

Fulness: In the New Jerusalem

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung's sermon explores the New Jerusalem as the ultimate manifestation of Christ's fullness and God's eternal purpose for His people.

Duration: 1:02:53

Scripture: Ephesians 2:20, Revelation 21:1-7, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "New Jerusalem"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that God's will is being fulfilled in time, despite occasional setbacks. The work of redemption was completed through Jesus' crucifixion and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The speaker highlights the goal of believers to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, deny themselves, and follow Jesus. The sermon concludes with a call to worship God and a prayer for a deeper understanding of the vision of the New Jerusalem.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the book of Revelation? Chapter 21. Revelation Chapter 21. We'll read from the first verse through verse seven.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the fourth earth had passed away, and the sea exists no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice out of the heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them their God, and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall not exist any more, nor grief, nor cry, nor distress shall exist any more, for the former things have passed away.

And he that sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he says to me, Write, for these words are true and faithful. And he said to me, It is done.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him the thirst of the fountain, of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit those things, and I will be to him God.

Chapter Twenty-Two, Verse Twenty. He that testifies these things says, Yea, I come quickly. Amen.

Come, Lord. Lord, as we come to the last session of the ministry of Thy word, we do acknowledge Thee as the end, as Thou art the beginning. We just commit this time into Thy hands and ask Thee again that Thou wilt open our eyes, that we may see what Thy servant John saw.

We pray that our hearts will really be touched by Thee and be drawn to Thee, that we may cry out, Come, Lord Jesus, in the name of our Lord Jesus. This is the last session of the ministry of God's word. Through the week, by the grace of God, we have shared with you on this matter of trust on to fullness.

First of all, we must see the fullness of Christ, and having seen His fullness, we are called to enter into it. We have gone through the whole New Testament, the fullness of Christ in the Gospel, in the book of Acts, in the epistles, and in the book of Revelation. And now we come to the end of the last book of the Bible.

In other words, here we see the consummation of all things. We see the fullness of Christ manifested in all things. Even before the foundation of the world, in eternity past, God has made a will according to His good pleasure.

He wants His Son to have the first place in all things. And that is to say, He wants all things to manifest the glory of His Beloved. He wants the fullness of Himself that is located in His Son to fill all things.

God made this will according to His good pleasure. And then He began to work in time. Even though we find that during that period called time, it seems as if His plan was frustrated from time to time.

But we do thank God that He continued to work until one day His will will be fully realized. In the fullness of time, God sent His Beloved Son into the world. And when His Son was crucified on the cross, before He gave up His spirit to the Father, He shouted with a loud shout, it is finished.

That is to say, the work of redemption is finished. He has laid the foundation for the restoration of all things. He has reconciled all things by the blood of the cross to His fullness.

And after that, it is just a development of that which has been laid. And now when you come to Revelation chapter 21, you find that God declared, behold, I have made all things new. It is done.

The word it is done actually means they are fulfilled. And there you find the Apostle John, he saw the old heaven and the old earth have passed away, burned. There will be a new heaven and a new earth.

And he saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from above from God upon this earth. And this city, New Jerusalem, is the manifestation of the fullness of Christ in a topperate way. This morning, we want to see that vision.

The vision that the Apostle John saw almost 2,000 years ago. You know, when John saw the New Jerusalem, the tabernacle of God, coming to man. When he saw this, you know what he did? It was so good, tremendous, that he fell down and worshipped the messenger, because the news was so good.

And of course the angel said, no, don't do that. We are fellow servants. Worship God.

You know, in this book of Revelation, I think it is very interesting if you notice the reaction of John. Sometimes you find John wept, and now you find he did a most foolish thing, as it were. You know, John knew the law so well, he knew God so well, and yet somehow you'll find when he saw that vision of New Jerusalem, it touched his heart so much that he forgot he worshipped the angel.

And he was forbidden to do that. Now, you must understand the feeling of John at that moment. And if you understand his feeling, probably you will not blame him.

Brothers and sisters, do we have the same reaction? If we see New Jerusalem, if we see what God has done, brothers and sisters, we will really be beside ourselves. We do not know what to do, and we will really worship God. What a God we have.

