

# The 7th Vision: The New Jerusalem

by Stephen Kaung

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*The holy city, New Jerusalem, is the consummation of God's desire to dwell with man, where God's people worship him in a city of peace, unity, and oneness under the government of God's Son.*

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:1-7, Revelation 22:1-5, Revelation 22:13-14, Revelation 22:17

**Topics:** "Eternal City", "Christ Exalted"

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## Description

In this sermon on the book of Revelation, the preacher focuses on the last of the seven visions in the book. This vision represents the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose and the manifestation of eternal reality. The preacher describes the heavenly city, emphasizing its crystal-like jasper walls and its height of 144 cubits. The city is seen as a corporate expression of Christ, where Christ is all and in all. The preacher emphasizes that this is the purpose of God, for Christ to be all and in all.

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## Transcript

Conformable to your death, that we may know you, wonderful Lord. Will you please turn to Revelation chapter 21. Revelation chapter 21.

We'll read from verse 1 through verse 7. Revelation chapter 21, verse 1 through verse 7. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first 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 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 said 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 that thirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be to him God, and he shall be to me son.

Maybe we'll read just another portion. Chapter 22. Chapter 22, verse 1 through verse 5. And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, going out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

And in the midst of his street and of the river, on this side and on that side, the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, in each month yielding its fruit, and the leaves of the tree for healing of the nation. And no curse shall be any more, and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it. And his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name is on their forehead.

And night shall not be any more, and no need of the lamp and light of the sun, for the Lord God shall shine upon them, and they shall reign to the ages of ages. We have been considering together this book of Revelation. We believe that God wants us to see his son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in relation to our time.

That is, to see the Lord Jesus in the light of the end days. And for this we find a series of seven visions of our Lord Jesus being given. Now this morning we come to the last of the seven visions.

It is the consummation of all the visions that have gone before. Because in this vision we shall see the fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God, and the manifestation of eternal reality. Here you'll find John said, I saw.

He again saw something. And what did he see? He saw the holy city. New Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Now what is the meaning of the holy city, New Jerusalem? It is explained in the next verse. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with man, and he shall tabernacle with us. This holy city, New Jerusalem, is the tabernacle of God with man.

Now dear brothers and sisters, we know that from the very beginning, it is the will of God that he should tabernacle with man. It is for this reason that he created man in the first place. And after he created man, he put man in the garden of Eden, before the tree of life.

God desired not only that external communication with man. It is true that God came to the garden and talked with man. But God's purpose is more than that.

God desired not only to have an external communication with man, whom he created. But God's desire is that man might eat the tree of life. That is to say, that man might receive his life and come into union with him.

So that there will be an inward relationship of life. And also an inner communion with God. In other words, God desired to dwell among man.

And the word dwell probably can be better expressed by another word, to abide. It is the will of God that he will abide with and in man. So that man may abide in God.

And we know the word abide simply means to make home. God's desire is to make his home in man and with man. And thus man may find in God their eternal home.

So it is the original thought of God to tabernacle, to dwell, to abide in and with man. But unfortunately, man failed. Because man rebelled against God's command.

The will of God was frustrated. The work of God, the plan of God was delayed. But the purpose of God never changed.

And because of that we find in the scripture how God began to work. As our Lord Jesus said, My Father worketh until now, and I work. First, he delivered a nation, Israel, out of Egypt.

He brought them to himself. And then at Mount Sinai, he gave them not only the law, but the tabernacle. God expressed his desire to his redeemed people, Israel.

Saying that, I want to dwell among you. And for this reason, build me a tabernacle. God could dwell among his people, Israel, through the tabernacle.

And of course we know primarily that tabernacle represents our Lord Jesus. How can God dwell among man except through our Lord Jesus? And secondarily, the tabernacle also represents the church. It is because of the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus that a new tabernacle, a new body is being raised.

And then of course when our Lord Jesus came to this earth, it is said in John chapter 1 verse 14, And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among men, full of grace and truth. When our Lord Jesus was on earth, he was the tabernacle of God on earth. Through him God tabernacled among men.

