The Apocalypse A Series of Special Lectures on the Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Lecture Forty-Ninth

THE NEW JERUSALEM--MATERIALISM IN THE REVELATIONS OF THE FUTURE--A LITERAL CITY--HOW THE BRIDE OF THE LAMB--ITS DERIVATION--ITS LOCATION--ITS SPLENDOR--ITS AMPLITUDE--ITS SYSTEM OF ILLUMINATION--ITS LACK OF A TEMPLE--ITS RELATION TO THE WORLD AT LARGE--ITS SUPERLATIVE HOLINESS.

Rev. 21:9-27 (Revised Text):

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and he talked with me, saying, Hither, I will show you the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the spirit onto a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of the heaven from God, having the glory of God; her brightness like a stone most precious, as a jasper stone, crystal-clear; having a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel; from the east three gates, and from the north three gates, and from the south three gates, and from the west three gates. And the wall of the city having twelve foundation-stones, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who spoke with me had a measure, a golden reed, that he might measure the city, and her gates, and her walls. And the city lies four-square, and her length is as great as her breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to the extent of twelve thousand stadia. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured her wall [height] of a hundred fortyfour cubits, measure of a man, which is of an angel. And the construction of her wall jasper, and the city pure gold, like to clear glass. The foundation-stones of the wall of the city adorned with every precious stone. The first foundation-stone, jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedone; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius, the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrisoprasus; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates twelve pearls, each one of the gates separately was out of one pearl. And the street of the city pure gold as transparent glass. And a temple I saw not in it; for the Lord God the All-Ruler and the Lamb is its temple. And the city had not need of the sun, nor the moon, that they should illumine it; for the glory of God lighted it, and the Lamb the lamp of it, and the nations shall walk by means of the light of it. And the kings of the earth bring their glory to [or into] it. And its gates shall not be shut by day, for night shall not be there. And they shall bring the glory and the reverence of the nations to [or into] it. And there shall not enter into it anything common [or unclean], nor he who does abomination and falsehood, but only they who are written in the book [or roll] of the life of the Lamb.

One of the most remarkable paradoxes of the Church of our times is it abhorrence of materiality in connection with the Kingdom of Christ and the eternal future, while practically up to its ears in materialism and earthiness. Were one of the old Christians of the Apostolic age to revisit the world to take a look at our modern Christianity, I think he would be greatly puzzled to understand how, under the guise of spirituality, the whole Church is permeated and loaded down with carnal philosophies, hopes, and aims. Remembering the sublime simplicity of the ancient times, when the Church was set like a golden circlet on the head of the King of Glory in contact everywhere with Divinity, he would be amazed to see how that circlet has been divorced from its

original setting, stained with the flesh, and pushed into the morasses and bogs of this world, while earthly glories--crowns, mitres, tiaras, wealth, and secular consequence--are looked to and worshiped everywhere as the insignia of what in sad mockery is called a "spiritual" kingdom! Would he not wonder [be astonished] to find Christians locating their most orthodox rejoicing in monarchs, in popes, patriarchs, bishops, sect leaders, numbers, luxurious arts, boastful speeches, worldly orators, secular education, march of intellect, and a fancied progress toward a "spiritual" millennium of mere secularism, to merge at last into an empty and impossible heaven?

And should he venture to inquire of some of our popular preachers whether the proper waiting for the Lord from heaven is to pray "Thy kingdom come" (the method by which to realize the blessed consummation when it shall be "on earth as it is in heaven", holding fast to the characteristic and animating patriarchal hope of a celestial city which Christ has gone to build and to bring down out of the heaven as the eternal residence of his enthroned saints), how surprised he would be to get this answer: "Sir, you are laboring under a delusion. The kingdom was set up 1800 years ago. The speedy coming again of Christ in person to reign on earth is a carnal idea, long since exploded and held only by a few eccentric people who cannot rise to a conception of the true spirituality of the Bible. As to the heavenly Jerusalem, why that is only a gorgeous Oriental symbol of the beautiful church state which you see all around you. The glory of Christianity is to keep abreast with the times, to press popular education, to create machinery to reach and elevate the masses, to follow up the conquests of arms with Bibles and missionaries, schools and civilization, to purify and influence legislation, to improve society by gradual reforms and general enlightenment, to win for the Church the patronage of the rich and great, and so to progress till the whole earth shall rest in the embrace of a worldwide 'spiritual' kingdom (located here in Satan's lap!) to last for indefinite ages!" With a groan over his inability to rise to such a philosophy, I can fancy the ancient saint gladly returning to his grave to sleep in honest earth till that resurrection on which his hopes were fixed, rather than hear any further about a "spirituality" so carnal and a Christianity so doubtful and earthy.

