

Revelation
Chapter 21:9-27
“The Place He’s Prepared”

All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid
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September 2009

Announcement:

Teaching: We began looking last week at the only truly magical kingdom ... a place the Bible refers to as the New Jerusalem. Last week, God gave us a brief glimpse at the population and activities of that place ... this morning He gives us just a bit more on the structure of it ... but, as you’ll see, He once again gives us just enough to whet our appetites ...

We’re going to begin this morning, as we did last week, by going back and looking at the problem ... to one of the most heart wrenching passages in scripture ...

Gen 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" — 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Man sinned ... rebelled against God and cast himself into a fallen state ... into a state that was separated from God. And so, because God did not want that state to be eternal He cast man out of the Garden of Eden to make sure that they would not be able to partake of the Tree of Life and live forever in that state. And He even posted an armed, guarding angel at the gate to make sure that man did not return to the Tree of Life until the problem of his fallen state was dealt with.

Now ... flash forward ... as a sort of interim step ... I’d like for you to read again with me ... the promise of coming answer ...

John 14:1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

And this brings us to the final two chapters of the Bible ... **Revelation chapters 21 and 22.** The reunion of man with his God and, in **chapter 22** ... the re-establishment of

access to the Tree of Life ... not in the Garden of Eden this time, but this time in Heaven.

Verse 9: If you can remember back to **chapter 16** and that final series of judgment called the Bowl Judgments ... this is one of the angels that god had assigned to pour out His final wrath upon the world that rejects Him.

And this angel says "Come with me John ... I've got something cool to show you."

Q. And what does he show him? – The Bride of Christ ... and, of course, we know that the Bride of Christ is the church ... me and you, but in this passage, we are not only referred to as the Bride, but for the first last and only time, we are referred to here as The Wife of the Lamb.

Q. Why now? – Because back in **chapter 19** ... we got married!

Q. Remember the Wedding Feast and all that? –

And this angel is about to show John the New Jerusalem from a bird's eye view, but he's not suggesting that the structure is Jesus' wife, but that Jesus' wife dwells there.

Verses 10-11: So there it is ... the New Jerusalem ... not Heaven for it comes down out of Heaven and yet it apparently provides us access to Heaven ... to the throne of God.

And it is described by John as looking like crystal clear jasper.

The problem with that is that there's no such thing as clear jasper ... much less one that has a crystal-like look to it.

Q. So what is this then? – Not sure but most scholars believe it to be diamond with some red hues to it.

And you gotta get the picture here ... we're talking about the outside walls. Not brick, not stone, not vinyl siding, but solid diamond.

Verses 12-14: The eternal inscription of these names makes it clear that our entry into this glorious place is, in part, due to the foundational relationship between God and His Hebrew children and the work of the apostles.

Q. And don't you bet that Apostle John walked and walked ... all the way around this structure until he found the foundation stone with his name on it? – Hey, that's me! Ah ... You shouldn't have ... really.

Q. Now ... if you're a thinker, you may have already thought this question to yourself ... why are there gates and why is there an angel posted at each one? –

I don't know, but I do know that it would make no sense for these angles to be gate

operators because we're about to learn that these gates are never shut anyway.

Q. And it would make no sense for them to be some sort of guardians ... evil's been destroyed ... so what would they guard against? –

Q. What if they're like information angels? Heavenly concierges? –

Q. Need directions to Pluto? – No problem.

Q. Wanna know Moses' apartment number? – Just asked one of these angels.

I don't know what they do, but I'm all for going there to find out!

Verses 15-17: So this huge, brilliant, radiant cube! And the shape makes sense ...

Q. Remember the Holy of Holies in both the Tabernacle and later on the Temple? –
A cube (Exod 26 & 1 Kings 6)!

Q. Extra points if you can remember how big it was? – 15 foot by 15 foot!

But this time the cube is roughly the size of our moon. Fifteen hundred miles high, fifteen hundred miles long and fifteen hundred miles wide with external walls that are over 200 feet thick.