But after his death and resurrection, he received a new body, a corporate body, the body of Christ, the church. And from that day until now, the church of God is the tabernacle of God among men. God is able to present himself to mankind through the church.

And God is to be seen, to be heard through the church. This is what a church is, the tabernacle of God with men. So thank God in the final stage, we will find the tabernacle of God is the holy city, the New Jerusalem.

The holy city, the New Jerusalem, is the consummation, is the gathering up of all the works of God throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament. Because there in the holy city you will find it is the composite of the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints. And this will become the holy city, the New Jerusalem.

This will become the tabernacle of God with man. And this will be the permanent, eternal tabernacle of God with man. God will dwell with man on the new earth through that tabernacle.

And it will continue on for eternity. John said, I saw the holy city. Now this holy city is the wife of the land.

How can a city be a wife? Certainly you cannot take this in the literal sense. You have to take it in the spiritual sense. What is a city? What does a city represent? A city speaks of a unity.

Many yet one. Because in a city you find many people. And yet these many people become one city, one unity.

A city is where the government is. Therefore when you speak of a city, it reminds you of the government. There is a government and only one government over that city.

A city speaks of order. There is an order there. It is not just something disorganized, something disintegrated, scattered.

But a city speaks of a divine order, an order there. And of course development. Therefore it speaks that in the final consummation, God will have a city, which is a unity, a oneness, under the government of his son.

Because government shall be upon his shoulder. And there will be a divine order. And a city speaks not only of separation, but speaks of protection.

It is separated. And yet it is protected. It is called a holy city.

You know the word holy simply means set apart. It is in opposition to being common. It is not something common.

It is not something for every purpose. But it is set apart for one purpose only and that is to be for the Lord. The wife of the Lamb.

That city is for the Lord and nothing else. It is called the New Jerusalem. And the Jerusalem of old was to the nation of Israel.

So this New Jerusalem is to us. Jerusalem means peace. It is the city of peace.

But strange to say, this peace does not come easily. It has to go through many conflicts, many battles, many controversies, many travails. But finally when the Prince of Peace shall return, there will be peace in Jerusalem.

And we are exhorted to pray for the peace of the city of peace. Dear brothers and sisters, this is what the New Jerusalem will be. It will be a city of peace.

But it is not a peace that comes by compromise, by negotiation, which is never lasting. But it is a peace that comes by purity and by righteousness. When the Prince of Peace shall rule over this earth, then you'll find he will rule through this city, the New Jerusalem.

He shall reign in that city, and through that city he shall reign over the whole earth. Jerusalem is the center of the national life of the people of Israel. We find it is said in Psalms that twelve tribes will flow together to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

Therefore Jerusalem is the very center of the life together of the twelve tribes of Israel. Dear brothers and sisters, this is what New Jerusalem will be to us. It will be the center of our life together.

We are no longer scattered, but we shall all be together and it will be centered upon the Lord who is the very center of that city. Jerusalem is where the temple is and where the throne is. The temple of God was built on Mount Moriah and the throne of David was set up on Mount Zion and Jerusalem is built on these mountains.

So in Jerusalem you have the temple. In Jerusalem you have the throne. In Jerusalem there is worship.

In Jerusalem there is dominion and authority. So this New Jerusalem we find the same thing. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be set in the center of that city.

There will be no temple in the city. Why? Because the whole city is a temple. There his people shall worship him, there his people shall serve him and there his people shall reign as king forever and forever.

So dear brothers and sisters, here you will find at the very last you will have the holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. Everything is ready and this is the wife of the Lamb in a very real sense. When you look at this city you will find this city is nothing but a corporate expression of Christ.

In that city you will find Christ is indeed all and in all. There is nothing but Christ. And yet it is Christ being all in all to us all.

And we know this is the purpose of God. That Christ may be all and in all. Now just look at this city for a moment.

When John saw that city coming down out of heaven of course first he saw the outward of that city and then gradually he was led into the city and even to the center of that city. Whatever he saw outwardly was but the manifestation of what was inwardly or what was in the center of that city. Now first of all you will find he saw the outward appearance of that city.

