

The New Jerusalem

Revelation 20-22 introduces the end of the age and the kingdom. This period is nominally a thousand years conforming to a **Sabbath rest** at the conclusion of the creative “week” thus fitting a conceptual framework totalling seven thousand years. However, any literalism regarding time-frames can be dispelled by the fact that the seventh creative day in Genesis is lacking the evening and morning formula even though it lies within the same creative “week” as the other days.

The millennium age is the period between the first and second resurrections, in other words it is the kingdom age which is a time of probation for the mortal population. The kingdom is administered by the immortalized saints and during this time Satan ¹ is bound. The release of Satan occurs at the end of this period and is therefore associated with the “second resurrection”.

It seems that the last resurrection results in the unbinding of Satan and this suggest that elements rejected at the second resurrection ferment the Gog rebellion. Gog is destroyed before any harm can come to the “camp” of the saints. When that point is reached the earth no longer contains a mortal population. All elements opposed to God and his Christ have been destroyed. There are no more nations and God is “all in all” (1 Cor. 15.28).

Rev 20 provides an overview of the entire period from the beginning of the millennium until the end of the millennium and Rev 21-22 describes the conditions **during the millennium**. The point that is emphasised in Rev 21-22 is that there is **no temple present during the millennium**.

Where is the temple? (Rev 21.22-26)

“And I saw no temple therein: for the **Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.** ²³ And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. ²⁴ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: **and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.** ²⁵ And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. ²⁶ And they shall **bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.**”

Revelation makes it clear that there is no temple in the kingdom age and therefore *ipso facto* animal sacrifice does not occur because there is no Law of Moses. It is sometimes asserted that the reason that the temple is absent is because this passage describes events after the millennium. Therefore a temple is necessary during the millennium but no longer necessary after the millennium. That cannot be substantiated from the text. The time “after the millennium” is one where **no more nations exist.**

No more Sea (Rev 20.13-21.1)

“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is **the second death**. ¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea”.

The “sea” is a metaphor for the gentile nations and the concept of nationhood is done away with after the 1,000 years. In fact, the concept of death no longer exists because all those with the “nature of death” have been judged and cast into hell. **There are no more mortals on earth - the earth is populated with the saints**. Therefore during the millennium;

^{KJV} **Revelation 22:2** leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

^{KJV} **Revelation 22:3** And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

^{KJV} **Revelation 22:14-15** Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Inside and outside the kingdom

So in the kingdom there is an “inside” and an “outside” like the Garden of Eden. This is a kingdom picture -there are “nations” which require “healing” -the “throne” of God and the Lamb are in the city **but no temple**.

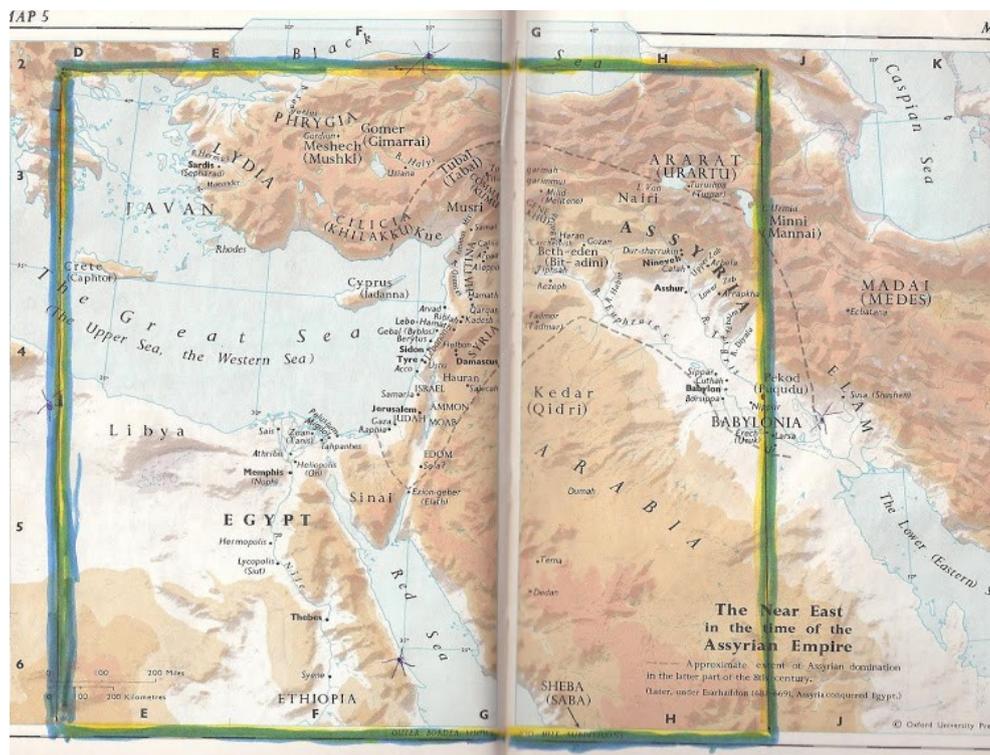
^{KJV} **1 Corinthians 15:24-28** ²⁴ Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. ²⁷ For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. ²⁸ And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

