

The New Jerusalem

Purpose: To show from scripture that restored Jerusalem in Isaiah and the New Jerusalem in Rev 21-22 is the Glorified New Covenant Church.

Luke 24:

44 Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.

Since Bro Mark’s study of the Servant songs, I have been reading through Isaiah with a Christocentric lense. What I mean by that, is how he showed in the second song that there are 3 Israels: Ethnic Israel, Christ the Servant, and we who are of the faith of Abraham. That really helps to understand the language in Isaiah and the other prophets that will speak of a vicious judgement of Israel one moment, and a God of mercy and glorious renewal the next. This is why we must read the Old Testament in the light of later, New Testament, revelation. It takes the light of Christ, the Logos, to fully illuminate His word. I would like to look specifically at the imagery of the restored city of Jerusalem in the book of Isaiah, and show how the new Testament writers help us to understand it. My purpose this morning is to show from scripture that restored Jerusalem in Isaiah and the New Jerusalem in Rev 21-22 is the Glorified New Covenant Church. My goal is not to exhaustively cover this subject, but just to read through and compare several scriptures in order to give an overview, and spur you on to do your own study. I started studying this topic simply from reading through Isaiah in my ESV Reader’s bible, and noticing the striking similarities between passages in Isaiah, and the description of the new Jerusalem in Rev 21. Let’s first read Rev 21, and then go back through it in more depth, comparing it to several passages in Isaiah.

Revelation 21 - The New Jerusalem

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Is 65:19

“For behold, I create new heavens
and a new earth,
and the former things shall not be remembered
or come into mind.

18 But be glad and rejoice forever
in that which I create;
for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy,
and her people to be a gladness.

19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem
and be glad in my people;
no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping
and the cry of distress.

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne
saying, “Behold, the dwelling place^[fn] of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they
will be his people,^[fn] and God himself will be with them as their God.^[fn]

4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more,
neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things
have passed away.”

Is 60:18

18 Violence shall no more be heard in your land,
devastation or destruction within your borders;
you shall call your walls Salvation,
and your gates Praise.

5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

Is 55:1

1 "Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death." 9 Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."

Is 62:5

5 For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 12 It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— 13 on the east

three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. 16 The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia.^[fn] Its length and width and height are equal. 17 He also measured its wall, 144 cubits^[fn] by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. 18 The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Is 54:11-12

11 "O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted,
behold, I will set your stones in antimony,
and lay your foundations with sapphires.^[fn]

12 I will make your pinnacles of agate,^[fn]
your gates of carbuncles,^[fn]
and all your wall of precious stones.

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Is 60:19-20

19 The sun shall be no more
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give you light;^[fn]

but the LORD will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.^[m]
20 Your sun shall no more go down,
nor your moon withdraw itself;
for the LORD will be your everlasting light,
and your days of mourning shall be ended.

24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory
into it,

Is 60:1-3

1 Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
2 For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
3 And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
(Royal Nation, Holy Priesthood -1 Ptr 2)

25 and its gates will never be shut by day —and there will be no night there. 26
They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

Is 60:11

11 Your gates shall be open continually;
day and night they shall not be shut,
that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations,
with their kings led in procession.

27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable
or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Is 60:21

21 Your people shall all be righteous;
they shall possess the land forever,
the branch of my planting, the work of my hands,
that I might be glorified.^[fn]

We can see all of these parallels between Isaiah's Prophecy and Rev 21. Following our Christocentric hermeneutic, we know that when Isaiah was describing the restored and rebuilt Zion, he was speaking of the New Jerusalem. But what is this building, this city? Let's look at a few other places in the new testament, but first one more passage in Isaiah:

Is 28:16 - The Cornerstone

16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
“Behold, I am the one who has laid^[fn] as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'
17 And I will make justice the line,
and righteousness the plumb line;
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
and waters will overwhelm the shelter.”

Peter quotes v 16 in in 1 Pet 2:**1 Peter 2 - Christ the Cornerstone, we are living stones, being built up into a spiritual house**

1 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

7 So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”

8 and

“A stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **(Is 60:1-3!)** 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

We are being built up into a spiritual house! Now let’s look at a couple more passages in Isaiah:

Isaiah 54:1-3

“Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;
break forth into singing and cry aloud,
you who have not been in labor!

For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married,” says the LORD.

2 “Enlarge the place of your tent,
and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out;
do not hold back; lengthen your cords
and strengthen your stakes.

3 For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left,
and your offspring will possess the nations
and will people the desolate cities.

Is 60:4-5

4 Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.

5 Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,^(fn)
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

Now let's look at Ephesians 4:

Ephesians 4 - Christ has abolished the law, establishing a new covenant “house” for all people, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of

hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,^[fn] but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **(Rev 21:14)** Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by^[fn] the Spirit.

Think about the description of the New Jerusalem, as the bride of Christ, perfected, as we look at Ephesians 5:

Eph 5 - Christ is beautifying his bride, the church, of which marriage is a picture

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.^[fn] ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

The Passage that speaks most clearly and directly to our discussion is Gal 4. Here we discover that, like there are 3 Israels, there are two Jerusalems:

Galatians 4 - Two Jerusalems

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. 24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia;^[fn] she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!
For the children of the desolate one will be more
than those of the one who has a husband.”

28 Now you,^[fn] brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 But what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.” 31 So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

So what does all this mean? These glorious descriptions of the restored Jerusalem apply to us!

Restored Jerusalem is:

-The New Jerusalem

-The Bride of Christ

-A spiritual house

-A holy temple

-The Church!

Therefore, the old testament is our history, because we have been grafted in (Rms 11)! It is not just the history of some other folks in another time, but it is the history of our redemption. Read Christocentrically!

Is 62:1-5

1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.

2 The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

4 You shall no more be termed Forsaken,^[fn]
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,^[fn]
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,^[fn]
and your land Married;^[fn]
for the LORD delights in you,
and your land shall be married.

5 For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.