When the city descending down from heaven he said he saw that city with the shining of God. It shined with the shining of God. Now why is it? Because God is... God and the Lamb are the light of that city.

In that city there is no need for sun or for moon. Why God himself, the Lamb is the lamp thereof. God is the light and the Lamb is the lamp thereof.

In other words God enlightens that city. But there is another point we have to remember. Why is it that John saw the shining of God in that city? Because all the materials of that city are made of such that they are all transparent.

Whether they are gold, they are transparent gold. Now we have never seen any gold that is transparent because there is always impurity there. But one day you will find the gold there is transparent like crystal.

You can see through it. And the wall is made of jasper, precious stone, blue color. And yet it is crystal like jasper.

Now you have never seen a crystal like jasper today. Why? Because today there is so much impurity. But one day you will find the wall is made of crystal like jasper.

In other words you will find a material. Not only the material represents Christ. But there is no shadow, there is no shade.

It is all crystal like, it is all transparent. There is no spot, no wrinkle. In other words when the light of God shines through these metals, through these stones, through these things, you will find that the light just shines through.

There is no resistance, there is no detraction, reflection, deflection. But you will find the light is able to shine right through the whole city. The whole city is so transparent.

The light of God just shines through it. And not only through it but being magnified by it. The reflection of light in that city is tremendous.

And this is the reason why when John saw the city he saw the shining of God. O dear brothers and sisters, is it not the will of God that he should be magnified, manifested, through us his people? But today no matter how much Christ is being reflected by us, we deflection. Somehow there is resistance somewhere.

In other words there is always impurity within us. There is always some shadow, some shade there. Opaque.

We are not as transparent. No resistance. No spot, no wrinkle.

O brothers and sisters, how sometimes you cry out and say, O Lord, why is it that people do not see thee as they ought? Why? Because they see more of us than of Christ. They may see some of Christ but even that sum of Christ is being twisted. Why? Because we are so impure.

There is so much spot and wrinkle in us. But dear brothers and sisters, thank God the Holy Spirit is working towards the end. And when that end shall arrive, truly the church shall be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle of any other sort.

And the church shall be without blemish. One day you will find Christ is so incorporated in our lives. Christ is so organized, rushing to our lives, that it is nothing but Christ.

There will be no more resistance. On the one hand, it is we. Yet on the other hand, it is Christ.

It is Christ in us. And yet, Christ all in you all. Not only the light of God will be there, but the light of God will be magnified by that city.

So John saw the shining of God. It is by that light, the light of the city, that the nations walk before God. In other words, the light of God enlightens that city.

And the light of the city enlightens the nations. And in that light, the nations shall walk. And the result is, they shall bring worship to God.

Dear brothers and sisters, in a very small sense, if we walk in the light, as God is in the light, it is true we shall have fellowship with one another, and the blood of God sent Jesus Christ cleanses us from all our sins. But on the other hand, if we walk in the light, we shall be the light of the world. The world shall walk in our light.

But if we do not walk in the light, then how can we enlighten the world? How can the world walk in the light? And how can they come and worship God? So here you find the transformation of time. When eternity shall begin, the work of God is completed. The work of transformation is fulfilled.

Brothers and sisters, what is the work of the Holy Spirit today? The work of the Holy Spirit today is predominantly and mainly the work of transformation. He is transforming us from glory to glory according to the image of God's Son. But one day the transformation shall be completed.

The confirmation shall be perfect. And this is the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. Dear brothers and sisters, we must thank God.

If it is left for us to complete it, we will never make it. But thank God this is the work of the Holy Spirit. God has entrusted this work to His own Spirit.

And the Holy Spirit shall complete it. The day shall come when the Old Testament and the New Testament sings the redemption, the redemptive work of God throughout the ages shall be consummated in that Holy City. And God shall be magnified, the shining of God.

Then John took a closer look and he saw the wall and the foundation. The wall was made of crystal-like jasper. In other words, jasper.

Jasper is blue color. And blue is a heavenly color. And in chapter 4 of the book of Revelation we find one who sits upon the throne.

Looks like a jasper stone. In other words, this jasper stone speaks of God's own nature. How heavenly He is.