A spiritualized earthiness is simply a white-washed sepulchre, and an incorporeal and immaterial eternity for man is equally aside from the teachings of God's Word. No wonder that professed believers of our day are anxious to put off getting into the heaven they believe in as long as the doctor's skill can keep them out of it, and finally agree to go only as a last despairing resort. It has no substance, no reality for the soul to take hold on. It is nothing but a world of shadows, of mist, of dim visions of blessedness with which it is impossible for a being who is not mere spirit (and never will be mere spirit), who knows only to live in a body and shall live forever in a body, to feel any fellowship or sympathy.

But such are not the ideas of our futurity which the Bible holds out to our faith and hope. Did men but learn to know the difference between a Paradise of sense and a Paradise of sensuality, the truth of God would not suffer in men's hands as it does, and their souls would not suffer as they do for something solid on which to anchor amid the anxious perturbations of life and death. Did men but rid themselves of the old heresy--that matter means sin--and learn to know and feel that there was a material universe before sin was and that a material universe will live on when sin shall have been clean washed away from the entire face of it, they would be in better position both to understand and to enjoy the fore-announcements of the futurity of the saints which God has given for their consolation amid these earthly vicissitudes and falsities.

Chalmers, one of the greatest of Scottish preachers says: "There is much of the innocent and much of the inspiring and much to affect and elevate the heart in the

scenes and contemplations of materiality. And we do hail the information, that, after the loosening of the present framework it will again be varied and decked out anew in all the graces of its unfading verdure and of its unbounded variety. In addition to our direct personal view of the Deity when he comes down to tabernacle with men, we shall also have the reflection of him in a lovely mirror of his own workmanship. Instead of being transported to some abode of dimness and mystery so remote from human experience as to be beyond all comprehension, we shall walk forever in a land replenished with those sensible delights and those sensible glories, which we do not doubt will lie most profusely scattered over the 'new heavens and new earth.' We are now walking on a terrestrial surface, not more compact perhaps than the one we shall hereafter walk upon. We are now wearing terrestrial bodies, not firmer and more solid perhaps than those we shall hereafter wear. It is not by working any change upon them that we could realize to any extent our future heaven. The spirituality of our future state lies not in the kind of substance which is to compose its framework, but in the character of those who people it. There will be a firm earth, as we have at present, and a heaven stretched over it, as we have at present. And it is not by the absence of these but by the absence of sin that the abodes of immortality will be characterized."

The New Jerusalem, which we now come to consider, is in the line of these ideas. It stands in antithesis to the final Babylon. John is called by one of the same particular angels, in precisely the same way, to be shown it, just as he was called to be shown the great Harlot (see Chap. 17). The world and all its activities and achievements is made up of two opposing sides: the side of the heavenly, which is the good and the blessed, and the side of the earth, which is sensual and devilish; the true and false; the things which gravitate toward eternal life and the things which gravitate toward destruction and the second death; the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the devil. These two sides are at present intermingled and are differently situated toward each other at different periods, the one often hard to be distinguished from the other. But everything on either side has an affinity for its own and is true to its own, so that in the progress of time each side becomes more and more itself--developed and consolidated until the two antagonistic influences, tendencies, and parties crystallize to their true spirit and finally come out in two opposite cities. One of these cities is of the earth and from the earth; the other is of heaven and from heaven. The one is destined for everlasting extinguishment under the wrath of God; the other for eternal illumination with his unveiled presence and glory. Whatever, therefore, may be the run of our ideas of the one, the same must hold good of the other also. What Great Babylon is on the side of the bad, this New Jerusalem is on the side of the good. They are counterparts of each other, and each is the ultimate consummation of that to which it relates.

