

Revelation: A Study of End-Time Events

Lesson Twelve: Chapters 21 & 22

Overview:

This lesson brings our study of end-time events to a climactic conclusion, revealing the amazing inheritance that God has prepared for His people, all because of the finished work of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, free from the defilement that mankind has brought upon God's beautiful creation. The New Jerusalem, a satellite city, will come down out of heaven from God, the measurement of all sides being 1,500 miles (the approximate distance between Toronto and Miami). It will be the abode of God and man together. We are told that there will still be nations on the new earth who will walk by the light of this city. There will be no need for the sun or moon, because the glory of God will give it light, and the Lamb, Jesus Christ, will be its lamp.

There will be a River of Life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, flowing down the middle of the great street of the city. On both sides of the river will be the tree of life, which will provide our sustenance and healing. As unbelievable as it sounds, we know that it is true because these are the words of the faithful witness, Jesus Christ. We are told not to seal up the words of this prophecy, because their fulfillment is imminent; they can occur at any time. Be ready for the coming of the Bridegroom!

21:1

- 1) Here "new" (*kainos*) means "recently made, fresh, unused, unworn." The new earth is all "arable land," with no sea.

Read Isaiah 65:17

"This 'new Jerusalem' was seen coming down out of heaven by John, and his description was awesome! We've sung about it for years but it's indescribable. It's only a small part of heaven however. It will be home along with the new earth. This universe has no end to it. We can only see 1,029 stars with the naked eye and 3,300 with binoculars. If we use a telescope we can view 200 million just in our galaxy (the Milky Way). In 1925 Mr. Hubble (inventor of the Hubble telescope) discovered whole new galaxies of stars more than six million trillion miles away from earth. He proved the universe contained as many galaxies outside our galaxy as there

were stars inside our home galaxy... We know now that the universe contains more than 50 billion galaxies with each galaxy containing more than 200 million stars.”¹ Read Hebrews 1:3. Amazing!

- 2) Perhaps it is because the seas now divide people groups and nations that the new earth will have no oceans or seas.

21:2

- 1) The “new Jerusalem” is not the earthly Jerusalem that had been “trampled by the Gentiles” during the Great Tribulation so that it was “figuratively called Sodom and Egypt” for the sins committed there and the persecution of the Jewish people.
- 2) The Church, as the Bride of Christ, will be “beautifully dressed” in fine linen: the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:8). Here, the new Jerusalem is the abode of the saints, coming down out of heaven, extravagantly prepared for God’s people. The new Jerusalem is NOT the bride, but is prepared AS A BRIDE!

Read Isaiah 64:4

21:3-5

- 1) No more sin and death. No more resurrections are mentioned. It appears that no one would be born after the Millennium: they would have to be tested. The earth appears to be populated by those who entered, or were born during, the Millennium.
- 2) Again, we see that the new Jerusalem is the dwelling of God AND His people – together as in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8).
- 3) There will be no more reason for tears: no more mourning, crying, pain or death. AND, “the former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind” (Isaiah 65:17).

21:6-7

- 1) “It is done.” At Christ’s crucifixion, he cried out, “It is finished,” speaking of the atonement for sin. Here, it speaks of the restoration of all things.

¹ Phillips, David L., *Understanding What John Saw: Revelation Made Easy* © 1998, p. 221.

- 2) Our inheritance: ALL of the saints, from all ages, will inherit EVERYTHING that our heavenly Father has prepared for us.

21:8

- 1) Have you ever lied? Committed any of these others sins? Is that your identity?

Read 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Romans 4:24-25 Praise be to Jesus Christ, our Lord!

- 2) This confirms that all the lost will be tormented day and night forever and ever in the fiery lake of burning sulfur (20:10), not annihilated.

21:9-10

- 1) The Church, not only betrothed, but now the mature spouse of Christ.
- 2) Again, we see the New Jerusalem descending from heaven, as the dwelling place of the Wife of the Lamb (the Church) (3:12-13), and for all who overcame through the blood of the Lamb (21:7).

21:11-14

- 1) The city will be dazzling, reflecting the glory of God!

“In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you” (John 14:2).

- 2) “On the gates are written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.” This is not speaking of the Church as “spiritual Israel” since the names of the Apostles, who represent the Church, are on the twelve foundations.

21:15-17

- 1) The new Jerusalem is actually shaped like a cube: all sides are 1,500 miles across (approx. Toronto to Miami)!
- 2) The walls will be 216 feet thick.

21:18-21

- 1) The wall around the city was jasper (precious gem of various colors), each foundation will be decorated with precious stones, but the city itself will be made of pure transparent gold.

- 2) Each gate is a single pearl! Each of the 12 floors (foundations) is 125 miles high (1,500 miles high divided by 12).

21:22-24

- 1) Read Rev. 3:12
- 2) Genesis 1:3 “And God said, ‘Let there be light...’ on the first day of creation. He did not create the sun and moon (“lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night”) until the fourth day (1:14). God does not need the sun to produce light. here, we see that His glory will illuminate the entire city.
- 3) There will still be nations (*ethnos* = “people”) and kings on the new earth. Again, it appears that those living through the Millennium will populate the new earth, and have access to the heavenly Jerusalem.

21:25-27

These gates will never be shut, because there will be no night (21:25). The OT custom was for the city gates to be shut at night for protection, something God’s people would no longer need: there will be “twelve angels at the gates” (21:12).

