

Revelation Pt 49 The Lamb Is Enough

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Revelation / Revelation 21:22–27; Revelation 22:1–5

Scripture

Revelation 21:22–27 BSB

²² But I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its lamp.

²⁴ By its light the nations will walk, and into it the kings of the earth will bring their glory.

²⁵ Its gates will never be shut at the end of the day, because there will be no night there.

²⁶ And into the city will be brought the glory and honor of the nations.

²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who practices an abomination or a lie, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 22:1-5 BSB

¹ Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

² down the middle of the main street of the city. On either side of the river stood a tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit and yielding a fresh crop for each month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be within the city, and His servants will worship Him.

⁴ They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

⁵ There will be no more night in the city, and they will have no need for the light of a lamp or of the sun. For the Lord God will shine on them, and they will reign forever and ever.

Introduction

Last week we walked through the architecture of the New Jerusalem. Twelve gates. Twelve foundations. A perfect cube matching the holy of holies. Foundations built from a

high priest's breastplate. Gates made from something that only exists because of a wound.

And we ended on something missing.

Ezekiel's vision, the one this entire passage has been following as its pattern, had a temple standing at the center of the city he saw. A temple was the anchor of everything in Ezekiel's vision. John has walked us through gates and foundations and walls and measurements in more detail than almost anywhere else in this book, and nowhere in any of it has he mentioned a temple.

We find out why tonight.

A couple weeks ago, some of you heard a message in the Book of Life series that walked through several of the verses in front of us tonight. The river. The tree. The absence of a temple. Seeing God's face. That message was not an accident. It was placed there on purpose, to give you a taste of where this study was heading before we arrived here ourselves. Tonight we go the rest of the way into it. We are going to slow down on the original language, the Old Testament background standing behind each of these images, and the specific theological weight each one carries, in a way a single message could not fully cover.

What we are about to see is the final scene of the city vision. Every signpost that has pointed toward God throughout the

whole of Scripture, the temple, the sun and moon, the curse on the ground, the impossibility of seeing God's face and living, is retired in these verses. Not because any of them failed. Because every single one of them was pointing somewhere, and the thing they were pointing to has finally arrived.

Section 1: No Temple

Revelation 21:22 BSB

²² But I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

V.22 — The Lord God and the Lamb Are the Temple

For any reader steeped in the world of the Old Testament, this is one of the most jarring sentences in the entire book of Revelation. John says he saw no temple in the city.

To understand why that lands the way it does, you have to understand what the temple was to Israel. It was not a building people visited on occasion, the way we might think of a church building today. It was the single place on earth where God's presence was concentrated. It was the only place sacrifice could be offered, the only place sin could be dealt with, the only place a person could stand as close to

God as the old covenant allowed. Everything in Israel's national and spiritual life orbited around that one building.

And John looks for it in the New Jerusalem, and it is not there.

The word John uses for temple here is the same word we developed in detail last week when we looked at the shape of the city. Naos. Not the wider temple complex with its courts and outer buildings, but the inner sanctuary specifically. The holy of holies. The most restricted room in the entire old covenant system.

Here is why its absence makes complete sense once you remember what we already established about the shape of this city. The New Jerusalem is a perfect cube, matching the exact proportions of the holy of holies in Solomon's temple. The whole city is already that category of space. There is no need for a smaller sacred room inside it, because there is no part of the city that is not already that sacred. You do not need a holy of holies within a structure that is, in its entirety, already a holy of holies.

John tells us why directly. Its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

Pantokratōr, Almighty, is a title John has used throughout this book. It appears at the very beginning, in chapter 1, and it appears here again at the very end. That is not incidental.

The same title that described God at the opening of this vision describes him again as the vision closes. Nothing has diminished. Nothing has changed about who he is. The story has simply arrived at its intended destination.

Early in his ministry, when Jesus cleared the temple courts, the religious leaders demanded a sign to justify his authority to do such a thing. Jesus answered them by saying, destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. They assumed he meant the physical building in front of them, the one that had taken decades to construct. John tells us plainly that Jesus was speaking about the temple of his own body.