What He has done. The holy city, the New Jerusalem, is the corporate expression of the fullness of Christ. Truly it is that body that is filled with the fullness.

Now, in order to know this New Jerusalem, probably it will be good for us to know what Jerusalem is. I think we are all familiar with the name Jerusalem. It is a city, a city of peace.

It is a city on earth that God put His name there. It is a city in which there is the temple of Solomon. In other words, in that city God dwells.

In that city He rules. In that city He is served and worshiped. And the people of God will grow to that city, as the psalmist said, the twelve tribes will go to that city as a testimony, a testimony of the oneness of God's people.

And out of that city the law goes forth. And all the nations will come and bring their tribute. This is Jerusalem on earth.

The first mentioning of Jerusalem is found in Genesis chapter fourteen. We find that when Abraham defeated the four kings, rescued Lot, and as he came back from victory, he was met by a king, Melchizedek, king of Salem. You know, it is really a very strange thing, because there you find the land of Canaan, where the seven tribes, the Canaanites, live.

And we know that the Canaanites represent the evil forces in this world. And they occupied that land. But in the midst of these seven tribes of the Canaanites, you find there was a city, the city of Salem, of peace.

And there was a king in that city, Melchizedek, the king of righteousness. And he came to meet Abraham. He gave Abraham wine and bread.

And he blessed Abraham. Brothers and sisters, that is the first mentioning of Salem, the city of Salem, Jerusalem. And then later on you find this city was occupied by the Jebusites.

And in second Samuel, when David became king, the first thing he did, he went and took Jerusalem out of the hand of the Jebusites, and made it the capital there. Why? Because evidently, by revelation, he knew that this was the place where God had chosen to put his name there. So he set his throne there.

And then Solomon, his son, built the temple there. After the nation of Israel was divided into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah, Jerusalem remained as the capital of the southern kingdom for about five hundred years. And then we know it was destroyed by the Babylonian army.

And the people of God were taken into Babylonian captivity. Even though it is the city of peace. But we find that this city knew more turmoil, confusion, war, than any other city in the world.

This city had been occupied by many nations. But we find in the book of Isaiah, chapter two, we find that at the end of the days, the mountain of God's house will be lifted up, and all nations will flow into it.

Brothers and sisters, this is Jerusalem.

But even this Jerusalem will pass away. Because when the old earth passed away, Jerusalem on earth also will pass away. But what God is really after is what Jerusalem on earth represents.

What God really is after is that new Jerusalem. In other words, all that Jerusalem represents will be realized fully in new Jerusalem. That new Jerusalem is not earthly.

It is heavenly. It descends from heaven upon the new earth. This new Jerusalem is not physical.

It is spiritual. Can you imagine a city as wife? Surely this should tell us that what God desires to show us is the principles, is the spiritual reality, not a literal city. New Jerusalem is a city.

But it is not a literal city. How can a city become a wife? But we find that all the characteristics, the principles, the spiritual principles are all being manifested in this new Jerusalem. Just like when we say, our Lord Jesus is the Lamb of God.

He is a Lamb. But is He literally a Lamb? Of course not. He is the Lamb of God because He has the spirit, the character of the Lamb.

And this is the same thing with that holy city, the new Jerusalem. It is the final, corporate expression of the fullness of Christ. The foundation that Christ has laid on Calvary's cross and God has built is finalized in that city.

As a matter of fact, even Abraham looked forward to that city. You remember in Hebrews chapter 11, Abraham was a pilgrim, a stranger, sojourning in the promised land. And the Bible said, if he wants to return to his own home, his own Caldea, he could do that.

But he was looking forward to a city with foundations, built by God Himself. Brothers and sisters, all the saints in the Old Testament time, and all the saints in the New Testament time, we are all looking forward to that city, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, that God has built, and it will be the fullness of Christ in a corporate. First of all, this new Jerusalem is a city.

A city speaks to us of unity. A city is a unit, is an aggregate of people, many but one, many people, but they live together as one unit. Under one government, under one rule, one administration, this is what a city is.

I have to intrude into my brother's territory, because he did it last night. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 13, you know there is a goal before us, and that goal is until we all arrive at the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God. Here you are.

This new Jerusalem is a city. It is the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God. It is made of many people, but they are one.

