

The Hope of the Church of the One Body

Most of Christianity today teaches only two spheres of blessings, and the lesson here teaches on the second sphere of blessing which is New Jerusalem. The first sphere of blessing involved what was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (who had the 12 fathers of Israel) being their seed would be like the sand, and stars in heaven and that they would inherit the Promised Land. This involved promises made through covenants with the nation of Israel (Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, and the New Covenant).

It's discussed that most of this lesson falls under what is called Dispensational teaching versus what is taught by Covenant theologians (who believe that the New Covenant was made with the church). The first sphere of blessing is the earth. Therefore, we will look at the second sphere of blessing which involves New Jerusalem which is a heavenly inheritance that was given to Abraham.



It's important to make the distinction between a heavenly inheritance and an inheritance located far above the heavens. The heavenly inheritance that Israel will enjoy is New Jerusalem and we see a description of that in Rev. 21:1-2. This lesson takes time to expound on the heavenly blessing Israel receives with New Jerusalem and in the end compares it to the third sphere of blessing the church of the one body receives in Christ (which is in the heavenlies, far above all).

Rev 21:1-2 (KJV)

- 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.
- 2 And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

There have been reams of books written on these two verses alone regarding whom it will pertain to and when it will happen, both out of the Covenant Theologians and the Dispensationalist groups.

In verse 2, it mentions New Jerusalem as being “*prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*”. Which causes a problem for those who only recognize two spheres of blessing since it's hard to make New Jerusalem the inheritance for the Body of Christ. Especially since verse 9-14 says:

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Rev 21:9-14 (KJV)

- 9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew **thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.**
- 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,
- 11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;
- 12 And had a wall great and high, and **had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:**
- 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 in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

There are characteristics of this city showing that is specific to Israel. The foundation is Israel and the gates are Israel, including the Angels guarding the gates (whose entire relationship has been with the nation of Israel). You cannot make New Jerusalem the inheritance for the body of Christ.

Rev 3:11-12 (KJV)

- 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.
- 12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

We believe the book of Revelation was written much earlier than traditionally thought (traditionally being taught it was written in 90AD on the Isle of Patmos). We feel contextually it was written during the Acts Period when those things were in hope to imminently happen with the nation of Israel.

That's why the apostle Paul wrote this in Hebrews 12 to encourage those who have this heavenly hope.

Hebrews 12:12-24 (KJV)

- 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;
- 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.
- 14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:
- 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

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- 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.
- 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.
- 18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,
- 19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:
- 20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:
- 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)
- 22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,
- 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
- 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Paul says that city is what Abraham was looking for in Hebrews 11:8-10

Hebrews 11:8-10 (KJV)

- 8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.
- 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:
- 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

We see the faithfulness of Abraham in the actions

Heb 11:13-16 (KJV)

- 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
- 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.
- 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.
- 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

We learn in Hebrews that God has a lot of better things stored up for the Nation of Israel.

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Hebrews 6:9 (KJV)

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded **better things** of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

Heb 7:19 (KJV)

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a **better hope** did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Heb 7:22 (KJV)

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a **better testament**.

Hebrews 8:6 (KJV)

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established upon **better promises**.

Hebrews 9:23 (KJV)

23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with **better sacrifices** than these.

Hebrews 10:34 (KJV)

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a **better and an enduring substance**.

Hebrews 11:16 (KJV)

16 But now they desire a **better country**, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Hebrews 11:35 (KJV)

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a **better resurrection**:

Hebrews 11:40 (KJV)

40 God having provided some **better thing** for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Hebrews 12:24 (KJV)

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh **better things** than that of Abel.

What better thing is it that Israel will inherit? It's not the earth but New Jerusalem coming out of Heaven prepared for those who have fulfilled these faithful promises.

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Now compare this to the third sphere of blessing declared in Ephesians 1:3; 17-21

Ephesians 1:3 (KJV)

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings **in heavenly places in Christ:**

Ephesians 1:17-21 (KJV)

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is **the hope of his calling**, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand **in the heavenly places**,

21 **Far above all** principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Most of Christianity today does not recognize this third sphere of blessing. However, those that recognize this third sphere of blessing with the unique calling and inheritance are identified as hyper-dispensationalist (or ultra-dispensationalist). Some have called them “Bullingerites”.

Those that teach the dispensation of grace are labeled in this category. Those Christians who don't recognize the economy of grace are missing the true calling of the Christian today. Those who said grace was taught when Jesus came into the world as it said in Johns gospel that Jesus came full of grace and truth.

The fact of the matter is grace was present back in the Garden of Eden when Adam sinned. It's not until the Apostle Paul declared that the Dispensation of Grace was revealed to him by Christ which was hidden in God before the foundation of the world as declared in Ephesians 3:1-11.

Ephesians 3:1-11 (KJV)

1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the **dispensation of the grace of God** which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

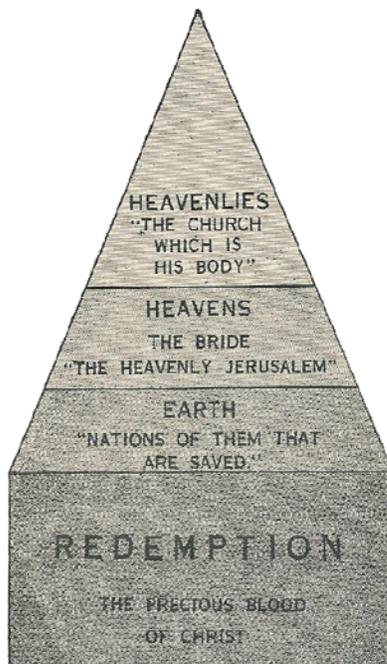
4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

5 Which **in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men**, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

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- 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:
- 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
- 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
- 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, **which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
- 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,
- 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

Three Spheres of Blessings



This declaration of the Mystery has its own inheritance and that is what the third sphere of blessing pertains to.

In review the first sphere of blessing is the Earth which was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (and his 12 sons who became the 12 fathers of Israel).

The second sphere of blessing still pertains to the Nation of Israel which is their heavenly blessing which is the city New Jerusalem that down from heaven who was built by God.

The third sphere of blessing is the heavenlies, which is far above all where Christ Jesus sits. The Christians in the dispensation of grace (church of the one body) have their citizenship and inheritance with Christ.