And yet it is crystal-like. We shall be heavenly. There will be nothing earthly.

It shall be crystal-like jasper. And the wall is of tremendous height, 144 cubits. One cubit is an arm's length to your middle finger.

That's a cubit. 144 cubits. We have never seen a city wall as high as this wall.

Why is it so high? Because it is so separated, it is so well protected. Dear brothers and sisters, we know in the very beginning after God planted a garden of Eden, which means the garden of pleasure, everything was so pleasant in the garden, and yet because there was no wall, the enemy slipped in and tempted man. But thank God, in the eternity to come, you will find a holy city.

It is a garden. It is a garden. Why? Because you will find a tree of life everywhere.

And yet it is wall-y. There is a tremendous high wall all around the city, well protected. There will be no more danger of the enemy coming in.

Wholly separated. And of course, brothers and sisters, we know separation is not just an external thing. Separation is the impartation, the incorporation of the life of God in us.

The more the life of God is built up in us, the more we are separated, the more we are protected. And in the final stage, you will find the separation is complete. The protection is perfect.

It is 144 cubits. It is the multiple of 12. And 12 is the number of eternal completeness.

How about the foundation? You will find the foundation is made of 12 precious stones. Every stone is different. And these 12 foundations bear the name of the 12 apostles of Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, on the one hand, whatever precious stone it may be, whether it be jasper, whether it be amaroï, whether it be some other precious stones, you will find all these precious stones are nothing but the expression of Christ in different individuals. It is Christ. And yet it is Christ in Peter.

It is Christ in John. It is Christ in James. In other words, our identity will never be lost.

Do not think because it will be Christ all and in all, therefore we will lose our identity. Not at all. You know, in this world, if you try to make people the same, the one thing to do is to try to make you lose your identity.

So you lose your identity and you become one of the parts of that whole. But dear brothers and sisters, God has something much better. On the one hand, it is Christ all and in all.

It is neither you nor me. Neither Jews nor Gentiles. And yet on the other hand, we never lose our identity.

Peter is always Peter to eternity. John is always John to eternity. And James always James to eternity.

And you are always you to eternity. Now don't copy anybody. Because if you copy anybody, in eternity you will still be you.

So you, you, you have lost your time. It's no use. Your identity will always be there.

Brothers and sisters, our individualism must be dealt with by the cross, but the individuality always remains. Therefore you'll find the twelve stones bear the name of the twelve tribes of the land. And every stone is different.

It is Christ. But the way Christ is organizing Peter is very different from the way Christ is organizing John. John expresses Christ in a unique way.

And Peter expresses Christ in a petering way. And you ought to express Christ in your way. But dear brothers and sisters, you are not expressing you.

I am not expressing me. But we are all expressing Christ. And it takes all of us to express Him as all and in all.

And the twelve gates, bear the name of the twelve tribes of Israel. Why? Because salvation comes from the Jews. God in the beginning called Abraham.

And for Abraham the nation of Israel. And the Savior is to come from that nation. It is twelve poles.

Poles speak again of the work of the Holy Spirit. Oh, how the Holy Spirit works. Even though He was not present in the Old Testament time, He came to be on this earth only.

As our Lord Jesus was glorified. And yet we find even in the Old Testament it is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is through His work that here you will find both Israel and the Church.

All the redeeming of the Lord, the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the ages are being gathered together into the Holy City to be the wife of the Lamb. Look a little closer. And then you find as you enter into the city, you find a street there.

And the street is made of pure gold, transparent as glass. Again, we have never seen such gold. You don't have it on earth.

But gold speaks of the nature of God. You know, what is a street? Street in the Scripture always speaks of fellowship. Why? Because you walk on the street.

If you want to go anywhere you have to walk on the street. It leads you there. But, dear brothers and sisters, on this earth there are too many streets.

And there are dead-end streets too. And one-way streets. And here you will find you are all confused.

All confused. But, dear brothers and sisters, one day there will be only one street and that street will lead you to the throne. Nowhere else.

You will never get lost there. You will never come to a dead-end. And here you will find the fellowship of the saints is on the basis of the divine life of God.

