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Isaiah 61

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Isaiah 61.

Topics.

- The Spirit of God is upon me to bring Good News to the broken hearted.
- They will build up ancient ruins and repair cities with everlasting joy.
- They are the offspring off the LORD that will be known among nations.
- God clothed me with garments as a bride adorns herself with jewels.
- The glory of the spiritual temple God is building in Christ.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Isaiah is the exciting story of the Old Testament and the New Testament compacted into one book. It covers the wonder and splendour of Bible prophecy and echoes of the Lord Jesus Christ resound throughout Isaiah's visions and his messages. It teaches history as it affects God's people and constantly points to a future age when righteousness, justice, joy and peace will be established on earth. Isaiah prophesied about 740–700 B.C. He lived during the decline of Israel in the shadow of the powerful Assyrian Empire. He spoke the word of God to a people who were "deaf and blind" (Isaiah 6:10) who refused to listen to his warnings of looming disaster. Isaiah warned the people of Judah's that their sin would bring God's judgment (i.e., seventy-years captivity) and declared that God is sovereign and would use Cyrus the Persian to return the people from exile. He spoke also of a servant and man of sorrows who would be wounded for our transgressions faithfully accomplishing God's purposes of salvation (Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12). The final chapters give a beautiful description of a new creation in which Christ will rule as King, judging the wicked and establishing God's Kingdom on earth. Following are four points that will help the reader understand the book of Isaiah as they travel through it:

1. The history of Israel and Judah. At this time in the story Assyria has taken the ten tribes of Israel in the land of Samaria into captivity and marched up to Jerusalem (the two tribes of Judah) to destroy it, but failed. Later in the story Babylon attacks Jerusalem and conquers the city and takes the people of Judah into captivity. After this victory Babylon conquers Assyria which resulted in Israel and Judah being brought under the submission of Babylonian rule and the tribes being brought together during the seventy-year Babylonian captivity.
2. Many of Isaiah's visions are written as though they have already taken place, but a majority of these visions are predicting future events that are about to happen during Isaiah's generation while others will come to pass in a future age. Though these visions are of future events Isaiah speaks them in the present tense, because he spoke them as they came to his mind and as he saw the events unfolding before him. They are often spoken in this manner because of the certainty of it and because God had ordained them and revealed them to his prophets who spoke them to His people so they must come to pass, because God cannot lie.(Titus 1:2).
3. Though Isaiah is primarily speaking to Judah (the two tribes at Jerusalem) much of what he says applies to Israel (the ten tribes in Samaria) because both Judah and Israel are in the same corrupt spiritual condition.

4. All the promises to Israel are now in Christ. God's promises to Israel now include the Jews and the Gentiles. This is because under the New Covenant God is building an entirely new nation made up of Jews and Gentiles of which Christ is the head. In this new nation that God is creating in the Lord Jesus Christ Jews have no advantage over Gentiles since all are one in Christ Jesus.

The apostle Paul wrote: Gentiles were 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. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (i.e., one nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Eph. 2:1-22).

The practical application: of what this means, is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel through Isaiah also apply to Gentiles who by faith belong to Christ.

THIS CHAPTER IS SET OUT IN THE FOLLOWING FIVE SECTIONS

1. The message for those held in captive to Babylon.
2. The more perfect message for a future generation yet to come.
3. The end of Israel's seventy-year captivity in Babylon.
4. The three years of Jesus ministry.
5. The Lord Jesus Christ's returns in glory.

ISAIAH 61:3

The Spirit of God is upon Me to bring Good News.

- **Isaiah 61:1-3:** The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to grant to those who mourn in Zion to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

The previous chapters: the constant theme throughout many of the previous chapters has been upon Israel's gross sins and rebellion, their seventy year captivity in Babylon and God using Cyrus the king of Persia as His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) (Isaiah 45:1) to bring the Empire of Babylon to ruin and set the people of Israel free, with most of the chapters also carrying an echo of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

This chapter: follows the same theme the first three verses are a beautiful example of the wonder and splendour of God's majestic and eternal prophetic word. Contained within the language of these verses is a message for those held in captive to Babylon and also a much wider and more perfect message for a future generation yet to come.