They are one under one government, and that government is upon the shoulder of our Lord Jesus. There He is the head. He is the Lord, unchallenged, fully submitted.

One day this will become a reality. This is not only a city, this is a bride, the Lamb's wife. When you think of wife, bride, it tells us of union.

It tells us of growth. It tells us of love. As our brother mentioned last night, you cannot have a wife that is a baby.

He has to be full grown. We are the body of Christ today, and how our Lord Jesus loves His body. No one hates His body, and here you will find our Lord Jesus loves His body.

He sanctifies it, purifies it with the washing of the water by the Word, in order to present that body to Himself. A glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any of such sort, holy and blameless. Brothers and sisters, this body is growing, is growing into maturity, into a full grown man, and when it has become a full grown man, then our Lord will return and take her to be His bride.

There will be that eternal union, and there will be that everlasting love unto a full grown man. And again you'll find this city is not only the Lamb's wife, it is also the tabernacle of God among men. Brothers and sisters, it is the eternal purpose of God, eternal wish of God, to dwell among His own.

He created man in His own image, gives him the capacity to receive God into him, that God may dwell in him and among men. After He redeemed the children of Israel out of Egypt, He revealed to these redeemed people His purpose of delivering them. God did not deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt just that they might be free to do anything they want to do.

God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt with a very specific reason, and He did not reveal that reason until He took them to the Mount of Sinai, and there He revealed to them He wanted to dwell among them. So He asked them to build a tabernacle for Him, that He might live among His people. And later on you'll find David, who loved God very much, who knew God's heart, he desired to build a permanent house for God, and God was pleased, and His son Solomon built the temple.

And when the tabernacle was erected, the glory of God came and filled the tabernacle. When the temple was built, the glory of God again came and filled that temple. In other words, He loved the ages, but the temple was destroyed.

The Son of God came into this world. He was the real temple of God. The glory of God rests upon Him.

We contemplate His glory, even as the glory of the only begotten with the Father. But that glory was veiled, because He came in the flesh. The glory was there within, but it was veiled.

People did not see it. Only those with spiritual eyes could see it. Throughout His life on earth, only once that glory broke out.

It was an amount of transfiguration. But did the glory of God ever departed from that temple? It did. When our Lord Jesus cried out, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me? The glory.

There was darkness upon this earth, because God's beloved Son is made a sin offering. But thank God, now our Lord Jesus is crowned with glory. He has returned to His glory.

He poured out His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and glory filled the spiritual. Brothers and sisters, on the day of Pentecost, we see a hundred and twenty people. They were baptized in one Spirit into one body, and the glory of God in the Spirit filled that body.

But unfortunately, we find how the church has failed. But thank God the day is coming, when He shall have His tabernacle. And you'll find the glory will fill that tabernacle, and it will never depart.

And God will dwell among men. God's purpose will be fulfilled. An angel said to John, do you want to have a closer look of that new Jerusalem? I will show you.

So that angel took him to a high mountain in the Spirit, and he saw that city full of glory. It has the shining of the glory. What is glory? Many people have tried to explain.

Many people try to define. But brothers and sisters, we find that whatever definition we may try, it really, in a sense, confine, limit what glory is. Glory is undefinable.

What is glory? Glory is what God is. Glory is the sum total of the character of God. Glory is His presence and His satisfaction.

And here you'll find this city shines with the glory of God. In other words, it is a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any of such. This city is so transparent that the glory of God can shine through it without distortion, without discount.

To put it in another way, it is full of glory, full of God, nothing else. And then as John looked at this city, he found her shining was like a most precious stone, as a crystal-like jasper stone. We know jasper stone.

We first read it in chapter four of the book of Revelation. When John was taken in spirit to heaven, he saw a throne, and there one sitting upon the throne. And the appearance of the one on the throne is like jasper and sardius.

So jasper here represents the character, the nature of God. So the shining is like a most precious stone as a crystal-like jasper stone. In other words, this city has taken up the nature and character of God.

It is crystal-like. In other words, it shines through without any interruption. It is all of God, nothing.

Then John saw this city. Actually this city was a cube, because the length and the width and the height are equal. He measured it, an angel measured it with a golden reed, and you find the measurement of the width and the length and the height is 12,000 stadia, which is approximately 1,500 miles.