That claim, made early in the Gospels, is the seed of what we are looking at tonight. Jesus was already telling his listeners that he himself was what the temple had always been pointing toward. The building in Jerusalem was never the final destination. It was a signpost, and Jesus was the reality the signpost pointed to. Paul later tells believers in Corinth that if they are joined to Christ, they themselves become a kind of temple, God's presence dwelling in them individually. What began as a claim about Jesus's own body extended to the church as his body, and now, in Revelation 21, it reaches its final and complete form. Not a building. Not even individual believers scattered across time. The entire city, in its totality, is where God's unmediated presence dwells.

There is one more connection worth making, because it reaches all the way back past the temple, past the tabernacle, to the very beginning of the story.

There was no temple in the garden of Eden either.

Genesis tells us that God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. No building. No priesthood. No sacrificial system. None of it was necessary, because nothing yet stood between God and the people he had made. The temple, when it eventually came centuries later, was not God's original design for how he wanted to relate to his people. It was a concession, a way of managing a relationship that sin had fractured, keeping God's presence available to his people while also keeping sinful people safe from a holiness that would otherwise destroy them.

What John shows us in Revelation 21:22 is not an innovation. It is a restoration of the original design, improved beyond what Eden itself offered. God walked with two people in a garden. Now he dwells, without any structure standing between them, with a redeemed multitude too large to count, in a city built for exactly that purpose. The temple's absence is not a loss. It is the sign that everything the temple existed to manage has finally, completely, been resolved.

Section 2: No Sun, No Moon

Revelation 21:23–24 BSB

²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its lamp.

²⁴ By its light the nations will walk, and into it the kings of the earth will bring their glory.

V.23 — The Lamb Is Its Lamp

We already touched on this back in verse 11, when John described the city's radiance as being like jasper. At that point we noted that the glory of God functions as the city's actual light source, and that this verse would make it explicit. Here it is, stated directly.

No sun. No moon. Two of the most permanent, unchanging fixtures in human experience, present since the fourth day of creation, simply not needed anymore.

This is not a small claim. Every civilization in human history has organized its entire existence around the sun and the moon. Seasons, calendars, agriculture, the rhythm of day and night itself. John is telling us that in the New Jerusalem,

the most basic structure of physical existence as we have always known it is no longer necessary, because something greater has taken its place.

The glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Notice the distinction being made here. The glory of God is named as the light itself. The Lamb is named as the lamp. That is a careful and deliberate way of describing the relationship between the Father and the Son without collapsing them into one undifferentiated thing. The Father is the source of the glory. The Son is the means by which that glory is displayed and made visible. Two persons, one light, functioning together exactly the way this entire book has shown them functioning together from the very beginning.

This language reaches all the way back to John's own Gospel. He wrote there that in Jesus was life, and the life was the light of men. At the incarnation, that light entered the world in a body that could be crucified. What we see in Revelation 21 is not that light being switched on for the first time. It is that same eternal light, once hidden in weakness and once subjected to death in his humanity, now fully and permanently unveiled, with nothing left in all creation to obscure it or threaten it again.

Isaiah saw this coming centuries earlier. He wrote to a people who knew nothing of Revelation, in Isaiah chapter

60, that the sun would no longer be their light by day, nor the moon give them light by night, because the Lord would be their everlasting light and their God their glory. That promise, given long before Jesus was born, described exactly what John is now seeing fulfilled. The sun and moon were never going to be permanent fixtures of God's ultimate plan for his people. They were always going to be replaced by something greater once the greater thing arrived.

V.24 — The Nations Walk by That Light

By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

This verse deserves careful, honest handling, because it raises a real question that deserves a real answer rather than a quick pass.

Earlier in this book, "the nations" and "the kings of the earth" appear repeatedly as language for those who resisted God, who worshiped the beast, who gathered against the beloved city in rebellion. So when those same phrases appear here, walking peacefully in the light of the New Jerusalem and bringing their glory into it, it raises a fair question. Are these the same rebellious nations somehow given a second chance after judgment has already been rendered? Has something changed about who gets in?

