

PICTURES OF HEAVEN

Five Biblical Descriptions

Trinity Lutheran Church Norman, OK.

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Date: 1-10-16

Lesson: 1. The New Jerusalem



THE BIBLICAL DESCRIPTIONS

1. The New Jerusalem
2. The Wedding Banquet
3. The New Garden of Eden - Paradise
4. The Peaceable Kingdom
5. The Whole Company of Saints and Angels

A. THE BIBLICAL TEXTS:

1. Note: In 70 A.D. The Romans tore down the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus predicted this:

(Luke 13:34-35) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! (35) Behold, **your house** is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

(Luke 21:5-6) And while some were speaking of **the temple**, how it was adorned with **noble stones and offerings**, he said, (6) "As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here **one stone upon another** that will not be thrown down."

(Luke 21:20-24) "But when you see **Jerusalem** surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. (21) Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, (22) for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. (23) Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. (24) They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and **Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles**, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

2. Note: Now the Body of Jesus is the true Temple of the Church

(John 2:13-22) The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to **Jerusalem**. (14) In **the temple** he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. (15) And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of **the temple**, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. (16) And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make **my Father's house** a house of trade." (17) His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for **your house** will consume me." (18) So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" (19) Jesus answered them, "**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**" (20) The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build **this temple**, and will you raise it up in three days?" (21) **But he was speaking about the temple of his body.** (22) When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

3. Note: Since the old temple in the old Jerusalem is gone, our New Temple is Jesus in the New Jerusalem in heaven.

(Galatians 4:24-26) 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; 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.

(Hebrews 12:22-29) But you have come to **Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, (23) and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in **heaven**, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, (24) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (25) See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. (26) At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." (27) This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken--that is, things that have been made--in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. (28) Therefore let us be grateful for receiving **a kingdom that cannot be shaken**, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, (29) for our God is a consuming fire.

(Revelation 3:11-13) I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. (12) The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in **the temple of my God**. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of **the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name**. (13) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

(Revelation 21:1-27) 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. (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 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." (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." (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. (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."

(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. Its length and width and height are equal. (17) He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. (18) The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as 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, transparent as glass.

(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.**

B. THE DOCTRINE: Luther's Works Volume 47, Page 303

"In its place **a new people, a new Jerusalem**, and a different holiness would arise in which one would no longer have to propitiate sin annually by sacrifice, worship, and holiness in **the temple** and yet never become righteous and perfectly holy, because the atonement had to be repeated and sought anew by sacrifice every year."

C. THE HYMNS AND WORSHIP:

LSB Hymn 372

D. THE MEANING FOR YOU:

1. What does this description of heaven convey to you?

1 Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest—
The promise of salvation,
The place of peace and rest—
We know not, oh, we know not
What joys await us there:
The radiancy of glory,
The bliss beyond compare!

2 Within those walls of Zion
Sounds forth the joyful song,
As saints join with the angels
And all the martyr throng.
The Prince is ever with them;
The daylight is serene;
The city of the blessed
Shines bright with glorious sheen.