These dimensions give us a sort of apartment building that's 33,750,000,000 cubic miles in size. Just a quaint little cottage!

By the way ... if you're a natural skeptic like me and thought the bit about angelic measurements being the same as human measurements to be a bit hoakie ... the NIV gives us a more readable translation of this ...

Rev 21:17 ... He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using. NIV

In other words ... for the sake of John's understanding and so that we can grasp something of it ... the angel used human measurements.

Dr. Henry Morris has done some calculations on these accommodations and uses the estimation of 100 billion people who will have lived (past, present and future), by the time of Christ's return. Then he says, very generously, that perhaps 20% of that population will eventually dwell in the New Jerusalem ... so that puts 20 billion people in the New Jerusalem.

And if so ... the dimensions that we are given, would allow each resident about 75 square miles!

For perspective ... here's that size ... superimposed on Enid ...

And could I remind you, we're not talking about all of Heaven or whatever else there is ... this 75 square miles is just your apartment. This is your personal condo ... your cottage.

Imagine what your yard will be like!

Verses 18-21: I am sure that each of the specific stones that the divine architect chose has deep and profound meaning, but what that is I do not know.

There are many who say that they know ... in fact too many say that they know. So ... much disagreement, but in reality, in most cases, we can't even say with any real degree of certainty what these stones are or what they look like so as far as I'm concerned, we just gonna have to wait and see.

Despite that, as I said, God has given us just enough information to whet our appetites ... to stimulate our imaginations.

So think again with me about what **verse 17** says ... the wall is over 200 feet thick ... and don't forget it's made out of this diamond with a red hue to it. So when the giant pearl ... that is a gate is opened ... we'll be walking through 200 plus feet of this diamond wall ... all lit up and reflecting the glory of God.

Q. And where do you get a pearl that's the size of a divine gate? –

Q. Maybe we're gonna have divine oysters at the Wedding Feast?

And the foundation stones! You gotta picture it ...

Start at one corner and you've got over 300 miles of pure jasper and then one huge pearl for a gate. Then you've got another 300 plus miles of sapphire followed by another huge pearl and then another 300 plus miles of emerald and then you come to the other corner. And it's like that on all four sides. And on top of these precious foundations stones ... 1,500 miles of pure diamond wall ... all the way around!

Q. Anybody wanna go to Heaven? –

And it speaks of gold ... lots and lots of gold. And it appears that this gold is used to construct the inside although that's not specified. Streets of gold and all, but ...

Q. Whoever heard of gold as transparent as glass? – Actually it is a fact that the purer gold is ... the more transparent it becomes.

It's said that the gold that King Tut (or Tutankhamen) was buried with is nearly as valuable as all the rest of the world's gold combined. Not because of quantity, but

because of quality. They say that much of the gold he was buried with is so pure that a thin slice of it is nearly transparent.

But for that gold to be transparent requires that it be sliced very thin.

Q. So what's the purity of God's gold?

And no matter what these specific stones are ... clearly God is making a point about values and that the value systems are dramatically different between earth and Heaven since gold is used for asphalt and diamonds are Heaven's drywall.

The most precious things on earth will mean nothing in eternity so don't get so wrapped up!

But as cool as all this is ... I'm still amazed at how little God tells us. This description of the New Jerusalem ... is extremely limited.

Think about it ... if you have an opportunity to see a mansion ... a chance to go into the home of a wealthy person ...

When I was growing up, we had a family friend whose house had 7 bathrooms ... a total of 47 rooms and an indoor pool that was larger than our city pool. There was a waterproof sofa in the shower.

But if you have an opportunity to see a really spectacular structure like that you don't go home and say ... "You should have seen the fence around the yard! Those posts were sunk in concrete 3 feet deep! And the stucco was amazing."

No you don't talk about the fence and the walls. You say ... "The toilets seats were padded and electrically heated! It had a 9 car garage!"

But really all God gives us here is the fence and the foundation ... that's it.

Q. So ... can you imagine what this tour's gonna be like? – I know we'll be there with glorified minds, but I think even a glorified mind's gonna be blown by this.

