

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #101
10/08/2008

The Eternal Heaven: Part 11
“The Lamb’s Bride, the New Jerusalem: Part 5”
Revelation 22:1-5

Viewing “holy city” from the outside, John saw that it had:

1. **“... A wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel” (21:12).**
2. **“... the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (21:14).**
3. **“... the building of the wall of it was of jasper and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones” (21:18-19),**
4. **“... the twelve gates were twelve pearls ... and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass” (21:21).**
5. **“And I saw no temple therein for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (21:22).**

After God showed John a view from the outside, He then began to reveal certain basic features that are inside the **“holy city.”** We find twelve of these features presented in verses 22:1-5, upon which our attention will be focused:

1. The **“pure river of water of life” (22:1).**
2. **“Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb” (22:1).**
3. **“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life” (22:2).**
4. **“The tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month” (22:2).**
5. **“... And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (22:2).**
6. **“And there shall be no more curse but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it” (22:3).**
7. **“And his servants shall serve him” (22:3).**
8. **“And they shall see his face...” (22:4).**
9. **“And his name shall be in their foreheads” (22:4).**
10. **“And there shall be no night there” (22:5).**
11. **“For the Lord God giveth them light” (22:5).**
12. **“And they shall reign forever and ever” (22:5).**

Revelation 22:1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Revelation 22:2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 22:3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

Revelation 22:4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

Revelation 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.

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We have considered the first five of these characteristics:

1. The **“pure river of water of life”** (22:1).
2. **“Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb”** (22:1).
3. **“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life”** (22:2).
4. **“The tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month”** (22:2).
5. **“... And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations”** (22:2).

In this lesson we continue to study the embedded truths which are contained in the next one of these characteristics, number six.

6. **“And there shall be no more curse but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it”** (22:3).

When Adam and Eve sinned and rebelled against God they cursed themselves. God then pronounced **“the curse”** upon them and their descendants which they had produced by their own choices. The absence of **“the curse”** is one of the greatest contrasts between earth and heaven and is one of the greatest blessings experienced by those who get into God’s eternal heaven. Simply the absence of all things resulting from sin will make God’s eternal heaven a wonderful place.

“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Genesis 3:16-19).

Sin changed God’s creation from a place of perfection to a place of suffering, anguish, frustration and failure. Whereas everything had been perfect, fulfilling and harmonious, i.e., exactly as God had created it to be, everything changed after sin was introduced. Everything was messed up and under **“the curse.”** God tells us in Romans 8:20,22 that **“For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope ... For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”**

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The creation, including all the various aspects of nature, was affected by the consequences of man’s sin. The second law of thermodynamics, the law of atrophy in which everything atrophies and disintegrates if left to itself, was introduced into this world as a part of the curse. What had been created to last forever was suddenly destined to decay, self-destruction and death.

We can easily recognize many of the problems that exist in nature. The environmental climate factors are often wild and destructive. For instance, man does recognize that there are problems with the environment but cannot solve them. In addition to the fact that nature is itself negatively affected, another big issue is also true — the mind of man has become so confused that so-called wise men have become fools and man can neither understand the problems nor design a solution for them. Long ago God described the situation which we see in our world today. As we see man expressing his ignorance, even though he calls it “science” and wisdom, God describes it another way: *“...when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Romans 1:21-22). Centuries before God instructed Paul to write the above words, He has spoke through the prophet Isaiah: *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”* (Isaiah 5:20-21).

When men reject God as the Creator and the Sustainer of all of this creation, not knowing or believing what He tells us, and foolishly tries to provide solutions to problems of which he is ignorant, he is predetermined to fail and to further complicate and worsen the situation.

