

From the Garden to a City – Revelation 21 Part 1

Stand Read Revelation 21:1-8 Pray

This week we get our first look at the place that God has prepared for us in eternity. This is after the Millennial Kingdom that is after the Tribulation that is after the Church Age. Last week we touched on the New Creation and unpacked verse five. This week we will look at this place as we study this chapter as a whole.

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

We went through the why of this already and by way of review that the original creation before the fall was a garden created for man. But the fall forfeited that creation to Satan who tainted it and brought a curse upon it. So, even after the Tribulation it still had its flaws. God never intended the universe we live in to be the final place for us.

Some people see the last part as a bummer. No sea! No surfing? That's not Heaven! Not true. It doesn't mean there is no water, just no ocean as we know it.

2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Right before John had a chance to be bummed out that he will never hit the waves again he sees a City coming down out of Heaven! Now we are going to really get into the details of this city next week but notice the first description of it, "prepared as a bride". Before you have an opportunity to talk about what's missing you become speechless. The language is supposed to do that! Any of us men who have been married know exactly what being said here. I remember the first time I saw my bride come up the stairs of the old church and come down the aisle with her dad. Stunning! It will be beauty beyond our imagination!

But what I find most interesting is, it is a city!

I grew up in the "Biggest little city on earth". No, not Reno. San Francisco. It is only 49 square miles and has a million people living in it. The first opportunity I

had to flee I took! The city was no place for me. (Let tell you a story of a man named Jed...) Why? Too many people! Sacramento seemed like a good alternative as it had some of the functions of a city but spread out enough that everyone had their own space.

Our perception still hasn't changed much. You look at the city now and who would want to go there? Violence, Drugs, Crime, Perversion. NO place for a Born-Again believer.

But this place will be a place you want to be in! Why? Look...

3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Almost as if God could hear us remember all the bad things a city is associated with, He shows us the benefits of this one. First, that God is there dwelling with us face to face! Second, God will take away every bad thing and bad thought that would come from experiences in this old world. We just witnessed the pain of those that aligned with Satan at the end of the Millennium. We just saw the end of those judged at the Great White Throne. The last of all those feelings are now being wiped away by God Himself!

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

It's almost as if Jesus anticipates a "How?" He says He makes all things new. But notice He has to tell him to write. John's jaw has probably dropped to the ground, and he was just staring at this vision. Jesus had to remind him of his purpose. Write. Again, God's word is true and faithful. We are Calvary Solid Ground. We stand on the solid ground of God's word. We don't need a confessional. We don't need the writings of the reformers to put our trust in. We have all we need right here in our hands or laps. We live in a unique time in history. God's word in its original language has never been more available to mankind. They have been written and they are trustworthy. Read it and believe it!

6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

This statement by Jesus "It is Done" is very complex. It is not the "It is Finished" that we hear on the cross. It is more like "It has Become!". And used to describe the original creation.

John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things **were made** through Him, and without Him nothing was **made** that **was made**.

It is like a master craftsman who has just unveiled his finest work for all to see. Here is where you get to live with Me! I did this just for you! Look at it!

He then describes the water that will be there for us. It is what is offered to us today. It will be literal then but is offered to us spiritually now.

Open your bibles to John 4 and we will read down to verse 26

John 7:27-39

37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Are you thirsty today? Has this old dry world made your mouth dry? Have you let the relationship you have with Christ become a desert of ritual and religion? Come to the fountain today!

The word "Freely" is the Latin word "Gratis". It also carries with it the idea of "Undeservedly". You never earn it. It is not bought with a price. It was already paid for! Come and drink today as it will be your sustenance then!

7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Before you say “I knew it! There is something I have to do. I have to clean up my act and overcome!” NO, NO, NO! You might think I sound like a broken record as we go over this again and again.

1 John 5:1-5

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 4 **For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

An overcomer is someone who believes. That’s it. To repent is to change your mind. To confess is to say the same thing as. You just believe and come to the waters. They’re the wells of salvation!

Isaiah 12:1-3

And in that day you will say:

“O Lord, I will praise You;

Though You were angry with me,

Your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.

2 Behold, God is my salvation,

I will trust and not be afraid;

‘For Yah, the Lord, is my strength and song;

He also has become my salvation.’ ”

3 Therefore with joy you will draw water

From the wells of salvation.

Listen, none of us deserve it! We all belong in this next group...

8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

These are those that rejected the offer and continued in their sin. Their lives were a pattern of this behavior. We struggle with it, but it is NOT our identity. The current world system enjoys these things and relishes in them. We reject them and turn from them and choose to follow God and His ways. The idea here is there is still time. It is not too late.

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

We are reintroduced to one of these angels that have been active throughout the book of Revelation. He is encouraging John to come look. And what does he see? A city described as a bride, the Lamb's wife. What? A thought we were the bride of Christ?

Ephesians 5:25-32

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, **but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

But we have discovered that in reality that all who are ever saved will be the "wife" of the Lamb. But why now the city?

What are cities made for? People! Do you not know that people are important? The only thing important in this creation is people. The great commission doesn't

tell us to build buildings. It doesn't tell us make money. It doesn't tell us to build our kingdom here on earth. What does it say?

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

In this statement the nations are people! It is our job to invite people to a city. A city that has a fountain of water that is available to drink now, freely. It is for you. It is received by faith. Just believe like it always has been.

Hebrews 11:13-16

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Put your faith and trust in Christ today and you will begin your pilgrimage to the city prepared by God. You do not become homeless in your journey. Our citizenship becomes that of this future city and desire to be there grows stronger as we walk through this decaying corrupt world.

Philippians 3:17-21

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from

which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Join us on this journey. The invitation is given. Come to Jesus Who says, "I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts." You can today!

Stand Pray