

# The Story of God

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### 1. The True Story of the Universe

**2 Peter 1:16, 19** *We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we became eyewitnesses of that One's majesty... 19 And we have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place...*

**2 Corinthians 10:5** *As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.*

### 2. The Eternal Purpose of God

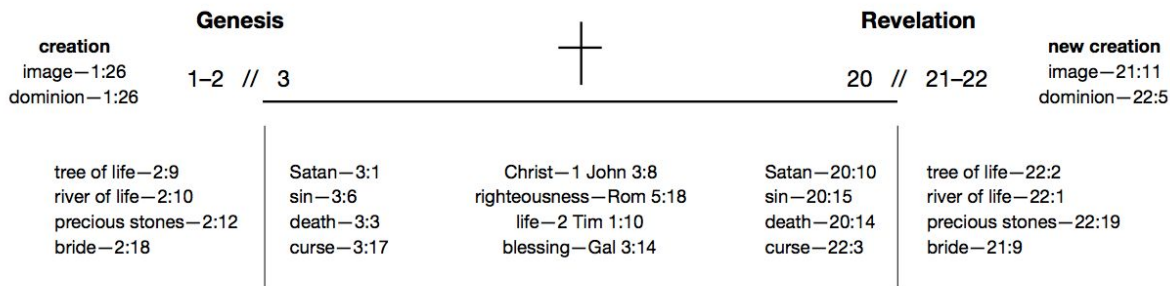
**Ephesians 3:9-11** *To enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is... 10 In order that now... the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, 11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**2 Timothy 1:9** *God has saved us and called us... according to His own purpose...*

### 3. The Bookends of the Bible

**Isaiah 46:9-10** *...I am God and there is no one like Me, 10 Who declares the end from the beginning...*

**Ephesians 5:31-32** *For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. 32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.*



# **Image**

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### **1. Beginning**

#### **Made in His Image**

**Genesis 1:26** *And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.*

### **2. Middle**

#### **Marring His Image**

**Romans 1:24-25** *Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to uncleanness, so that they dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 Who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creation rather than the Creator...*

#### **Transformed into His Image**

**2 Corinthians 3:17-18** *And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.*

### **3. End**

#### **Perfecting in His Image**

**Revelation 22:3-4** *And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him; 4 And they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.*

# **Dominion**

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### **1. Man Created to Rule**

**Genesis 1:26,28** *And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it,*

### **2. Man Failed to Rule**

**John 8:34** *...Everyone who commits a sin is a slave of sin.*

**Romans 5:14** *But death reigned from Adam until Moses...*

### **3. Though Fallen, Man Still Destined to Rule**

**Psalm 8:1-2, 4-6** *O Jehovah our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, You who have set Your glory over the heavens! 2 Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to stop the enemy and the avenger. 4 What is mortal man, that You remember him, and the son of man, that You visit him? 5 You have made him a little lower than the angels and have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 For You have caused him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.*

### **4. The Second Man Redeeming Man to Rule**

**John 14:30** *The ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing.*

**Hebrews 2:6-9** *“What is man, that You bring him to mind? Or the son of man, that You care for him? 7 You have made Him a little inferior to the angels; You have crowned Him with glory and honor and have set Him over the works of Your hands; 8 You have subjected all things under His feet.” For in subjecting all things to Him, He left nothing unsubjected to Him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to Him, 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.*

### **5. Man Ruling in Eternity**

**Revelation 22:5** *The Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.*

# Vessels

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### 1. God Made Man as a Vessel to Contain Him as Life- Genesis 2:7

#### A. Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground...

*Isaiah 64:8 ...we are the clay; and You, our Potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand.*

#### B. ...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...

*Proverbs 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah...*

*Zechariah 12:1 ...Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,*

#### C. ...and man became a living soul.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Ecclesiastes 3:11 ...He has put eternity in their heart, yet so that man does not find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.*

### 2. “Me”, “Jesus”, and “Vessel” - Acts 9:1-15

*3-5 And as he went, he drew near to Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? 5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus , whom you persecute.*

*15 But the Lord said to him, Go, for this man is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before both the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;*

### 3. Becoming Vessels of Mercy, Honor, and Glory - Romans 9:21-23

*21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? 22 And what if God, wishing to demonstrate His wrath and make His power known, endured with much long-suffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, 23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,*

**Mercy:** Lamentations 3:22-23

**Honor:** Judges 9:9; Isaiah 61:1; Galatians 3:2; 2 Kings 4:1-7

**Glory :** Ephesians 3:21; 1:18

### 4. The New Jerusalem as a Corporate Vessel - Revelation 21:11, 23

*11... Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal...23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.*

