

MASTERING THE ENGLISH BIBLE

Revelation



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Mastering the English Bible: Revelation
Copyright 2023 by David W. Cloud
ISBN 978-1-58318-334-2
First Edition- June 2023



Published by Way of Life Literature
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866-295-4143 (toll free) - fbns@wayoflife.org
www.wayoflife.org

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Printed in Canada by
Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

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Introduction to *Mastering the English Bible*

This is one of the 11 segments of Mastering the English Bible.

Mastering the English Bible is a comprehensive survey of the Old and New Testaments, covering the Bible's full history and every book of the Bible.

It consists of the following 11 segments:

- Old Testament History Genesis to the Silent Years
- Old Testament Job to Psalms
- Old Testament Proverbs
- Old Testament Prophetic Books
- The Gospels
- Acts
- Romans to Corinthians
- Galatians to Thessalonians
- Pastoral Epistles
- General Epistles
- Revelation

Mastering the English Bible is for beginning Bible students as well as for advanced. It is for youngsters (teens and above) and oldsters. In fact, the Bible pictures can be used for children. It is for individuals, homes, and churches. It is for preachers, both for those formally educated and informally.

Mastering the English Bible is nearly a complete Bible college curriculum in one course. The aim is to educate the student in **Bible history**, **Bible times** (e.g., Egypt, ancient Babylon, the Hittites, Canaanites, Assyria, neo-Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome), **Bible interpretation** (e.g., context, comparing Scripture with Scripture, defining words, paying attention to details, understanding repetition, interpreting metaphoric language), **Bible doctrine**, **theological terms**, **Bible geography**, **Bible typology** (e.g., the Passover, the Tabernacle, the Levitical Priesthood, the Levitical offerings), **Bible culture**, **Bible biography**, **Bible archaeology**, and **Bible prophecy**. Mastering the English Bible teaches the fundamentals of the law of Moses, the Gospel, Israel, and the Church. The course aims to give the student a broad comprehension of the Bible as a whole and how each part fits into the whole.

Mastering the English Bible is very practical. There are extensive lessons on prayer, Christian growth, spiritual warfare, the husband-wife relationship, child training, evangelism, church planting, pastors, deacons, church discipline, the woman's ministry, youth discipleship, the church as a body, spiritual gifts, congregational singing, and much more.

Mastering the English Bible is accompanied by the *Way of Life Pictorial Bible*, which is an extensive series of multimedia PowerPoints packed with more than 7,500 slides featuring detailed maps, historical backgrounds, treasures from archaeology, Bible pictures, reconstructive drawings of ancient places, charts, video clips, and other visual aids. Many of these were captured by the author in the best archaeological museums in America and abroad, plus research trips to Israel, Greece, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Europe, and England.

Mastering the English Bible is more than a Bible course. It is a philosophy that a true New Testament church is a church in which every member is a serious, lifelong Bible student. If this is not the case, the church cannot possibly be what God wants it to be. It cannot even have the congregational singing that God requires. Consider Colossians 3:16, “**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” This is a description of a true New Testament church. It is a church in which the Word of God is dwelling in the members richly, not slightly, dwelling in all wisdom, meaning that the Word of God is getting down into the daily lives and producing practical wisdom for godly Christian living.

To be a serious, lifelong Bible student is necessary for everything in the Christian life. Philip Henry, father of the Bible commentator Matthew Henry, observed, “All grace grows as love to the word of God grows.”

Mastering the English Bible is a product of 50 years of serious Bible study and teaching. The author has a passion to help God’s people become effectual Bible students, beginning at the youngest age possible. The church and the home are to work in harmony toward this objective.

Mastering the English Bible consists of video classes, textbooks, syllabi, review questions, tests, test scores, and other teaching tools. These are available to those who purchase the textbooks and register online.

The course syllabus is very important. It explains the course objectives, the requirements, and the student projects, and it gives a weekly timeline of what the student should accomplish and when to take the tests. It is a class schedule that can be used by teachers or by private students. For the larger courses, there are two ‘paces,’ one shorter and one longer.

No shortcut to learning the Bible

- Proverbs 2 likens the pursuit of spiritual wisdom to searching for silver. “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding” (Pr. 2:1-6).
- The effectual student has to carve out time from his daily schedule, learn how to study the Bible, obtain the necessary tools, and work at it day by day for his entire life.

Goals of *Mastering the English Bible*

- To give an overview of the Bible, which is the starting point for understanding it. The Bible is one Book that was planned by God in eternity before it was given to the holy prophets, and understanding the big picture is necessary to rightly understand the parts. This is why a whole Bible reading plan is essential. “It is not enough that we be familiar with great verses, or great texts, or great chapters, or great individual books. We must know the Bible as a whole, and should be familiar with the parts which make up the whole; for here is a Divine progressive revelation, in which every part is organically related to every other part; and, consequently, only by knowing the whole Bible can we worthily appreciate its greatness and experience its power. ... the synthetic method in Bible study demands that we get a mental grasp of the Bible as a whole ... In the Bible, as in biology, the whole is more than the aggregate of the parts. A living body is more than an assemblage of limbs; and the

Introduction to Revelation

Revelation's Purpose (*"The Revelation of Jesus Christ,"* Re. 1:1)

1. The book of Revelation exalts Jesus Christ.

"This is the key to the whole book. It is a book of which Christ is the great subject and centre, particularly in that period of his administrations and glory designated as the day of his uncovering, the day of his appearing. It is not a mere prediction of divine judgments upon the wicked, and of the final triumph of the righteous, made known *by* Christ; but a book of the revelation *of* Christ, in his own person, offices, and future administrations, when he shall be seen coming from heaven, as he was once seen going into heaven" (J.A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, p. 16).

