

DEEPER TEACHINGS
(MEAT OF THE WORD)

#45

THE HOLY CITY

By Sam Fife



According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1Co 3:10

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Beginning our study in the 21st chapter of Revelation, we see that twice in Revelation 21, the Holy City or the new Jerusalem is referred to as the bride of Christ. In verse 2, John says: "And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

This was a far-off view of the City that John saw. Then in verses 9 and 10, we see the angel taking John close up and giving him a close-up view of the Holy City. We read there: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels that had the seven last plagues, and talked to 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 shewed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

We see that twice here, the New Jerusalem, the Holy City, is called the Lamb's wife, or the bride of Christ. In many other places in scripture, we find the church referred to as the Bride of Christ.

There are not two brides of Christ revealed in scriptures, or three or four. Scripture does not make Christ a bigamist. So therefore when we see that scripture calls the Church the Bride of Christ, and also the Holy City the Bride of Christ, we see that the two are one, and that the Church is the Holy City, and that the Holy City that John saw is simply the Church having come to perfection. The perfection that God planned and purposed for it.

He says in Ephesians 4 that "when Jesus ascended up, He gave gifts unto men, to some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. For the perfecting of the saints, perfection, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith, that is believing the same truth, ONE TRUTH, and the knowledge of the Son of God, the same knowledge that Jesus had. Unto a perfect man,

perfection, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Just like Jesus.

When John saw the Holy City descending down from God, God was giving him a vision of the Church as it would be in its perfection. If we follow John in his close-up view that was given him of the Holy City, and study the various parts of the Holy City as John saw them in the vision and if we let the Spirit of God show us the spiritual realities of which these parts or portions of the Holy City are symbols, then it shall be revealed to our hearts how true it is that the Holy City is the Church in its perfection.

John said: "And he showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God." And in verse 11 he said: "Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."

Here the vision reveals to John the light of the city. All the way through scripture we find that light has been a symbol for the truth. When the Bible says that the Holy City (which is the Church in perfection) that her light shall be like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, it simply reveals the Church having come to all light, perfect light, all truth, purest truth, and walking and living in absolute light, truth, purity.

Notice specifically that it said her light was as a jasper stone, clear as crystal. In the symbolism of scripture and in the spiritual language with which God speaks, we find that all colors of the spectrum that we have in human experience, from black to white are symbols of various stages of our spiritual growth. From the black, darkness of sin that we are in before we come to Christ, to the absolute whiteness and then on to the absolute purity that we will come to when we have come to perfection in Christ.

Often, when God speaks in visions, since God speaks in the symbolic language, the language of symbols, He often reveals individual spiritual condition through the color He shows the individual to be in, in the vision. When God wants to reveal this individual to be in complete darkness,

lost, He will show this one in black in the vision. Then if it is a Christian He is speaking about, one who is growing spiritually, He might show this one in brown, denoting that he has not yet grown very far spiritually, brown being a little bit lighter than black in the spectrum.

Then if it's an individual who is growing in God and who has gone quite far in their growth in God and in their walk in the Spirit, God might show this one in gray, which is not white, not having come to the perfection in Christ, but on their way up in their spiritual growth.

Then when God has spoken to us in visions and wanted to reveal the future of an individual, when he would come to absolute perfection in Christ, we have seen this individual in white. Yet there is a color in the spectrum which is higher than white, clearer than white, more perfect than white and that is the color of the jasper stone or crystal clear which is what you might call the color of water. So crystal clear that you can see right through it, much lighter than even white which cannot be seen through. Crystal clear, the color of water, and water is the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

So when the scriptures say that the light of the city is clear as crystal, as a jasper stone, it simply proclaims to us that the Church will have come to absolute union with the Holy Spirit, walking in all truths. Even as Jesus said: "When the Holy Spirit is come, He shall lead you in all truth." Perfect truth, purest truth. Therefore the scripture symbolizes it to us by proclaiming that the light of the City is as a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

In verse 12, we read that the City has a wall, great and high. This speaks to us of the Church having come to perfect protection. In the Old Jerusalem, the literal Jerusalem in Palestine, which was an earthly symbol of this spiritual City, there was a wall built all around the city to protect it from its enemies.

