

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 234

THE NEW JERUSALEM BRIDE

“And I John saw the holy city, *new Jerusalem*, coming down from God out of heaven, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*” (Rev. 21:2).

One will never be able to understand the deep mystery of Christ and His bride until first he understands the great mystery of God Himself. I have previously pointed out in this series that man in the beginning was created male and female in the image of God. The moment we understand that *male and female IS the image of God*, then our hearts will throb with heavenly rapture at the awesome glory, power, and exaltation of Christ and His bride. When he that readeth can grasp the wonderful truth that God bears within Himself both the characteristics of male and female, of Father and Mother, then he can better understand the divine word spoken “in the beginning” when God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so...*in the image* of God created He him; MALE AND FEMALE created He them” (Gen. 1:26-27).

Most people speak of God and His Son without even giving thought as to how it is that God has a Son. All nature with unified voice reveals that one male, or two males, or a thousand males, or a billion males can never produce an offspring. The invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even *His eternal power and Godhead* (Rom. 1:20), and creation immutably proclaims the mystery that it takes both a male and a female to reproduce life. This simple law of life is a divine revelation of the GODHEAD! God is within Himself both a Father and a Mother and it was within this unique reality of His Being that God Himself brought forth His Son and His sons. I would not for one minute nor in any way seek to dishonor or diminish the glory, the honor, or the majesty of OUR FATHER — the Lord God Almighty. But He is completely pleased to have me declare to you the reality of Himself which is male and female. Motherhood is a most profound revelation that is rooted in the deepest essence of God Himself.

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called *their name* Adam, in the day when they were created” (Gen. 5:1-2). Male and female. Both Adam. Both man. Both in the image of God! God made His image exactly alike, yet opposite. From the very beginning we can journey into the depth of God’s Being in the revelation of His image and nature as male and female. Adam is a figure we are pressing through to know God. With what divine clarity does the inspired apostle teach us that Adam himself was but a type of the Christ. “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who *is the figure of Him that was to come* (the second man, the last Adam)” (Rom. 5:14). This presence on the earth of man — male and female — is the glory of God emanating out of the sphere of His invisible substance and the figure, the symbol, the picture,

the prophecy of *the last Adam and His wife* — Christ and His bride! It is not important *how* man was created, nor even *when* he was created — but to see the mind of God radiate and descend and express itself into human form, He made His invisible nature of male and female into a model creation that could see and comprehend, though the female at creation was still hidden within the man, just as the female nature of God was hidden within Himself from eternity. And just as Eve, the female part of Adam, was taken out of Adam and formed into its own unique identity, so is the bride of Christ taken out of Christ and raised up into its own reality and expression for union with Him. Oh, the mystery of it!

You see, Adam was created on the sixth creative day, but Eve was not formed from his side until some unspecified time afterward. When Adam was created on the sixth day, Eve was in Adam. As I did some research on this I found that the science of genetics tells us that the body cells of humans each contain 46 chromosomes that carry information for biological inheritance. These include a pair of sex chromosomes — two X chromosomes in the female body cells but an X and a Y chromosome in the male body cells. We can see, therefore, that it is entirely in accord with the science of genetics that God created a man first and then woman *from* the man. If God had created a woman first, and man from the woman, He would have had to create Y chromosomes by a special creation and added them to the X chromosomes He obtained from the woman in order to create a man. As a result, Eve and Adam would have been two creations, not one.

But God created man first, and then woman from man, so He had from the man the X chromosomes necessary for the creation of the woman. We can see, then, that from the standpoint of genetic information Eve was not a separate creation. Eve was in Adam. As Dr. Bob Koontz wrote many years ago, Eve was in a sense the first clone, cloned from the cells God took from Adam. The Hebrew language used in Genesis agrees beautifully with this thought. In Genesis 2:22 God “made” (Heb. *Banah*), most commonly translated “to build,” the rib (Heb. *chamber*) of Adam into a woman. The Hebrew word *bara*, meaning an original or initiating creative act, is used of the creation of Adam in Genesis 1:27. All of these facts show that Eve was biologically, psychologically, and spiritually *in Adam* until she was “made” or “formed” or “built” from substance taken from his life! As God separated Eve from Adam, giving her form and raising her up into an identity, and exalting her and setting her together with Adam over all the works of His hands (“let *them* have dominion...”), *so* God is separating out of His Christ the wife He has in His own side, giving her form and raising her up into an identity, and setting her with Christ on the universal throne of authority, glory, and dominion over all things in all realms. This glorious God-Woman is the Lamb’s wife, the bride of God’s Christ! God’s agenda is to get this woman fully raised up into her own unique identity, to give her form and substance, to inspire the consciousness of this woman, that she may find herself and fulfill herself in God’s great and eternal kingdom!