"If after studying this book of the Revelation, the Lord Jesus Christ does not mean more to you than He did before, either I have failed in teaching it, or the Holy Spirit has not been able to reveal this glorious truth to you. The unveiling of Jesus Christ is the central content of the Book" (Theodore Epp, *Practical Studies in Revelation*, p. 13).

The following are some of the marvelous ways that Christ is revealed in the book of Revelation:

- He is *the faithful witness* (Re. 1:5), the one who is utterly dependable, the one to whom the wise man commits his soul for eternity and whom he trusts every day of his earthly journey.
- He is *the first begotten of the dead* (Re. 1:5), the resurrected Son of God for whom death's sting is forever past and whose resurrection is the guarantee of our salvation.
- He is *the prince of the kings of the earth* (Re. 1:5), the One who holds all authority in His own hands and who has the final say in all matters, the one that the kings of earth are exhorted to worship before it is too late.
- He is *the one who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood* (Re. 1:5), thus providing the perfectly-sufficient atonement by which our eternal salvation is purchased and assured.
- He is *the one who will come with clouds* (Re. 1:7), in the glory of God and with the authority and power to put down all rebellion and to establish God's kingdom on earth.
- He is *the Alpha and Omega* (Re. 1:11), the eternal God, the great I Am, the Creator, the one who holds all things in his own hands and by whom all things consist, who knows all things and sees all things, who is able to work all things together for the good of them that love him and are the called according to his purpose.
- He is *the one who stands in the midst of the churches* (Re. 1:12-13), as their one legitimate Head, leading them and caring for them and warning them and judging them.
- He is *the glorified High Priest* (Re. 1:13-16), who has brought us to God through the sacrifice of Himself and ever lives to intercede for us on the basis of that Sacrifice, who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities and through whom we can come boldly unto the throne of grace to obtain mercy and to find grace to help in time of need.
- He is *the one who lives, and was dead, and is alive for evermore* (Re. 1:18), who has gotten eternal victory over death and through whom the believer has the same victory, who has said, "*And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*"

- He is *the one that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth* (Re. 3:7), the One who has all authority in heaven and earth, for whom nothing is impossible and through whom we can do all things.
- He is *the Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns* (Re. 5:6), the meek and lowly one who made the perfectly sufficient eternal sacrifice upon which all of our blessings are based, the one who has all authority in heaven and in earth.
- He is *the one who opens the seals* (Revelation 6-9), the Word of God, the Author of divine revelation, the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the Source of all wisdom and the Teacher of all truth.
- He is *the Son of man who reaps the harvest of the earth* (Re. 14:14-16), into whose hand all judgment has been committed, who is not only a gentle lamb but the lion of the tribe of Judah, not only the Saviour but the Judge.
- He is *the Bridegroom* (Re. 19:7-10), the One who loved the church and gave himself for it so that it would be joined to Him and become members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, and enjoy intimate fellowship with Him forever.
- He is *the King of kings and Lord of lords who returns on a white horse* (Re. 19:11-21), the One who will put down all rebellion against God and will rule and reign forever with His saints.
- He is *the One who reigns over the Millennial Kingdom* (Re. 20:4), who will cause the nations to beat their swords into plowshares and to practice righteousness and justice and truth and to make the lion to lie down with the lamb, and the child to play safely on the adder's nest, and the desert to blossom as the rose, and whose righteous rule will be maintained by the rod of iron.
- He is *the Judge on the Great White Throne* (Re. 20:11-15), before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.
- He is *the giver of the water of life* (Re. 21:6), the one who loves the world and gave himself so that men might be saved and have life more abundantly.
- He is *the one who will come quickly* (Re. 22:7, 12), the one who is standing before the door and for whose return we must be ready at all times.
- He is *the temple of the New Jerusalem* (Re. 21:22), and through Him we will have a continual and perpetual intimacy with God and in whose presence will be fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.
- He is *the light of the New Jerusalem* (Re. 21:23), and we will walk in this light and there will be no darkness at all; we will delight in its glory and be enlightened through its instruction.
- He is *the root and offspring of David* (Re. 22:16), the inheritor of all of God's promises to Abraham and Jacob and David, the Lord and Saviour of Israel.
- He is *the bright and morning star* (Re. 22:16), the one who appears in the Rapture for the New Testament saints before the darkest part of the Tribulation night and before the dawn of the Second Coming.

2. The book of Revelation is the finale of the revelation of God's eternal plan.

The Bible is the revelation of God's eternal plan, and Revelation is the capstone. It is the grand finale. God's plan is "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph. 1:10). The Bible begins with the first Adam in paradise and ends with the last Adam in paradise.

The first Adam plunged the first creation into sin, but the last Adam bought redemption and brings many sons into the glory of the new creation (Heb. 2:10).

3. The book of Revelation describes how Christ will judge the world, overthrow man's kingdoms, and bring in God's kingdom.

"The Revelation contains the details of the carrying out of the divine decree that all Christ's enemies should be put under His feet--all things, save the Father, subjected unto Him (1 Co. 15:24-28)" (William Newell).

4. The book of Revelation challenges New Testament saints to be ready for Christ's imminent return.

Though the churches will not be on earth to experience the events described in the largest portion of the book (chapters 6-19), the book is addressed to the churches to challenge them. There is a great sense of urgency to the book. The events described in Revelation are imminent. They can begin at any time. The book of Revelation, literally interpreted, is a great motivator for zealous Christian living. The very first verse says these are "things which must shortly come to pass," and this is repeated at the end of the book, in Re. 22:6. Four times the expression, "Behold, I come quickly," is repeated (Re. 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20). Twice the expression "the time is at hand" appears (Re. 1:3; 22:10).