22:1-2

- 1) There will be no sea (Rev.21:1), only the river of the water of life. “River” comes from the root word *pino*, which means “figuratively, to receive into the soul what serves to refresh, strengthen it, nourish it unto eternal life.”
- 2) Where have we seen the “tree of life” in previous Scripture passages?

The tree of life was first seen in the Garden of Eden: Read Genesis 2:9; 3:21-24. God did not want man to live forever in his sinful condition, and so prevented him from eating of the tree of life. In Revelation 21, we see that man will live with God forever in a sinless condition. Read 1 John 3:2.

It appears that the millennial saints, those who will not die but will survive the Tribulation period and enter into Christ’s thousand-year reign on earth, as well as those born during the millennium and do not rebel against His authority, will populate the new earth. They will have access to the New Jerusalem (God’s satellite city whose “gates will never be shut”). Could it be that God’s original plan for man in the Garden of Eden will yet be fulfilled

on earth? Yes, and more: His Son now has a Bride, and they will be joined by resurrected Old Testament and Tribulation Saints, as they dwell in the New Jerusalem.

In Revelation, we see that God is finishing what was started in Genesis. He is demonstrating that even while preserving man's free will, He is sovereign and controls the outcome of human history. No plan of His can be thwarted.

22:3-5

Christ took on the form of a servant for our sakes (Phil. 2:7); we will have the privilege of serving Him throughout eternity.

22:6-7

- 1) A prophet (*prophetes*) is "one who, moved by the Spirit of God, and hence His organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, especially concerning future events, and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation."
- 2) "Behold, I am coming soon" (Jesus now speaking, not the angel). "Soon" (*tachos*) means "quickness, speed." When it happens, it will happen quickly, suddenly.
- 3) To "keep" (*tereo*) is to "heed, to attend to carefully." We are not to dismiss the prophecies of this book, but to take them seriously.

22:8-9

Matthew 4:10 "...worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only."

22:10-11

- 1) To "seal" (*sphragizo*) is "to hide, keep in silence, keep secret." Here, do NOT SEAL UP!
- 2) "The time is near."
 - a) "time" (*kairos*) is a "period of time"
 - b) "near" (*engus*) is "imminent" (ready to take place at any time).
- 3) Let him who does wrong continue... It is their choice. Read Daniel 12:10.

22:12-13

- 1) A “reward” (*misthos*) is “wages earned; of the rewards which God bestows, or will bestow, on good deeds and endeavors.”
- 2) Rewards are what is due for the works done in this life. They are in addition to salvation, which CANNOT be earned (Eph. 2:8-9).

22:14-15

- 1) The lost are still in existence (not annihilated); but exist outside of God’s presence in the fiery lake of burning sulfur (21:8).
- 2) A “dog” (*kuon*) as used here is “metaphorically, a man of impure mind, an impudent man.”
 - a) Those who have never been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and received a new nature (2 Peter 1:4, 2 Cor. 5:17).
 - b) Those who have not been credited with the righteousness of Christ (Romans 4:23-24).

22:16-17

- 1) A church (*ekklesia*) is an “assembly of Christians.” While this letter was originally addressed to the seven local churches, the message is for all Christians of all time. “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’” (22:17). The bride is the entire Church!
- 2) The invitation of the Holy Spirit and of the Bride of Christ, His Church, is to all: “Whoever is thirsty...whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.”

22:18-19

John warns that the prophecy of the book of Revelation is the inspired Word of God, and not to be changed (added to or taken from). Jesus attests to this in v.20.

This passage does not refer to differences in interpretation of the words themselves. Satan would love for us to stay away from this book for fear that we would misinterpret it. Remember, there is a blessing to all who read, and hear and take to heart the words of this prophecy (Rev. 1:3).

We must handle the Word of God reverently, and prayerfully pursue the study of God's Word under the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

22:20-21

1) Here, the invitation is to the Lord: "Come, Lord Jesus."

Read 2 Timothy 4:8."

2) "Grace" (*charis*) means "goodwill, loving kindness, favor."

3) "Lord" (*kurios*) is defined as "he owner; one who has control of the person, the master."

If you have received Christ's death as payment for your sins, and personally trusted Him as your Savior, then you are God's possession, purchased by the blood of Christ. But does He have CONTROL of you?

Are you surrendered to His Lordship in YOUR life?

"And he died for all,
that those who live should no longer live for themselves
but for him who died for them and was raised again"
(2 Corinthians 5:25).

Prayer of Renewed Dedication of Our Lives

"Lord God, I confess that I have gone my own way and leaned upon my own understanding. I have allowed the world to lure me away from obedience and surrender to You, and I have allowed Satan to deceive me in many ways. But I trust in Your mercy and in Your power to enable me to live the life You've called me to live "in Christ." I ask You, Father, in the Name of the LORD Jesus Christ, and by the power of His Blood, to "turn my eyes from worthless things; renew my life according to your Word." Amen!

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked “NASB” are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright© 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked “KJV” are taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, AUTHORIZED KING JAMES VERSION, THE NEW SCOFIELD REFERENCE EDITION. Copyright © 1967 Oxford University Press, Inc. Used by permission.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Greek words and their meanings are taken from the Greek Lexicon, based on Thayer and Smith's Bible Dictionary plus others; this is keyed to the large Kittel and the "Theological Dictionary of the New Testament." These files are public domain.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Hebrew words and their meanings are taken from Brown, Driver, Briggs and Gesenius Hebrew Lexicon, keyed to the “Theological Word Book of the Old Testament.” These files are public domain.