B. **The New Jerusalem is Presented as a Temple**

1. The cube-structure – "length and width and height are equal" recalls the Holy of Holies – 1 Kings 6:20; Ezek. 41:4.
2. Parallels to Ezekiel's end-times Temple:
   - The high mountain from which John views it (Ezek. 40:2).
   - The measuring rod used to measure it (Ezek. 40:3).
   - 12 gates (Ezek. 48:31-34)
   - "The LORD Is There" Ezek. 48:34 – with Rev. 21:3.
3. 12 precious stones in the foundations of the wall recall the precious stones on the high priest's breastplate (Exod. 28:17-20) and the stones associated with Eden (Ezek. 28:13-14), and stones adorning the temple (2 Chron. 3:6), as well as the stones that the Temple of the Church is built with (1 Cor. 3).
4. The city "paved with gold" recalls the inside of the temple (and Holy of Holies especially) being overlaid with pure gold (1 Kings 6:20-22; 2 Chron. 3:4-8).
5. Also, nothing unclean is allowed into the city – just like no uncleanness was allowed into the Temple – Rev. 21:27 with Num. 19:13, 20; 2 Chron. 23:19.
6. Instead of the ark being there as God's footstool (while his throne/seat was in Heaven) God's throne is in the midst of New Jerusalem – Rev. 22:1, 3.
7. Instead of just the high priest wearing God's name on his forehead (Exod. 28:36-38), all the redeemed have his name on their foreheads – Rev. 22:4.
8. The river of life flows from the throne Rev. 22:1 and the sanctuary in Ezek. 47:1ff.
9. "And I saw no temple in the city for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb." – Rev. 21:22.

Based on: *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth* by G.K. Beale and Mitchell Kim (Crossway, 2014)

Review

- We saw how the Church can be seen as a True Temple where Jew and Gentile are **reconciled**, worshiping together in peace, growing into a holy temple in the Lord - Eph. 2:14-22.
- We are called to be **holy** as "the temple of the living God" who must "bring holiness to completion in the fear of God" - 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1.
- The Church expands & extends God's presence & glory over the whole earth, fulfilling the mission of Eden, as it **grows by the Word of God**:
  - The word of truth (the gospel) **bears fruit** in us - Col. 1:5-6.
  - Growth comes from us "**speaking the truth in love**" - Eph. 4:15-16.
  - We grow by the "**pure spiritual milk** [of the word]" - 1 Pet. 2:2.
  - The Word is as precious as gold, silver and gems: which are the **building materials** God uses to build his Temple - 1 Cor. 3:10-17.
- This growth often comes in a context of **suffering** - 2 Cor. 4:17-5:1.

I. Priestly Ministry in the True Temple (the Church)

A. We are a **"kingdom of priests"** – *Rev. 5:10; cf. 1:6, 1 Pet. 2:9.*

1. We have an incredibly important and significant job – We are serving in God's temple, and we are actually being built up as part of it!
2. Like the saints of old felt privileged when they ascended the Temple steps and were in the courts of praise, we have an even more mind-numbing position as being the very habitation of God's Spirit, corporately and individually!
3. We are a company of priests on a mission for Christ's Kingdom. We are extending the presence of God, the knowledge of God, and ultimately the glory of God to the ends of the earth.
4. We are imaging God, whether we want to or not, when people want to find God or see him, they have to look at us. We're His Temple, and that's where people will find God.

B. This brings sober **Obligations** on our part. (But "obligations" is probably the wrong word, we should say "**privileges**"!)

1. **Worship** –

Heb. 12:28-29 "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, for our God is a consuming fire." **remember Nadab, Abihu

2. **Purity** –
   - 2 Cor. 7:1 speaks of cleansing ourselves from defilement – just as the priests would cleanse in the laver.
3. **Sacrifice**
   - singing of praise (Heb. 13:15)
   - doing good & sharing our possessions (Heb. 13:16, Micah 6:6-8)
   - giving of gifts to enable spread of the gospel (Phil. 4:18)
   - confession of sin, penitence of heart (Ps. 51:17)
   - steadfast love/covenant loyalty & a knowledge of God (Hos. 6:6)
   - offering our very bodies to God for service (Rom. 12:1)
4. **Prayer (Incense)**

Ps. 141:2 "Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!"
Rev. 5:8 "the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."

5. **Witness**
   - Church is pictured by lampstands in Revelation, spreading God's light abroad (see Matt. 5:14-16, too).
   - Paul saw his work of taking the Gospel to the Gentiles as a sacrificial service too

Rom. 15:16 "to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

   - Our status as priests is so that we would "proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9b).
6. **Communion** as the One New Temple Feast (Heb. 13:10)
   - We get to enjoy the benefits of Christ's GREAT SACRIFICE. We feast on His body and blood, spiritually, and this is what sustains us – this is our one **true feast**.

C. Ultimately, and by God's grace, we come to be the **adornment of God's Temple**.

1. Luke 21:5 "*And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said*," – we (the Church) are "living stones" (1 Pet. 2:5), and our lives are "living offerings" (Rom. 12:1) that adorn God's living Temple.
2. Rev. 3:12 promises that "*the one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it...*" This reminds us that, we will experience an even greater sense of being God's Temple one day. We are already living in God's presence in His temple, but one day we will know *so much more* of His presence. The end-times Temple is **already** here, but it's **not yet** here in the glory and splendor with which it will ultimately shine. (Rev. 21:3, 7, 22).

II. The Final, Global Temple where God Dwells Among Us

"Why does [John] see a new heaven and earth in Rev. 21:1 and then focus only on a Graden-like city structured like a temple in the remainder of the vision?" (136)

A. **The New Heaven & Earth are Equated with the New Jerusalem**

1. The seeing-hearing pattern in Revelation argues for this.
   - John sees one thing & hears another with the two images interpreting each other: ex. hears "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (5:5), sees "a Lamb standing, as though it had bene slain" (5:6).
   - Here, he sees the New Heaven & Earth (v. 1) & New Jerusalem (v. 2); hears "the dwelling place of God is with man" (v. 3).

"If what John hears interprets what he sees, then the new heavens and new earth and the new Jerusalem are understood as 'the dwelling place of God'." (137)

2. A parallel with Isaiah 65:17-18 argues for this.
   - In 65:17 God creates "new heavens and a new earth", but this is parallel with God's [re-]creating "Jerusalem to be a joy" (65:18).
   - In the Hebrew poetry of Isaiah, the two creations are parallel.
3. The scale of the New Jerusalem argues for this.
   - 12,000 stadia cubed – 1,380 miles.