5. The book of Revelation presents a heavenly perspective of earth for the New Testament saint.

Revelation gives the redeemed saints the right perspective on the affairs of this life, and the right perspective is God's perspective. Revelation shows us the perspective of the resurrected Christ in chapter 1, of the throne of God in chapters 4-5. The judgments of chapters 6-18 are all issued from heaven, from God's throne, by God's direction, via God's holy angels. This is the only right perspective of man's affairs. Man was made by God and for God (Col. 1:16). He was made to love God with all his being (De. 6:5). Anything less is idolatry. Men can align themselves with God's perspective in this present time by repenting of their sin against Him, putting their trust 100% in Jesus Christ and His atonement, and loving His Word.

Revelation's Meaning (Re. 1:1)

1. The Greek word for revelation, *apokálupsis*, means "an uncovering." Elsewhere it is translated "lighten" (Lu. 2:32), "manifestation" (Ro. 8:19), "coming" (1 Co. 1:7), and "appearing" (1 Pe. 1:7). *God does not intend for the book of Revelation to be confusing. It is a revelation, not a veil; its purpose is to manifest truth, not hide it.* While it contains symbolic language, it everywhere describes literal truth.

2. The book of Revelation contains "*THINGS which must shortly come to pass*" (Re. 1:1). It describes literal events that will occur in this world.

3. The book of Revelation is not a sealed book ("And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand," Re. 22:10).

Whenever Revelation has been interpreted literally rather than allegorically, it has been an open book and has taught God's people to expect the imminent fulfillment of its prophecies. As we will see, this was true during the early centuries of the church age. Church historians of all stripes admit that the early Christians interpreted Revelation literally. For example, the Lutheran historian Philip Schaff wrote: "The most striking point in the eschatology of the ante-Nicene age

Christ Appears to John (Re. 1)

The Revelation of Jesus Christ (Re. 1:1-2)

This describes the nature of the book. It is a revelation. The English word “revelation” is translated from the Greek *apokalupsis*, elsewhere translated “lighten” (Lu. 2:32), “manifestation” (Ro. 8:19), and “appearing” (1 Pe. 1:7). It is a revelation, not a hiding.

This also describes the theme of the book. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ. The name “Jesus Christ” appears four times in chapter 1 (verses 1, 2, 5, 9). **Jesus** is His birth name, meaning Saviour (Mt. 1:21). It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name *Joshua*, meaning “God is salvation.” **Christ** is His prophetic name, meaning “the anointed one” (Ps. 2:2; 132:17; Isa. 61:1). *Christ* is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *Messiah* (Joh. 1:41). Christ is the central figure of Old Testament prophecy. He is the Seed of David, the inheritor of David’s eternal throne. He is the center of God’s eternal plan (Eph. 1:10). The name “Jesus Christ” destroys the heresy that separates Jesus from Christ, as the gnostics taught. Jesus is not *a* Christ; He *is* Christ. Jesus is Christ; and Christ is Jesus. Everything prophesied about the Messiah is fulfilled in the person of Jesus. He was Christ at His birth, and He is Christ forever. He did not become Christ at His baptism and cease to be Christ at His death as some early heretics taught.

In Revelation, we see Christ glorified and exalted victoriously and ruling and reigning forever. We see Him both in His compassion and in His power, in His grace and in His judgment, supping with His saints and judging His enemies.

- Revelation 1 – Christ appears to John
- Revelation 2-3 – Christ speaks to the churches
- Revelation 4-5 – Christ receives the title deed to God’s kingdom the earth
- Revelation 6-18 – Christ judges the world
- Revelation 19-20 – Christ returns to reign on earth
- Revelation 21-22 – Christ rules eternally

Jesus Christ is the central Person and theme of the Bible. See Luke 24:44. It is impossible to interpret the Bible rightly if one does not understand that it was given to reveal Jesus Christ. He is both its Author and its Central Figure.

Jesus Christ is the central Person of history. No one can understand human history properly if he does not recognize that Christ is the King of kings, that all things were created by Him and all things are proceeding toward the accomplishment of His eternal purpose.

Jesus Christ is the central Person of the church. In Revelation 1, Christ stands in the midst of the churches. “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Col. 1:18).

Jesus Christ is the central Person of eternity. There never will be a time when the Lamb will not be on the throne worshipped and served by all creatures.

“**which God gave unto him**” (Re. 1:1)

This verse describes the process of inspiration.

- It began in the mind of God and was infallibly transmitted to chosen men. It began with God and was given to John by the mediation of an angel.

- The mention of angels involved in the process of inspiration brings us back to Old Testament modes of communication. See Ac. 7:53; Heb. 2:2.

- Note that God does not describe the process of inspiration in any detail, not here nor elsewhere in Scripture. We do not know exactly in what manner Jesus showed the revelation to the angel or how the angel showed it to John, but we know that it happened and we know that the product of this process is the infallibly inspired Scripture (2 Ti. 3:16-17). We accept this by faith.

This does not mean that Jesus is not God. In many other passages, Jesus is plainly described as God (e.g., Mt 1:23; Joh. 1:1; 20:28; Php 2:5-6; Col. 1:15; 1 Ti. 3:16; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 1:8-9). Hebrews 1:8-9 is quoted from Psalm 45, and in Psalm 45 it is obvious that God the Father, Jehovah God, is speaking about the Son. God the Father calls the Son, God, and God the Son calls the Father, God.

This is a reference to the Trinity. God the Father gave this revelation to God the Son. Compare Joh. 5:19-20; 7:16; 12:49; 14:10; 17:8. "This is in accordance with the representations everywhere made in the Scriptures, that God is the original fountain of truth and knowledge, and that, whatever was the original dignity of the Son of God, there was a mediatorial dependence on the Father. ... The same mediatorial dependence the apostle teaches us still subsists in heaven in his glorified state, and will continue until he has subdued all things, (1 Co. 15:24-28) and hence, even in that state, He is represented as receiving the Revelation from the Father to communicate it to men" (Barnes).