The Apostle had already seen this city "coming down out of the heaven from God." But he saw it only at a distance, and without that particular spiritual transport which was necessary to enable him to see it so as to describe it. God meant that we should have as clear and thorough an outlook upon the ultimate crown on the side of grace and salvation as he has given us of the ultimate crown and end of the sensual wisdom and the man-wrought progress. Hence this angel comes to John to show him the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, in her final condition and domicile, and in all the magnificence of her eternal glory. And whatever tabernacle of God, congregation of true worshipers, or seat or character of Divine economies, constitutions, or manifestations have been graciously vouchsafed to men as individual, nationalities, or churches from the foundation of the world to this time, [it] is here shown in its final consummation, completeness, and eternal reality.

That a real City as well as a perfected moral system is here to be understood, I see not how we can otherwise conclude. Great Babylon, to which it stands as the exact antithesis, came out finally in a real and universally potent city; so, therefore, must this. All the elements of a city are indicated. It has specific dimensions. It has foundations, walls, gates, and streets. It has guards outside and inhabitants within, both distinct from what characterizes it as a real construction. It is called a city--"The Holy City." It is named as a city--"The Holy Jerusalem." It is called "The New Jerusalem," as over against an old Jerusalem, which was a material city. Among the highest promises to the saints of all ages was the promise of a special place and economy answering to a heavenly city, and which is continually referred to as an enduring and God-built city. Abraham "looked for a city which has foundations, whose maker and builder is God" (Heb. 11:10). Of all the ancient saints it is written, that "God has prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:16). Jesus assured the disciples, from whom he was about to be separated, "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 ye may be also" (John 14:2,3). Hence the Apostle, in the name of all Christians of his day, said, "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. 12:22); not indeed as to actual possession as yet, but as having attained to title to it and to citizenship in it by faith, hope, and sure anticipation. And whatever difficulty we may have in taking it in or in reconciling it to our prepossessions [liking], I do not see how we can be just and fair to God's Word and the faith of the saints of former ages if we do not see and admit that we here have to do with a true, real, God-built city, substantial and eternal (albeit there has never been another like it) and not with a mere ideal and fantastic city.

The angel calls it "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." The heavenly city is Christ's Bride, not on account of what makes it a city, but on account of the sanctified and glorified ones who inhabit it. Without the saints, whose home and residence it is, it would not be the Lamb's Wife; and yet it is the Lamb's Wife in a sense which does not exclude the foundations, walls, gates, streets, and constructions which contribute to make it a city. Mere edifices and avenues do not make a city; neither does a mere congregation or multitude of people make a city. You cannot have a living city without people to inhabit it, and you cannot have a city without the edifices and avenues arranged in some fixed shape for the accommodation of those who make up its population. It is the two together and the order in which the parts are severally disposed, the animate with the inanimate, which constitute a city. And while this holy Jerusalem is the Bride and Wife of Christ with reference to its holy occupants, it is still those occupants as disposed and arranged in that city. So that the city as a city, as well as its people as a people, even the whole taken together is embraced in what the angel calls "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," as she finally appears in her eternal form and completeness.

The description which the Apostle gives us of this city, though very brief, is very magnificent, and presents a picture which almost blinds us with its brightness. It is not necessary that I should enter upon a discussion of the numerous details. They can be found more or less accurately given in almost any respectable commentary on the Apocalypse. Only to a few of its broader and more important features do I invite attention at present, with a few brief remarks on each.

1. *Its Derivation.* John sees it "coming down out of heaven from God." It is of celestial origin. It is the direct product of Almighty power and wisdom. He who made the worlds is the Maker of this illustrious city. No mortal hand is ever employed upon its construction. The saints are all God's workmanship. They are all begotten of his Spirit, and shaped and fashioned into living

stones from the dark quarries of a fallen world, and transfigured from glory to glory by the gracious operations of his hand. They reach their heavenly character and places through his own direct agency and influence. And he who makes, prepares, and places them also makes, prepares, and places their sublime habitation. It is elsewhere said, in so many words, that the maker and builder of this city is God (Heb. 11:10). It has no architect, no workmen but himself. He who by his Spirit garnished the heavens erects and fashions the New Jerusalem.

2. Its Location. This is not specifically told, but the record is not without some hints. John sees it coming down out of heaven. The idea is that it comes close to the earth and is intended to have a near relation to the earth. But it is nowhere said that it ever alights on the earth or ever becomes part of its material fabric. Though coming into the vicinity of the earth, it is always spoken of as the "Jerusalem which is above" (Gal. 4:26). The nations on the earth "walk by means of its light," which implies that it is over them. John could only get a near view of it by being spiritually transported to the top of "a mountain great and high," like the greatest altitudes of the Alps or the Himalayas.