TWO WOMEN — TWO CITIES

In our previous studies on this subject we have seen that in John’s visions in the book of Revelation two women and two cities are clearly presented. One of the women is a pure virgin, clothed with the resplendent glory of Christ (Rev. 12:1-6). The other woman is a harlot, gaudily attired with scarlet and purple, and decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls. One of the cities is the holy city, New Jerusalem. The other is called Mystery Babylon the Great. In the symbolism of prophecy a “woman” signifies a *church* and a “city” signifies a religious or spiritual *government*. Thus, the virgin woman represents the true church, the bride of Christ, and the harlot woman represents the false church, the fallen, corrupt, apostate church systems of man. The “holy city, New Jerusalem” is the symbol used to represent the established rule and government of God composed of the perfected and holy bride of Christ and the overcoming sons of God. The city is the woman, the bride of Christ, whereas the *throne* in the midst of the city signifies the manchild, the sons of God who rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:1-5). But as with Adam and Eve in the beginning, it is a *joint dominion*. “Mystery Babylon” can be nothing else but a church which is also a religious government over men’s lives, a great ecclesiastical kingdom, backed by the power and influence of the world — the carnal church systems of man exalted to power and dominion in the earth. This is why God will judge, throw down, and utterly destroy the Great Babylon; and this is why God is building up His holy city, the pure bride of Christ and the holy sons of God, New Jerusalem, to shine with His scintillating light of life to lighten all peoples and all nations, filling the whole earth with His glory!

New Jerusalem is the capital city of God's kingdom, and will reign over that kingdom forever. Babylon is the capital city of the great kingdom of religious Babylon, which kingdom shall pass away. The mount Zion, which is *in Jerusalem*, where the "many brethren" of Jesus reign, is the chief eminence, the highest pinnacle attainable spiritually in Jerusalem: Babylon is founded upon seven mountains of shame. The true church is a woman crowned with twelve stars of divine and heavenly government: the false church is also a woman, with her own name and shame written upon her forehead. The head or husband of the true woman, God's church, is the Christ: the head or husband of the false church is her paramours, the kings of the earth. The true woman brings forth children unto God — the manifest sons of God; the false woman brings forth her harlot brood. The city of God, New Jerusalem, is to be the habitation of God forevermore; the city of Babylon shall become heaps, the habitation of bitterns and owls, "...and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 14:23; 34:11-17).

Why does God want to bring forth in the earth a spiritual woman — the bride of Christ? The answer is found in the typology of the first woman, Eve. "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; *because she was the mother of all living*" (Gen. 3:20). The *mother of all living*! The mother of all living is the image of God — bringing forth children in His image. Let us consider this woman, the mother of all living, under another significant type in the revelation of God. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons (Ishmael and Isaac), the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for there are *two covenants*; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is *above* is free, which is the *mother of us all* (that is, the saints). For it is written, Rejoice thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, *are the children of promise*" (Gal. 4:22-28). Here Paul is telling us about two distinct and different *women*, two distinct and different *Jerusalems*, which stand for two distinct and different *covenants*. Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael, and Isaac are used as illustrations. In the allegory, Abraham represents God, the Father. Sarah, as His wife, represents the original promise and covenant God made with Abraham to bring forth in the earth a people, a race, a nation. This promise and covenant preceded the giving of the Law at Sinai and the raising up of Israel as a nation under the Law.

Just as Sarah was old and barren and had no son, so there were no children by this covenant, there was no nation birthed out of the first, the Abrahamic Covenant. When the Egyptian bondservant, Hagar, was given to Abraham as a wife, she pictured the second covenant — the covenant of the Law given by Moses. Thus, Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, typified the natural Israel, the nation of unregenerated people developed under the Law Covenant after the time of Moses. Finally, Isaac, the seed of promise was born under the first, or Abrahamic Covenant, which was God's Promise — picturing a spiritual people developed out of the spiritual promise and covenant — without Law, thus the covenant of Grace and of the Spirit. Then Paul made a comparison of Hagar to mount Sinai (the Law) and the capital city of Jerusalem in the land of Israel, declaring, "For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem (the earthly) which now is, and is in bondage (under the Law) with her children." Sarah, on the other hand, typifies the free woman, the spiritual covenant which brings forth the promised seed — Christ. And this Sarah is also Jerusalem — not the earthly Jerusalem, of course, for that is Hagar — for the apostle explains, "But Jerusalem WHICH IS ABOVE (New Jerusalem which *comes down*) is the *mother of us all*."

"Jerusalem which is above" pertains to the heavenly promise and the spiritual seed — the enChristed. Ah — the Jerusalem "which now is" is the one with which the saints at Galatia were well acquainted in that day, the natural city there in Palestine built on seven mountains and surrounded by a great wall, and containing a magnificent temple that was first built by Solomon and later rebuilt by Zerubbabel. It was the center of Jewish worship, as well as their governmental capital city. It was the central place where the Law given to Moses on mount Sinai was administered to the people. In other words, it represented the "law" system which is in "bondage" and all the natural seed which serves God "under law." But he contrasts that Jerusalem which represents the natural seed and the law system which regulates the flesh of the outer man, with another Jerusalem, "Jerusalem which is above," that is, in the high places of the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! This second Jerusalem, this *new Jerusalem*, is a *free* system, not a bondage, and she represents a spiritual seed and she is *our spiritual mother!* The prophet said she would dangle her babes (converts) on her knees and let them nurse at the breasts of her consolation — *mother care*.