"to shew unto his servants" (Re. 1:1)

The revelation is for Christ's servants (Re. 1:1). See also Re. 22:6.

- God's servants are mentioned nine times in Revelation. They are the born again believers in the churches (Re. 2:20), the 144,000 who are sealed from the 12 tribes (Re. 7:3), and the prophets (Re. 10:7; 11:18). God's servants are those that fear Him (Re. 19:5). The book of Revelation will not be understood by those who are not God's servants. It will not be understood by unbelievers, by mere casual readers, or by nominal (unregenerate) Christians. "It is safe to say that the Revelation will not yield its fullness of truth and blessing to the idle nor to the curious. Only the servant who will make full and proper use of the information may have it" (John Knox).

"things which must shortly come to pass" (Re. 1:1)

These things **must** come to pass. No one can speak like this except God. To make such declarations, one must be immortal, omniscient, and omnipotent. These things **MUST** come to pass because Jesus Christ says so. What confidence and assurance! What a solid foundation for living! The individual that builds his life upon Jesus Christ and His infallible Word will never be ashamed.

These things must **shortly** come to pass (Re. 1:1).

- This is repeated in various ways eight times in Revelation. "Shortly come to pass" is stated twice (Re. 1:1; 22:6). "The time is at hand" is stated twice (Re. 1:3; 22:10). "Behold, I come quickly" is stated four times (Re. 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20).

- These statements refer to the imminency of Christ's coming. The time is always at hand. The imminency of Christ's return is emphasized throughout the New Testament. See Mt. 24:42, 44; 25:13; Ro 13:11-12; Php. 4:5; Jas. 5:8-9; 1 Pe. 4:7. Christ's return for the church-age believer is not preceded by specific signs; it can happen at any time. The church-age believer is not looking for the Antichrist but for Christ Himself. The events described in Revelation 6-18 pertain to "the day of the Lord,"

which will come “as a thief in the night” and as “sudden destruction” (1 Th. 5:2-3), but the New Testament believer is “not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief” (1 Th. 5:4). God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Th. 5:9). A major purpose of the book of Revelation is to set the minds of God’s people on the future and to cause them to live continually in preparation to meet the Lord.

- These statements refer to God’s clock rather than ours. See 2 Peter 3:8, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” In Isaiah 54:8, God told Israel, “In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for A MOMENT; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.” Though He has forsaken Israel for at least 2,000 years, to God that is but a moment. The reason that God has waited for 2,000 years is because He desires that men be saved (2 Pe. 3:8-9), and He will wait as long as He wants for this. We can understand this by comparing the way man sees things and the way an insect sees things. Man lives an average of more than 70 years, so he can look upon something as happening “shortly” when it is even as much as a year or more away. Some insects, though, live only one brief day, their entire lifespan being encompassed within the span of a few hours. If that insect could understand human language and if I told it that I was going to do something shortly, meaning that I was going to do it in a year or so, it would not be able to comprehend how that 360 insect life spans could be described as “short” for the simple reason that it’s perspective is so small.

- These statements refer to rapidity of execution. Once the judgments described in Revelation begin, all of the events of chapters 6-19 will occur in a brief seven year period.

“and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John” (Re. 1:1)

The revelation shows literal things under symbolic language. The word “signified” is from the Greek *semaino*, which means a sign or token.

The revelation was given through Jesus by his angel (Re. 1:1).

- This refers to an angel that was assigned to reveal these things to John. Compare Revelation 22:6, 8. We aren’t told which angel this is, though we know that angels have names.

- Angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14). These are the angels that did not follow Satan in the rebellion. They are called “the elect angels” (1 Ti. 5:21). They accept their created position and serve God with all their might. They are instant in obedience. They are on call, ready and eager for His commands. They are a good example to redeemed sinners.

- Angels were also employed in giving the law of Moses (Ac. 7:53; Heb. 2:2).

The revelation was given by Christ’s angel unto John.

- John had a very close relationship with Christ. He was a fisherman of Capernaum on Galilee who was called to be an apostle the same day as Peter and Andrew and John’s brother James (Mt. 4:18-22).

- He liked to call himself “the one whom Jesus loved” (Joh. 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20). At the Last Supper, it was John who lay on Jesus’ bosom (Joh. 13:23).

- John was chosen to write five books of the New Testament canon.

“Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw” (Re. 1:2)

John was a man of sound mind and good reputation. His testimony was not bought or coerced. He did not make any earthly gain by preaching the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was ridiculed, impoverished, persecuted, and imprisoned for the things that he testified.

The book of Revelation is described as “the word of God.” Though its canonicity has been questioned by some, John tells us that it is the Word of God, and we believe his testimony. Revelation bears the stamp of divinity throughout. There is not another book like it on earth.

The book of Revelation is called “the testimony of Jesus Christ.” This is the Bible’s chief theme and purpose. The Bible is not a book about religion; it is a book about a Person. It is not a book about what man should do for God; it is a book about what God has done for man. To study the Bible and miss seeing Jesus is to miss the main thing. To preach the Bible without preaching Jesus is to preach in vain.

John recorded “all things that he saw.” He is a faithful prophet. He did not withhold anything that Christ gave him. He did not subtract from it or add to it.

The Blessing

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Re. 1:3).

This is the first of seven blessings pronounced in Revelation (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). Though Revelation describes God’s judgment upon unrepentant sinners, it is a book of blessing and grace for those who believe. It begins with blessing and ends with grace (Re. 22:21). God is the God of blessing. He is the great Judge who will judge the impenitent, but His delight is in blessing.

The fact that a special blessing is announced for those who read the book of Revelation proves that it is not an unintelligible book. Blessing comes by understanding, not by blind mysticism.