When the scriptures say that around the New Jerusalem there was a wall great and high, it reveals to us that the Church shall have come to absolute protection from all its

enemies. From sorrow, from demons, from fear, etc. not because there will be a literal, physical wall around it, but its wall will be the leadership, the guidance, the counsel, the power and the anointing of the Spirit of God which will be working in us at that time. Therefore we will have absolute protection from everything that hurts us now, upon the earth.

In verse 12, we are told also that not only did the city have a wall great and high, but it had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. So we see that the scripture teaches us that the twelve tribes of Israel are the gateway into the City.

When we consider this, we can see that it is so. For it was through the twelve tribes of Israel that God raised up the prophets through whom He spoke and gave us the revelation that is given to us in the Word of God, which is our entrance into the City.

We enter into the City by the revelation in God's Word that was given to us through the prophets who were of the twelve tribes of Israel. It was through the twelve tribes of Israel that Jesus Christ our Lord came, who is our entrance into the City. So truly the thing all began with the twelve tribes of Israel. They are the gateway, the revelation of God which was given through them, the Savior which was given through them. They are the gateway into the City.

Then in verse 14, we read: "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

Here we are told that the twelve apostles are the foundations of the city. This alone should be ample evidence to us that God never intended to present the idea that this New Jerusalem was a literal city. For it says that human beings, the twelve apostles of the Lamb are the foundation of the city.

In the book of Ephesians, the second chapter and the twentieth verse, we are told that we who are Christians are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus

Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. So we see that the apostles and prophets are the foundation and that we are built upon this foundation. We, the Church are God's building, we the Church are God's Holy City that He is building.

Then in verse 15, John says: "And He that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. "

Always in scripture, when we find someone being sent forth with a measuring reed, to measure the temple of God, or the house of God, or the city of God, they are being sent to measure the spiritual condition of that temple.

In the 11th chapter of Revelation we read: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein. "

So we see that the angel was sent with a measuring reed to measure the house of God, or the Church of God, and the altar therein, and the people who worship thereat, proclaiming that he is measuring the spiritual condition of His people. When we read in Rev. 21: "He that talketh with me had a golden reed to measure the city," it simply means that the spiritual condition of the city is about to be revealed to us.

In verse 16, God reveals to us the spiritual condition of this city. "And the city lieth foursquare." 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.

The city lying foursquare simply presents to us the truth that it has come to absolute perfection.

A cube is absolutely square, foursquare. It is perfection in all of its angles. Therefore the city lying foursquare simply reveals to us the church having come to absolute perfection as concerning its spiritual condition.

I shall never forget the day I preached this message to the people in the assembly. God spoke to me before I went in to

the pulpit, and He told me to tell the people before I even opened my Bible, that this message that I was about to preach, God would confirm through one of the congregation in a vision before the service was over.

So I went in to the pulpit and preached this message, that the Holy City, the New Jerusalem was the church in perfection. That the church in perfection was the Holy City, that the fact that the city lieth foursquare simply presents to us the truth of the church having come to absolute perfection. As I drew toward the close of the message, one of the young women in the assembly raised her hand and said that she had had a vision. Then she arose and told the vision.

In the vision she had seen an old city surrounded by a wall, like the old Jerusalem, and she saw a group of people coming, dancing down the road toward the city. They entered into the gates of the city and inside the city was a great patio made up of concrete squares. As the group of people danced in through the gates of the city, they each laid down on the concrete squares. As she watched the vision, they blended into the concrete squares until they disappeared and became a very part of the city.

God had confirmed and no one in the congregation doubted that God had confirmed His Word. Even as the people blended and became part of that city, that the Holy City was the church in perfection and that the church in perfection was the Holy City, the New Jerusalem.

Verse 17 says: "And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is of an angel."

The number twelve in the numerology of scripture is the perfect number. Twelve times twelve presents to us absolute perfection (or a hundred and forty four). Absolute perfection in the numerology of the scriptures.

When the scriptures say that the wall was an hundred and forty four cubits it simply presents to us the truth that the wall which completely surrounds this city is absolute protection to the city, perfect in every way. The wall of the

city is simply the perfect anointing, perfect faith, perfect knowledge, perfect power, perfect everything that we the church will have come to, which will be of course our protection against every enemy that might seek to come against us, sickness, suffering and all these things and in the end even death will have been defeated.

There will be no more sorrow that can get to us. No more sin can enter into it, because we will have come to the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. Even as Romans 6 says: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, so shall we also be in the likeness of his resurrection."

