

# Come, I Will Show You the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb

## 21: 9-10

**DIG:** What is it about the City that John and his readers are meant to notice in particular? Why? What impresses you most about the City and its central figure?

**REFLECT:** How do you feel about the fact that the Holy City of Jerusalem will be your hometown? How do you feel about the fact that this is what Jesus has prepared for you?

**God's** nature has more than one characteristic. **He** loves and judges; saves and condemns. Both of these characteristics are demonstrated here. Imagine, one of the same angels who poured out a bowl of **ADONAI's** wrath one thousand years earlier is now inviting **John** to see **the Lord's** love for **His** faithful ones. This **angel** was **one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues (15:1)**. Either **he** or another of those **seven angels** had also poured out **God's** judgment on the wicked city of Babylon (**17:1**). The book of **Revelation** has been called a tale of two cities - Babylon and **the New Jerusalem**; the prostitute and **the Bride**. One **he** saw thrown down with violence, to disappear forever (**18:21**); the other **he** saw **coming down** from heaven in glory to endure forever. Babylon was both a monstrous system of spiritual and political wickedness, and also a literal city that served as the capital city of Satan's kingdom during the Millennium. On the other hand, **the New Jerusalem** is also both a glorious literal city as well as the universal tabernacle of **God**, and eternal kingdom of righteousness.<sup>484</sup>

Escorting **John** on a personal tour of heaven's capital **City**, **the angel came and said to the aged apostle**, "**Come, I will show you the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb**" (**21:9**). **The Holy City** will have trees, streets, and mansions, but its true identity will be **the Lamb** and **His Bride**. **The New Jerusalem** is described as a bride because it draws its character from its people. Those people make up **the Bride of the Lamb**, a title originally given to the Church (**19:7**). However, as David Stein writes in his *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, there is no Church apart from the Jewish people and no Israel apart from the New Covenant. All those of faith, both Jew and Gentile, will comprise **the Bride**. As we approach the end of the book of **Revelation**, the figure of **the Lamb** becomes increasingly prominent. In the next twenty-two verses **He** is mentioned seven times.<sup>485</sup>

John's amazing vision began when **the angel** lifted him up and **carried him away in the Spirit (21:10a)**, similar to what **Ezeki'el** experienced (**Ezeki'el 3:12-14, 8:3, 11:1, 11:24, 40:2,43:5**). When he received the visions in the book of **Revelation**, **John** was a prisoner of the Romans on the island of Patmos (**1:9**). But he was transported from there in an incredible spiritual journey to see what human eyes could never see without *God's* help. **John's** visions were not dreams, but spiritual realities, like those Rabbi Sha'ul saw when he was also **caught up to the third heaven (Second Corinthians 12:2-4)**.<sup>486</sup>

**John's** first stop was a **mountain great and high** outside **the City** itself, in order to have a clear view from **his** vantage point. **And he saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from ADONAI (21:10b)**. That emphasizes its divine origin. It is **the city whose architect and builder is God (Hebrews 11:10)**. It will come **down** to the freshly created new earth from **heaven** where it has been for all eternity. Earlier in the chapter (**21:2**) **Yochanan** had given us a simple summary statement that **the Holy City** was coming down to the new earth. But **his** perspective seemed to be from a distance where **he** had observed the actual creation of the entire new earth and its atmosphere. Here, **the angel** seems to bring **him** to a closer location, where **he** can watch in great wonder as **the glorious City** moves **down** right past **his** very eyes.<sup>487</sup>

How far it will descend we do not know. Nothing is said about it coming to rest upon the new earth. It may do that, but it also may remain suspended above. One thing is for sure however, what goes on in **the Holy City** will be more important than what takes place on the earth because the New **Jerusalem** will be the capital city of **God's** new creation.<sup>488</sup>