# **The Tree of Life**

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

**Genesis 2:9** The tree of life...good for food.

1. The climax of our usefulness to God is that we are VESSELS to contain Him and express Him.
2. The summary of Paul's fourteen epistles may be expressed in just two words OPEN VESSEL.  
**Acts 9:15** *Go, for this man is a chosen vessel to Me.*
3. A proper consecration
  - A. Giving ourselves as VESSELS to the Lord
  - B. Cooperating with the Lord so that He can FILL us
4. God's eternal purpose as revealed in Genesis 1  
**Genesis 1:26** *And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.*
  - A. Image- for expression
  - B. Dominion- for representation
5. God's way to fulfill His purpose as revealed in Genesis 2  
**Genesis 2:9** *And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden...*

**John 10:10** *...I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.*

**1 John 5:12** *He who has the Son as the life...*

6. The New Testament reveals that Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life.  
**John 1:4** *In Him was life...*  
**John 15:1** *I am the true vine...*
7. God does not want us to do something for Him. He knows that we can do nothing. His way is simply for us to receive Him. Christ is our life and life supply; therefore, daily we need to feed on Him.  
**Genesis 2:16** *And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely.*
8. Whenever man draws near to God, He presents Himself to us in the form of food for our enjoyment and satisfaction.  
This fact points us to two things
  - (1) The kind of relationship God wants to have with man
  - (2) The purpose God wants to accomplish
9. In order to fulfill His eternal purpose, God takes this ONE way - He comes in the form of food to be eaten by us.
10. The tree of life is the center of the universe
  - Nothing is more central and more crucial to both God and man than the tree of life.
  - According to the purpose of God, the earth is the center of the universe, the garden of Eden is the center of the earth, and the tree of life is the center of the garden of Eden; hence, the universe is centered on the tree of life- Genesis 1:1; 2:8-9; 3:1; Colossians 1:18

11. Blessed are those believers who exercise their right to enjoy the tree of life for the fulfillment of God's purpose- Revelation 22:14

- ...who wash their robes
- ...that they may have right to the tree of life
- ...and may enter by the gates into the city.

# Rivers

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

**Revelation 22:1** *And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.*

**1 Peter 4:4** *In this they think it strange that you are not running together with them into the same flood of dissoluteness, slandering you*

### 1. Its Significance

**Genesis 2:10** *And a river went forth from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four branches.*

**John 7:38-39a** He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. **39** But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive...

### 2. Its Embodiment and Release

**Matthew 1:20-21** *But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21* And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.

**John 19:34-35** *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water. 35* And he who has seen this has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he says what is true, that you also may believe.

**Acts 2:32-33** *This Jesus God has raised up, of which we all are witnesses. 33* Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.

**Acts 1:8** *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

### 3. It's Final Destination

**John 4:14** But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water gushing up into eternal life.

**Rev. 22:1** And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

### 4. Practical Application

**1 Corinthians 12:13** For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

**Psalms 46:4** There is a river whose streams gladden the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.

**Revelation 22:17** And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him

# **Stones**

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

**Genesis 2:10-12** *And a river went forth from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four branches. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that goes around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.*

**Revelation 21:10-11, 18, 19, 21** *And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal. 18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone... 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls*

**1 Corinthians 3:12** *But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,*

**GOLD** signifies the divine nature of the Father (Job 22:25)

**SILVER** signifies the redeeming Christ (Matthew 26:15)

**PRECIOUS STONES** signify the transforming work of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18)

**Matthew 16:18** *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

**2 Corinthians 3:18** *But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.*

**1 Peter 2:5** *You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*



# Couple

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### 1. Story

**Genesis 2:18, 21-25** *And Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart. ... 21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 And the man said, / This time this is bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh; / This one shall be called Woman / Because out of Man this one was taken. 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And both the man and his wife were naked and were not ashamed before each other.*

**Revelation 19:7** *Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.*

### 2. Interpretation

**Isaiah 54:5** *For your Maker is your Husband*

**Ephesians 5:31-32** *For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. 32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.*

### 3. Application

**Mark 12:30** *And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength.*

**1 John 4:19** *We love because He first loved us.*

**Deuteronomy 30:19-20** *I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life that you and your seed may live, 20 In loving Jehovah your God by listening to His voice and holding fast to Him*

# The Fall

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### 1. Satan's Temptation

**Genesis 3:1-5** *Now the serpent was more crafty than every other animal of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said to the woman, Did God really say, You shall not eat of any tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said to the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. 4 And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will become like God, knowing good and evil.*

**2 Corinthians 11:3** *But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.*

### 2. Man's Fall

**Genesis 3:6-8** *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desired to make oneself wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she gave some to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. 8 And they heard the sound of Jehovah God walking about in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden.*

**Romans 5:12, 19** *Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed onto all men because all have sinned...19 For just as through the disobedience of one man the many were constituted sinners...*

**Romans 7:20** *But if what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that work it out but sin that dwells in me.*

### 3. God's Response

**Genesis 3:9** *And Jehovah God called to the man and said to him, Where are you?*

**Genesis 3:15** *And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; He will bruise you on the head, but you will bruise him on the heel.*

**Genesis 3:20-21** *And the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And Jehovah God made coats of skin for Adam and for his wife and clothed them.*