There is another point I must mention in passing and then return to this thought of the two Jerusalems. There of two sets of “two cities” in the New Testament. Paul speaks of the two cities as the two Jerusalems, the bond city and the free city, the earthly city and the heavenly city. But then in the book of Revelation we have two cities — but they are not two Jerusalems — rather, there is one Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem, and the other city which is an harlot, Mystery Babylon. Now what can this mean? Is the earthly Jerusalem and Mystery Babylon one and the same thing? Not at all! The two Jerusalems were two *covenants*, but Mystery Babylon and New Jerusalem are two *churches*. Can you not see that this is a different symbol altogether! Mystery Babylon has never *been* a *covenant* nor has it *had* a *covenant*! You see, in A.D. 70 the old Jerusalem with its government, temple, priesthood, and sacrifices was destroyed never to exist again as a *covenant*. It is all gone. There is a city, yes, but no theocratic government, no Mosaic law, no temple, no priesthood, and no sacrifices. But following the destruction of the old Jerusalem there arose another city, and another woman in the earth which grew right alongside the people of the Jerusalem which is above, becoming rich and powerful and glorious throughout all the earth and over the nations as the Revelation reveals. The old earthly Jerusalem in New Testament times never did occupy a position of prominence and power either *among* or *over* the nations and the kings of the earth. Jerusalem was just a dusty little province in a remote corner of the world of that day. So these are the two cities and the two women of the Revelation — quite distinct and different from the two women Paul spoke of in chapter four of Galatians. But let us now return to the two Jerusalems.

Two women. Two cities. Two covenants. Two seeds. And while the earthly Jerusalem with its law system was destroyed, the *seed* of that old covenant remains with us to this day in the midst of the Lord’s people! The covenant of Hagar, the Law of mount Sinai, with its darkness, tempest, and lightnings still swirls and blows and thunders in the lives of many. It makes people servants, fearing the wrath of God. How sad that so many churches today still major in that covenant! Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? “*Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman*” (Gal. 4:30). The bondwoman, the old Jerusalem, is the bondage of legalism, ritualistic religion, external forms and sacraments, traditions of the elders, man-made rules and regulations. The Jerusalem which is above, the freewoman, is the *new covenant*. It is free in the pure Spirit of the Lord, and is *our mother*. She gives birth to our being, our sense of reality, bringing us out of the natural sense and into the spiritual, out of the strength of our fleshly identity and into the strength of our spiritual identity, out of our earthly consciousness and into the heavenly!

This woman is a covenant and a people birthed of that covenant, and in her covenant she contains a promise in her womb, in which the seed has come to bear again the Christ, for the Christ is birthed *in us*; that is the way He comes to us. We are the children of the freewoman, and her consciousness is being raised up in us — the feminine side of God. This is the realm of freedom in Christ into which we have been birthed. Thank God, we do not dwell in a place of law, nor of commandments and outward ordinances any more! We are children of the heavenly Jerusalem — there is nothing outward or organized or traditional here — all is spiritual and heavenly! We are not waiting to enter into this city through the pearly gates in the sweet bye and bye on some distant shore, for “*We ARE COME to mount Zion, and UNTO THE CITY OF THE LIVING GOD, THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM...to the general assembly and CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN, whose names are written in heaven...and to the spirits of just men made perfect*” (Heb. 12:22-23). Yes, beloved, ***we are come!*** This entrance into the realm of the heavenly city is not a future hope, nor is it somewhere off in space: this is where we ***now*** have come in our walk in the Spirit of God. We are now seated in the heavenly places, we have now entered in through the gates of the city, we are now walking the street of gold — that is, *walking out* the divine nature of God. We have a right to the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, which is the very life of Christ, and we have drunk of the river that flows out from the throne, even that water which is the Spirit, and it has become within us a wellspring of water springing up unto eternal life. While multitudes look for a literal city from outer-space, we ***are come*** to the New Covenant City of Inner-space, where Christ *in us* is our hope of glory! How few realize this precious truth! And this city to which we are come, this heavenly Jerusalem, IS THE MOTHER OF US ALL!

Let us UNDERSTAND! The reason there is this mysterious attraction between the masculine and the feminine is because the feminine was taken out of the masculine. The woman was taken out of the man, and something you women are is uniquely what we men are, but it is separated from us, and therein lies the phenomenon of why male and female seek union. Jerusalem above is the *mother* of us all. What does that

mean? There is a divine quality of God that is feminine that has *birthed all spiritual life* and it is the same divine quality of God that is birthing us in this realm of sonship to God. God in Christ is the masculine characteristic of God. Christ in the church is the feminine characteristic of God. Thus Christ in union with the church births men into the family of God! All of Jerusalem's children are born of the spirit, and led by the spirit of God. And now in this heavenly light, power, and spirit, they come to be heavenly Jerusalem's children, born from above. Oh, the mystery of it!

This heavenly Jerusalem, this church of the Firstborn, is the mother of all them that are born of the spirit and walk in the spirit, which gives them power to become the sons of God, and they that believe in the light that the spirit brings are the children of the light, and walk in the light of their mother, New Jerusalem. And you may read how this New Jerusalem is garnished with pearls, symbolically, and there is written on the gates the names of the twelve tribes, and on the foundations the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. So here you may see that there is no night here, but always day, in the holy city, where we dwell and the Lamb is the light. All the children of the light, of spiritual understanding, that are born of the spirit from above, see it as their mother, and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the spiritual light of this city, New Jerusalem, which is from above. And all Jerusalem's children, that have overcome, have right to the tree of life, and drink of the water of life, which as Jesus told the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, flows out from Christ and out of our innermost being in this new and heavenly Jerusalem.

