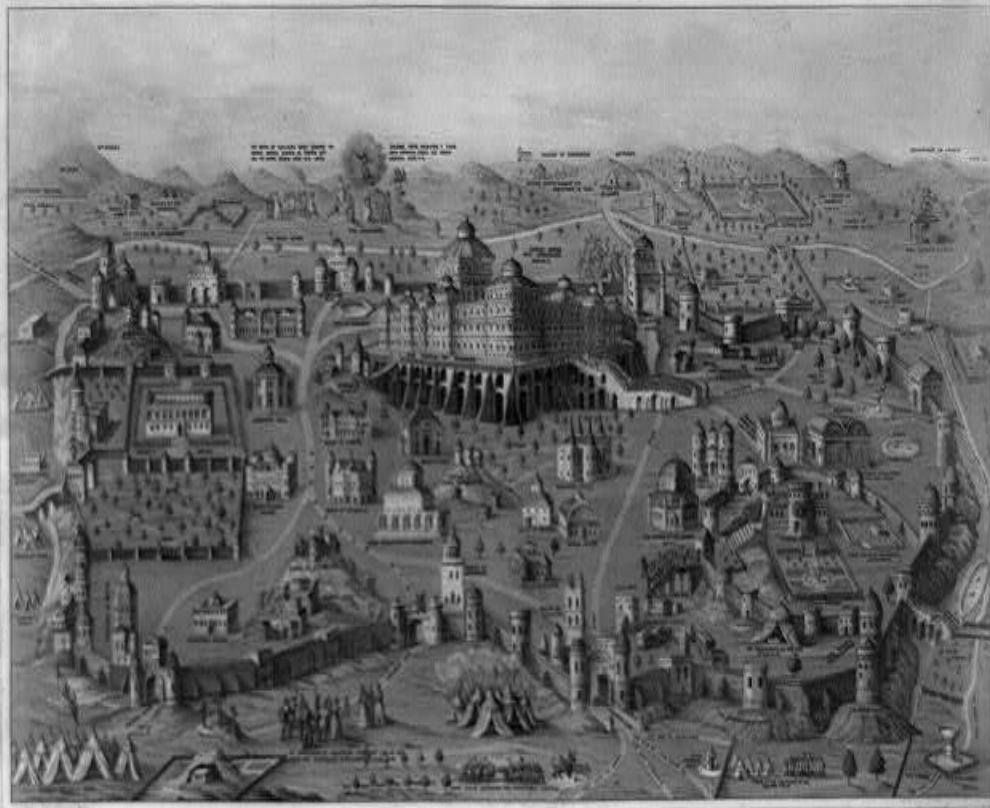




**THE NEW HEAVEN  
AND  
THE NEW EARTH**

**Revelation chapter 21 is one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible, describing where and under what conditions the resurrected saints shall spend eternity in perfect fellowship with God. Here we see elements of Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Garden of Eden.**



THE ANCIENT CITY OF JERUSALEM WITH SOLOMON'S TEMPLE  
TAKEN FROM AN ORIGINAL AT ROME



**V1: There is only a brief reference to the destruction of the old creation, which has already taken place at this point, in John's vision of the future. This is very much in keeping with the theme of peace, beauty, and perfect fellowship with God which is the theme of Ch. 21.**

# **What happened to the old heavens and the old earth -- quite literally, the entire old creation?**

## **Let's read 2 Peter 3:10-13.**

**Peter describes the details of what will happen to the earth -- the whole creation. The old creation will be destroyed with a great noise and heat at the Lord's return. This is no ordinary fire, for, according to Peter, the "elements" (στοιχεῖα) will melt with fervent heat (v.10).**

**The Greek word shown is used only two other places in the NT, (Heb 5:12 and Gal 4:3, 9) and it indicates about the same thing we mean when we talk about the elements in a scientific sense: the most basic building blocks of matter. This is no ordinary fire!**

# **What happened to the old heavens and the old earth -- quite literally, the entire old creation?**

## **Let's read 2 Peter 3:10-13.**

**Peter adds in verse 12, “the heavens being set on fire will be dissolved (*λυθήσονται*), and the elements burning with heat are melting.” This indicates that the very forces holding the heavens together shall cease to exist. What an incredible description! As matter itself is being consumed, the heavenly bodies shall, in consuming heat, be cut loose from all of the forces which hold them together and in their places. *(We might add that this description rules out those millennial descriptions which depict only the believers as knowing that Christ has returned. It seems that the events described here would be hard to miss!)***

**What happened to the old heavens  
and the old earth -- quite literally, the  
entire old creation?**

**Let's read 2 Peter 3:10-13.**

**To conclude Peter's point: with this end  
of the creation in mind, "What manner of  
persons ought you to be in holy conduct  
and godliness . . . ?" (v 11b).**

# **What happened to the old heavens and the old earth -- quite literally, the entire old creation?**

**So in v.1, we are clearly dealing with a brand new creation in a much more literal sense than did Noah in which the Ark landed after the Flood. The most striking aspect about the New Creation is that it is a material place, and yet, it is perfect. That, again, is beyond our comprehension, since we have never seen perfection!**

