

# The Voice of Truth # 542

## The City Not Made with Hands

The city not made with hands. Open your Bibles at the 21st chapter of Revelation. As we continue our study today of the city not made with hands, I cannot get away from that great truth set forth in the 14th chapter of John, where Christ said to his disciples the night before his crucifixion, **I go to prepare a place for you.** Then he said, don't let your heart be troubled. I will come again for you. The saints of all ages have looked for that City Not Made with Hands.

In our last study we watched that city descend from God out of heaven and pointed out to you the foundations of the city made of twelve precious stones, radiating the colors of the rainbow and engraved with the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. We called your attention to the twelve gates of pearl, having the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraved on each gate, and each gate guarded by an angel. Then, we called your attention to the city itself, which was made of pure transparent gold. The scripture says, as it were, transparent glass. In other words, the city is a true crystal palace made of nothing but transparent gold and it outshines the most sublime creation that the human imagination could ever dream of.

At this time, we want to look more closely at the city not made with hands and note again, first its size; when John measured the city, he found it to be 12,000 furlongs, or approximately 1,500 miles in length, width, and height. Now you listen and get this great truth. It lies four-square, it is a cube 1,500 miles wide, 1,500 miles long, 1,500 miles high. Think about the space that this city will occupy. If it were to set down in the United States, its base would reach from Maine to the tip of Florida, and from Florida to the Rockies in Colorado. Or, if it were placed in Europe, it would cover all of Britain, Ireland, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, Prussia, European Turkey, and half of European Russia. The Lord will have to make a new earth to take care of such a city. There is no foundation in this present earth that would hold up such a city.

Just think with me again; the city is 1,500 miles square, 1,500 miles high, resting upon 12 foundations of precious gems. Just think of a city that size made of pure gold. It says that the streets are paved with gold. Just to think of one street across that city 1,500 miles long, and suppose there are streets a mile apart crossing each other and a story every mile high, there would be over a million miles of streets in that city, and all paved with pure gold. Not only are there no foundations in this earth capable of holding such a construction, but there are no materials in this earth to build such a city. It almost staggers the imagination, but for the fact that when our Lord made the worlds, he brought them forth numbers upon numbers, grades upon grades, with suns and moons to illuminate the planets that orbit around them, which are beyond the power of any man to enumerate. When I think about our Lord creating the angels, millions upon millions, rank upon rank of heavenly beings, which are beyond the power of any man to number, even as the stars of heaven; and when I meditate upon the work of redemption, how God, through the atoning blood of the Son of God, is redeeming, delivering, molding, making and shaping a race of people that no man can number, which he says will outnumber the stars of heaven. It does not stagger me nor try my faith to believe that he can and he will make such a city 1500 miles cube of pure gold. The whole city is made without hands. It's a direct creation of the Lord God of heaven for his people whom he loves and redeems with his own precious blood in which his throne will be. Some have raised the question, will there be enough people redeemed out of the human race to occupy such a city? Let me ask you a question. Do you think this golden city that God made without hands is just for empty show? God says in Isaiah 45:18 that he does not create in vain. Let me ask you another question. Have you made your calling and election sure? Are you going to occupy that city? I am. I am by His grace. It can only be occupied by the grace of God. Only blood-bought sinners will live there in their new resurrected bodies, fashioned like unto the body of our glorious Lord.

Yes, when the Lord God of heaven cries, it is done, and all His plans and purposes regarding the human race have been fulfilled, that city will be filled with inhabitants. One day Christ gave a parable of the king who made a feast for his son, the prince. He sent out messengers to tell those who had been invited, to come, and they began one by one to turn him down. Then he said, go out in the

highways and hedges, and compelled them to come in, the halt and lame, blind poor, the naked, the wretched, the miserable, the contemptible outcast. They're those whom Satan's cast away. Until his wedding was furnished with guests. There won't be one vacant room in the New Jerusalem. Christ said, **I go to prepare a place for you.** And he knows how many he has elected, predestinated, and ordained to be saved, and they will all be brought home at last without the loss of one. Our Lord will be victorious.

Let's look again at the illumination of the city made without hands. The scripture tells us that there's no need of the sun or the moon to lighten it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. This city will be where God's throne is, and he himself, the Lamb, is the temple from which the Shekinah glory of God shines forth to illuminate the entire city. To think that a poor, old, wretched sinner like me, saved by his grace, will be made in the likeness of the Son of God, and will live in the light of his glory forever and forever, is almost beyond human comprehension. Can a finite mind fathom the infinite? Oh, what our Lord has gone to prepare for us, just for his beloved.

Not only will this light of God and of the Lamb illuminate the city, but it will illuminate the eyes of the body and the soul, and make everything light in the Lord. The glory of God will so envelop that city, it will be like an unclouded hallow. It will penetrate throughout the entire city so that there will not be a dark place about it. The glory of God will shine like a new sun inside and radiate out into the very depths of space from the top to the bottom of this golden city. This glory is not like the light that comes from the combustion of fuel that has to be continually fed into the lamps, but it is the uncreated glory of him who is light, dispensed by and through the Lamb as the everlasting lamp.