Can you think of a city 1,500 miles up, 1,500 miles wide, 1,500 miles long? It will be from New York, I don't know to where, to Miami. And not only the width and the length, but the height, 12,000 stadia. It is the multiple of 12.

And 12 in the scripture speaks of perfection. So here you'll find it is perfect measurement, up to the full measure, unto the measure of the statue of the fullness of Christ. That is what it is.

And the wall is 144 cubits, roughly 200 feet, that is the wall. Again a multiple of 12, perfect. So you'll find this whole city is just perfect.

We will be like Him, as He is, by the grace of God. Grace will do that. And the wall is made of jasper.

We mentioned already jasper represents the nature, character of God. What is a wall for? You see, wall in the scripture is very important. The problem in the beginning of human history is a problem of wall.

Because there is a garden, but there is no wall. Actually God wants Adam to be that wall, but Adam failed. So you'll find the enemy crept in, tempted man, and man failed.

No wall. Wall is separation. Wall is protection.

Wall, walls in all that is within it. And it excludes all that is without it. Wall is very important in the scripture.

You'll find in the recovery of Jerusalem, you have to have the wall built up. Even though the temple was rebuilt, but without a wall, it wasn't finished. But here you'll find a finished product, the wall.

And the wall is 144 cubits. We have never seen a wall that high. It is a perfect separation.

And that wall is made of jasper. In other words, it is the very life of God that makes the separation. The full life of God.

The full separation. And we know separation is but another word of holiness. This is a holy city.

This is a city that is separated from all that is not of God. And it includes all that is of God. Well, brothers and sisters, what is holiness? We are supposed to be a holy nation, a holy people.

We are supposed to be separated from the world. Separated from anything that is not of God. But how are we separate? Are we separated by keeping some rules and regulations? No.

We are separated by the life. The reason why you find God's people are not holy, are not separated as we should be. It is not because we do not have enough rules and regulations.

It is because we are lacking in life. As we grow in life, in the life of God, in Christ Jesus, brothers and sisters, it naturally separates us from all that is not of God. It will separate us from the world, from ourselves, from self, from sea, from the enemy, from anything that is not of God.

And it will keep us in all that is of God. So here you'll find holiness is completed. Brothers and sisters, it is not the will of God in Ephesians chapter 1, it says, that God wants us to be holy and without blameless before Him in love.

And here you'll find holiness. This is a holy city. Twelve foundations with twelve precious stones, bearing the name of the twelve apostles.

Now brothers and sisters, we all know that this city with foundations that God built, in one sense it has only one foundation. The apostle Paul tells us there is no other foundation, but the foundation that he has laid, which is Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus Himself declared, I will build my church upon this rock, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

In other words, He is the rock. He is the foundation. He is the foundation of that holy city, New Jerusalem.

And yet you'll find the scripture says there are twelve foundations of twelve precious stones. And even in Ephesians chapter 2, you'll find it is said that the apostles and the prophets, they are the foundations of that habitation of God. Now is there any contradiction? No.

Why? Because here you'll find these twelve precious stones, even though they are all distinct, different. One represents Peter, one represents John, one represents James, and you'll find they are all different. There is still that individuality there.

You can recognize these different stones. They are not just one stone, one kind of precious stone, but they are all different precious stones. They all have different color and different brilliancy.

And yet, brothers and sisters, even though you do have all the differences, but they are just the varieties of Christ in each. In other words, the apostles do not have their teachings. The teaching of the apostles is none other but the teaching of Christ.

The apostles have no other fellowship but the fellowship of Christ. It is through the prophets and the apostles that Christ is made known to us. And that is the reason why we find the foundations of the prophets and the teachers.

But in actuality, it is Christ. Outwardly, you see Peter. Actually, it is Christ in Peter.

The gates are made of pearls. Pearl speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit. How the Holy Spirit works very patiently in us, in order to bring us to Christ.

It bears the name of the twelve tribes of Israel, because salvation comes from the Jews. You have the shining of the glory of God. You have the foundations of the work of Christ Jesus.