The blessing requires three things:

- The blessing requires **reading** the book of Revelation. Reading the Bible is an important part of understanding it and being sanctified by it. It must be read and read and read, day after day, year after year. This is why the habit of daily Bible reading is so important. Reading the Bible is blessing upon blessing. What a blessing it is to learn about God, life, salvation, the past, the present, and the future!
- The blessing requires **hearing** the words of Revelation. The Bible is intended not only for reading but also for hearing. This is why it is important for the Bible to be read during church services. It is interesting that the pronoun changes in Revelation 1:3 -- “blessed is HE that readeth, and THEY that hear the words of this prophecy.” Reading the Bible is particularly a private matter, whereas hearing the words of the Bible is a public matter. Compare 1 Timothy 4:13, which refers to the public reading of the Scriptures. Reading, exhortation, and doctrine are public ministries. “Reading” is *anágnosis*, which refers to reading out loud. “Philip heard the Ethiopian eunuch read” (Ac. 8:28). It is used for the reading of Scripture in the synagogues (Lu. 4:16; Ac. 13:7; 15:21; 2 Co. 3:15) and in the churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Th. 5:27). The fact that the Bible is intended for reading out loud highlights the importance of the Bible being translated in a clear, majestic reading style, and in this the King James Bible is peerless. “[N]ot only was theirs [KJV translators] the best of the English Bibles; there is, in no modern language, a Bible worthy to be compared with it as literature. ... They knew how to make the Bible scare the wits out of you and then calm you, all in English as superb as the Hebrew and the Greek” (Gustavus Paine, *The Men Behind the King James Version*, 1977).

Christ's Eternal Rule (Re. 21-22)

The New Heaven and the New Earth (Re. 21:1)

The new heaven and the new earth follow the destruction of the old creation by fire as described in 2 Peter 3:10-13.

- When God made the original creation, He pronounced it "good" (Ge. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), but sin entered and it was plunged into curse and ruination. Ultimately, God will destroy the original creation and make an entirely new one that is not spotted by sin. He will make all things new.
- It appears from Revelation 20:11 that the destruction of the first heaven and earth occurs before the Great White Throne Judgment. We read that heaven and earth flee from the face of God on the throne and "there was found no place for them."
- The new heaven does not refer to God's dwelling place, which is the third heaven, but rather to the first heaven, which is the earth's atmosphere, and probably also to the second heaven, which is the realm of the stars. In Genesis 1:1, when God made the original heaven and earth, it referred to both the first (Ge. 1:6-8) and the second heavens (Ge. 1:14-15).
- As to the nature of the new heaven and the new earth, we are not told very much. It is described in only one verse. We assume that it is similar in some ways to the present heaven and earth, but we do not know anything for certain beyond the simple statement of Revelation 21:1.

There will be no more sea (Re. 21:1). Following are some possible reasons why:

- The sea speaks of division. John was exiled on the Isle of Patmos by means of the sea.
- The sea is restless and tumultuous, representing wickedness (Isa. 57:20-21), whereas there will be only righteousness and peace in the new heaven and the new earth.
- The sea is a place of depth and mystery; whereas in the new heaven and the new earth, we will know, even as we are known and will see God face to face (Re. 22:4).
- The sea is a place of storm, danger, and destruction, whereas there will be no such things in the new heaven and the new earth.
- The sea contains our sins (Mic. 7:19). God has promised to cast our sins into the depths of the sea. Eventually, He gets rid of the sea itself. It reminds us of how completely our sins are removed by the blood of Christ.

The New Jerusalem (Re. 21:2 - 22:5)

The focus of these chapters is the New Jerusalem, which is the dwelling place of the saints of all ages, but which is particularly associated with the bride of Christ.

This is the heavenly city that all of the saints of old looked for (Heb. 11:13-16).

This is the "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:9-10). At the call of God, Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees. It was a great city, but it had no foundations. When it was re-discovered in the last half of the 19th century and excavated by Leonard Woolley, only pathetic ruins remained.

This is the fulfillment of God's glorious eternal plan, the plan that He had before the world was made, the plan for which He made the world, and the plan toward which He has carried the world. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him" (Eph. 1:10).

"The closing description of the city is saturated with allusions to Old Testament prophecy. It is like the finale of some great concerto, in which the themes that have sounded throughout it are all gathered up in the last majestic, melodious crash. Here at the farthest point to which mortal eyes are allowed to pierce, the 'tree of life' that the first of mortal eyes had looked on waves its branches again. The end has circled round to the beginning. But now there is no more prohibition to pluck and eat, and now it grows, not in a garden, but in a city where the perfection of human society is entered into. Here, on the last page of Scripture, the river, the music of whose ripple had been heard by Ezekiel and Zechariah bringing life to everything that it laved, and by the Psalmist 'making glad the city of God,' flows with a broader, fuller stream, and is fouled by no stains, but is 'clear as crystal.' River and tree have the same epithet, and bring the same gift to the citizens. All the blessings which Jesus gives are summed up, both in John's Gospel and in the Apocalypse, as 'life.' The only true life is to live as God's redeemed servants, and that life is ours here and now if we are His. It is but a 'stream' of the river that gladdens us here, the fruit has not yet its full flavor nor abundance. It is life, more life, for which we pant, and the desire will be satisfied there when the river runs always full, and every month the fruit hangs ripe and ready to be dropped into happy hands from among the healing leaves" (Alexander MacLaren).