The “nations” only exist during the millennium and the mortal population only exists during the millennium. It is during this period that the nations are “healed” and enter into the “city” but this “city” into which **the nations bring their glory has no temple**. After the final rebellion of the nations under Gog which coincides with the second resurrection and last judgement there are no more nations and there are no more mortals for God is “all in all”. Ezekiel’s temple will not be built during the kingdom age and Harry Whittaker has produced a comprehensive analysis of Ezekiel’s temple demonstrating why such a structure would be entirely inappropriate.² On Rev 21 Osborne³ notes the following:

The idea of twelve gates, three on each side, is taken from Ezek. 48:30-35, where the new temple also has twelve, with three on each side. A major difference is that each gate in Ezekiel is named after a tribe, while here it says simply that “the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel were written on the gates.” The meaning in Ezekiel is that each tribe has a gate that opens to its own tribal territory. Here the thrust is quite different. These gates provide access to all “humankind,” namely, the “people” (21:3) who have “overcome” the world (21:7a) and so “inherited” the city of God (21:7b). The fact of twelve gates means that access is plentiful and the names of the twelve tribes written on the gates builds on the symbol of the 144,000 in 7:1-8, meaning that the people of God provide access to the “people” of the world so that they might repent and thus gain entrance to the city of God.

Gen 15.18 and the city of God

The small scale, exclusively Jewish “oblation” envisaged by Ezekiel (the division of the land of Israel into a parallel grid of tribal allotments) is transformed into an inclusive “city” of gigantic proportions. While the New Jerusalem is 12,000 **stadia** to a side, Ezekiel’s city is but 4,500 **cubits** to a side. The measurements in Rev 21.16-17 are sometimes taken as a perimeter measurement making each side 3,000 furlongs but that is not correct as the “New Jerusalem” is meant to **encompass the territory promised to Abraham**. Moreover, with the length of each side being 12 ($\times 10^3$) stadia, totalling the cuboids’ perimeters equals 144 ($\times 10^3$) which is the Fibonacci number associated with the tribes in Rev 7 *and* with the height of the “wall”. This region will be under the complete control of the saints. The wall has the height of a twenty story building but each side of the city is roughly 1,500 miles high so the “wall” does not extend to the full height of the city. As Mt Everest is about 5.5 miles above sea level the city has a height that is roughly 272 times higher than Mt Everest.



The above square is roughly the area covered by the measurements in Revelation with Jerusalem at the exact centre

Of course, these measurements are purely symbolic as the city has no need of a literal defensive wall or gates, or foundations. The countries that surround Israel which are largely Muslim will now make pilgrimages to Jerusalem (rather than Mecca) to worship the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”. They will be administered by the saints. “In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people,, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance” (Isa. 19.23-25).

There will, no doubt be topographic changes brought on by the exceeding great earthquake which has a spiritual and literal dimension. The Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth and lies on the Great Rift fault line that originates at the African lakes and travels through the Jordan valley up into the valley of Lebanon. An earthquake big enough to split the Mount of Olives would rearrange elevations and redirect rivers and water catchment and therefore the “water of life” will likely also have a literal and spiritual component. The whole area will be transformed into a verdant –fruit producing garden and the wilderness will bloom. There will be no cursed earth in the presence of the Lamb – truly a land of milk and honey – and this area will include the whole Middle East.

The Lord is there

God is not content to save a handful of martyrs and allow the rest of mankind, along with all their achievements of culture and civilisation, to perish in the abyss. For into the holy city he now brings the **nations** and the **kings of the earth**. To suppose that by these phrases he means only the elect would be to run counter to his consistent usage throughout the whole of his book. **The nations** are the heathen, who had once been allowed to trample the holy city underfoot, who were seduced by the great whore, and who were finally reduced to subjection by the armies of Christ (11:2; 18: 3, 23; 19: 15).