**In a very real sense, then, believers will finally know the perfect life in a material world and live in perfect fellowship with God, and each other, just as we were originally created to live.**



## **V.4: The Perfected Bride**

**John sees, though a little cloudy, the idea of life in perfection by listing but a few of the things which we know now, because of sin, and assuring us that in the New Creation these ALL will be gone.**

**One important point worth noting is that man today talks about doing away with death and with the causes of human suffering, and man even pretends that he will be able to do it. It is very clear that these things will never be done away with until God does away with them for the saved.**

# **Vv. 5-8: The LORD Speaks – The Blessed and the Damned**

**This is a message from God for people living before the New Heavens and the New Earth come to pass. This is a message intended directly for us today!**

***Verses 5 through 6a introduces this message by identifying the Speaker: Jesus (compare with Rev. 1:8; 22:13). The Bridegroom now gives John a message for the whole Church -- a message with your name on it! His message confirms that He is the Speaker, since He is the Source of living water. The source is not ourselves, our own faith, good works, or good intentions (which, despite our ability to even realize our good intentions, are also as filthy rags compared to God's will), but Christ and His work for us, is especially important for us to realize as we look at verse 7.***

# **Vv. 5-8: The LORD Speaks – The Blessed and the Damned**

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***Verse 7 speaks of overcoming. It would be easy for us to imagine, then, that our overcoming makes salvation our work. But this is not the case. Our failure to overcome is on our own heads. If we overcome, it is because of what God has given us for living, through the faith He gave us, by means of His Means of Grace: His Word, Holy Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar. As Paul says, there is no room for boasting! Or as Luther said just prior to his falling asleep...***

*“Wir Sind  
Alle  
Bettler”*



# **Vv. 5-8: The LORD Speaks – The Blessed and the Damned**

***Verse 8 offers the other side of the coin! Even in the believer, the sinful flesh (Old Adam) must be placed under subjection by means of the law. Notice, too, that unbelief is only one of the fruits of the flesh which rules where Christ does not.***

***Jesus is very blunt: the coward (δειλός)...literally one who has NO moral fortitude. One who didn't have the "guts" to confess Jesus as the Lord in the face of persecution...even physical death! This certainly includes the apostate Christian, which makes them even more of a reprobate!***

***The unfaithful – those with no faith or lack of trust (cf. John 20:27)!***

# **Vv. 5-8: The LORD Speaks – The Blessed and the Damned**

***The coward and the unfaithful are vile as are these:***

- **The murderer:** those who planned and carried out the taking of life, which also includes all who plan and carry out the murder of the infant!***
- **The sexually immoral:** all who prostitute themselves; all sexual deviants, and those who participate in sexual sins, actively or passively!***
- **Sorcerers:** all who engage in magic arts, illicit drug use, users of incantations and any kind of witchcraft, fortune-telling, etc.***
- **Idolaters:** those who worship anything or anyone, but God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)!***

## **Vv. 5-8: The LORD Speaks – The Blessed and the Damned**

***There “portion” or “FATE” is the Lake of Fire, which is everlasting torment and separation from God. As we have discussed, this is the Second Death, from which there will never, ever be a resurrection...or life!***

# VV. 9-27



## THE NEW JERUSALEM



**This section of Rev. 21 describes New Jerusalem in the New Creation of God in which the believers shall live forever! Some of this language is clearly**



**figurative, but we must be careful to stay with the point of comparison so that we do not get lost or mislead ourselves.**

**The twelve gates in v.12 are the OT saints, since they have the names of the twelve tribes written on them.**

**The twelve foundations in v.14 indicate the foundation of the Church's faith in the Apostles' teaching of Christ.**

**This is made clear by the fact that they actually have the names of the 12 Apostles written on them.**



**The measurements of the city can be taken as literal, lacking any indication of symbolism. The dimensions indicate that the New Jerusalem is 1,380 miles long, wide and high! It is described as a perfect cube.**

**The wall of the city is 144 cubits (v.17) and should be taken as symbolic. 144 represents the Bride of Christ, the Church (cf. 11:7-10, 12:13-18, 13:7).**



**Vv. 18-21: impress us with the incredible beauty of the New Jerusalem. Some of the more obscure minerals named here are difficult to identify with certainty from the Greek.**

***Vv. 22-27:*** highlights the Holy perfection of the New Jerusalem. There is no need for a Temple for the One Who is worshiped is among His people. He is their light and their life. The fact that all the faithful of all times are here is indicated in vv. 24 & 26. In v.25, we learn, in addition to the fact that the New Earth has no sea, that it also has no night. The gates of cities used to be closed at night, when an open gate could provide an enemy easy access to the city under the cover of darkness. That the gates of this New Jerusalem, are never closed tells us not only that there is no more night; there are no more enemies to challenge God or His people.

**v. 27 is of the most beautiful and reassuring verses of Holy Scripture, in that it rules out, forever, any further contact for us with sin, either from within ourselves or from temptation. The most difficult and continuous struggle of this life will be forever...over!**