Some commentators have tried to fit the description of the New Jerusalem of chapter 22 into the earthly Millennium, but we are convinced that this is impossible. First, beginning with Revelation 21, the scene passes from the old creation to the new heaven and the new earth, and to try to force the city of Revelation 22 back into the Millennial Kingdom is unreasonable. We agree with Ford Ottman who says: "The expanded vision of the New Jerusalem does not, for its interpretation, demand a return in thought to the conditions existing during the Millennium. ... A return to the Millennial earth in this vision of John would be incongruous and perplexing. There may be difficulties in the way of harmonizing what is implied in the terms of this vision with our own thoughts of eternity, but this should not discourage us, for eternal conditions may be altogether at variance with our ideas of them" (*The Unfolding of the Ages*). Second, the description in Revelation 22 of the New Jerusalem cannot possibly fit into the Millennium. For example, there will be no sun there (Re. 22:5), whereas we know that the sun will still exist during the Millennium. Also, there will be no curse or death in the New Jerusalem of Revelation 22, whereas in the Millennium there will be both (Isa. 65:20).

The New Jerusalem is a city (Re. 21:2).

It is a city, a place, a real place. It is a city of light, walls, gates, angels, redeemed people, faces, measurements, distances, foundations, jewels, transparent gold, pearls, nations, water, fountains, rivers, trees, fruit, and a throne.

The New Jerusalem is "the holy city" (Re. 21:2).

God is a holy God and requires holiness of His people (Le. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7; 21:8). Thirty-one times God is called "the Holy One of Israel" (2 Ki. 19:22; Ps. 71:22). The seraphims cry

continually, “Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts” (Isa. 6:3). Holiness is the absence of sin, and nothing pertaining to sin will be in the New Jerusalem. There will be no idolatry, witchcraft, fornication, adultery, uncleanness, lasciviousness, hatred, variance, emulation, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, theft, deceit, malignity, whispering, backbiting, despite, pride, boasting, inventing of evil things, disobedience, covenant-breaking, unmercifulness, wrath, strife, sedition, drunkenness, drug abuse, rebellion, tyranny, treachery, lying, dissembling, blasphemy, false witness, or any other sin. Except a sinner be converted so that the holy law of God is written in his heart, he would never be happy in God’s holy heaven. As Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Joh. 3:3).

How different the city of God is from the cities of this present world! The rebel Cain and his sons built the first cities (Ge. 4), and they have been filled with wickedness ever since.

The New Jerusalem a city that comes “down from God out of heaven” (Re. 21:2).

Compare Re. 21:10, “*and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.*”

Hebrews 12:22-24 describes the same city existing already in heaven or as a term for heaven itself. It is the place of habitation for God, Jesus, the elect angels, and the spirits of the redeemed (not yet dwelling in resurrection bodies). “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of Abel.*”

Therefore, the city exists during the Millennium, but it is not on earth at that time. It comes to earth only after the new earth is created. In the Millennium, the church-age saints, being a heavenly people, will probably live in the heavenly Jerusalem while also having business on earth. We know that they will reign with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom (e.g., Mt. 19:28; Re. 2:26-27). The resurrection body will make this possible. Some dispensational commentators have theorized that the New Jerusalem will be a type of “satellite city” during the Millennium (e.g., J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 577-579). But there is no need for this theory, as Hebrews 12 explains that the New Jerusalem is heaven. The glorified saints will be above the angels and will be able to travel from heaven to earth in an instant.

The New Jerusalem is a city “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Re. 21:2).

Compare Re. 21:9, “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

This does not mean that the city itself is Christ’s bride; it means that the city is the dwelling place for His bride. The bride of Christ is the church (Eph. 5:25-32). The Lamb’s wedding is described in Revelation 19:6-9. The New Jerusalem is the bride’s city, but all of the saints of all ages are at home there. Israel will be there, for the names of her 12 tribes are engraved on the gates of the city’s wall (Re. 21:12).

The New Jerusalem is a city where God will dwell with His people (Re. 21:3).

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven.” The great voice is the voice of the Father sitting on the throne of heaven. Compare Re. 21:5, “And he that sat upon the throne said...” The voice of God is a great voice. It is the voice of the Majesty on high. It is likened to the sound of thunder (Ps. 29:3-9). Every word of that voice is true and authoritative and living. Wise is the man who heeds that Voice!

“the tabernacle of God is with men.” Jesus is the tabernacle of God. He is God manifest in the flesh. The Greek for tabernacle (*skené*) is used in John 1:14, which says, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us...” The Word of God was seen on earth for a short time and then ascended back to heaven. Today, we live by faith. We cannot see God except in Scripture, but faith will become sight in the New Jerusalem. We have longed to see Jesus face to face, and that longing will become reality. “And they shall see his face...” (Re. 22:4).

“and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” The repeated emphasis is on God being with His people. This is why God made man in His own image. He made man for Himself. He made man in order that He would be with man. He made the first man, Adam, and his wife, Eve, to be the instruments through which God Himself would become a man, the second man (1 Co. 15:47), to redeem fallen man and to dwell with redeemed man forever. We see God dwelling with man in Christ's first coming. He dwelt with the disciples. He spent His entire days with them for three years. He ate with them, conversed with them, slept with them, walked hundreds of miles with them, traveled in boats with them, watched sunrises and sunsets with them, comforted them, reprovved them, talked with them about the creation, about the Father, about redemption, about the eternal kingdom. This was a little foretaste of the New Jerusalem, but then the redeemed will be perfected and glorified and there will be no secret sins, no guilt, no deception, no physical weakness, no mental weariness, nothing to hinder the most intimate communion with God.

The New Jerusalem is a city where there is no sorrow or pain or death (Re. 21:4).

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.”

This is the condition for which the saints of all ages have longed since man's fall. Our sorrows and pains in this present world are incalculable, but when we dwell in that City, these things will be forever past. There will not be the slightest tinge of sorrow or sadness there, not even the potential for it, no tears of sorrow, no pain of any kind, no depression, no sickness or disease, no old age, no injury, no separation from loved ones, no confusion or uncertainty, no bullying, no tyranny, no frustration, no mental torment, no crying, no longing for that which cannot be attained, no persecution, no torture, no false accusations, no pain from physical exertion, no pain from heat or cold, no burns, no scrapes, no tearing, no lack, no debt, no fear. There will be no cripple there, no blind or deaf or dumb or simple or deformed.