The prophecies also speak of a future Jerusalem as set at the tops of the mountains and exalted over the hills (Is. 2:2). If a final exaltation of the earthly Jerusalem is contemplated in such passages, the language still is borrowed from something higher, in which alone its literal import can be realized, and hence includes more especially the "Jerusalem which is above," of which the earthly Jerusalem is the type. The probabilities are that it will stand high over Palestine, and be perhaps stationary as the earth revolves under it; not so high as not to be in ample view of all the dwellers of the earth, and not so low as not to throw its illumination upon all nations and countries, and upon at least half the earth at a time. Something like what the pillar of cloud and fire were to the tribes of Israel when they came up out of Egypt shall the relation and location of this glorious city be, with reference to the generations of men in the new earth.

3. Its Splendor. Here the specifications are numerous and transcendent, as we would expect in a city erected and ornamented by Jehovah and coming forth direct from the heavens. Everything built by God's direction is the very best and most splendid of its kind. So was the ship in which Noah was saved. So was the Great Pyramid, of which there is reason to believe that it was built by divine direction.¹ And so were the Jewish Tabernacle and Temple. Much rather then would it be so in a "Great City" built with his own hands, and intended as the sublime crown of the most marvelous of all his glorious works. And as we would expect, so the description is.

Earthly cities are often very magnificent and charming. But if we take our stand on some high point from which to look down upon them, we can see nothing but irregular heaps of human habitations and buildings, mostly involved in a mist of fumes and smoke, having but a dim light of their own--dusty, dingy, and by no means the most beautiful objects on which the eye can rest.

It is very different with this heavenly city. It is as clean, pure, and bright as a transparent icicle in the sunshine. John describes it as "having the glory of God." *Glory* is brightness, luster, splendor. The glory of God, or that in which God is arrayed--that which most bespeaks and characterizes Deity--is *Light*; for "God is light," and in him is no darkness at all. And this city has and is invested with the glory, light, brightness, and radiating splendor of God. That brightness, as it flashed on Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, surpassed the radiance of the noonday sun of Syria. The very intensity of its brilliancy struck him blind. And this brightness the New Jerusalem has, only with its sharpness when manifested against sin and

¹ See my volume, A Miracle in Stone.

sinners softened, for there are no more sinners and no wrath. Hence the brightness is like a most precious *jasper stone*. A jasper stone is wavy with the various colors of the rainbow, but it is opaque. This city has this jasper appearance but without the opacity. It is "like a most precious jasper stone *crystal-clear*," perfectly transparent like a diamond or rock-crystal. So pure, so bright, so soft is the luminous and divine splendor in which this whole city is arrayed.

It has "a wall great and high," which is not only like jasper, but which is built of jasper itself. And that wall stands on twelve foundation-stones, and each of those twelve immense stones is a separate and distinct jewel in itself. There are certain substances in nature, found in very small fragments, which are so scarce, rare, beautiful, and enduring that they are called gems, or precious stones—so precious that the prices of them are almost fabulous, and hence they are used almost exclusively for rich and costly ornament. Twelve kinds of these, each a vast, apportioned, and solid mass, make up the foundations on which the jasper walls of this city are built. Through these walls are twelve openings or gateways, with twelve gates; and each of these twelve gates is made of one solid pearl.

From these gates inward there are as many main streets, and all the streets are gold--gold in perfect purity such as cannot be reached by any earthly refinement, gold with a peculiar heavenly quality beyond what is ever seen in our gold--transparent gold like the most perfect glass. Men have built some very grand cities, the houses of which they have constructed with all manner of costly stones, granite, marble, and other solid productions of the earth, dressed, and polished, and ornamented to degrees of great excellence. But there is one part of every such city which they are satisfied to have of inferior material, just so long as it is even and smooth; namely, the part which is trodden under everyone's feet. It therefore gives a very high touch to the splendor of this celestial city that its very streets are pure transparent gold.

And the city itself is of the same material--nothing but "pure gold like to clear glass." It is a true crystal palace, made of nothing but transparent gold. An object is thus presented, the splendor of which far outshines the most sublime creations of which the human imagination ever dreamed.

