

Revelation 21:23 – 22:5 The Delights of the New Jerusalem

Verse 23

And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it – It does not say there is no longer a sun or moon, only that the city has no need of them.

The glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb – Jesus declared that He was the Light of the world (John 8:12, 12:36). John declares that God is light and in Him there is no darkness (1 John 1:5-7). True fellowship with God is now a reality.

Verse 24

And the nations shall walk by its light – The brightness of the city will provide light for the new earth. The meaning of “nations” is debated. The Greek word is *ethnos* from which we get the word ethnic, and is often used of gentile nations. Some see this as simply a reference to all non-Jews who are on the new earth. In other words saved Gentiles, not political entities.

And the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it – Some think the kings are former kings from the old creation who are believers. Others think that kingship is a reward to faithful believers, that is, those who were overcomers. Everyone who enters the city will give glory to God.

Verse 25

And in the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates shall never be closed – In John’s day, the gates of a city would be closed at night-fall for protection. However, there will be no enemies in the eternal state and there will be no night so the gates will always be open. “*Shall never*” is a double negative in the Greek text to express emphasis (*ou me*).

Verse 26

And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it – This is a picture of the ancient practice of kings and nations bringing their wealth and glory to the city of the greatest king.

“Because of your temple at Jerusalem, Kings will bring gifts to You.” Psalm 68:29

“Let all kings bow down before him, all nations serve him.” Psalm 72:11

Verse 27

And nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever (ou me) come into it – At this time all the unsaved are removed from the presence of God. Only believers will enter into the city.

But only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life – The inference is that all believers will have free access to the city in the new earth.

Chapter 22, Verse 1

And he showed me a river of the water of life – This appears to be a literal river but it would also symbolize the refreshment and sustenance that God provides through eternal life.

Clear as crystal – Pure and unpolluted

Coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb – The life that flows in this river comes directly from God.

Verse 2

In the middle of its street – This could refer to the throne of God or to the river itself.

On either side of the river was the tree of life – The word *tree* is singular inferring one tree. Perhaps this is the very tree of life that was in the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9). Some see the tree as a collective for many trees that line the river based on the parallel of the millennial sanctuary river (Ezekiel 47:1, 12).

Bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month – This tree is perpetually in season, always bearing fruit. The fact that there are months seems to point to some sort of calendar. Perhaps a lunar calendar if the sun and moon still exist. Apparently the fruit of the tree can and will be eaten.

And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations – The word for healing is *therapeia* from which we get the word “therapeutic.” It can carry the idea of “health giving” or “well-being.” If some people have mortal bodies, the leaves may function to sustain their immortality.

Verse 3

And there shall no longer be any curse – This is another clue that this passage is referring to the eternal state not the millennium.

And the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it – Jesus sat on the Davidic throne during the millennium. Now God and Jesus sit on the eternal throne.

Verses 3 - 4

And His bond-servants shall serve Him – There will be service and activity in the eternal state.

And they shall see His face – They will enjoy personal, intimate fellowship with Him (1 Cor. 13:12).

And His name shall be on their foreheads – Having the mark of God is a great privilege (2:12, 7:3, 14:1) that indicates ownership and protection. It also shows that we are His children and heirs.

Verse 5

And there shall no longer be any night: and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun because the Lord God shall illumine them – Apparently the light of God’s presence illuminates every part of the New Jerusalem.

And they shall reign forever and ever – Just as in the Millennial Kingdom, faithful believers will rule and reign with Christ forever!