And in this heavenly Jerusalem there shall be no more curse and no more death, for it is here that God is delivering us and removing from us the curse of sin and death. All who wait for another city shall die and not live, but all who dwell in this city may eat of the tree and drink of its quickening water. And he that overcomes, saith Christ, "I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Rev. 3:12). We understand by now, do we not, that the Jerusalem which is above and is free and is the mother of us all is God's high and holy realm of the spirit, wherein we may walk in perfection, intimacy of fellowship, and vital union with God. The New Jerusalem is the kingdom of God, the church of the Firstborn, and the bride of the Lamb, a people born from above and in union with Christ. She is a city that is not located away out there somewhere in the blue, but in the heavens or exalted places of the Spirit of the Lord. To walk in her light is to walk in the state or kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The church has been called the mother. Why? Because the church is the dispenser of the life-giving seed of the Spirit and the Word, and the church is the formation of God's divine feminine nature within a people on the earth. The first concept that calls us out of the world unto Himself is a woman. Long millenniums ago the mighty Moses brought this word to the Lord's people: "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Ex. 20:12). What blessings accrue to those who honor their father *and* their mother! Again and again we are told to honor our father *and* our mother, and this is the first commandment with the promise of life. We have this as a natural law — and I am in no way seeking to diminish that natural law — for verily I say unto you that he who truly values and honors the heavenly Father *and* the heavenly Mother will ultimately respect his earthly father and his earthly mother a well. We have learned to honor God our Father, but it should be obvious to all who read these lines that few have learned to honor God as our Mother — that unique aspect of His own Being that births all spiritual life and reality.

LOOKING FOR THE CITY

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out to a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for *he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that *they seek a country*. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a *better*

country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: *for He hath prepared for them a city*” (Heb. 11:8-16).

The scriptural, spiritual, heavenly symbolism of truth is here illustrated in simple terms for our understanding. In this magnificent passage we are told that Abraham looked for a city. He did not want Babel, for he departed from the land of Babel. The writer tells us that if Abraham had cherished Babel in his heart the Lord might have permitted him to return. But Abraham was looking for something better, something far greater, he wanted a city that has eternal foundations. He did not want a man-built city; he looked for one whose builder and maker is God! When he looked for it he left kindred and country, and wandered about homeless in the very physical land he was to inherit, which was merely a shadow and type of what he was really looking for. Did he ever find it? No. But by faith he saw it afar off, and he *will* find it, he *will* see it in reality!

All who follow in the steps of faithful Abraham are strangers and pilgrims on this earth — in this present world-system. This outer fleshly realm with its order, culture, religious systems, political systems, commerce, education, and all the rest, is not their home, their realm of dwelling, their state of being. They are looking for that city that is being built by God, for they are citizens of the New Jerusalem which is of heavenly, spiritual quality and substance. Those who are looking for a heavenly, spiritual city know full well that they are only strangers and pilgrims in this present order of man, in this carnal, mortal world. They endure their life, living as in a temporary state. They have no desire for the things of this realm of dust that excite the carnal man, for they seek a better country than this! No nation, civilization, or system built by man can make claims of permanency. Nations we know once existed, not a cobblestone of their existence can be found. World empires, during my brief time on this planet, have folded up their tents, pulled down their banners, and they are gone. Men whom we thought could never leave us have died, and we wept when they did. Others whose names we feared and who held life and death in their hands for millions, like the withered grass are but dirt, a haunting memory in the minds of their victims. In our own country, after our founding fathers fashioned for us a land of freedom and opportunity, our government has progressively changed, grabbing for more and more power and control over every aspect of our lives, while our liberties have eroded, our freedoms been usurped, our morals degraded and perverted, our tax money squandered, our economy devastated, and no one seems able to stop the downward spiral. Nothing permanent, nothing lasting exists in this carnal world of man! I have watched men build large churches and powerful religious organizations expecting them to transform the world, and then the leaders fell into sin and scandal, and now they can't be found. Their sin or their death was the end of the large following and the movement disintegrated.

Abraham looked for this permanent order. I look for this permanent order. This was the city of God that the man of faith looked for, not a vast earthly empire. All sons of God look in the same direction! “Those who are born of the Spirit,” Jesus said, “SEE the kingdom of God.” Not of this world, but something far in excess, the real of the real, the permanent of the permanent, the eternal abiding place, the city of refuge, the Holy of holies, the promise of all promises, from corruption into incorruption, from mortality into immortality, from death unto life uncreated, from time into eternity where measurement has totally lost all its sense. As God's elect walk with the Lord in this strange land, God is preparing for them a city, a sphere of dwelling, a state of being of eternal substance, raised up within by the glorious mind of Christ. I do not mean by this that the city of God is located in some far-off heaven somewhere. Oh, no! It cannot be too strongly emphasized here that the New Jerusalem is *not* heaven (as that term is commonly understood) in any sense of the word, nor is it a literal city made with brick, mortar, stone, wood, or gold in some specific geographical location. This glorious city of God is a *spiritual city* made up of *living stones* forming a *spiritual house*, a heavenly people, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, heart of His heart, mind of His mind, nature of His nature — the bride of Christ! It is heavenly in *character*, but is found here *in* the world, but not *of* the world.

In the book of Revelation John is carried away into an exceeding high mountain and there he is shown that which is called a *bride* and a *city*. From the top of that high mountain John looks out and sees a most wonderful city, coming down out of heaven from God, filled and flooded with the glory of God. The description that follows sets forth to the uttermost bounds of human understanding the grandeur and beauty of the glorified bride of the Lamb, represented by this great city. The dimensions are perfect in proportion and in their outer relations. Its foundations are adorned with the costliest, most precious stones, the walls

are built of jasper, and each gate is one immense pearl; but the city itself is builded of a gold as transparent as pure glass. The name of the city is New Jerusalem. Now why is this city called New Jerusalem, instead of New York, New Providence, New Brunswick, New London, or some other name? Well, Jerusalem of old was known as “the city of the great King.” The expression “new” stands for another order, a new dispensation and economy in which only the transformed body of Christ takes part. The glorious description of this city indicates the excellency and perfection of the new heavens and the new earth ruled by the new capital city. Its lofty gates of pearl upon which are emblazoned the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, its twelve foundations of precious stones, upon which are inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and its jasper walls and golden street are merely representations faintly shadowing the transcendent majesty of that new and perfect government. In the midst of the city is a river of water of life clear as sparkling crystal, signifying all the life-giving blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God flowing out to mankind from this grand city.