4. Its Amplitude. There is no stint or meanness in God's creations. When he set himself to the making of worlds, he filled up an immeasurable space with them. He brought them forth in numbers without number, of grades upon grades, from the moons which play around the planets to luminous masses beyond any power of man to commensurate their enormous magnitude. When he created angels, he added myriads on myriads and orders on orders till all earthly arithmetic is lost in the counting of them. When he started the human race, it was on a career of multiplication to which we can set no limit. When he began the glorious work of redemption, and commenced the taking out and fashioning of a people to become the companions of his only begotten Son and co-regents with their Redeemer, these pictures of the final outcome tell of great multitudinous hosts, in numbers like the sands of the seashore. And the city he builds for them is of corresponding dimensions.

Starting from the center of our own city, though perhaps the largest in extent on this continent, we can travel but a few miles till we get beyond its built-up limits; and its breadth is but slight compared with its length. But the golden city for which the Church of the firstborn is taught to look as its eternal home is 1500 *miles square*, for 12,000 *stadia* make 1500 miles. John saw it measured, and this was the measure of it, just as wide as it is long and just as high as it is wide, for the "length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." Here would be streets over streets, and stories over stories, up, up, up to the height of 1500 miles, and each street 1500

miles long. Thus this city is a solid cube of golden constructions, 1500 miles every way. The base of it would stretch from furthest Maine to furthest Florida, and from the shore of the Atlantic to Colorado. It would cover all Britain, Ireland, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, Prussia, European Turkey, and half of European Russia taken together! Great was the city of Nineveh; so great that Jonah had only begun to enter it after a day's journey. How long then would it take a man to explore this city of gold, whose every street is one-fifth the length of the diameter of the earth, and the number of whose main avenues, though a mile above each other and a mile apart, would not be less than eight million! Bengel writes: "Stupendous magnitude! Alexandria is said by Josephus to have had a length of 30 stadia and a width of not less than 10 stadia. According to the same, the circuit of Jerusalem is defined by 33 stadia; that of Thebes, according to Decaearchus, by 43 stadia; that of Nineveh, according to Diodorus Siculus, by 400 stadia. Herodotus, in his first book, says that Babylon had 120 stadia in each side and 480 stadia in each circuit and that its wall was 50 cubits thick and 200 cubits high. This is 12,000 stadia every way. All the cities in the world are mere villages in comparison with the New Jerusalem." Even the jasper wall which surrounds it is higher than the highest of our church spires. Earth has no foundations on which such a city could be set, to say nothing of the materials of which it is built. Therefore it comes forth out of the heaven from God and has its place above the tops of the mountains.

An anxious question to believing souls has ever been, "What proportion of the people who have lived or now live are likely to reach this blessed city?" Men came to the Savior when on earth inquiring, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" It is a complex question which could not be made profitably clear to those who put it, and it has nowhere been directly answered. It is better that we should be about making our own salvation sure than speculating about the number who finally get to heaven. But the picture here placed before us casts a light upon the inquiry as exalting to the grace of God, as it is encouraging to those who really wish to be saved.

This golden city has not been built in all this amplitude and magnificence of proportions for mere empty show. God did not create the earth in vain; "He formed it to be inhabited" (Is. 45:18). Much rather, then, would he not lavish all this glory and splendor upon the Eternal City without knowing that enough out of the family of man would embrace his salvation to fill and people it. And the population to fill and occupy a city 1500 miles long, and broad, and high, allowing the amplest room and space for each individual, family, tribe, and tongue, and nation, would necessarily mount up to myriads on myriads, who sing the songs and taste the joys of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Amplitude--amplitude of numbers as well as glorious accommodations--is unmistakably signified in whatever way we contemplate the astonishing picture.

5. Its System of Illumination. What is a city without light! And what is more difficult of management in utilizing city spaces than the arrangements for light. Fortunately no gas trusts are needed in the New Jerusalem, nor light of the sun or the moon. It is itself a grand prism of inherent light, the Light of God and the Lamb which illuminates at once the eyes of the body and of the soul, and shines not only on the objects without but on the understandings within, making everything light in the Lord. The glory of God's brightness envelops it like an unclouded halo, permeates it, and radiates through it and from it so that there is not a dark or obscure place about it. It shines like a new sun, inside and out, sending abroad its rays over all the earth and into the depths of space, making our planet seem to distant worlds as if suddenly transformed into a brilliant luminary whose brightness never wanes.