Then verse 18 says: "And the building of the wall of it was of jasper. "

The wall, too, was built of jasper stone, which has the crystal clear color of light which again presents to us absolute protection through having come to absolute union with the Holy Spirit, the crystal clear purity of the jasper stone.

Then you will notice in the last part of verse 18 it says: "And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."

It says that the city was pure gold. In symbolism of scripture, gold is the symbol of the nature of God. As much as gold is the perfect metal that cannot be tarnished, so God's nature is perfect and it cannot be tarnished. Silver is the symbol of the redemptive work of Christ. Just as silver is the metal second only to gold, Christ is the second person of the trinity.

Precious stones are the symbols of the gifts in operation of the Spirit of God. So when the Bible says that this city is pure gold, it simply reveals to us the church, the Body of Christ having come to the perfect nature of God.

Then in verse 19 we read: "And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones."

This simply means that our wall of protection will be founded upon all the gifts and operations of the Spirit of God working perfectly in us. Because all the gifts and operations

of the Spirit of God working perfectly in us, will then be our perfect protection from every enemy, so that no one can hurt us.

"The first foundation was jasper, the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth; sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."

I am not familiar with all of these precious stones that are mentioned here, but I would stake my life on the fact that if these precious stones were all to be studied and if their characteristics were to be known they would all symbolize different workings and operations of the Spirit of God.

Verse 21 then says: "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, every several gate was of one pearl."

The pearl is pure white. We learned earlier that the twelve gates were the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. This simply refers to us having come to absolute light, absolute perfection, pure and white, wearing the robe of perfect righteousness before God.

Then the last part of verse 21 says: "And the street of the city was pure gold."

We walk on streets. So the street of the city speaks of our walk. The fact that the street of this city was pure gold reveals to us the truth that in our walk, we will have come to the perfect walk in the nature of our God, having attained to the perfect nature of our God, walking in perfect holiness, perfect purity.

It would be good at this point in our study, to emphasize the truth that the idea that so many Christians have in their spiritual immaturity, that some day they're going to go to a literal, physical city, in space somewhere, with streets paved with literal gold and buildings made out of jewels is only an idea that is the result of spiritual immaturity.

There is no physical city anywhere with streets paved with gold and buildings made out of jewels. There never will be any physical city with streets paved with gold and buildings

made out of jewels as our "heaven." Our heaven is revealed to us in Romans chapter 8 verses 28-29, where the scripture says: "Whom he did foreknow, he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son."

To become exactly like Christ. This is our "heaven," no matter where we happen to be in God's universe. This is our final dwelling place, when we have come to our glorified spiritual state, come to perfection in Christ Jesus, and have become the Holy City. Then we will not go to this city or that city or any city, but God's whole universe will be our dwelling place. We will be free - free from the limitations of flesh, therefore free to live in God's universe as citizens of God's universe.

What good would streets paved with gold be to us after we have attained to our glorified body? We will have no need to walk on streets then. We will have come to the resurrection life of Jesus. After the Lord Jesus was resurrected, we don't find that when He wanted to go somewhere He had to walk down streets. When He wanted to go to the upper room where the disciples were, He simply appeared to them there in the upper room. When He wanted to join some of the disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, He simply appeared to them there. When He wanted to appear to the disciples in the hills of Galilee, He simply appeared there. When the disciples were fishing and He appeared to them on the shore, He didn't need to walk there, He just was there.

When we have attained to the resurrection likeness of Christ and we want to transport ourselves from one place to another, we won't have to walk down any literal street paved with gold, or asphalt or anything else. We will simply speak the word of faith and we will be there. So streets paved with gold would be of no value to us, or buildings of jewels because we won't live in buildings. We won't have to live in buildings.

The only reason that gold and jewels are so attractive to us now is because we are in our carnal state and these things are worth money. They have carnal value here on earth. When

we have attained to our spiritual state, those things will mean nothing to us because all things will be ours. Not one thing will have more value than another to us.

So we see that there never was and never will be any literal city in heaven someplace with streets paved with gold.

These are simply symbols which God uses to present to us spiritual realities, because we are carnal at the point where we come to the Bible and that these things hold for us carnal attraction. So God uses these symbols to attract us, until we grow to the point where we can see back behind the literal letter of the Word, back behind the literal symbol and see the spiritual reality which is the only reality. That spiritual reality is the Holy City which is the Church in perfection.