This is the street. Oh, how sad it is that people today do not maintain their fellowship on the ground of Christ. Instead, they try to maintain their fellowship on some certain doctrines or certain forms or certain systems or certain ways and methods.

Brothers and sisters, all these are byways and highways that they lead to dead-ends. But there is only one street. And that street, that fellowship is on gold.

Pure gold. Transparent. In other words, our fellowship is based on the life of God in Christ and nothing else.

And our fellowship shall be so open it's transparent. You know, today, even though we do fellowship, sometimes we feel we have to hide something. Sometimes you think if you are too open, you will be misunderstood.

Oh, people will look down upon you. But dear brothers and sisters, if our fellowship is purely on the ground of Christ, it can be transparent as transparent gold. It is the fellowship of the life of Christ one with another.

And this fellowship will lead us to the throne. Will lead us to God. It will not lead us astray, away from God.

But it will lead us to God and lead us to worship. There is only one street and one river of life. This river of life comes from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

And it goes through the whole city. And wherever the river of life goes, the tree of life grows. It grows in the middle of the river.

It grows on the two sides of the river. And the tree of life is everywhere. Dear brothers and sisters, river of life and the tree of life growing everywhere speaks of life abundant.

In other words, in that city, it is nothing but life. It is nothing but the life of God. The life of God flows and overflows.

Thank God. As our Lord Jesus said, I come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly. And how this is fully realized.

It is life. How much of our fellowship today is life? But one day, it will be life. It will be life abundant.

Everywhere you see life, there is no more death, no more tears, no more pain, no more distress. All things have passed away. Even no sun or moon is needed in that city.

You know, brothers and sisters, we need the sun today. We need the moon today. If the sun should be completely wiped out, destroyed, within seconds we will all be frozen.

We need the moon. We need all these things. These things make us live.

They are absolute necessity. But one day, we shall find in God, in Christ, all our need. We will be delivered from even the need of the sun or the moon.

Think of that. How much are we delivered today from these physical things? The Lord is delivering us. But still you find many physical things are absolute necessities.

We need the sun, we need the moon. But one day, even the sun and moon, we don't need them. Why? Because we find in Christ our all and in all.

He is our sun. He is our moon. He is our light.

He is our everything. Oh, thank God for that day. What a deliverance it will be.

We will not lean upon anything physical anymore. God is everything to us. Then you go to the very center of that city.

The very center of that city is the explanation, the meaning of that city. It is the center that gives the meaning and explanation of that city. And what do you find in the center? In the center you find the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Oh, brothers and sisters, one day the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be eternally set up in the city of God. And through that city He shall reign over the new heaven and the new earth. All who are in that city are kings.

They shall reign with God and with Christ eternally. They shall have the name of God upon their forehead and they shall serve Him as servants forever. What do we see here? We see Christ all and in all.

We see God all and in all. We see Christ in the center, in the midst of the city. And we see the city as a corporate expression of God and of His Christ for eternity.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is the realization of the eternal purpose of God. And God said, write it down. Because all these words are true and faithful.

And God said, it is done. I have done it. I'm the offer and I'll make up the beginning and the end.

So dear brothers and sisters, we have such a blessed hope before us. Oh, how we need to look forward to that day. Sometimes, you know, when we look around, we wonder.

Sometimes when we look at ourselves, we are disappointed. So let us look up and see that God is going to get what He wants. Christ shall be all and in all.

And we shall be His eternal home. And for us, He shall tabernacle among men. Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, our hearts do rejoice in Thy presence, knowing that Thou art God.

Thou art the God who works even now until Thy purpose is fulfilled. Oh, how we praise and thank Thee that it is Thy will, that Christ shall be all and in all. And it shall be.

Oh, we do pray that even today we may learn something of that nature. That we do not need to postpone and delay Thy working. But in a way, we may speed up Thy work by yielding and cooperating with Thee.

How we long that Christ may truly be all and in all to us, individually and together. And we look forward to that day when the shining of God shall become the shining of the city and the nations shall walk in the light thereof. Today be all the praise and glory in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

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