That city for which Abraham looked is a city formed of *enChristed people* which has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, nor the light of any candle, for the Lord God is the light thereof. These Christ people have no need for the outward light of creeds, doctrines, laws, ceremonies, rituals, ordinances, baptisms, traditions, organizations, programs, etc., for the very presence and life of God Himself within is their illumination. The nations walk in the wondrous light of this city’s reality, and the kings of the earth bring glad tribute of their glory into it. Through the open gates no evil thing will ever enter. Within its precincts stands no temple made with hands, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple of it, those who abide in Him are its priests and its sacrifices are those spiritual sacrifices offered up from within by Christ Jesus. On each side of the river is the tree of life yielding continuous fruitage of the power of the Christ life. And the leaves of the tree are the living word which brings healing to the nations. The heart never fails to respond with a quickened beat to the lines: “His servants shall serve Him; and *they shall see His face*; and His name shall be upon their foreheads” — that is, His nature and character shall radiate out of their lives. Description is far beyond the utterance of my poor tongue! Its majesty and fame and power and blessing escape me! Methinks that we can but tarnish its exalted glory by our frail attempt to describe it. It will abide forever and through those wide gates that never close will flow forth to all people and all nations the illumination and quickening and dominion until God has gathered together in *one* all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth.

Rare indeed is the man or woman in the religious systems of earth who has a true and spiritual understanding of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem bride of the Lamb, but alas, nearly all view it as some kind of new constellation which will come from the skies into close proximity to earth and be near or upon it. As one has written, “No doubt the sudden coming into sight, from heavenly space, of a glittering object, unknown to astronomers, self-luminous, above the brightness of the sun, steadily approaching, till it enters our atmosphere, and comes in close proximity to, if not in actual contact with this globe, transcends all human experience, and defies all natural phenomena.” Men seem intent upon calculating the city in cubic miles as though it were nothing more than a huge metropolis slightly more wonderful than those at present on earth.

According to Revelation 21:16-17 the city lies foursquare, 1500 miles each way with a wall around it 144 cubits high. That makes the wall 264 feet high. I can just imagine a city 1500 miles square that lands and covers the earth from the Mississippi river to the Atlantic ocean! From south to north it would reach from below the Mexican border to above the Canadian border! It would stand 1500 miles tall, with such a bulge on the side of earth’s face that the earth could no longer revolve and continue its straight course around the sun year by year. It would literally smash all the farms, villages, highways, people, cattle, and industries over 2,250,000 square miles! Now just what might be the population of such a city? If each individual was given one cubic mile of this city, the population of it would be 3,375,000,000 people — about half the present population of the earth. But again, if each individual were given one cubic acre, the population of the city would be something like this: 51,840,000,000,000! What a city! Another waxed eloquent about the size of the mansion each inhabitant would possess, replete with space for gardens and fountains and other such childish nonsense.

Until our spiritual minds are able to grasp the simple truth that the *body of Christ* is the temple of God, and that God has no other temple and never will; and until we understand by the spirit that every room and mansion in that temple is a living son of God, a literal habitation of God through the spirit; and until we

understand that the city of God is the *bride of Christ*, and that the stones of that city are all living stones, as Christ Jesus Himself is a living stone and the only foundation that can be laid, we have understood nothing at all. The book of Revelation shows the development of this Bride-City from glory to glory. Each view is a fresh and further comprehension of the grandeur of the purposes of God for all who are called to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The total victory for all the elect is detailed in all its glorious and eternal reality. This is the beauty of the Church Triumphant! This is that glorious church that is without spot or wrinkle! It is so great and mighty! It stands in the age and the ages to come clothed in the awesome majesty of the glory of God and His Christ! It is seen in all of its splendor and heavenly beauty. It was birthed into the earth at Pentecost and has been processed and matured throughout the 2,000 year church age. In the closing chapters of Revelation it comes into its final and full divine perfection and is viewed in the ultimate eternal triumph and purpose of God.

Thus we see that the New Jerusalem, contrary to the driveling childishness that is taught, is not a fanciful monstrosity some fifteen hundred miles high, which will one day come floating or crashing down out of the clouds to settle and rest on the earth like a bump on a little boy's head, throwing it out of balance and off its course. God made this earth complete and as it should be long, long ago. He created it a perfectly functioning reality, and "nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it" (Eccl. 3:14). Truly, unspiritual men, who walk after the carnal mind and its imaginings, can invent many fairy tales. Thus saith the Lord: "And they shall call *them*, the *holy people*, the redeemed of the Lord; and *thou* shalt be called Sought Out, a *city* not forsaken" (Isa. 62:12). And again, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. And the nations shall come to *thy light*, and the kings of the earth to the brightness of *thy rising*...and they shall call *thee*, the *city of the Lord*, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 60:1,3,14). It is evident that a PEOPLE is the CITY! There can be no doubt that the city in the Revelation is not a literal city, but rather those who have adorned themselves with the very nature, the very qualities, that their Husband requires. "But *ye are come* unto mount Zion and unto the *city of the living God*, the *heavenly Jerusalem*...to the general assembly and *church of the Firstborn*." The message is clear — the bride doesn't live IN the city: the bride IS the city! To that city we have come! It has come down into our hearts; day by day we walk its street of righteousness; we live in its light of truth, we breathe its heavenly atmosphere of life and light and love, we enjoy its rights of God's blessing, provision, and power!

