

Sweet Home Alabama New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:22-27)

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

*(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. (19) The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. (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. (Isa 60:18-20)*

*(12) ...Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. (13) Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. (14) For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. (15) Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. (16) Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. (Heb 13:12-16)*

1. In Alabama there are many “temples,” but in the New Jerusalem there won’t be one. Would you rather have a building or God (vs. 22)?

The temple was a place where God’s presence dwelt in a unique and special way. It was a place set apart as holy where unholy people could meet with God. Then and there, only the high priest was allowed into God’s presence in the holy of holies in a very special way, and even then only once a year. Now we meet with God in and through His Son Jesus Christ, the living temple and presence of God. When we turn from our sin and trust in Christ, the Holy Spirit of God comes to live inside of us and we ourselves become the temple of God. When born again Christians gather together we do so as the temple of God (the temple of the Holy Spirit). In the New Jerusalem there will be no physical structure that is the temple. We will all be in God’s presence and enjoy His nearness to the fullest forever and ever. There will be no hinderances to experiencing God fully because satan and sin will be completely done away with. You will know God fully, experience and feel God wholly, talk to God clearly, and hear from God perfectly. God is holy, and to be with God takes perfect holiness. We are made holy through the work of Christ. One day Jesus’ work for us and in us will be fully completed, and we will be actually holy to the fullest. God is working out this holiness in our lives now through sanctification. Worship will be an all day every day thing in the New Jerusalem. It will be a full life of worship in all we do forever. We will enjoy God for eternity! Do you want to enjoy God forever? Do you want to be with God now? Do you want God more than you want anything or anyone else? Do you want all your life now to be an expression of worship to God? Do you want to be holy as He is holy?

2. In Alabama and it’s cities we need the sun, moon, stars, lamps, flashlights, candles, etc. for light to see. But in the New Jerusalem we will need no extra light. Would you rather have the sun or The Son? Would you rather have a candle or God (vs. 23-26)?

Our eternal home, sweet home New Jerusalem, will be bright. Light will characterize it because God is light, and this is His house, and therefore a true lighthouse. Our home will be lit by the bright and pure glory of God and His Son Jesus. There will be no darkness of sin, depression, doubt, danger, drugs, or death, but only day. No more walking through dark times in life, no more dark nights of the soul either. No dark streets in the city. We will be safe and secure forever. No bitter cold. Only light and all the beauty that light brings out. This light will be for all people, all nations, all classes. Our glory is and will be derived from God’s glory. The glory and honor that redeemed people made in God’s image deserve will finally be their’s.

3. In Alabama we still have to close and even lock our doors at times, especially at night. But in the New Jerusalem doors stay open and there is no night. Isn’t this the safety and security your heart longs for? This only comes in and through knowing God (vs. 25-26)?

All are invited to the New Jerusalem, but not all respond to the gracious invitation. The gates are open for any who would come, but there is only one way in. Jesus Christ is the way of salvation, He is the “Pearl of great price.” The New Jerusalem will be a glorious and honorable place.

4. In Alabama there are unclean people and things, detestable people and things, fake people and things, and people whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life. But in the New Jerusalem only holiness and purity, virtue and honor, truth and justice, and only those who are true children of God (vs. 27).

God is holy and can have nothing to do with unholiness and sin, it can’t be in His presence. God is virtues and honorable, and since we are made by Him and saved by Him we are honorable and should be virtuous. God is true and cannot lie. He wants us to walk in the truth in every area of our lives. Those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life are those who have turned from their sins (repented) and put their trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. These people will walk in the light, they will walk in love, they will walk in the Spirit.