The most consistent reading, and the one that fits both this passage and the rest of Scripture, is that "the nations" here refers to the redeemed drawn from every nation, not the nations in their prior state of rebellion. This verse is best understood as the fulfillment of Isaiah chapter 60, where the prophet described nations and kings streaming to Zion, bringing their wealth and their glory, coming not as conquerors but as worshippers acknowledging the Lord's light. Isaiah's picture was never one of rebellious nations storming the gates. It was a picture of nations coming in submission, in repentance, in recognition that the light they are walking toward is greater than anything they had before.

This also fits something we have already established firmly in this study. Revelation 21:27, just a few verses ahead, states plainly that nothing unclean will ever enter this city, and only those written in the Lamb's Book of Life will pass through its gates. Whatever we make of "the nations" in verse 24, it cannot mean people entering apart from that condition. The consistent testimony of this entire chapter is that entry into this city is never automatic and never based on national or ethnic identity. It is always and only based on whether a person's name is written in the book.

So when we read that the nations walk by the light of this city, and kings bring their glory into it, we are reading about redeemed people, gathered from every nation and every

people group throughout history, who once may have lived under systems opposed to God, and who now walk in a light that belongs to everyone who has been brought into it through the Lamb. The rebellion described earlier in this book is over. What remains, in this verse, is the harvest of every nation that Christ's death purchased people from, as Revelation 5 already told us, when the redeemed were described as having been ransomed from every tribe and language and people and nation.

Section 3: Gates That Never Close

Revelation 21:25–27 BSB

²⁵ Its gates will never be shut at the end of the day, because there will be no night there.

²⁶ And into the city will be brought the glory and honor of the nations.

²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who practices an abomination or a lie, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

V.25 — Nothing Left to Fear

Ancient cities closed their gates for exactly one reason. Protection. A city gate was the single most vulnerable point in a city's defenses, and every city that expected to survive shut its gates at nightfall and posted watchmen to guard them. An open gate at night was an invitation to disaster. A closed gate was the difference between safety and ruin.

So when John tells us the gates of the New Jerusalem never close, he is not describing a minor architectural detail. He is describing a city with nothing left to defend itself against.

Think about everything this book has already shown us being dealt with by this point in the story. Satan bound, released, and finally thrown into the lake of fire. The beast and the false prophet already there ahead of him. Death and Hades thrown in as well. Every enemy that has appeared across the entire book of Revelation, every threat that ever stood against God's people, has already been permanently removed by the time we arrive at this verse. The open gate is not carelessness. It is the practical proof of a victory that has already been completely won.

"There will be no night there" reinforces the same point from a different angle. Night, throughout Scripture, is often associated with danger, concealment, and the things people do when they think no one is watching. There is no night in this city because there is nothing left that needs darkness to operate. Nothing hidden. Nothing waiting to strike. Nothing

that requires cover.

V.26 — The Glory of the Nations Comes In

They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

This verse deserves careful handling, because it would be easy to misread it in either direction. It does not mean human culture and achievement are irrelevant and get discarded at the end. Nor does it mean everything humanity has ever produced, regardless of its character, gets carried into eternity unchanged.

What this verse most likely describes is the redemption of what was genuinely good in human achievement and culture throughout history, now purified of whatever corruption clung to it, brought into the New Jerusalem as an offering rather than left behind as ash. This is consistent with what we already worked through in verse 24: nations and kings who once may have lived under systems opposed to God, now redeemed, bringing what was genuinely valuable in their history and culture as worship rather than as competition with God's glory.

This should not be pressed further than the text allows. John does not give us a detailed inventory of what qualifies

as "glory and honor," and any confident claim about the specific content of that phrase goes beyond what is written. What we can say with confidence is the general shape of the picture: nothing about the eternal state is a wholesale erasure of human history. Something valuable that was made throughout the centuries by the nations of the earth finds its way, redeemed, into the city of God.