BUILDING THE CITY

Jerusalem of old was the capital city of the national Israel; and as that old order was but a type and shadow of the new (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:16-17), therefore the New Jerusalem must be the capital city, or the ruling element, in Israel today, which is Christ's Kingdom and of which our Lord said, it "is not of this world" (Jn. 18:36). In other words, New Jerusalem is the ruling class, the kings and priests unto God: those who have overcome all things and have attained to the highest position of honor and might and true greatness in grace. It comprises those who rule with Christ upon His throne. We, therefore, who have been accounted worthy to suffer with Christ (II Tim. 2:12), *are* the New Jerusalem which shall rule over God's infinite realm for evermore. We are the city foursquare, which is the bride of the Lamb. This is the Jerusalem from which, in the age and the ages to come, the Word of the Lord shall go forth to all the earth (Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2). In fact, it is even now going forth! This is the Jerusalem from which even now the Lord has uttered His voice (Joel 3:16). This is the Jerusalem from which, during the age and the ages to come, living waters shall go forth to the whole world (Zech. 14:8). "And everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Eze. 47:9).

In scripture a city pictures a government. Abraham was seeking for a city, for a government — the heavenly arrangement, a divine rule by the Spirit upon earth. Cities of old were often actually nations within themselves known as "city-states". Each had walls and was self-sufficient. Some of the great cities of ancient times were Babylon, Athens, Rome. Some cities were nations within themselves, while others ruled over territories beyond their walls. The city was representative of the nation. The power and might of the land flowed from the city. They were not intended merely as dwelling places, because most people were involved in agriculture and animal husbandry and were self-sufficient. As men multiplied, some of the people began to live in cities; and then cities became centers of power and ruled the surrounding area of the land in which they were located. It did not avail an enemy much if he conquered the land surrounding the city. The city itself had to be conquered for the victory to be significant, and only then could it be said that the land had been taken. The real seat of government, power, and authority resided in the city. The walls of

the city were formidable protection. Armed with this understanding, we can see the use of an illustration given by Solomon wherein he said, “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.” And again, “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city” (Prov. 25:28; 16:32). A city without walls was an easy prey for the enemy. Likewise, anyone unable to control his emotions, passions, and carnal desires is an easy prey for his enemies (the flesh, the world, and the devil) and will quickly be overrun by them!

Oh glorious city of God! In the 48th Psalm we read the description of the city of our God, and we begin to see deep meanings in these comparisons. “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, *in the city of our God*, in the mountain (Zion) of His holiness” (Ps. 48:1). It is in this city that praises to God ascend day and night! The bride rejoicing in the Lord in both light and darkness, in times of blessing and in times of trial and suffering, in easy things and in hard things, those who are of the bride company can be known by their offering up unto Him the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving continually; and thus she and the city are one. We are told that she is “beautiful in elevation (situation).” Jerusalem was not builded in low swampy lands, but upon a beautiful elevation of the mountains. Neither are we built up so that we are “comely as Jerusalem” when we remain upon the low lands, amid the miasmas of earthly swamp lands, amid the fogs, and vapors, bogged down in carnal understanding, fleshly wisdom, religious delusion, or in negativism, fear, or despair. Upon the high lands of the Spirit of the Lord the air is clear, and as we climb higher and higher upon the mountains of God, we become “beautiful in elevation” — full of grace, joy, peace, faith, wisdom, and might!

This is “the city of the great King,” and “God hath made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge.” How high is our calling when God has chosen us to be a part of “the city of the great King,” “...built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone; *in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit*” (Eph. 2:19-22). Truly in this city of the great King God hath made Himself known! He has made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge — a high tower. Has He not made Himself known in every palace of His habitation in this heavenly city, as the Strong Tower and Rock of Defense to every tempest-tossed and tested soul? Only in Him is there safety; only in Him is there protection; only when we are consciously in Him, and continually trust upon our union with Him can we stand firm and overcome all things. Praise God! In our experience with Him day by day He is more and more making Himself known in the palaces which *we are*, and victory and life become our portion, swallowing up all darkness and death. “Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth” (Ps. 50:2). Isn’t it wonderful!

We read that “Jerusalem is ***builded as a city that is compacted together***, whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Yahweh, for an ordinance to Israel, *to give thanks* unto the name of Yahweh” (Ps. 122:3-4). The word translated “compacted” has most precious meanings, which more perfectly apply to the heavenly Jerusalem, than to the earthly city. We need not think that this is strange, when we bear in mind that the earthly Jerusalem was the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. And we are melted before God when we apprehend the full import of these meanings when applied to the bride of the Lamb! “Compacted” means “*to join together by means of fascination; to be charmed and thus bound together; to have fellowship.*” This sets forth the harmony and the beauty in architecture of the earthly Jerusalem, with its lofty walls, its beautiful palaces, its glorious temple. It was so beautiful that men were *fascinated* by it, *charmed* by it, and irresistibly *drawn* to it for their dwelling. In the spirit it sets forth the harmony, the perfection, the beauty, the fellowship, the perfect unity of the living stones of the New Jerusalem! These living stones, which are built upon the only foundation, Jesus Christ, are *compacted together* in Him, through the drawing and welding of the Holy Spirit. It is not the unity promoted by commitment to a preacher, a ministry, a church, a movement, or a doctrine, but the love of Christ, the purpose of God, and the power of the Spirit which sovereignly draws them together, and they are made steadfast through the deep dealings and processings of the Lord. Oh, yes!