Verses 22-23: There won't be any "going to church" ... it's all one giant church.

Q. And by the way ... what makes a church a church?

Q. Is it the steeple or the pews or the pastor? – No ... the church is the assembled people of God. A gathering of those who would worship Him.

And that's what will make all of Heaven ... all of the divine apartment complex ... the New Jerusalem ... one giant church. God's people assembled together in oneness and in

worship of Him.

And He will glow to such an extent that no other light is needed. And don't forget that we too will have taken on His glow. Every reason to believe that we will put off light too. All 20 billion of us and all this is going on inside a pure gold and diamond structure.

Bring sunglasses!

Verses 24-27:

Q. What's the deal with this glory of the kings and nations here? – I was hoping you could tell me! I really don't know ...

Some interpret this as saying that the pleasures and privileges of the kings will, not only be carried on in Heaven, but surpassed, and if that's so then it says here that this is also true of the nations of earth.

So these pleasures and privileges would be enjoyed equally by all of us.

Others go so far as to questions this as God's creation of a new race. One subsequent to ours who would inhabit the earth in its new form and benefit from the proximity of the New Jerusalem.

Personally, I'm going to stick with my original suggestion ... let's just find out when we get there.

No night because there's no fatigue.

Huge gates made of a single pearl and they're never closed. But again ... the fact that there are gates tells me that there's coming and going.

Q. Wanna try out your new flying ability and just zip off to some far away universe for the weekend? – Out the Topaz gate ... get directions from the angel and you're off!

What an incredible vision! You know as we've labored our way through **many passages and chapters and books of the Bible** ... this is the part that we've all longed for. As you make your way through **Leviticus** and as you work your way through **Job**. Even as you struggle through the **Book of Hebrews** ... this is the culmination. It's been the goal all along.

And that's our God. He always saves the best for last. And that's more than just a catchy phrase ... it's a very important point of discernment. It can help us grasp what is from God and distinguish it from what is from Satan.

Because whereas God always saves the best for last ... Satan is just the opposite. Satan makes promises of instant benefit. When he tempted Jesus in **Matthew chapter 4** it says

that he ... took ... [Jesus] to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, " All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

And Satan hasn't changed. He still comes and takes you someplace ... in your heart or in your mind and he shows you something that you don't have and then tries to convince you that if you had that thing ... your life would be so much better. And he always loads the cost at the rear of the deal.

But the Lord doesn't operate that way. We have 65 books of instruction and counsel and commandment all before we get to the promise of **Revelation**.

Satan whispers ... "You can have this or you can do that ... oh ya and did I mention that all it's gonna cost you is a little compromise?"

But the Lord says "This is gonna cost you dearly and I want you to carefully count the cost, but if you choose to follow Me ... here's the result."

Satan hides the consequences and tells us of all the temporal pleasures of this affair or that drink or such and such drug.

And I think it's important for us to see that because it's important for us listen for the difference. One voice you bow to and, as Jesus did in the desert, to the other you say ...

Matt 4:10 "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

And discernment aside ... the other thing that this tells us is that as good as your life might be right now ... as much as you might enjoy your family and friends and ministry and even your job ... as good as any of that might be for you ... you aint seen nothin' yet! He always saves the best for last so all that we've ever really longed for is yet to come.

*** Signal Usher to get P & W Leader ***

Conclusion:

Here we have an earthly apartment complex ... the result of man's sin.

And in **Revelation 21** we have the divine apartment complex ... the result of God's grace.

Much better, but still ... take note that this eternal dwelling place is referred to exclusively as a "City", "The Great City", "The Holy City", "The City of Jerusalem".

In the Greek the word is polis (pol'-is) and it means a community or collection of people.

In God's perfect Kingdom and plan you won't be off in a corner by yourself somewhere. You'll be with your brothers and sisters because that's how God created us.

Q. Now ... why is that important? – It highlights for us again ... the heart of the Father. He wants us to be a community ... a collection of people. People are in your life to stay. They're not going away. So we may as well make the most of this community ... this collection of people. It's practice for eternity.