THE MESSAGE FOR THOSE HELD IN CAPTIVE TO BABYLON: at this time Jerusalem and the Temple of God is laying in ruin and the people of Israel are under the oppression and bondage of the Empire of Babylon. Naturally the Jews in captivity and those separated from Jerusalem and

the Temple of God would feel that they were held prisoners to Babylon; be broken-hearted; faint of spirit and in deep mourning. The Spirit of God inspires Isaiah to speak words of comfort and Good News to the captives saying that the LORD has anointed him to proclaim to them the Good News that their bondage to Babylon is about to come to an end. The prison doors (their captivity in Babylon) will be opened and they will be set free, because God's favour is now toward them and not against them. The LORD will exalt and prosper them (give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes) and a spirit of praise and joy instead of mourning and turn His judgment upon their enemies so that He may be glorified. The LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia and used him as His anointed shepherd to fulfil these promises. Cyrus conquered the Empire of Babylon and set the people of Israel free from the bondage and captivity of Babylon. The following verses of the prophet Isaiah show that God not only called Cyrus (the secular king of Persia) His anointed shepherd and called him by name, but also show that God said He would equip Cyrus and take him by the right hand and go before him. They picture God holding Cyrus by the right hand and opening all doors that no man can shut while Cyrus the king of Persia subdues all nations.

- The LORD says of Cyrus, "*He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfil all my purpose,*" saying of Jerusalem, "*She shall be built,*" and of the temple, "*Your foundation shall be laid.*" (Isaiah 44:28).
- Thus says the LORD to *his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped*, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed. (Isaiah 45:1).
- I (*the LORD*) *will go before you (Cyrus king of Persia)* and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, ³I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, *who call you (Cyrus) by your name.* ⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, *I call you by your name, I name you*, though you do not know me. (Isaiah 45:2-3).
- I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; *I equip you (Cyrus) though you do not know me,* ⁶that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, there is none besides me; I am the LORD, there is no other. (Isaiah 45:5-6).
- Thus says the LORD: "The wealth of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush, and the Sabeans, *men of stature, shall come over to you (Cyrus)* and be yours; they shall follow you; they shall come over in chains and bow down to you. They will plead with you, saying: '*Surely God is in you,* and there is no other, no god besides him.' (Isaiah 45:14).

Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Multitudes of Jewish families who had been scattered throughout the nations returned to Jerusalem and the land of Israel with triumphant joy and rejoicing. When the temple of God was completed their faith was once again established and a golden time of prosperity and peace followed. The return to Zion is believed by some to be the first time in human history where a people exiled from their homeland by the force of a foreign ruler had returned to their native soil to re-establish their own joint national home and thereby further encourage the concept of a distinct national identity for the Jewish people.

THE MORE PERFECT MESSAGE FOR A FUTURE GENERATION YET TO COME: Isaiah's message transcends the era of Israel's captivity in Babylon and Cyrus and echoes a future King who the LORD also called His anointed shepherd, and his name is not Cyrus, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who God filled with His Spirit (without measure) at his water baptism as the following verses show:

- When Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; (Matt. 3:16) (Mark 1:10).

- The Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22) (John 1:32).

After this Jesus began his ministry and God:

- Anointed and sent him to proclaim the Good News to the poor and the broken-hearted and set those, captive to the law of sin and death free.
- Sent him to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favour (i.e., the Good News of the Gospel) to those who mourn over their sin and are faint hearted, especially those dwelling on Zion (the lost sheep of the house of Israel)
- Clothed the faithful with Jesus righteousness (the beautiful headdress) and filled them with joy and praise instead of sorrow and mourning.
- Planted those in Christ in His House (i.e., the global body of Christ, the church and Kingdom of God).
- Turned His vengeance against the prideful, hypocritical religious leaders of Jesus generation (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes).
- Made all (Jews and Gentiles) that come to Him through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ heirs of righteousness that He may be glorified.

Jesus in the following verses cites these words of Isaiah at the beginning of his ministry:

- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (Luke 4:18-19).

ISAIAH 61:4-7

They will build up Ancient Ruins and Repair Cities with Joy.

- **Isaiah 61:4-7:** They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁵Strangers shall stand and tend flocks; foreigners shall be (Israel's) plowmen and vinedressers; ⁶but shall be called the priests of the LORD; they shall speak of as the ministers of God; shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall boast. ⁷Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonour they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy.