“for the former things are passed away.”

The former things are the things of this present age, a fallen, unredeemed earth over which the devil reigns as “the god of this world.” It will be wonderful to live in a world in which this present age is looked upon as “former.”

The New Jerusalem is a city whose description is “true and faithful” (Re. 21:5).

“And he that sat upon the throne said.” These words are from the Father sitting on the throne. He is the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3). He is the Judge of all (Heb. 12:22-23).

He says, **“Write ... these words”** This revelation was to be written. It was to be a part of the canon of Scripture. It was to be available to mankind. It was to be read and preached and meditated upon. The revelation was not given in general thoughts but in words. The Scripture is verbally inspired. Scripture is the “words ... which the Holy Ghost teacheth” (1 Co. 2:13).

He says, **“for these words are true and faithful.”** The description of this city is literally true. It is not a mystical vision. Nothing is more certain, more faithful, more dependable than the words of God.

The New Jerusalem is a place where the water of life is freely available (Re. 21:6).

“And he said unto me, It is done.” God speaks of future things as “done.” Before Him, the Tribulation, the coming of Christ, the first resurrection, the Millennial Kingdom, the second resurrection, the new heaven and the new earth, all are “done.” These are the words of the eternal God who knows the end from the beginning. When Christ was on earth, before His arrest in Gethsemane, before His trial and crucifixion and resurrection, He prayed to the Father, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (Joh. 17:4). He can speak of things that do not exist as if they do exist, because they do exist before Him.

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.” The Alpha and Omega is Christ, as we saw in Revelation 1:11. Jehovah God is the first and the last in the Old Testament (Isa. 44:6; 48:12), and Jesus is the first and the last in the New. In Isa. 44:6, Jehovah God says, “I am the first, and I am the last: and beside me there is no God.” Jesus is not another God; He is God the Son. He is “The mighty God” (Isa. 9:6), “God with us” (Mt. 1:23), “God ... manifest in the flesh” (1 Ti. 3:16), the express image of God (Heb. 1:3).

“I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”

The water is for him that is thirsty. Salvation is for those who recognize their need of it and desire it, those who are thirsty for it. Jesus said, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (Joh. 7:37). He said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt. 11:28). Salvation is for those who cry out, “What must I do to be saved?” (Ac. 16:30).

The water is free. The word “**freely**” is a glorious word. It refers to salvation as the free gift of God’s grace (Eph. 2:8-9). Those who drink of this water will drink by free grace, solely because of the blood of Christ.

The water comes from a “**fountain**.” It does not trickle out. It flows out. It is abundant. It is sufficient to satisfy the whole world. Jesus “gave himself a ransom for all” (1 Ti. 2:6). He made propitiation “for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jo. 2:2). Jesus said, “Come unto me, ALL ye that labour and are heavy laden” (Mt. 11:28).

The water is the water of life. This is not merely water as we presently know it; it is the water of life, the Water of waters! The fountain of the water of life will literally flow in the New Jerusalem, and the saints will drink of it. Though we do not know the exact benefits of drinking this water, we know that it will be delightful! The fountain of the water of life is God Himself. The river of

life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb (Re. 22:1). The fountain of life is with Him (Ps. 36:9). From Him flows all of the delightful blessings and glories of eternity. He is the God who has "given us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Ti. 6:17), who "shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps. 36:8), in whose "presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11). The Lamb is the One who said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Joh. 10:10). For the redeemed, the abundant life begins in this present world, but the perfection of the abundant life is for the New Jerusalem.

The New Jerusalem is a city where the saints shall inherit all things (Re. 21:7).

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things." In this present world, the saints typically own little or nothing. The bulk of the riches of this world are "owned" by the unsaved (though they actually own nothing, for "the earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness therefore," Ps. 24:1). Through the ages, many saints have "wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented" (Heb. 11:37). They have been warned about the dangers of riches and have been instructed that "having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (1 Ti. 6:8-10). But in the New Jerusalem, the saints will own "all things" and will delight in God's riches. The church-age saint is joint-heir with Christ (Ro. 8:17).

"And I will be his God, and he shall be my son." What simple words, but what infinite truth! This is adoption, which is the fruit of Christ's atonement. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Ga. 3:26). In this present life, the believer *begins to* grasp and appreciate the meaning of this great truth, perhaps on the level of a toddler, but the literal meaning will be understood only when the child of God dwells with God in glory.

The New Jerusalem is a city where no unregenerate sinners will enter (Re. 21:8, 27; 22:15).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Re. 21:8).

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Re. 21:27).

"For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Re. 22:15).

The description of those who "***are without***" is repeated three times in Revelation 21 by way of terrible emphasis.

Jesus said that no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again (Joh. 3:3). To enter the New Jerusalem, sinners have to be forgiven and converted (1 Co. 6:9-11). "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

The overcomer is the true believer in Jesus Christ, the born again Christian as opposed to the nominal one (1 Jo. 5:4-5). See the comments on Revelation 2:7.