V.27 — Nothing Unclean Enters

Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Throughout Revelation, the Book of Life has functioned in courtroom language. A throne. Books opened. Judgment rendered. That was the entire scene at the great white throne in chapter 20. But here, the Book of Life is not standing in a courtroom. It is standing at a gate.

A courtroom looks backward. It examines a record that already exists and renders a verdict based on what has already happened. A gate looks forward. It is not an evaluation of the past. It is the entry point into what comes next. The same Book of Life that determined a verdict in chapter 20 now determines passage in chapter 21. The function of the book has not changed. What has changed is the moment in the story it appears in. Chapter 20 showed us

the book being used to render judgment. Chapter 21 shows us the same book being used to grant access.

This is worth connecting to something already established firmly in this study. We noted, back in chapter 20, that the Book of Life appears six times across the entire book of Revelation: 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15, and here in 21:27. This is the sixth and final appearance. John has been building toward this exact moment across the entire book, and this is where the thread ends. Not with a courtroom. With an open gate, and a book determining who is standing on the other side of it.

"Nothing unclean will ever enter it." Not reduced. Not managed. Nothing. And the only qualification for passing through is the same qualification this entire study has returned to again and again: whether a name is written in the book. Not religious activity. Not a family history of faith. Not proximity to people who were faithful. The book, and only the book.

Section 4: The River of Life

Revelation 22:1–2 BSB

¹ Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

² down the middle of the main street of the city. On either side of the river stood a tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit and yielding a fresh crop for each month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

22:1 — The River

Notice first what the river flows from. Not a separate spring somewhere in the city. Not a natural feature that simply happens to exist there. It flows directly from the throne of God and of the Lamb. One throne, shared by the Father and the Son, and life itself pouring out from that single source.

Ezekiel chapter 47 gives us the clearest Old Testament picture behind this river. Ezekiel is shown water flowing out from beneath the threshold of a future temple. At first it is only ankle deep. The prophet is led further along its course, and it becomes knee deep. Further still, and it reaches the waist. Further again, and it becomes a river no one can cross, too deep to wade through. Everywhere this river flows, it brings life. Trees grow on both of its banks, bearing fruit every month without failing, their leaves never withering, and even the Dead Sea itself, one of the most lifeless bodies of water in the ancient world, is healed by contact with this river and filled with living creatures.

Ezekiel's vision showed a river that started small and grew. What John shows us in Revelation 22:1 is that same river,

but flowing directly from the throne itself, in full force from the very beginning. There is no small trickle here that needs to build over distance. The source is already the throne of God, and the river that flows from it is already complete.

There is an even older thread behind this image, reaching back before Ezekiel to the very beginning of the story. Genesis tells us that a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, before it divided into four separate headwaters. The garden had a river. The new creation has one too, and this time it flows not from a garden bordering the throne, but directly from the throne itself.

22:2 — The Tree of Life

On either side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Go back to Genesis chapter 2. The tree of life stood in the middle of the garden, available to Adam and Eve, along with every other tree, before sin ever entered the story. Then Genesis chapter 3 happened. Man sinned, and God drove him out of the garden. But notice exactly how Genesis describes what happened next. God placed a cherubim and a flaming sword, turning every direction, specifically to guard the way to the tree of life, so that man could not reach out, take from it, and live forever in his fallen condition.

That detail matters enormously, and it is worth stating plainly. God did not simply remove access to the tree as an afterthought. He specifically guarded it. He posted an armed guard at the one thing that could have made humanity's fallen state permanent. From that moment forward, every single person born into this world has been born on the far side of that flaming sword, with no natural way back to the tree that was lost.

Every page of Scripture since that moment has been building toward the reversal of exactly that scene.

And here it is. The tree of life, back on either side of the river. No cherubim. No flaming sword. No barrier of any kind. The way that was specifically and deliberately closed in Genesis 3 is now completely and permanently open.