When Paul and Silas lay wounded and bound in prison at Philippi, they had that sacred light in the dark dungeon, which enabled them to attract the attention of the night watchman in that glorious prayer meeting when they sang songs and praised the name of the Lord. When Paul was on his way to Damascus, the scripture says, a light brighter than the noonday sun shone around about him, which illuminated his whole being with a new understanding. Then, when Moses came down from the mount after communion with God, we are told that his face

was lit up with the light of the glory of God, so that his brethren could not look upon him. Also, we are told that on the Mount of Transfiguration, that same light broke through, broke forth through the tabernacle of flesh and the raiment of our blessed Lord Jesus until the disciples were found on their faces. It is that glorious light that enlightens every believer's heart and mind through this wilderness journey, looking for that city that will shine forth in all of its brilliancy in that new home, that new Jerusalem. One day we'll come into the fullness of the glory of our God and of our Christ.

Now let's look at that 22nd verse. And John said, I saw no temple therein for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. The angel takes the apostle John through the entire city, showing him the beauties and glories of the New Jerusalem, the home where the bride dwells. And he's impressed with a very singular fact. He said, I saw no temple therein. Here is a city without a temple. What would you think if we visited a large city and found no temples, no houses of worship? Suppose that every place of worship in this old city were taken away at this moment. It would be some naked place, wouldn't it? All earthly cities, as a rule, are famed for their temples. The fame of noted cities of past ages have centered primarily around the magnificent temple buildings, and great temple ruins are preserved for the attraction of the tourist. But one of the peculiarities of the New Jerusalem is there'll be no temple therein. A temple is a place of worship, a place where God dwells, but the absence of a temple in the New Jerusalem does not mean that worship will cease. Now, I won't you listen now! It does not mean the communion with the eternal God no longer exists. When John said, **I saw no temple**, it is because Christ on the cross cried, **it is finished**, and the veil in the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom and lay bare the Holy of Holies. No longer will our worship and communion be through symbols and ceremonies and types and shadows. No longer will we see through a glass darkly, but face to face. No temple therein means that the triune God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit comes forth from behind all veils, all ceremonies, and our eyes shall behold him in his beauty, and we shall have direct communion with him in his manifested glory. All barriers and hidings, because they are infirmities of our flesh, will be forever removed. The Apostle Paul said, **But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the**

**glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.**

So, you see all offerings, all ceremonies, connected with the first covenant, the tabernacle and temple, based on the law and the righteousness through offerings of a type of Christ as our substitute, will be fulfilled and passed away. Every barrier will be removed. And as a kingdom of priests, we will have direct communion with the Lord God himself. To the believer, this will be the greatest joy of his heart and life in the new world. You see, there'll be no sin of any kind to deal with. Therefore, there'll be no daily cleansing from sin, but ceaseless praise forever and ever. This is because we'll be completely conformed to the image of Christ, not only in our standing before God through the justification of Christ, but in our state of perfect sanctification. **But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.** Let me call your attention to the wording of this verse of scripture. After John said he saw no temple therein, he immediately made an explanation. He said, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. I've often been asked this question. When the Lord Jesus Christ shall have put down all rule and authority and power, under his feet, by conquering the last enemy, which is death, that is, when he has literally brought the kingdom of death to an end and cast death and Hades into the lake of fire, forever ending Satan's kingdom on this earth or in the universe. And as he turned the kingdom back over his father, will he still retain his resurrected and glorified body? This scripture settles that question forever. **The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.** This plainly shows us that he'll carry his resurrected glorified body, with all the marks of Calvary as of a Lamb slain, throughout the cycles of eternity. This truth is also brought out in Revelation 22:3, **but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.** Here the Holy Spirit makes it definite and clear to us that he will always, that we will always and forever behold the Lamb of God, the crucified, buried, risen, glorified Christ. In the 17th chapter of John, where we have recorded that great high priestly prayer of our Lord, on the night of his betrayal, we find these words, **and now, O father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world began.** This