Men can build movements and little kingdoms around themselves or their ministry, but no man can build up the city of God! Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose ***builder and maker is God!*** Today, that city is found! It is God Himself who joins member to member and builds all together as an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ray Prinzing shared a thought which is most fitting here. “Thus Abraham sought — looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. This was in contrast to Cain — we read, ‘Cain went out from the presence of the Lord...and he builded a city’ (Gen.

4:16-17). If we walk after the way of the flesh, and the world, we seek to build our own city, we seek to establish our own kingdom and our own righteousness — and all we have wrought is a magnification of VANITY. But when we cease from our own works, and SEEK HIM who is the Builder and Maker — then HE builds the city. Indeed, ‘Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it’ (Ps. 127:1). How many yet ‘LABOR IN VAIN!’ Here the Hebrew word is *shav* meaning vanity, falsehood. They think they are building something true, but it is useless, fitted for destruction, a counterfeit to the real. Only Christ can live the CHRIST-LIFE through us. Only GOD can do the works OF GOD! So it is imperative that we come into UNION WITH HIM, to be led by His Spirit, so that whatever we do is ‘not by might, nor by power, but BY MY SPIRIT, saith the Lord’ (Zech. 4:6)” — end quote.

The bride of Christ is both a city and a woman, and as a woman we find the same principle of God “building” this heavenly reality and company. I love this that we read about the first figure of this bride of Christ — Eve in the Garden. “And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, *made* He a woman, and brought her unto the man” (Gen. 2:21-22). God separated Eve from Adam, so that the graces and powers of man are divided; only in the twain is there “one flesh.” When God took a “rib” from Adam, the Hebrew word is *tsela* used elsewhere of “side,” or “side chamber,” or just “chamber.” Obviously God took more than just a bone, but that whole *chamber of the womb*, and from this He built a womb-man or woman. From that time on she would help, assist the man to bring forth after his kind and share a joint dominion with him over all the works of God’s hands.

The Hebrew reading is that out of that chamber the Lord took from Adam he ‘**built**’ a woman. The Hebrew word is *banah* and the only true definition of the word given in Strong’s Concordance is “to build.” God took this organ from Adam to use as material to **build** and I am sure by the time she was completed and God breathed into her the breath of life, this first bride that bore the earthly image was a beautiful creature indeed! We could say she was **well built!** There is no doubt that she was the perfect specimen of womanhood and without doubt she was, as they say, drop-dead gorgeous! I can’t imagine how beautiful Eve was before the fall. We have seen a lot of beautiful creatures, but they are only creatures bearing the image of the fallen race, and what beauty was in Eve before the fall can’t be fathomed. God started from that “chamber” of Adam’s being and began to build and He built — constructed, developed, erected, raised up, framed, fashioned, composed, and put her together just like He wanted her to be, and then He brought her to Adam and presented her to him, and she was so marvelous in Adam’s eyes!

In the same way Jerusalem, the beautiful city of God, is a city *compacted together* — **built** by the hand of God! Any number of houses without inhabitants would not be a city, and on the other hand millions of people turned loose on the prairie would not be a city, for don’t you see that a city is a *compound structure* of houses filled with people and of streets? The houses form the material framework, and the people are the *real you*, like the soul and spirit dwelling in the body. In this glorious city the outer man, that is, the outward expression and outward ministry is the house — the inner man, the life-flow out of the spirit, is the inhabitant. Both Paul and Peter referred to their body as a “tabernacle.” The two united together — outward and inward — as the expression of HIS GLORY make the city of God. Body and soul united with spirit in a divine union form a “palace” or a “mansion” in the New Jerusalem city. “And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, *costly* stones, to lay the foundation of the house (temple). And Solomon’s builders, and Hiram’s builders did hew them, and the stonesquarers, so they PREPARED TIMBER AND STONES TO BUILD THE HOUSE” (I Kings 5:17-18). “And the house (Solomon’s temple), when it was in building, was built of stone MADE READY BEFORE IT WAS BROUGHT THITHER: so that there was neither hammer nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building” (I Kings 6:7). “For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell *in them*, and walk *in them*, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (II Cor. 6:16).

Truly the glory of the latter house shall exceed the glory of the former, as the New Jerusalem exceeds in glory the old Jerusalem — a whole new dimension of His glory and an entirely new arrangement is at hand. The primary work of this hour, I believe, is an **individual** work. It is like Solomon’s temple. Long before there was the “putting together” of all the members of that magnificent edifice and the filling of the house with Glory, there was an extensive and extended preliminary **individual work** wrought meticulously upon each member. The giant cedars of Lebanon were cut down, each board was hewed and shaped. The gold was mined, refined, and beaten into form by the artisans. The exquisite tapestries were cut and sewn. Each stone was individually quarried and chiseled to perfection. Only after all that

individual preparation was completed was the building raised up and compacted together WITHOUT THE SOUND OF A HAMMER OR ANY INSTRUMENT!