Twelve kinds of fruit. Not one variety, rationed carefully. Twelve, a number that has run through this entire chapter, describing complete and total sufficiency for the whole of God's redeemed people. Yielding its fruit every month, meaning there is no season in which the tree stops giving. No scarcity. No waiting. Continuous, unfailing provision.

"The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" deserves careful precision, because it would be easy to read this in a way the text does not intend. The Greek word behind "healing" is *therapeia*, from which we get our word

therapy. It does not necessarily imply that sickness still exists in the New Jerusalem and is being actively treated there. In a city where Revelation 21:4 has already told us death, mourning, crying, and pain are gone, it would contradict everything already established to suggest disease is still present and being managed. The word carries the sense of ongoing, sustaining, life-giving properties, the tree continually supplying wholeness and flourishing to the nations gathered there, rather than functioning as a hospital treating an illness that persists.

Man was driven from a garden and separated from a tree by a flaming sword he could never get past on his own. Jesus has built a city with that same tree standing wide open at its center, and a river flowing directly from his own throne to water it.

Section 5: No More Curse

Revelation 22:3–5 BSB

³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be within the city, and His servants will worship Him.

⁴ They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

⁵ There will be no more night in the city, and they will have no need for the light of a lamp or of the sun. For the Lord God will shine on them, and they will reign forever and ever.

V.3 — The Curse Is Lifted

Go back to Genesis chapter 3. After Adam and Eve sinned, God pronounced specific consequences on the ground itself. Thorns and thistles. The sweat of hard labor required just to produce food from soil that would now resist cooperation. The ground itself, Genesis tells us, was cursed because of what happened in the garden. That curse did not stay contained to agriculture. It spread outward to touch disease, decay, conflict, the entire created order groaning under a weight it was never designed to carry.

Revelation 22:3 says that curse is gone. Not reduced. Not managed more effectively. Gone, in full, without remainder.

And notice where the throne is located. Not in some separate heavenly realm hovering above the city. The throne of God and of the Lamb is in the city itself. Heaven is not a distant place believers eventually travel to. Heaven comes down, and God's throne sits directly among the people it rules, in the very place where the curse used to hold everything captive.

V.4 — They Will See His Face

They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

Start with Exodus chapter 33. Moses, in an extraordinary moment of boldness, asks God directly to show him His glory. And God's answer is sobering. He tells Moses that no one can see His face and live, but that He will place Moses in the cleft of a rock, cover him with His hand as His glory passes by, and then let Moses see only His back. Not His face. Even Moses, who spoke with God as a man speaks with a friend, was not permitted to see God's face directly. The reason given is not arbitrary. God's holiness is of such a nature that a sinful human being encountering it directly would not survive the encounter.

That is the weight sitting behind Revelation 22:4. Paul later writes to the Corinthians that right now, in this present life, we see in a mirror dimly. Indirectly. Through reflection rather than direct sight. But then, Paul says, we will see face to face. That "then" is exactly what John is describing here. Not a mirror. Not a reflection. Not a veil, and not even the limited glimpse Moses was given of God's back. Full, direct, unmediated sight of the face of God, made possible only because everything that made such sight fatal has been dealt with completely.

"His name will be on their foreheads" deserves its own full development, and this connects directly to something built out in detail in this study's teaching on the mark of the beast, months ago in chapter 13.

In that teaching, we walked through Exodus 28:36-38, where the high priest wore a gold plate on his forehead engraved with the words "Holy to the Lord." We looked at Deuteronomy 6, the Shema, where God commanded His people to bind His words as a sign on their hands and as frontlets between their eyes, a symbol of complete devotion in both thought and action. And we saw that Revelation 7:3 and 14:1 describe God's servants sealed with His name and the Lamb's name written on their foreheads, standing in direct, deliberate contrast to those marked on the hand or forehead with the mark of the beast in chapter 13.