**1 John 3:8** *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

**Revelation 20:10** *And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also the beast and the false prophet were; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

# The Cross

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

**2 Corinthians 5:21** *Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

### 1. Killed by Man

**Matthew 27:26, 30, 31** *Then he [Pilate] released to them Barabbas, but Jesus he scourged and delivered up to be crucified. 30 And they spat on Him and took the reed and beat Him on the head. 31 And when they had mocked Him, they stripped Him of the robe and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.*

**Acts 3:15** *And the Author of life you killed, whom God has raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.*

### 2. Combated by Satan

**Colossians 2:15** *Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

**1 John 3:8** *...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

### 3. Forsaken by God

**Matthew 27:46** *And when the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is interpreted, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*

**2 Corinthians 5:21** *Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

**Galatians 3:13** *Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, "Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree"*

### 4. Applied by Us

- A. Declare His death - 1 Corinthians 11:26
- B. Confess our sins - 1 John 1:9
- C. Rekindle our love - Revelation 5:6

# **The Church**

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### **1. According to God's Eternal Purpose**

**Ephesians 3:10-11** *In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, 11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord*

### **2. Fallen Man's Condition and Destiny**

**Romans 5:12** *Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed on to all men because all have sinned*

**2 Thessalonians 1:9** *They will pay the penalty of eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His strength*

### **3. What is the Church to God?**

#### **A. The Body of Christ**

**Ephesians 1:23** *Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.*

#### **B. The New Man**

**Ephesians 2:15** *Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace*

#### **C. The Kingdom and Household**

**Ephesians 2:19** *So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God*

#### **D. The Dwelling Place**

**Eph 2:21-22** *In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.*

#### **E. The Bride, the Wife of Christ**

**Ephesians 5:24-25** *But as the church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be subject to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her*

#### **F. The Warrior**

**Ephesians 6:11-12** *Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil, 12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.*

# The City

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

### 1. “And I saw...”

**Revelation 1:1** *The revelation of Jesus Christ...and He made it known by signs...*

### 2. “...the holy city...”

#### A. From Garden to City

**Genesis 2:8** *And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed.*

**1 Corinthians 3:9, 12-13** *You are God’s cultivated land, God’s building...12 If anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble...13 the fire itself will prove each one’s work, of what sort it is.*

**1 Peter 1:6-7** *...You have been made sorrowful by various trials, 7 so that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

**2 Corinthians 4:17** *Our momentary lightness of affliction works out for us, more and more surpassingly, an eternal weight of glory*

#### B. House and City

**Hebrews 11:10** [Abraham] eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

**Hebrews 11:16** they long after a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

**Revelation 22:3-5** There will no longer be a curse... 4 And they will see His face.... 5 they will reign forever and ever.

**Revelation 22:14** Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

#### C. City of light

**Matthew 5:14-15** You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city situated upon a mountain to be hidden. 15 Nor do men light a lamp and place it under the bushel, but on the lampstand; and it shines to all who are in the house.

### 3. “...NewJerusalem...”

**Revelation 21:5** And He who sits on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

**Deuteronomy 12:5** But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.

### 4. “...coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband”

# Walls & Gates

## IN THE BOOKENDS OF THE BIBLE

**Genesis 2:12** *And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.*

**Genesis 2:15** *And Jehovah God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.*

### 1. Wall for Separation and Protection

**A. Adam was to keep, guard, watch over, protect the garden**

**B. After Adam's failure, God placed cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life**

**Genesis 3:24** *So He drove the man out, and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.*

**C. When describing the structure and measurement of the city New Jerusalem, the first thing mentioned is the wall.**

**Revelation 21:12** *It had a great and high wall...*

1. Separation – one of the most important principles in a Christian's living

**Song of Songs 8:9** *If she is a wall, We will build on her a battlement of silver; And if she is a door, We will enclose her with boards of cedar.*

**Luke 14:34-35** *Therefore salt is good; but if even the salt becomes tasteless, with what will its saltiness be restored? 35 It is fit neither for the land nor for the manure pile; they will throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*

2. *The wall's appearance – expression for separation and protection*

**Revelation 21:18** *And the building work of its wall was jasper ...*

3. *The wall's material – precious stones, signifying transformation*

**Revelation 21:19** *The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone...*

### 2. Gates for Communication and Entrance

**Revelation 21:12a** *It had a great and high wall and had twelve gates...*

**A. Bdellium (pearl) in the bookends and silver in the middle**

**Genesis 2:12** *And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.*

**Revelation 21:21a** *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl.*

**1 Corinthians 3:12** *But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,*

**B. Entrance is available to all people**

**Revelation 21:13** *On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.*

**C. The three of the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—work together to bring people into the Holy City**

**1 Peter 1:2** *Chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the Spirit unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*

**D. The first gate mentioned in the Bible**

**Genesis 28 :17** *And he was afraid and said, How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven...*

**E. We need to follow the steps of the Triune God in seeking and gaining the fallen people**

**1 Peter 5:2a, 4** *Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God... 4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*