Seems to me many brethren have tried to put the body of Christ together as a visible organism and expression *before* the deep work of preparation has been fully accomplished upon each “living stone.” That is why we continually have divisions, church splits, groups and efforts that fall apart, and ministries that self-destruct. If you try to build this city by carnal strength or soulish manipulation you will hear the sound of many hammers — but it *still won't stand!* If your “group” has fallen apart, if your “church” has split, if your “congregation” has changed then nothing you have done represents the “building up” of God’s house — though the ***individual work*** may have partially been accomplished in some lives. Nearly all the efforts today accomplish some aspect of that individual work which precedes the raising up of the temple of God. As Alma McClure once pointed out, that explains why we so often find ourselves alone, on the backside of the desert, not fitting in with any group, even when we have tried to do so. But don’t get under condemnation in the meantime, my beloved, as God works HIS PREPARATION within you! Because He will be joining PREPARED member to PREPARED member! Often it takes the isolation, the separation, the ostracism, to *prepare* you to be a temple stone truly shaped by the Lord, to be effectually fitted and joined to that stone God has in mind to set you next to! Each stone was “made ready at the quarry” and that certainly helps us to understand the *strange path* that many have been required to travel! Yes, the hammer, ax, and iron tools of the Lord’s choosing have struck us in our place of preparation, and we have cried out in pain, not understanding why the trials have been so great, and seemingly without end! But be of good cheer! In the fullness of time God’s temple of sons and God’s bride-city WILL come together — by a sudden, powerful, sovereign move of God! That is the mystery.

Jesus walked among the people, calling twelve, and seventy, then multitudes of disciples, teaching, preaching, healing, doing signs and wonders, demonstrating the kingdom of God. There were vast multitudes of people who followed Him, but there was no cohesion, shape, or form. It was an *unstructured* kingdom. It was a great company of stones not yet assembled. Against that backdrop He left them and ascended up on high. He left His disciples, only a little flock, with all the powers of earth arrayed against them, as defenseless sheep in a wilderness, surrounded by wolves. He left a mere handful of ignorant and unlearned men and women: poor, despised, and rejected. He left a few uncouth fishermen and a publican to conquer a world of sin and shame. But when the day of Pentecost was *fully come, suddenly...* God put something together, stood it up in the earth, and revealed His glory. They came off victors through grace and turned the world of that day upside-down, the bloodstained banner waving from one end of the Roman Empire to the other. What a transformation the Spirit’s power wrought!

We stand today in an hour not unlike those days preceding the day of Pentecost. The next great Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, is about to “fully come.” The Christ is among us in a fresh manifestation, there is a new message going forth, a declaration concerning the next step and phase of the kingdom of God — the perfection of the bride of Christ and the manifestation of the sons of God. There is a unique dealing of God in these significant days and an urgency to enter into the greater glory to come. The bride is being adorned for the marriage of the Lamb, the manifest sons of God are ascending the heavenly mount Zion, the city foursquare is coming down from God out of heaven, the tabernacle of God shall be among men, and the new order for the new age will soon be birthed sovereignly BY GOD HIMSELF when the fullness of time has arrived. The greater temple will speedily arise in glory and majesty and power in the earth *without the sound of a hammer* — with no carnal efforts or soulish works to produce it. In the meantime we must individually submit ourselves to Father’s dealings, and the word and ministry He sends our way, continuing to press experientially into Him, in preparation for the manifestation of His life without measure.

The holy city descends, John tells us, “*as a bride adorned for her husband.*” Let us visualize the scene. The day has come. All the planning for the wedding is over. The guests are ushered in, and the attendants parade to the front of the sanctuary. Before entering the sanctuary himself, the minister stops to see the bride, who is waiting impatiently for the musical cue that tells her everything is ready. The minister compliments her on the gown she is wearing. It is more beautiful than any he has ever seen! Radiating love, she informs him that her husband-to-be designed it just for her.

May I say to you that the bridegroom, in my judgment, is the most short-changed thing in a modern wedding that’s imaginable. The minister takes his place and the bridegroom comes out and walks down and stands before him, and nobody pays any attention to the bridegroom, nobody acts excited when he comes

out. The only one that smiles is his mother! She smiles at him, but no one else does. And now the moment arrives for the bride to come out. And I want to tell you that every head in the building is turned! Why? They want to see how she is attired, what she wears. She is the main attraction! And I am of the opinion that that is just the reason a great many people go to weddings to hear the same ceremony repeated again and again — you go through the same thing every time. YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT THE BRIDE WEARS!

I think of another wedding with a bride who is dressed in that which her Groom has designed — in materials that He purchased Himself, and which she with great care and effort attired herself with, and she too is clothed with beauty! In chapters twenty-one and twenty-two of the Revelation she is eager for her musical cue, she has the kind of excitement that pertains to a bride, and then she steps forth and walks down the isle of the universe and the heads of men, and women, and cities, and nations, and of all creation are turned to behold her in all her beauty! It is the greatest wedding of all history. It is the wedding of the bride of Christ and the Lamb! And the Lamb is mentioned in those chapters and at His wedding, but like the modern day bridegrooms He does not take center stage but remains in the background. And He doesn't mind at all, for, after all, He is receiving His beloved and glorious bride and HE wants her displayed for all to behold! Oh, yes! *“Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready”* (Rev. 19:7).

To be continued...

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