The fearful are mentioned first in the list of sinners who will be in the lake of fire (Re. 21:8). Fear of man is one of the greatest things that keeps sinners from repenting and trusting Christ. I know this is true in South Asia where we have been missionaries for decades. Many have come to the point of believing that Jesus is Lord and Saviour and that He died for man's sins, but they have refused to repent and cast themselves upon Christ, because they were fearful of their friends and relatives and of society at large. See Lu. 9:26; 12:8-9; 2 Ti. 2:12. **The unbelieving** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8). It is unbelief that damns the soul to hell (Mr. 16:15-16). **The abominable** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8, 27). Abominable refers to anything that is unclean before God, either spiritual or physical (Le. 18:22, 30; De. 7:25; 18:9-12; 22:5; 25:13-16; 27:15). **Murderers** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8; 22:15). This is to break the sixth commandment (Ex. 20:13). **Whoremongers** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8; 22:15). This encompasses all sexual sins, which are against the seventh commandment (Ex. 20:14). Jesus said for a man to look upon a woman to lust after her is adultery (Mt. 5:27-28). This unregenerate pornographic generation is bound for the lake of fire. **Sorcerers** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8; 22:15). This encompasses every type of dark craft, including witchery, witch doctors, wizardry, divination, enchantment, astrology, fortune telling, necromancy, and consulting with familiar spirits (De. 18:10-12; Le. 20:27; Isa. 8:19; 47:13). **Idolaters** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8; 22:15). This is to break the first and second commandments (Ex. 20:3-5). **Liars** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:8, 27; 22:15). All three verses emphasize that liars will be in the lake of fire. Lies are of the devil, the father of lies (Joh. 8:44). Lies are the opposite of God's character, which is truth. Lies plunged God's creation into darkness. Fallen man is a liar by his very nature. He is born "speaking lies" (Psa. 58:3). The fallen heart is "deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9). There is, therefore, no possibility that any son of Adam would be innocent of lying, which means that without salvation there is no hope of being in the New Jerusalem. **Nothing that defiles** will be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 21:27). This encompasses every sin of the flesh and the spirit. The word "defile" is translated from the Greek *koinóo*, which is also translated "unclean" (Heb. 9:13) and "pollute" (Acts 21:28). Jesus said the things that defile a man are the sins of his heart (Mt. 15:19-20). All men are defiled; their very righteousnesses are as filthy rags before God (Isa. 64:6); and all will be excluded from the New Jerusalem except those who are cleansed of their defilement by the blood of Christ. **Dogs** will not be in the New Jerusalem (Re. 22:15). This is a description of men who are of the most morally reprobate and heretical kind. It describes a male harlot in Deuteronomy 23:17-18 and a false teacher who preached a false gospel in Philippians 3:2-3. The similarity is that one sold his body while the other sold religion. Jesus used the term "dog" to refer to a person who derides the gospel and to whom it is a waste of time to preach the holy things of God (Mt. 7:6). Specific sins are listed, because typically the sinner does not trust Christ because his love for sin is greater than his desire to be saved. Once, after I had witnessed to a man a few times, he asked me what he would have to do about his adultery and dishonest business practices if he were to be saved. I told him that Christ would make him a new creature and give him a desire for holiness and would help him get victory over such sinful things but that it was not God's will for him to continue in his sin. That was the last time he was willing to listen to me, because he loved his sin too much to repent. The rich young ruler went away from Christ sad because he was not willing to repent of his sins of covetousness and self-righteousness. All of these sins can be cleansed by

the blood of Jesus Christ if the sinner will receive Him as Lord and Saviour. "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jo. 2:2).

The New Jerusalem is a city of glory ("having the glory of God ... for the glory of God did lighten it," Re. 21:11, 23).

"**Glory**" refers to kingly splendor ("Solomon in all his glory," Mt. 6:29). Solomon's glory was great for this world, but it was a mere shadow of Christ's glory ("the throne of his glory," Mt. 19:28; "when the Son of man shall come in his glory," Mt. 25:31; "that they may behold my glory," Joh. 17:24; "then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col. 3:4). Glory refers to great beauty ("glorious beauty," Isa. 28:1; "glorious in his apparel," Isa. 63:1). God's presence is characterized by glorious light and brilliant color and breath-taking beauty, rainbow beauty. God described this when He challenged Job to, "Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty" (Job 40:10). The light of the New Jerusalem is "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Re. 21:11). This is glory. The jasper that is used to describe the overall appearance of the city is like our diamond. It is a brilliant clear stone which reflects the light and through which the light passes. The entire city sparkles like a massive diamond. The city's source of light is the Lamb (Re. 21:23). When Peter, James, and John saw Christ in His majesty on the Mount of Transfiguration, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Mt. 17:2). When John saw the resurrected Christ, he saw "his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Re. 1:16). That is the glory that will lighten the holy Jerusalem! Since the very light of the holy city is from the Lamb, the occupants will be reminded at every moment that He is the source of their glory and of every blessing. The light will shine into every corner and crevice, for there will be no darkness in that city. There will be no need of sleep or of hiding.

The New Jerusalem is a city with a wall (Re. 21:12, 17-18).

The wall is not there to provide protection but to mark out the boundaries of the city and to act as the entrance thereto.

The wall is massive. It is 5,368 miles long (surrounding the city on all four sides, each side being 1,342 miles). It is 144 cubits high (Re. 21:17), which is 216 feet if the cubit is 18 inches (the general measure from a man's elbow to the tip of his fingers). The wall, thus, is much shorter in height than the city, which rises miles above it. The cubit is said to be "according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." Thus, the cubit of a man and the cubit of an angel are the same, because angels are described in the Bible as human in appearance.

The wall is very strong and beautiful, being made of jasper (Re. 21:18). This type of jasper is apparently the same as that which is described in Re. 21:11, which is "clear as crystal." In this world, we might own small pieces of precious stones, but in the New Jerusalem, thousands of miles of high wall are made from it! The wall is strong and beautiful but it is not intended to hide anything. The city behind it is visible through the clear stone.

The wall has 12 foundations, each garnished with 12 types of precious stones (Re. 21:14, 19-20). Obviously they are exceedingly beautiful, bathed in the light of the glory of God. "Though the precise colors of these stones in some cases are not certain, the general picture here described by John is one of unmistakable beauty, designed to reflect the glory of God in a spectrum of