The problem is that at the point where we come to the Bible and to Christ, we ourselves are dead in trespasses and sins. We are completely carnal, completely fleshly, completely physically minded, completely material-minded in our thinking. Therefore we think only in the literal. We see everything in the literal. Everything we read of, we see in the literal, and when we read of a city with streets of gold, we then think that there is literally such a city somewhere.

When we come to the Bible in our carnal state, God attracts us with these carnal symbols and we accept Jesus as our Savior and the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us and we are born again of the Spirit of God. We move out of the carnal fleshly realm into the spiritual realm, but we are then baby spiritual beings. So we bring over into the spiritual realm most of our carnality, our material mindedness, our fleshliness.

As young Christians we still see everything that we read in the Bible literally. We read only the letter of the Word. Since we are born again of the Spirit of God, we begin a transition, a growth. As we study the Word, the Spirit of God leads us from the carnal, fleshly, material minded, literal thinking physical being that we are, to the spiritual being that God purposes us to one day be.

In the middle of that growth, we are in a transition from fleshly to spiritual, and therefore we desire to think spiritually instead of completely literally. We begin to see back behind the literal letter of the Word and we begin to see the spiritual truths and the spiritual realities which God is teaching us through those carnal symbols. We begin to see the spiritual realities of which the carnal symbols are just that "symbols."

Then we see that the streets paved with gold are a symbol of a perfect walk in the Spirit of God, having attained to the perfect nature of God. Then we see that the dwelling places made out of jewels are simply symbols of our spiritual house in which we will have come to the point where we have all the gifts and operations of the Spirit of God working in us perfectly.

When we see the city is made of pure gold, we see us, having come to the perfect nature of God. We read in Job where the scripture says: "We shall come forth as gold," and we understand that it means that we shall come to the perfect nature of God. Come to perfection, just as gold is the perfect metal. So when the Bible says "The street of the city was pure gold" it simply proclaims to us the truth of the church having come to the perfect walk in God - perfect holiness, fulfilling the Word: "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."

Then in verse 22, John says: "And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

The temple has always been the house of God. What we call today, the church house. There will not be any need for a church house for people to go into to meet with God, for God will be in us, and we will be in God. We will not need to go anywhere to meet with God ever. He will always be with us, and we will be with Him in perfection. This is why the scripture says: "The Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof." We will always be in Jesus and the Father, and they will be in us, in perfection, so of course there will

be no more houses of God, there will be no more literal temples of God anywhere.

Verse 23 "And 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 symbolism of scripture, the sun is the type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Inasmuch as the sun lights up the whole world, so Jesus is the light of the world. Inasmuch as all light draws its energy and sustenance from the light of the sun, so the scripture says that Jesus upholdeth all things by the word of His power. All life draws its energy and sustenance from Him.

The moon in the symbolism of scripture is a type of the church. Just as the moon has no light of its own but only reflects the light of the sun, so the church has no light of its own, but reflects the light of Jesus Christ to the world. The sun and the moon are symbols of the spiritual things. When the scriptures say: "The city will not need the sun, neither the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light there of," it simply means that we will have come to perfect union with Jesus and with God our Father. We will be walking in their perfect light and will have no longer any need of the carnal symbols and they will pass away.

Verse 24 says: "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

Notice here that it does not say that the nation of the unsaved shall walk in the light of the city. Only the nations of them that are saved or only the people that are saved will walk in the light of this city. Perfect light, pure light, perfect union with the Spirit of God.

Verse 27 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."

No one whose nature has not been changed shall enter into this city. Because, of course, since this city is the church in perfection, only those who have been born again of the Spirit of God and are walking in the Spirit of God until He has changed completely their nature, so that they have come to perfect purity, perfect holiness, shall arrive at this state of perfection which is the Holy City. This is the wonderful plan that God has devised whereby no sin can enter into this city. For all who come to this state will have arrived at perfection and there will be no sin left within them.

Therefore the City itself will be perfect. If the unbelievers, the unregenerated, the unperfected could be a part of this city then it would not be heaven because there would still be evil there. There would still be sin there and all the results of the evil. This is what the Bible means when it says: "No sin shall enter into it." Because all who will come to this point will have come to perfection in Christ Jesus, perfect holiness, perfect everything.

