

**December 27, 2009**  
**"THE NEW JERUSALEM", *Daily Disciple*, page 370**



**PSALM**

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD.  
How good it is to sing praises to our God,  
how pleasant and fitting to praise him!
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD builds up Jerusalem;  
he gathers the exiles of Israel.
- <sup>3</sup> He heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.

(Psalm 147:1-3)

**MEDITATION**

“And whether the righteous remain forever in the New Jerusalem, on the newly renovated earth, or wing their way as messengers of love and mercy to worlds unknown, the same gracious hand that conducted them through their earthly pilgrimage will ever lead them to fountains of living waters, and wipe away all tears from their eyes.”  
(Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, page 577)

**SCRIPTURE**

<sup>22</sup>I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup>The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. <sup>24</sup>The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

(Revelation 21:22-24)

**PRAYER**

“Father, this day bind my wounds, heal my broken heart, light my way, and gather me into your presence. Lord Jesus, come quickly and bring the New Jerusalem. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Digging Deeper: Finding out, discussion and sharing

1. This devotional message focuses on The New Jerusalem, afterlife and being with God.
2. Read Psalm 147 and answer the following questions:
  - a. What would you say the major theme of this Psalm is?
  - b. Read Psalm 147:1. Note that this verse sets the tone of the entire Psalm.
  - c. In verse 2 we read that the Lord builds up Jerusalem.
    - 1) What did "Jerusalem" represent for Israel?
    - 2) According to verse 2 what does God do?
    - 3) According to verse 3 Jerusalem becomes what for Israel?
    - 4) This Psalm about Jerusalem sets us up for thinking about aspects of the New Jerusalem. Why would John's vision of the afterlife be depicted as New Jerusalem?
    - 5) Parallel thought and question: what other New Testament concepts of doctrine and faith are you aware of that build off of significant Old Testament concepts?
  - d. This Psalm affirms the sovereign activity of God. It is the Lord who *builds up* Jerusalem and not man.
  - e. Go through the rest of Psalm 147 and list the other sovereign activities of God. What other things does God *do*?
  - f. Notice carefully the brokenhearted and the wounded in this text. This will serve as an important springboard for the New Jerusalem.
3. In Robert Milligan's meditation, he recognizes that through the history of Christian thought and interpretation the afterlife has been generally expressed in one of two ways: either a new earth or a heaven.
  - a. From the book of Revelation can you make a case for either one?
  - b. As far as Milligan is concerned, he maintains that the two most important things about the afterlife is that God will lead his children to fountains of living water, and wipe away all their tears. What do you think this means?
4. Read Revelation 21:22-24.
  - a. According to 21:2, the New Jerusalem the Holy City, comes down out of heaven from God.
  - b. 21:3-4 indicate that the New Jerusalem is more concerned with God's presence among his people and the eternal relationship sustained than a place to go to.
  - c. According to verse 22, why is there no temple in the New Jerusalem?
  - d. Why does it not need the sun or moon to shine?
  - e. What relationship does it sustain to the nations?
5. I have purposefully refrained from using the word "heaven" when referring to the afterlife in this lesson. Instead, I have chosen to stay with the phrase "The New Jerusalem" that is a distinct use with apocalyptic literature such as the book of Revelation.
6. Look over chapter 21 again and discuss the advantages of John's vision presenting the afterlife in terms of the New Jerusalem.
7. How has the lesson challenged your traditional thinking about the next life?
8. Describe and share your hope for the afterlife with others in your small group.