means that when he turns the kingdom back to the father, he will take his place with the Father, with the same glory that he had before he became incarnated. So the Father with the Son, will be the temple and the Lord Jesus Christ will have the glory with the Father that he had before he was born of a virgin. And we shall forever adore and worship him as the one who loved us and gave himself for us. That'll never be erased. There'll be no scars in our hands, but there'll forever be scars upon him. When the Lord Jesus Christ walked with his disciples on earth, regardless of where they were, he was their temple. If it were on the mountainside, or in the wilderness, or down on the street corner, or upon the Mount of Transfiguration, or in the upper room where they ate the Feast of the Passover, or as they walked in the way to Emmaus, or dined with him on the shores of Galilee, or parted from them on the Mount of Ascension, He was the temple to them. When we gather here to worship, our Lord is present in our midst, and he is our temple through the revelation of the Holy Spirit. We are encumbered with these old fleshly bodies, many times in pain, or we have come from the battlefield where we've had a fierce encounter with Satan or the flesh, and we find so much to hinder us in our worship, even though the Holy Spirit makes our Lord so real and precious to our hearts. But won't that be a most glorious day when we go home and there'll be no sickness, no pain, no sorrow, no crying, no barriers, no hindrances, no battlefields to fight, no wilderness to walk through. All veils will be removed and we'll come face to face with our blessed Lord and our worship will be pure and holy and glorious.

There is no human language that I know of that can describe what he has in store for us as his children, for he will not be ashamed to be called our God and to call us his sons. Oh, a glorious fact to me that I face is, there will be no more headaches, no more headaches. No wonder the Psalmist cried; **I shall be satisfied when I awake with his likeness.**

Now let's read the 24th verse and notice the relationship of the New Jerusalem, the city not made with hands, as the capital city of the New Earth. **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 honor into it.** The first phrase says that the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it. This means that the nations of the New Earth shall walk by means of its light. That is, from the new Jerusalem

will come spiritual illumination for the soul as well as the glorious light of the eyes. All the inhabitants of the earth will live in the light of truth and righteousness, and the light of life shall they have for all their personal, social, and national needs in the redeemed family of man. It will all go forth from this city, not made with hands. Their religion will come forth from the new Jerusalem. All the restored blessings of paradise shall come forth from this great metropolis. Their Redeemer, their only Lord God, will be visible to their eyes and ever present to their hearts and minds. That which has never yet been found upon this old earth will be found upon the new earth. A holy nation, a holy people for the Lord. The scripture says that all nations will be sanctified and holy. They shall all walk in the light of the eternal city of the eternal God, the city not made with hands, and they shall come there to worship and bring their honor and their glory into it.

When the scripture says that the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it, we're to understand by glory and honor, all that homage and gratitude of earthly kings which lead them to devote everything they possess to the service and honor of that city, and of the Lord God of heaven, and of the Lamb thereof. Glory means all the honor that the world can give. In other words, all nations as one man shall be worshipers, and all devotion shall concentrate in the New Jerusalem upon one object, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. All eyes and all ears will be turned to that city. All honor that man can render and all the delights and emotions that the human heart can feel will flow forever to that city not made with hands, whose gates are never to be shut and where there is no night.

In closing, let me call your attention to the character of the city. According to the 27th verse, **and there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.** That expression in **no wise** is a double negative and is used very emphatically. Nothing that defileth, or common, or unclean; nothing which is not sanctified, and wholly separated and set apart for the Lord Jesus Christ, shall enter into that city.

Then he says, **whatsoever worketh abomination**, that is, practice idolatry, abhorrent and detestable sin, shall not enter. Then third, that which **maketh** (or practiceth) **a lie**, or pretenders to the truth, or corrupters of the truth. God

declares that nothing which is not set apart to the worship of Jehovah shall enter into the holy city. If you unbelievers should get to heaven, and you won't, how miserable you'd be, because all you will hear and see is the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. He calls Jerusalem the Mount of His Holiness, and the word holiness means that everything is dedicated to the worship and glory of the triune God.

Look at that last statement in verse 27, **but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life**. This takes us back to the councils of eternity, before time began, when God purposed and planned in the secret recesses of his own heart that he would create a people for himself, a people who would be where he is, a people who would love him, and adore him, and worship him, and trust him, and depend upon him, and revel in him, and delight themselves in him. He desired a people whom he could dwell with and be their God, and they would be his people, and he could rejoice and fellowship with them. He planned and he purposed that they would be like himself, like the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, he took from his own side, from under his own heart, a part of his own being, and he fashioned and formed a people in his own image, filled with his own spirit. He loved them; He gave himself for them. He suffered and died to redeem them. In patience he called and drew them with the cords of his love and snatched them from the grasp of the enemy, and at last, he has brought them home. Behold, he says, it is done. And now they are brought into his tabernacle and they are separated unto him, separated from sin, from idols, from corruption, from falsehood. This is the bride, the wife of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is his eternal home for his beloved.

My friend, how clean, how pure, how fresh, how invigorating, how lovely, how glorious is that holy relationship, that holy city, that holy bride who hath made herself ready, **and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints**. My friend, I praise God that he called me, that he elected me, that he wrote my name in the Lamb's Book of Life. That he called me, He justified me, and one day he'll glorify me. And to think that this poor old wretched sinner, sitting here at this microphone will live in that city. It overjoys my heart. And I can't help but praise him, and praise him, and praise him, and praise him, and praise him, for his marvelous grace. Can you?