, because she is not just ONE PERSON, like an ordinary bride, but she is a great multitude of people

Some may be disappointed that the description of the New Jerusalem describes people more than a place, they long for the streets of gold and gates of pearl ...

Yet, I think the fact that this passage describes the churches character and what she is by God's grace Is even better than a description of a place -

1. First notice the description of the angel –

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues... Revelation 21:9 A (NKJV)

- 1. Note the angel is described in terminology which tripled the use of the number seven: God's number / the number of completion and perfection, God created our world and rested in a total of seven days...*
- 2. Here the multiple sevens speak to the complete, total and final judgment of the rebellious kingdoms of men and Satan ...*
- 3. Here they also speak to the complete victory of God's Kingdom, led by Christ, the church –*

**¹⁸ ... and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
Matthew 16:18 (NKJV)**

The description of this angel, mentioning bowls and plagues, reminds us of the defeat of man's and Satan's kingdoms which rebel against God and Christ!

This reminder is hinted at here, as God would have His people AVOID the plight of the lost!

II. This passage is about the Bride, the Church, God's people –

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."
Revelation 21:9 (NKJV)

- 1. Here, one of the Angels from a previous vision, the bowl judgments, is back, yet with a much more beautiful, a much more pleasant vision –*

"Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." - Revelation 21:9 (NKJV)

- 2. Remember, as I have said ... the Lamb is our Lord Jesus Christ –*

A. Not a literal lamb

B. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God, because like the Passover lamb, and like most Old Testament lambs, He was sacrificed for our sins –

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29 (NKJV)

⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

Even leaven is NOT LITERAL LEAVEN -

¹¹ **How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.** ¹² Then they understood that He did not tell *them* to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Matthew 16:11–12 (NKJV)

Leaven in 1 Corinthians 5:7 is sin ... Matthew 16, the leaven of the Pharisees, false doctrine was / is a particular kind of sin ...

Leaven is yeast ... sin is like yeast in that a little bit has a growing, spreading influence ...

*Like leaven is not literal leaven in **1 Corinthians 5:7**, and Christ is not a literal Lamb, so the bride in **Revelation 21** is not a literal bride ...*

3. The church is Jesus Christ's bride / wife –

A. In Ephesians 5, instruction about how husbands are to love their wives is based on Christ's love for the church -

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV)

B. We should notice Paul doubles up on this comparison, even to the point where we can assume Christian marriage has as at least one of its purposes, and probably its main purpose to point to Christ and the church -

²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. ³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹ “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

³³ Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Ephesians 5:28–33 (NKJV)

*III. The entire passage **REVELATION 21:9-21**, as the New Jerusalem is described, is still a description of the church, the people of God, references to walls, gates, stones and foundations are metaphorical, just like Lamb & bride are –*

Let's read most of it again ---

... “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰ 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, ¹¹ having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹² Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³ three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. ¹⁴ Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 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. 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. ¹⁸ The construction of its wall was *of* jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 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 chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 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. Revelation 21:9–22 (NKJV)

1. *This is primarily about the church’s character and glory, not about a place, not about Heaven where we will live, but about us, as Christians, who we ARE:*

A. *We are a great city - **the great city, the holy Jerusalem - :10**, a large number of people will be saved.*

B. *We are holy - **the holy Jerusalem - :10** and definitely will be, we are set apart for God, we are His people, separate from others -*

¹⁵ **but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,** ¹⁶ **because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”** 1 Peter 1:15–16 (NKJV)

C. She has a heavenly origin and a made by God quality about her –
... descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Revelation 21:10 B – 11 (NKJV)

- *This is how God's people are described –*

³ Know that the LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Psalm 100:3 (NKJV)

- *We should have a heavenly / made-by-God quality and glory about us, even now ...*

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

IV. Notice her light, is described like a stone, this is the beginning of the mention in this passage of many stones -

¹¹ having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Revelation 21:11 (NKJV)

1. *Here it is in connection to God's glory / light like the sparkling of a diamond, the church reflects the light of life –*

Jasper stone --- like a diamond, shines and sparkles, so we are to shine ---

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV)

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine ...

Sometimes a bride's eyes sparkle with happiness, and this here is definitely the light of joy –

Isaiah 9:2–3 (NKJV)

² The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.

³ You have multiplied the nation
And increased its joy;
They rejoice before You
According to the joy of harvest,
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

2. As stones are mentioned, it is important to remember, these are not literal stones, this is not the first time God's people are compared to beautiful stones, note what Simon, whose is renamed by Christ "Peter" which means "stone" says –

⁴ Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "*Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.*" ⁷ Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "*The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,*" ⁸ and "*A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.*" They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. ⁹ But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1 Peter 2:4–10 (NKJV)

A. "**Him**" – in 1 Peter 2:4, Who is a living stone, is our Lord Jesus Christ --- **A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.**" :6

B.⁵ **you also, as living stones ... is us, who are true believers, we are built into a spiritual house, ultimately into a spiritual city!**

C. *Note the references to a holy priesthood :5 / a royal priesthood :9 The Priest's Breastplate has stones on them representing each of the twelve tribes -*

¹⁵ **"You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, you shall make it. ¹⁶ It shall be doubled into a square: a span *shall be* its length, and a span *shall be* its width. ¹⁷ And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: *The first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; *this shall be* the first row; ¹⁸ the second row *shall be* a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹⁹ the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ²⁰ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. ²¹ And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes. Exodus 28:15–21 (NKJV)**

V. *Notice to the references to "gold" in this passage, also a reference to a "refined" character -*

¹⁸ **The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. Revelation 21:18 (NKJV)**

... **And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. Revelation 21:21 B (NKJV)**

Again, "gold" is used elsewhere in Scripture in refence to character / faith -

¹⁰ **But He knows the way that I take; *When* He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. Job 23:10 (NKJV)**

⁶ **In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 1:6–7 (NKJV)**

VI. The gates of “pearl” –

²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. Revelation 21:21 A (NKJV)

1. *The names of the twelve tribes are on the gates –*

¹² Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³ three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. Revelation 21:12-13 (NKJV)

A. *Named for the people of God* ↑

B. Gates for the twelve tribes / Foundations for the twelve apostles ↓

¹⁴ Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Revelation 21:14 (NKJV)

2. *Pearls are used by Christ metaphorically to refer to doctrinal preaching –*

⁶ “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces. Matthew 7:6 (NKJV)

3. *Gates let people in or keep people out, getting INTO HEAVEN, with God’s people is worthy of all our best efforts –*

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶ who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. Matthew 13:45–46 (NKJV)

“From Heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride; and with His blood He bought her and for her life He died!”

Samuel Stone

Arnold A. Brevick