That teaching was explicitly building toward this exact verse, and this is where it finally arrives. The beast's mark, described back in chapter 13, is a counterfeit built on coercion. Everyone was required to receive it or face exclusion from buying and selling. It marks ownership through force. God's mark, culminating here in Revelation 22:4, is the opposite in every respect. It is not required under threat. It is the natural, permanent identification of those who belong to Him through redemption, not compulsion. The forehead, the seat of thought and identity,

carries His name because their entire identity has been shaped by belonging to Him.

V.5 — No More Night

There will be no more night, and they will have no need of lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever.

Genesis chapter 1 opens with God's first recorded act of creation. Let there be light. The very first thing God spoke into existence was light itself, before the sun and moon were even placed in the sky on the fourth day. Revelation 22:5 brings the whole story back around to that same starting point. Creation began with light spoken into existence. The new creation ends with that light no longer needing any created source to carry it. God Himself is the light, directly and permanently.

"They will reign forever and ever" deserves precision here, particularly given what we have already established in this series about the millennial kingdom. Revelation 20 described believers reigning with Christ for a specific, bounded period, a thousand years. That reign was real, but it was time-bound, part of the unfolding sequence of events rather than the final, eternal state. What Revelation 22:5 describes is not a continuation or repetition of that thousand-year reign. It is what comes after it, once the

millennium has ended, once the final judgment at the great white throne has taken place, once the new heaven and new earth have fully arrived. This reign has no boundary, no end point, no thousand-year marker. Forever and ever, without qualification.

Section 6: The Lamb Is Enough

Stop and look back at everything we have just walked through.

No temple, because the Lamb is the temple. No sun or moon, because the Lamb is the light. Gates that never close, because the Lamb has already defeated every enemy that could ever threaten this city. A curse lifted, because the Lamb bore it in a body of His own on a cross. A face once impossible to look upon, now seen directly, because the Lamb's blood made it safe to stand that close to a holy God. A tree of life, guarded for thousands of years by a flaming sword, now open, because the Lamb is the one who removed the sword.

Every single thing retired in this passage was retired for the exact same reason. Not because it failed. Because Jesus is what it was pointing toward the entire time.

Think about how much of Israel's entire existence revolved around things this passage has just taken off the table. The

temple was the center of national life, the only place sacrifice could be made, the only place a person could draw near to God. The sun and moon governed every calendar, every feast, every season of planting and harvest. The curse touched every single field that was ever plowed and every family that ever buried a loved one before their time. And access to God's face was so dangerous that even Moses, God's own friend, was only shown His back.

All of it retired. Not replaced with something else that does the same job differently. Retired, because the one thing that could actually accomplish what all of those things were straining toward has finally, fully arrived.

It would be easy to walk away from this passage remembering the images, the river, the tree, the gates, the light, without landing on the single reality underneath every one of them. The images are not the point. They are all pointing at the same thing from different angles. Take away the Lamb, and every single image in this passage collapses. There is no light without Him, because He is the light. There is no access to God's face without Him, because His blood is what makes that access survivable. There is no tree of life reopened without Him, because He is the one who reversed the curse that closed it in the first place.

This is what the whole study has been building toward from the moment we opened chapter 21. Man failed in a garden,

and everything that followed, every prophet, every sacrifice, every law, every king, was God working to bring His people back to what was lost, and further than what was lost. And now here, at the very end of the story, we see plainly that the entire mechanism God used to accomplish all of that was never a system. It was never a temple or a sacrifice or a set of rules. It was always a person. The Lamb who was slain.

Nothing else in this passage was ever going to be sufficient on its own. Not the walls. Not the gates. Not the gold or the pearl or the gemstones we spent an entire teaching on last week. All of that architecture, as glorious as it is, only means anything because of who lives at the center of it. Take Jesus out of the New Jerusalem, and you are left with an empty, beautiful, meaningless shell. Put Him at the center of it, and every wall, every gate, every foundation becomes what it was always meant to be: the dwelling place of God with His people, made possible by the one who paid for it.

He was always enough. Not one part of the solution. Not the final piece added to a system that was already mostly sufficient on its own. He was the whole answer, from the very beginning, and everything else in this passage, the temple's absence, the sun's absence, the curse's absence, is simply what it looks like when the one true sufficient thing finally stands fully revealed with nothing left in the way.

