

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 of the city will be 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, 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 maintain the healing of the nations. 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!

21:1-2

- 1) The creation of the new heavens and new earth follows the judgment of the lost. Read Rev. 20:11
- 2) Here "new" (*kainos*) means "recently made, fresh, unused, unworn." The new earth will have no oceans or seas, only dry inhabitable land, perhaps because the seas now divide people groups and nations. Today, over two-thirds of the earth is covered with water.
- 3) 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!

21:3-5

- 1) No more sin and death. No more resurrections are mentioned. Therefore, it appears that no one will be born on the new earth after the Millennium (in eternity) since their faith in Christ would have to be tested, as it was for those born during the Millennium. The new earth will be populated only by believers who will enter or are 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.
- 2) Our inheritance: ALL of the saints, from all ages, will inherit everything that our heavenly Father has prepared for us.

21:8

Have you ever lied? Committed any of these others sins? Is that who you are?

Read 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Romans 4:23-25.

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) (Rev. 3:12-13).

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 described as a cube: all sides are 1,500 miles across (approx. Toronto to Miami)!

J. Vernon McGee believes it to be a cube within a crystal-clear sphere:

“Several times attention is called to the fact that the city is like a crystal-clear stone or crystal-clear gold. This emphasis leads us to believe that the city is seen through the crystal. We live *outside* the planet called earth, but the Bride will dwell *within* the planet called the New Jerusalem. The glory of light streaming through this crystal-clear prism, will break up into a polychromed rainbow of breath-taking beauty.”¹

- 2) The walls will be 216 feet thick.

21:18-21

- 1) The wall of the city was jasper (a precious gem of various colors), and 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 God Himself will be the temple. As believers, we are “in Christ.”
- 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 God in the New Jerusalem.

¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Reveling Through Revelation, II* (Los Angeles: Church of the Open Door, n.d.), 104-105.

21:25-27

These gates will never be shut, because there will be no night (21:25). The Old Testament 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 Adam and Eve from eating of the Tree of Life. In Revelation 21, we have seen that because of what God's Son, Jesus Christ, has accomplished on our behalf, man will live with God forever in a sinless condition.

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 believers born during the millennium, 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 will have a wife (the Church), and they will be joined by resurrected Old Testament and Tribulation Saints, as they dwell in the New Jerusalem.

In the book of 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

"The curse came upon those in Paradise on account of their sins. *There shall be no more curse*, for no sin shall ever enter the New Jerusalem."²

² Barton W. Johnson. *Commentary on Revelation*, "People's New Testament." 1891. Public Domain.

22:6-7

- 1) Prophecy (*propheteia*) is a “discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproof and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, or revealing things hidden; esp. by foretelling future events.”
- 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, starting with the Rapture of the Church.
- 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. Live like you believe it!

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). Church Age believers receive crowns of reward at the Rapture. We see them (us) seated on thrones with their crowns in Chapter 4.

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."

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

This passage does not refer to differences in interpretation. 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.

Final Passage:

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 "the owner; one who has control of the person, the master."

If you realize that you have never trusted Christ as your personal Savior, asking for His forgiveness, you can pray this prayer of faith right now – and He will receive you as His own.

“Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the only begotten Son of God, that You are fully God and fully human. I believe that You led a sinless life and that You died on the cross for the sins of the world – including mine. I believe that God the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit, raised You from the dead and that You will come again to judge the living and the dead. I ask you to forgive me and save me so that I can be reconciled with my Heavenly Father, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and live with You forever. I receive You as the Lord of my life and the master of my soul. In Christ’s Name, I pray. Amen.”

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!

CHURCH AGE	PENTECOST: Birth of the Church Revelation Chapters 2 & 3	THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN Revelation Chapters 4-19 CROWNED ELDERS / BRIDE	MILLENNIUM
	RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH (1 Thess. 4:13-18)		
7-YEAR TRIBULATION	First Half of Tribulation 3 ½ years	RETURN OF CHRIST WITH HIS BRIDE (Rev. 19:8, 11-14)	Satan bound during Thousand Year Reign of Christ on earth (Rev. 20:1-3)
	GREAT TRIBULATION 3 ½ years		
Satan released to test those born during 1,000 years. Unbelievers rebel and are destroyed (Rev. 20:7-10)		White Throne Judgment of the Lost (Rev. 20:11-15)	
New Heaven and New Earth (Rev. 21:1)		New Jerusalem as satellite City of God above the earth (Rev. 21:2, 22-27)	
ETERNITY		ETERNAL STATE: all believers having access to the presence of Almighty God! (Rev. 22)	

7 Seals of Judgment of the Earth (Rev. 6)

- 1st Seal: First Horseman (Antichrist)
- 2nd Seal: Second Horseman (War)
- 3rd Seal: Third Horseman (Famine)
- 4th Seal: Fourth Horseman (Death)
- 5th Seal: Souls of Martyrs Under Altar
- 6th Seal: Cataclysmic Natural Event

Announcement of Great Tribulation: Rev. 6:17

7th Seal covers final 3 1/2 years:

The Great Tribulation

Including:

- 7 Trumpets of Judgment
- 7 Bowls of God's Wrath

Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16)

Resurrection of O.T. Saints (Daniel 12:1-3)

Resurrection of Tribulation Saints (Rev. 20:4)

Surviving Tribulation Saints enter the Millennium on earth and continue bearing children (Isaiah 65:19-23)

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. Public Domain.

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.

Bibliography

- Anderson, Sir Robert, *The Coming Prince: The Last Great Monarch of Christendom* (London, England: Hodder and Stoughton, 1881).
- Brown, Driver, Briggs and Gesenius. *The KJV Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon*. The Hebrew Lexicon is Brown, Driver, Briggs and Gesenius Lexicon, keyed to the "Theological Word Book of the Old Testament." These files are public domain. Unless otherwise indicated, all Hebrew words and their meanings are taken from this Lexicon.
- Easton, Matthew George, *Commentary on Revelation*, "Easton's Bible Dictionary." 1897. Public Domain.
- Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, A. R., A.M., *Commentary on Revelation*. "Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible." 1871. Public Domain.
- Johnson, Barton W., *Commentary on Revelation*. "People's New Testament". 1891. Public Domain.
- McGee, J. Vernon, *Exodus Volume II* (Pasadena: Thru the Bible, 1979).
- McGee, J. Vernon, *Notes & Outlines: Daniel* (Pasadena, CA: Thru the Bible Radio).
- McGee, J. Vernon, *Reveling Through Revelation, II* (Los Angeles: Church of the Open Door).
- Miriam-Webster Dictionary © 1997 by Miriam-Webster, Incorporated.
- New American Standard Bible*, ©1995. La Habre, CA: The Lockman Foundation.
Scripture quotations from this text are marked "NASB." Used by permission.
- The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995). Scriptures taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture verses are taken from this translation.
- Scofield, C.I. (Ed.), *The New Scofield Reference Bible: Authorized King James Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). Public Domain.
- Smith, William, Dr., *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, 1901. Public Domain.
- Thayer and Smith, *The KJV New Testament Greek Lexicon*. Greek Lexicon based on Thayer and Smith's Bible Dictionary plus others; keyed to the large Kittle and the "Theological Dictionary of the New Testament." These files are public domain. Unless otherwise indicated, all Greek words and their meanings are taken from this Lexicon.
- Walvoord, John F., *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971).
- Walvoord, John F., *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966).