The kings of the earth are those over whom Christ has asserted his authority only at the cost of untold suffering to his faithful people (1: 5; 6: 15; 17: 2, 18; 18: 3,9). Those who once brought the splendour of their luxury trade to deck the great whore now bring their willing tribute to adorn the holy city. Nothing from the old order which has value in the sight of God is debarred from entry into the new. The heaven that John describes is no world-denying Nirvana, into which men may escape from the incurable ills of sublunary existence, but the seal of affirmation on the goodness of God's creation. The treasure that men laid up in heaven turns out to be **the treasures and wealth of the nations**, the best they have known and loved on earth redeemed of all imperfections and transfigured by the radiance of God. Nothing is excluded but what is **obscene and false**, that is, totally alien to the character of God. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find a more eloquent statement of the all- embracing scope of Christ's redemptive work.⁴

The Garden of Eden, the Tabernacle and the Temple were **all** made after the **pattern of the heavenly sanctuary** (Heb 8.5). Once the true sanctuary has descended "from heaven" it is no longer necessary to have the shadow or type. If the **LORD IS THERE** (*Yahweh-shammah* Ezek 48.35) animal sacrifices will no longer be necessary and Christ himself will show them his piercings should they doubt (Like he did with Thomas). Gifts, meats, drinks, divers washings and carnal ordinances were imposed on the Jews **until the time of reformation** (Heb 9.10). In the kingdom there will be no need for "carnal ordinances" and the "place" of worship becomes a moot point;

Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. ²¹ Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. ²⁴ God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.
 (^{KJV} John 4:20-24)

John makes it clear both in his Gospel (John 4.14) and in the Apocalypse that Jesus is the source of “living water”- the water emerges from the throne where God and the Lamb sit and what begins as a trickle becomes a roaring stream as his saints are sent into the world to heal the nations. This crystal clear river has the tree of life situated on either side yielding **twelve crops of fruit every month**. The description is very similar to the prophecy of Balaam where the tents of Jacob are depicted as beautiful gardens and trees planted on the riverside (Num 24.16) a metaphor for the Milky Way - the celestial river of stars surrounded by the twelve zodiac constellations. “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). It is an image of the “heavens” descending to earth and the bearing of fruit every month speaks of a constant repetition of the harvest festival of tabernacles. A beautiful celebration of joyfulness and plenty – the building of booths for protection; “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat” (Rev 7.16); the booths are a symbol of the indwelling (tabernacling) presence of the *Shekinah*.

The symbolism of the city speaks for itself; the gold of tried faith forming the streets the jasper of the walls reflecting divine glory built on the solid foundations of the apostle’s gospel proclamation of the new covenant which can only be entered through the twelve tribal gates of the old covenant – everything demonstrates the unity and harmony of the divine purpose and the final revelation of **the true temple of God** – Jesus Christ and his saints who now carry **the name in their foreheads. This contrasts with those left outside the city;** “For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie” (Rev 22.15). The “whoremongers” are those who worship the Great Harlot, the murderers are those who killed the witnesses, the idolaters are those who worship the image of the beast and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie is a follower of the serpent in all its manifestations (cf. dragon). Many of these enemies of the gospel were already cast out in the first and second centuries but the pattern repeats and many more followers of Satan will be revealed at the end.

Surely, I come quickly (Rev 22.20-21)

“He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. ²¹The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen”.

The Apocalypse ends the same way as it began – with a sense of imminence and urgency – these things will happen soon and they will happen quickly. The generation that first heard these words in the first century saw a partial realization, similarly, the generation that sees the restoration of Israel will experience a repeat pattern and the conclusion of the matter.



End Notes Chapters 20-21 Pages 446-454

¹ On the dragon, Satan and the ancient serpent see chapter 17 page 375

² Harry A. Whittaker, A Fresh Look at Ezekiel's Temple, [Retrieved Aug 2017] [Access here](#) apart from the fact that Ezekiel's temple will not be built we must add the observation that Sulley's depiction of the temple is completely wrong and based on interpretive errors and wishful thinking. The first and second temples were similar to the layout of the tabernacle and any design that varies from the revealed template is bound to be wrong. Ezekiel would certainly be amazed if he were able to see [Sulley's temple](#)

³ Grant R. Osborne, Revelation, (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 2002), *ad loc.*

⁴ George B. Caird, The Revelation of Saint John the Divine, (Hendrickson Publishers, 1966), *ad loc.*