Key Themes

Every signpost retires because the destination has arrived. The temple, the sun and moon, the curse, the impossibility of seeing God's face and living: each one carried people toward something for centuries, and each one is now gone, not because it failed, but because what it pointed to has finally shown up. We just spent a whole section on this. It is the center of everything else in this teaching.

The garden is not simply restored. It is surpassed. Eden had a river. The New Jerusalem has a river flowing directly from the throne of God and the Lamb. Eden had a tree of life, guarded and lost. The New Jerusalem has that same tree, open, with no flaming sword standing in the way. What Adam and Eve had for a short season in a garden, the redeemed now have permanently, in a city, because Jesus succeeded exactly where the first man failed.

Access to God's presence has moved from impossible to permanent. Moses could not see God's face and live. The high priest entered the holy of holies once a year, after enormous preparation. Here, God's people see His face directly, continuously, without a veil and without fear, because the blood of the Lamb made that access safe rather

than fatal.

The mark of belonging is the opposite of the mark of coercion. The beast forced his mark on everyone under threat of exclusion. God's mark is the natural, permanent identity of those who belong to Him through redemption rather than compulsion. Two marks, two masters, two destinies, and this passage shows us which one lasts forever.

Nothing about the eternal state erases what came before it out of contempt. The nations bring their glory into the city. Human history is not something God is embarrassed by and discards. What was genuinely good in it is gathered up, purified, and brought in as an offering rather than left behind as ash.

Application

1. This passage retires the temple, the sun, the curse, and the veil over God's face, all because Jesus is what each of them was pointing toward. Is there an area of your life where you are still relying on a system, a routine, a religious habit, rather than resting directly in Him? What would it look like this week to stop treating the signpost as the destination?

2. Verse 4 tells us that one day we will see God's face

directly. Right now, Paul tells us, we see in a mirror dimly. What would change about the quality of your prayer life, your patience in waiting on Him, your trust in seasons that do not make sense, if you lived with a settled expectation of that day rather than a vague hope about it?

3. This entire teaching has come down to one thing. Not the architecture, not the river, not the tree, but the Lamb who makes every part of it possible and meaningful. Is your own faith resting on the beauty of what God has promised, or on the person who purchased it? Spend time this week thanking Him specifically for being enough, rather than only thanking Him for what He has given.

Closing

We have now walked through all twenty-seven verses of Revelation 21, and five more verses into chapter 22. Three teachings. One passage. One arc.

God declared it. A new heaven, a new earth, His dwelling with man forever, every tear personally wiped away. Then we saw it. Twelve gates, twelve foundations, a city built from the very people of God, a perfect cube matching the most restricted room in Israel's worship. And then we lived inside it. No temple, no sun, no curse, a river flowing from the throne, a tree with no flaming sword guarding it any

longer, and a face once impossible to see, now seen directly and forever.

Man failed in a garden. Jesus is building a city. And at the center of every single part of it, holding all of it together, making all of it possible, is the Lamb who was slain. He was always enough.

There is one more piece of this book left in front of us, and it deserves its own night rather than being rushed through tonight.

The last fourteen verses of Revelation, chapter 22, verses 6 through 21, are the closing words of the entire book, and in many ways, the closing words of the whole Bible. Jesus speaks directly one final time. He tells us plainly, I am coming soon. He gives a warning about the integrity of this book, that nothing is to be added to it and nothing taken away. And the very last invitation in all of Scripture goes out, one final time, to anyone who will hear it: the Spirit and the bride say, Come. Let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires the water of life take it as a gift.

We have spent months in this book together. We watched Jesus walk among seven churches. We watched seals broken, trumpets sounded, bowls poured out. We watched Babylon fall and heaven shout hallelujah. We watched the beast and the false prophet and the dragon thrown into the lake of fire, and then we watched the great white throne,

and then we watched all things made new.

Next week, we finish it.