

Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 4:17 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study of Revelation 22

"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book!" (Revelation 22:18-19)

Remember last week's lesson on Revelation 21? Where John saw (in his final vision), "a new heaven and a new earth, and the first heaven and the first earth passed away...and then the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride for her husband!" Then, "a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away! And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new!'"

And John was told (again, by Him who sits on the throne!) to write these things down, because "the words are faithful and true! It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end! I will give to the one who thirsts from the springs of the living water!"

Then, "one of the seven angels" told John to "come," and he "carried him away in the Spirit...and showed him (up-close and personal) the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God," made of the finest and costliest precious stones, having an illumination and "brilliance" beyond human imagination, truly worthy of the glory of God!" And we presumed that John, the beloved disciple, in exile on the isle of Patmos, must have been caught up with overwhelming joy as he undoubtedly recalled the words of Jesus to him and the rest of the disciples that He was "going to prepare a place for them and would be coming back to receive them unto Himself"! And so, he grabbed his pen and wrote down exactly what he was told to write, with all the exuberance he could muster (for sure)! F.F. Bruce, in his commentary on Revelation, described John's response as him "ransacking the resource of language and metaphor - jewels, gold, and pearls - to describe the indescribable glory which the holy city reflects!" (But you will have to read it again for yourself to capture it all!)

But the angel had more to show John and "testify" to him about what "was soon to take place"! And that brings us to Revelation 22 and the final words of the Revelation of Jesus Christ!

Revelation 22:1-2 says the angel showed John "a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street...and on either side the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations...and there will no longer be a curse...and His bond-servants will serve Him and see Him face to face and be marked by His name...and reign with Him forever and ever"!

Sounds a lot like God's original plan at the beginning of creation, when Genesis 2:8-16 tells how God "planted a garden, in Eden...and out of ground caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to

the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden...and a river flowing out of Eden to water the garden, and then that God "took the man (Adam) that He had formed and "put him in the garden to cultivate it and keep it," and told him that he could "eat freely from any tree of the garden, except from the tree in the middle of the garden! The "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" which, if he ate from it, he "would surely die"! You know the rest of the story! The "fall"! The banishing from the garden! The "curse"! The loss of fellowship with God! And the redemptive plan of God for man, which is what the rest of the Bible (all the pages between Genesis 3:15 and the book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ) is all about!

And now the restoration of all that was lost in the Garden of Eden (and more) Paradise regained!

Ah, the "water of life"! Jesus said (in Revelation 21:6) that "He will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost!" Reminding us of Jesus' words to the woman at the well (in John 4:14), that "whoever drinks of the water that I will give shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life!" And how (in John 7:37-39) "on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water!'"

Psalms 46:4-5 seems to anticipate it all! "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved!" And, of course, the words of Isaiah (in Isaiah 55:1), "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters...!" (And the song that says it all: "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus...!")

Will there be eating in New Jerusalem, as was intended in the Garden? Sounds like it, but apparently more out of the pure enjoyment of it and not out of necessity!

And will God have a job for us to do in heaven? Similar to the desire He had, back in Genesis, for man to rule over His creation? Again, sounds like a good possibility, but so much is still unknown to us! J. Vernon McGee has spoken about this: "Who knows but what He will give to each saint a world or a solar system or a galactic system to operate!"

Well, even after having completed our study of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, we still know so little about what it will be like in heaven! We still "see through a mirror dimly" (as the apostle Paul noted in I Corinthians 13:12) but then (someday) "face to face...and we will fully know, just as we also have been fully known!" Paul also speculated (in II Timothy 4:6-8) about "the things God has prepared for all who love His appearing!" Wow! Can hardly wait!

Three times in Revelation 22 we are told that Jesus is "coming quickly"! And that we need to be ready!

And three times "the words of the prophecy of this book" are attested to as being "faithful and true," and given by God through His angel for John to share with the saints about "things which must take place" in part to encourage us to follow His commands, and to be ready! Verse 7 says, "Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book!" Then, in verse 10, the angel's

instruction to John, "not to seal up the words of the prophecy of this book"! And Jesus Himself saying (in verse 16) that He sent His very own angel to "testify to these things for the churches"! (That would be us!) It was important to Him for us to know these things! And then, as one of the closing admonitions of this book, at the close of the Revelation, for the proper handling of the Word of God! And the grave warning for anyone who would dare add to, or take away from, "the words of this book"! (II Timothy 3:16-17 comes to mind!)

John closes with words that should echo the feelings of all who choose to follow Jesus: "Come Lord Jesus!" Maranatha!

"The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all! Amen!"

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