Then in chapter 22, beginning with verse 1, we read: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Here John sees deeper into the city.

If you want ample evidence that this is no literal city, no physical city you will notice that it says that the river of life proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Now, where is the throne of God? Is it in some physical city somewhere in space? We answer that question by proclaiming that God said in the scriptures "The heavens are my throne." Not just one city somewhere but God is everywhere and thus His throne is everywhere. For God is not a physical being that can sit on a physical throne in one physical place.

The one great truth that all theologians agree on is that God is omnipresent Spirit who is everywhere and who fills the whole universe. And our scientists tell us that in that universe there are more worlds out there than all the individual grains of sand on all the beaches of all the world.

You cannot put a God who is that big everywhere and bottle Him up in a physical throne in one physical place. He is everywhere and His throne is everywhere.

So when John saw the river of life flowing out of the throne of God, he is not talking about any literal river. Neither is he talking about any literal throne or city. The river of life is the Spirit of God always that flows forth from the omnipresent Father God. He is the river of life, the water of life. There is a river of life flowing out from me! Alleluia. Jesus said: "He that thirsts let him come unto me and drink." "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

So the river of life that will give us eternal, abundant, joyous, victorious, powerful life throughout eternity and that is in this Holy City is simply the Holy Spirit with whom the Church will have perfect union, at that time.

Notice that the water of life was clear as crystal, the color of a jasper stone. The Holy City is absolutely perfect, the Holy Spirit is absolutely perfect. Perfectly pure, perfect purity. That is why the color of the river of life is given here as clear as crystal.

Then in verse 2 John says that "in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life.' "

The Word does not say "trees" of life, but the "tree" of life. You see, there is only one tree to give life to all of the city. It says that this tree was on either side of the river. On both sides of the river. How could one tree be on both sides of a river? Because it is the tree of life, beloved. It is simply perfect union with the Spirit of God.

Before Adam's fall, back in the beginning, man was in perfect union with the Spirit of God, and therefore he was feeding upon the tree of life. He was partaking of the tree of life continuously. When he followed Satan in his temptation and turned away and cut his communion with the Spirit of God, he ceased to partake of the tree of life, and began to partake of the tree of death that came from Satan.

As man comes back into that perfect union with the Spirit of God that he had in the beginning, he will once again have

perfect access to the tree of life. You will notice that the tree of life is on either side of the river of life. It is only through union With the Holy Spirit, who is the river of life, that we have access and are partakers of the tree of life. It is as we are continually beside the river of life, yea in that river, that we have access to the tree of life.

Then also in verse 2 of chapter 22, we are told that the tree of life bears twelve manner of fruits. Twelve is the ultimate perfect number of scripture. Therefore the twelve manner of fruits that the tree of life bears, simply represents to us all the blessings that come to us from being partakers of the tree of life. Perfect health, perfect peace, prosperity, love, joy, perfect everything. That is why the scripture uses the ultimate number twelve to designate these fruits to us. It is all the blessing of God that come to us which make up the perfect existence throughout all eternity through partaking of the fruits of the tree of life.

Notice that the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There has never been anything given to mankind for the healing of the nations, healing of the great sickness of sin under which they are cursed. Healing which comes through the Holy Word of God. So the leaves of the tree are the truths of God's Word that are given to us by the Spirit of God, the river of life through the Holy Spirit, through which we partake of the tree of life, and of its leaves which are the truths from God's Word. Truths which alone will bring the healing of the nations.

In verse 3 we read: "And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it and his servants shall serve him."

There shall be no more curse because the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in the city. They shall be ruling, not physically but in our hearts as we will be in perfect union, oneness, obedience, perfect love, perfect everything. The Lord God and the Lamb will be reigning and ruling supreme.

In verse 4 we read: "His servants shall see his face and his name shall be written in their foreheads."

Scripture says his servants shall see his face. This of course does not mean that we will literally look upon the face of God. Because we have already learned that God does not exist in a physical form. The Word says that God dwelleth in the light that no man can look into. But when the scripture here says "We shall see his face," it simply means that we shall see God as He truly is. We shall understand Him perfectly. We shall see all the aspects of His nature. We shall see His character and His wisdom.

In 1 Cor. 13, the apostle Paul puts it this way: "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part but then we shall know even as we are known."