And that shining is not from any material combustion, not from any consumption of fuel that needs to be replaced as one supply burns out. For it is the uncreated light of Him who is light, dispensed by and through the Lamb as the everlasting Lamp, to the home, hearts, and understandings of his glorified saints. When Paul and Silas lay wounded and bound in the inner dungeon of the prison of Philippi, they still had sacred light which enabled them to beguile the night-watches with happy songs. When Paul was on his way to Damascus, a light brighter than the sun at noon shone round about him, irradiating his whole being with new sights and understanding, and making his soul and body ever afterwards light in the Lord. When Moses came down from the mount of his communion with God, his face was so luminous that his brethren could not endure to look upon it. He was in such close fellowship with light that he became informed with light, and came to the camp as a very lamp of God, glowing with the glory of God. On the Mount of Transfiguration that same light streamed forth from all the body and raiment of the blessed Jesus. And with reference to the very time when this city comes into being and place, Isaiah says, "the moon shall be ashamed and the sun confounded"--ashamed because of the outbeaming glory which then shall appear in the New Jerusalem, leaving no more need for them to shine in it since the glory of God lights it and the Lamb is the light thereof.

6. Its Lack of a Temple. "A Temple," says the seer, "I saw not in it." What a vacuum it would create in every earthly city if its temples were taken away! What would ancient Jerusalem have been without its Temple? How much does the fame and glory of the most renowned of cities, ancient and modern, rest on their Temples! Strip them of these and what wold be their nakedness! But it is no privation to the New Jerusalem that there is no Temple in it. No, it is one of its sublimest peculiarities. Not that worship is then to cease. Not that communion with the eternal Spirit and Source of all things is no longer to exist. While God and holy beings live, their loving adoration of him cannot cease, nor acts of worship be discontinued. But then and there the worship and communion will no longer be through symbols, veils, and intermediate ceremonials, which now are needed to help the soul to divine fellowship. Deity will then have come forth from behind all veils, all mediating sacraments, all previous barriers and hidings because of the infirmities of the flesh or the weaknesses of undeveloped spirituality. Himself will be the Temple thereof. The glorious worshipers there hold direct communion with his manifested glory, which encompasses them and all their city alike. As consecrated high priests, they will then have come into the holiest of all, into the very cloud of God's overshadowing glory, which is at once their covering, their Temple, their God.

When Jesus walked with his disciples on earth, wherever he was they had a Temple. In the mountains and wildernesses of retirement, in the midst of the street concourse, on the heights where he was transfigured, in the upper room where they ate with him the paschal supper, along the way to Emmaus, on the shores of Galilee, on the Mount of Ascension--wherever his divine presence, power, and goodness spoke its "Peace be unto you," was a Temple to them. What an encumbrance and detraction would have been Aaron's garments, Aaron's breastplate, and Aaron's ceremonials of inquiry and worship when they had with them "God manifest in the flesh," on whose bosom they could lay their heads, whose cheeks they could kiss, whose feet they could bathe with their tears, whose words they could hear, and whose gracious services and benedictions they could at all times command! What need of Solomon's Temple had they when the embodied Shechinah himself, in ever-approachable form, was with them by day and by night, their brother, their master, their everlasting friend! And when the saints in immortal glory dwell within the enclosing light of the unveiled presence of God and the Lamb, as his Bride and Wife, what more need have they of Temple or outward ceremonial to commune with Deity or to have fellowship with the Father and the Son! God and the Lamb are then themselves the Temple, and

the intervention of any other Temple would be a disability, a clog, and a going back from the sublime exaltation which the saints there reach and enjoy. Hence John saw no Temple in that city, "for the Lord God, the All-Ruler, and the Lamb is its Temple." The worship there is immediate and direct.

7. Its Relation to the World at Large. Of old, the song of the Psalmist was: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, the City of the Great King" (Ps. 48:2). In every land into which the Jewish people wandered, there was a glad thrill upon their souls when they remembered Jerusalem. Night and morning they knelt down with their faces thitherward to chant the praises of Him who there dwelt between the Cherubim; and year by year the pilgrim bands went up from all lands with gladness of heart, and lute, and song, unto the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel. To there came the tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord; for there were set the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David (Ps. 122). Out of Zion went the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. We cannot look back upon those times, even now, without a degree of fascination, which draws like a magnet upon every feeling of the heart. And what was then realized on a small and feeble scale in the case of one people, is to be the universal experience with regard to this blessed city. It is to be the center and illuminator of the world.