You have the gates of the pearls of the operation of the Holy Spirit. In other words, here you will find the Triune God has done the work and produced this holy city, New Jerusalem. Look a little bit closer.

And you find this city is made of gold. You remember in the temple, the house that Solomon built, he overlaid the house with gold. But here you find the whole city is gold.

It is not just overlaid with gold. It is pure gold. It is transparent gold.

We have never seen such gold. Gold represents again the nature of God. So you find this whole city is built with God's own nature.

There is nothing of wood. Of straw. It is all of God.

Again it is transparent. And there is only one street there. People try to figure out with that huge city, twelve gates, how can it be that there is only one street? And some people come up with the idea of a spiral that goes around and around and around until it reaches the top where the throne of God and the Lamb is.

But anyway you find there is only one street. And the street is of gold. You know, we often sing the song that we walk on the street of gold.

I don't know if you really like it. Because that gold is transparent Street in the scripture speaks of fellowship. You walk on the street.

You go and come on the street. It speaks of fellowship. And here you find the fellowship of all the things.

We have only one fellowship. One street. Today you have many bypass.

But in New Jerusalem there is no bypass. Only one street. Today you find this fellowship and that fellowship.

You find that we want to fellowship with these people but we don't want fellowship with that people. But in that day you will find there is only one fellowship. It is the fellowship of God's Son.

It is the fellowship in the Spirit. It is the fellowship of the saints. One fellowship.

And all fellowship leads to the throne. And it all comes from the throne. You know, brothers and sisters, what is fellowship? Oftentimes we think gossip is fellowship.

It does not lead us to the throne. Neither does it come forth from the throne. Fellowship.

Through fellowship we are being led to God. Fellowship comes from God. From Christ.

We fellowship Christ. And the more we fellowship, the more we draw nigh. And that fellowship is really open fellowship.

There is no hiding. Because the goal is transparent. Everything in you is visible.

Every thought is visible. Every word is heard. There is no hiding.

It is open fellowship. Brothers and sisters, how we long for that. Today, you know, when we fellowship with one another, somehow we try to cover up something.

We have to. There is still not that open fellowship. No hiding.

Transparent to one another. Wonderful. When that day, strangely there is not only just one street.

There is only one river. There is a river of life that comes, flows out from the throne of God. And this river goes through the whole city.

I don't know whether that river is in the midst of the street. And then you'll find tree of life. Just one tree.

But that one tree covers the whole city. On this side and that side of the street. And that tree produces twelve fruits.

One in each season. Of course we know that river of life signifies the Holy Spirit. Here you'll find the Holy Spirit.

The fullness of the Spirit. It flows through the whole city. And it produces the fruit according to season, according to needs.

There is no lacking. The center of that city is the throne. The throne of God and of the Lamb.

And all who are in that city, they are kings. They have the name of God upon their forehead. And they serve God.

Brothers and sisters, this is the picture of eternity. This is the picture when God's will is fully realized. This is the picture of the fullness of Christ manifested in a culprit.

This is what God is doing. This is what the Spirit of God is working in each one of us until we arrive. Until God has what He wants.

Until the Son has His bride. Brothers and sisters, is it a dream? It is real. With man it is impossible.

But with God all things are possible. He is doing it. He will do it.

He who calls us is faithful. He will perform it. For brothers and sisters, when we are given such a vision of what eventually, finally, God will possess, is our heart stirred just like John did? Are we really attracted by

what we see? Are we now willing to give up everything? Are we willing to cooperate with the Holy Spirit? Are we willing to deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow Him? Because this is the goal.

This is what by the grace of God we will arrive. For God and for ourselves. Brothers and sisters, what a God we have.

How good, precious are His thoughts. What He has done for us in Christ Jesus. What He is laboring by His Spirit patiently with us even now.

May we always have that vision before us. And may we be a worshiper. Dear Heavenly Father, our God, we worship Thee.

What Thou has willed is beyond our thinking, our comprehension. But we know that Thou has purposed. In Thy beloved Son, such a tremendous, glorious, O how we praise and thank Thee the day is coming when the glory of God shall fill the universe, when the fullness of Christ shall fill all things.

Praise and thank God that Thou has called us with such a high calling. O our cry unto Thee is, may that day come. Come Lord Jesus.

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