Scripture says then that at this time His name shall be in their foreheads. All the way through Scripture when we find the name of God mentioned, it signifies to us the nature and character of God. Here on earth, when we speak of a person's good name we are speaking of their character. When the Word speaks of God's name being written in our foreheads, this is where our minds are and it simply means we will have come to the nature and character of God. We will understand Him perfectly and will be walking in perfect oneness with Him.

Verse 5: "There shall be no night there and they need no candle. Neither the light of the sun for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

Night, as we see it in our world today, and in our human experience, or darkness, was given to us as a symbol of the spiritual darkness that man has entered into through the fall. When we arrive at perfection we will have come completely out of that spiritual darkness and in this sense the Word says: "There will be light there." For the Lord will give us perfect light. For that reason then, the carnal symbol will pass away and there will no longer be in our existence the division of night and day. We will have bodies that will not get tired and need sleep. So there will be no more this division in our existence. All these will pass away.

The scripture closes the vision of the city saying: "And they shall reign forever and ever." The church having come to perfection shall rule and reign forever and ever. Alleluia! May God help you through His truth and through your growth in the Spirit, your growth in the truth, to let pass away the childlike idea of a literal heavenly city somewhere, with streets paved with gold. In the process of your growing into spiritual maturity, may you see the spiritual realities behind these carnal symbols.

The idea that each one of us had as a young Christian, our spiritual childishness, of looking forward to that city with streets of gold, was used of God to attract us and to lead us into seeking more life in the Holy Spirit, so that He might lead us to the place that He has prepared for us. As we make the transition from the carnal, fleshly being that we were, to the spiritual being that we will be, let us leave behind these child-like instruments and ideas which must pass away. Paul says that they "perish with the using." Let us see back behind the literal letter of the Word and see the spiritual realities that are God's plan and purposes for our lives. Then let us let the Holy Spirit of Jesus our Lord lead us into the spiritual realities.

Not long ago I heard a man of God present a great truth. He said, until Jesus came, in the temple at Jerusalem, every piece of furniture, every one of the golden plates and platters, every one of these symbols held a meaning to the people of God. But when Jesus came, He replaced the temple, He replaced the furniture, He replaced every one of the golden plates and platters and they all became so much "junk." They had no more value whatsoever and God in 70 A.D. destroyed them all and wiped them off the face of the earth so that the people could no longer cling to them and so that they could move on into the spiritual realities that Jesus brought into our world.

So it is also in our lives. So it is with the ideas and experiences that we had as spiritual children. They become so much "junk" and have no value whatsoever anymore, but

are as instruments that must perish with the using. They are to pass out of our lives when they are no longer of value to us. We are not to look back to them for we are told to look forward to the great spiritual realities that God reveals to us, and in which He reveals His perfect plan and purpose for our lives. Perfect purpose for His Church, the Body of Christ, that He might lead us into it fully.

May God make it real to your heart, and let pass away the childlike nature, the carnal, fleshly desire for a material, physical heaven, with streets paved with gold and buildings made out of jewels. May you see the Holy City as it truly is. The Church having come to perfection.

Beloved, John saw the city descending down from God to earth. He did not see us going out into space somewhere. God is going to perfect the church right here upon the earth and it is going to reign upon the earth. We are not going off to some heavenly city somewhere in space.

Even the saints who have gone out into the spiritual realm, are going to come back with Jesus and be part of the church in perfection here upon the earth.

John saw the City descending down from God, and it is descending down from God. With every message from God that is preached, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every person that is saved and becomes a part of that city, it is coming down to earth. With every person that receives the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and grows up another step toward perfection, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every new revelation that comes to us from the Spirit of God and that takes us on into the fulfillment of God's perfect plan for our lives, the Holy City is descending down to earth.

Every time an individual steps us another step in God, the Holy City is descending to earth. With every victory over sickness, every healing and miracle that comes forth, the Holy City is descending down to earth. With every demon that is taken authority over and cast out, the Holy City is descending to earth.

Beloved, it will keep on descending with the growth of the church into its perfection. Until the Holy City is descended to earth, and the Words of Jesus that He gave us in the Lord's prayer: "Pray for God's will to be done and God's kingdom to come, here on the earth, as it is in heaven," will be fulfilled.

May God hasten that day, in Jesus' name. Amen.