"The nations shall walk by means of the light of it." Spiritual illumination for the soul as well as glorious light for the eyes, the light of truth and righteousness, and the light of Life for all needs (personal, social and national) in the redeemed family of man, shall go forth from that sublime city. And "the nations" shall walk in that light. Their polity, their religion, and all that makes for them an economy of Edenic blessedness shall come forth from that sublime metropolis. Their kings, judges, priests, loving guides, their Savior, and their only Lord God are there, visible to their eyes and ever present to their hearts and minds. What has never yet been upon this earth, a really holy nation, will then be found wherever man is found, and all people shall be the people of the Lord.

Men talk of *Christian nations*. But in all this dwelling place of man, from the beginning until now, there is nothing of the sort to answer to the phrase. There is no such thing and there never will be until the New Earth appears and the New Jerusalem comes into the view of men. Then, all nations, as nations, shall be sanctified and holy, for they shall walk in the light of the Eternal City of the Eternal King. That City, raised aloft and filled with the Spirit and glory of God and the Lamb, will be the illumination and the great glory of the world, the center of supremest interest, the joy of the waking thoughts and the sleeping dreams of all the children of men.

"And the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor to (or into) it." The Kings will then be Christ and his glorified saints. These will reside in this city, and whatever pertains to them as kings will have its center and seat there. Their glory as kings, their authority and their thrones, will all go to honor, dignify, and distinguish this city. And if by "kings of the earth" we are to understand sub-kings belonging to unglorified humanity, the statement implies that the homage and gratitude of earthly royalty will then devote everything of greatness and glory that it possesses to the service and honor of that city.

"And they shall bring the glory and reverence of the nations to (or into) it." All the honor the world can give will be given to that city. All nations, as one man, shall then be happy worshipers, and all devotion shall be concentrated in the New Jerusalem. All eyes, all ears shall be turned to it. And all the honor that men can render, and all the delight the human heart can

feel, will flow forever to that high tabernacle whose gates are never shut and where no night is ever known.

8. Its Superlative Holiness. "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of hosts," cried the six-winged Seraphim; and where that God is, only what is holy can find place. This is "the mountain of his Holiness," the city where his glory dwells; therefore no common or unclean thing can ever enter it, nor anyone who does abomination or works what is false. "Holy things for holy people," was the announcement given out by the Church for many ages, whenever about to present the mystery of the holy Supper; and a similar word forever flames around those gates of pearl. The city is ample, it is magnificent, and there is place within it for everyone ready and willing to become its denizen. But it is "holy," and no one can ever set foot upon its golden streets who is not enrolled in the book of life of the Lamb. Sinners may come there, yes; for it was made for sinners. But only for such as are cleansed in the proffered bath of regeneration, by the washing of water and the word. No place is there for them who believe not in Jesus and submit not themselves to his saving righteousness. No place is there for them who says "Lord, Lord," but do not the things which he has commanded. And if any love their sins better than God's salvation, the New Jerusalem is not for them. It is for those only whose names, through faith and sanctification of the Spirit, have been written in the Lamb's book of life.

Such, then, in brief, is that holy City which has been glittering in the imaginations and the songs of God's people in every age and under all dispensations. Its foundations by their colors speak of grace, mercy, and God's sure covenant earthward. Its gates of pearl speak of righteousness, obedience, and the heart set on the precious things of the divine kingdom, as the medium of transit from earth to glory. Its cubic form and its streets and constructions of purest gold proclaim it the embodiment of all perfection, the supremest seat of the supremest saintship. And within those immortal gates—in the very presence and company of God and the Lamb, surrounded with light, riches, and splendors beyond all that human thought can estimate, amid the liberties, securities, and perfections of the highest of all the material creations of gracious Omnipotence, as the jeweled link between the Eternal Father and his redeemed earthly family, and with a strength that walks unshaken under all the exceeding and eternal weight of glory—the Church of the firstborn, the Bride and Wife of Christ, shall live and reign with him days without end for the ages of the ages.

Exult, O dust and ashes,
Thy God shall be thy part!
His only, His forever,
Thou shalt be and thou art!