Here Isaiah prophesies that:

- All the poor, the broken hearted, the captives and those that mourn will arise and build up the former devastations of the ancient ruins of Israel's cities for many generations.
- Israel will prosper from the wealth of nations and foreigners will work and labour for them.
- Strangers will call Israel the priests and ministers of the LORD and nations will boast in their glory.
- Instead of Israel's shame and dishonour they will have a double blessing and exalt and praise the LORD with everlasting joy.

These things came to pass during the following two historic events and will come to pass in a far more perfect and glorious manner in the future:

1. At the end of Israel's seventy-year captivity

2. During Jesus ministry
3. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory.

1. **THE END OF ISRAEL'S SEVENTY-YEAR CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON:** after Cyrus the king of Persia who God used as His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) (Isaiah 45:1) to conquer the Empire of Babylon and set the people of Israel free they returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra. The poor, the broken hearted, the captives and those that mourned arose and returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt their ruined cities, their homes and Jerusalem and exalted and praised the LORD with overwhelming joy. During this time nations brought them gifts of gold and silver and foreigners laboured for them. Instead of Israel's shame and dishonour they received a double blessing (i.e., greatly prospered) and strangers looked upon them as the priests and ministers of the LORD and nations spoke of their glory.
2. **DURING JESUS MINISTRY:** however, contained with these prophetic words of Isaiah is an echo of the Lord Jesus Christ building up the ruins and destruction that the prideful, hypocritical chief priests, Pharisees and scribes had brought upon the House of Israel and those who were truly seeking God. John tells us that God gave Jesus the Spirit without measure and that He gave all things into his hand. (John 3:34-35). From the time of Jesus water baptism and the beginning of his ministry he brought the Good News of the Gospel and the new covenant of grace. It is called Good News, because by it sinners are saved by grace and not by self-effort or the works of the law. During Jesus minister on earth he:
 - Proclaimed liberty to those held captive to the bondage of sin and death.
 - Opened the eyes of those who were physically and spiritually blind.
 - Gave the broken hearted the beautiful headdress of salvation and the clothing of his own righteousness.
 - Turned the mourning of the broken hearted and those seeking God into praise and rejoicing (Isaiah 61:1-3) (Luke 4:18-19).
3. **WHEN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST RETURNS IN GLORY:** all the promises spoken of in these first seven verses will be fully and perfectly fulfilled when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to destroy the antichrist and his kingdom and establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in this first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce (Isaiah 65:17-25). All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

In Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

The great prophet Isaiah wrote:

- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

It should be noted: that as glorious as Christ's millennial reign will be it is not the final stage of God's eternal plan for mankind's salvation that he planned and purposed in His eternal mind before the world began. At the end of Christ's millennial reign God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its eternal perfect fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

ISAIAH 61:8-9

Offspring off the LORD that will be Known among Nations.

- **Isaiah 61:8-9:** For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their offspring shall be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.

Here Isaiah shines a spotlight upon the truth, "God loves justice," as one travels through the Scriptures it becomes very clear that the pillars of God's throne and the foundation of it and of His Kingdom are:

- Love and holiness, justice and mercy.
- Righteousness (meaning doing what is right and good).
- Grace and longsuffering, joy and peace.

These pillars embrace honesty, moral virtue, integrity truthfulness, fairness for all and kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22). These are the foundation and pillars of God's throne which means that all who belong to His Kingdom should do all they can to make them the foundation and pillars of their life. (Psalm 89:14) (Psalm 97:2). It also becomes very clear that the things God hates are:

- Justice being perverted and twisted for the gain of oneself or for others.
- Deliberately inflicting physical, financial, verbal, sexual harm and hurt upon others.

- Ministers twisting and perverting the Scriptures for their own advantage.
- Murder, theft, adultery and all things that dishonour God and bring a bad testimony to the good name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prior to Israel's seventy-year captivity to Babylon the generation of Israel was guilty of all these sins (most of this generation would have died during the seventy years). In contrast to this generation the new generation humbled themselves and prayed the following prayer:

- LORD we confess we have multiplied our transgressions before you, our sins testify to our wickedness, we are so sorry for denying you and not following your ways. We have wickedly oppressed others for our own gain and spoken lies, cheated the innocent out of justice and grossly lacked in righteousness. God we are truly sorry we have blinded the public from the truth and worse still made anyone who did forsake the iniquity we indulged in feel like they were our enemies." (Isaiah 59:12-15).

This is why the LORD is able to say that:

- He will faithfully give them their reward and make an everlasting covenant with them.
- Their offspring will be known among the nations and their descendants in the midst of the peoples.
- All who see them will acknowledge that they are an offspring that the LORD has blessed.

These promises and rewards were partially fulfilled when God used Cyrus the king of Persia as His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) (Isaiah 45:1) to conquer the Empire of Babylon and set the offspring of the generation that went into captivity free. Under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah God brought them back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Multitudes of Jewish families who had been scattered throughout the nations returned to Jerusalem and the land of Israel with triumphant joy and rejoicing. When the Temple of God was completed their faith was once again established and a golden time of prosperity and peace followed. During this time the offspring of Israel was not only known amongst the nations, but kings of the nations also brought them gifts of gold and silver. However, to limit the prophetic words of Isaiah in (v 8-9) to Israel's return to Jerusalem would be to deny the wonder of Bible prophecy and rob it of the ultimate and far more perfect fulfilment. Though these prophetic words do rest upon the era of Cyrus and Israel's return to Jerusalem they only pause there for a moment and then take up wings and soar through time and history until they reach the Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel and the new global nation that God is at this present time building in the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL

the everlasting covenant (v8) refers to the covenant of grace, while the offspring that God will bless and reward and that will be known among the nations (v9) refers to Jews and Gentiles in Christ. It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ and that all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called a new man in Christ, a new creation in Christ, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said:

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) 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 (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ.¹⁴ For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace,¹⁶ and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles).¹⁷ And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews).¹⁸ For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father.¹⁹ So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone²¹ in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord.²² In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were 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. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world. The practical application of what this means to those who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

ISAIAH 61:10-11

God clothed me as a Bride Adorns Herself with Jewels.

- Isaiah 61:10-11:** I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the LORD GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

Those these glorious words apply to Isaiah himself and to the returned offspring of Israel who God rewarded and exalted and caused their renewed faith to be seen amongst all nations. However, the ultimate and far more perfect fulfilment applies to everyone who faithfully trusts in the Lord for their eternal salvation. As the reader of the Bible travels through Bible prophecy and approaches the end of their journey the visions of the prophets become clearer and more detailed, so it is not surprising that when we arrive at the Book of Revelation (the final book) we see that

John continues the theme of the Bridegroom and the Bride of Isaiah. John not only amplifies Isaiah's vision, but also gives us a far clearer and far more detailed view of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the Bride and the Groom in the following verses he talks of a Bride adorned for her husband:

- I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He 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." (Rev. 21:2-4).

He speaks of an angel showing him the Bride the wife of the Lamb.

- 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." ¹⁰And 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, ¹¹having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. (Rev. 21:9-11).

Revelation twenty-one speaks of the twelve names of the tribes of Israel being inscribed on the gates of the city and of the twelve names of the apostles of the Lamb being on the wall of the city. (Rev. 21:12-14). These names embrace all the faithful of the Old Testament and the faithful of the New Testament (Jews and Gentiles) who belong to the Kingdom of God.

The Holy city New Jerusalem: John in his vision pictures the Holy city New Jerusalem as being built of pure gold clear as glass and every kind of precious stone, jewels, jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, carnelian, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, amethyst and pearls, (Rev 21:18-21). These are the most valued of all stones upon the face of the earth, men labour hard and risk their lives tunneling into the dark and dangerous depths of the earth to find these most valued and treasured stones and jewels. These stones signify how much value God places on those who love and trust Him for their eternal salvation. When anyone today who believes in Christ doubts God values them all they have to do is think of these precious stones and jewels and look back to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us. This truth and the picture of these treasures jewels should comfort every faithful brother and sister in Christ since it is certain if God was prepared to sacrifice his Son for us, while we were indifferent and apathetic toward Him and uninterested and unconcerned about what honoured Him and what didn't He will with great joy do everything to keep us for eternal life now we love His Son. (He does this by daily lavishing us with grace)

THE GLORY OF THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE GOD IS BUILDING IN CHRIST

John in the following verses of his most glorious and majestic vision sees that the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are the light of the New Jerusalem and that the throne of God and the throne of the Lamb are in the city.

- I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And 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. ²⁴By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. (Rev 21:22-24).
- No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. (Rev. 22:3-5).

To build this New City of Jerusalem Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles' teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity. When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building, (taken from the beautiful writings of a faithful, but unknown brother in Christ).

Peter wrote:

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when:

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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