Not only has nature borne the burden of the curse, but every aspect of man’s life has been negatively affected. God said that the curse would affect child-bearing and child-rearing. That which God designed to be solely a time of great joy, while still producing some of that joy, for many, is also a time of great pain and, often, of frustration. What was supposed to work without complications and difficulty is often encumbered with many pains and many frustrations. Out of man’s perverted understanding of the role of the woman in child-bearing has flowed, at least indirectly, the horrendous murder of uncountable numbers of babies which is often justified by the bogus claim of “women’s rights.” The curse has even affected many other babies who are carried to term and brought forth with various limitations and handicaps which greatly affect their lives as they grow older.

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Child-rearing is also affected by the curse. Many people suffer the pains resulting from the complications which follow uncaring, abusive or absent parents. Parents also suffer the heartaches associated with rebellious children who reject their parent’s love and provisions.

Not only are many parents ignorant concerning God’s instructions for child-rearing, but many substitute the foolish humanistic views offered by those who openly reject God’s wisdom and authority. That the curse has had a destructive and widespread affect upon the family including the parent-child relationship is obvious and should be recognized as the root cause of many of the problems in society.

The curse has also destroyed man’s ability to have a wholesome relationship with others as Cain’s murder of his brother Abel demonstrates, with like problems plaguing mankind ever since. The sins of jealousy, envy and the sinful desire to control and manipulate others for one’s own selfish benefits has produced murders, crime and wars throughout man’s sordid history. When a man has a wrong and broken relationship with his Creator, he will always have a destructive and debilitating relationship with others. A person can never have a wholesome and productive relationship with his fellow human being when he has a hostile and broken relationship with God. Such is true whether or not a person recognizes or believes in God.

Of course, the most damaging and destructive effect of the presence of the curse is the alienation of man from God. Prior to his sin, Adam had full and unrestricted access into God’s presence as well as uninhibited fellowship with Him.

This meant that all of God’s resources were able to flow into Adam’s life. It had always been God’s intent to bless the creature whom He created in His own image with all of His blessings. God’s wisdom, guidance, power and wealth flowed from His throne to Adam. God even trusted Adam with managing His creation and everything Adam did was just as God wanted it to be done because Adam acted in submission to his Creator and in reliance upon his Creator’s resources. God was the Creator and owner of all and Adam functioned as His steward, acting in God’s place. As a result, Adam knew and experienced bliss and fulfillment — needing nothing that was not supplied by his Creator. The results of his labor were not only satisfying, but also perfect and functioned according to the design of the Creator.

When Adam sinned he changed all of that. In essence, because he rebelled against God, he cursed himself. He deprived himself of the above things which had made his life so wonderful. Adam removed himself from the place where he could receive the blessings of God, put himself under the bondage to Satan and exchanged God’s blessings for God’s curse.

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Adam is the one to blame, not God for all of the misery experienced in this world. Misery is the natural result of serving Satan whereas blessings and bliss had been the natural result of Adam serving God.

Since **“the curse”** was a result of Adam’s sin, and no sin or any unconverted sinner who has not been cleansed of, not only all of his sin, but also any taint of his sin, will be allowed into heaven, there can be **“no more curse.”** Therefore, for the first time since the Garden of Eden, there will be **“no curse”** to haunt and debilitate the saints in God’s eternal heaven.

In the verse before us the words **“there shall be no more curse”** are followed directly by the words **“but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.”** Joining these two phrases is the little conjunction **kai** (2532), translated here as **“but.”** It is most often translated as **“and”** and usually joins two phrases together to complete a thought. The way this statement, as presented, tells us that **“the curse”** has been replaced by **“the throne of God and of the Lamb.”** Because every person God allows into His heaven has had his sins forgiven as a result of the price that Jesus paid on calvary and is no longer under **“the curse,”** God omits any reference to the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus Christ in this statement for it is understood as a basic pre-condition of being present in heaven.

This sets the stage for God to make the next statement found in 22:3: **“And his servants shall serve him.”** The word for **“servants”** is **douloi** (1401) which means a **“bondslave,”** i.e., **“a person who has permanently and willingly yielded up his submission to another.”** God chose a fitting word when He wanted to say “serve.” It is **latreuo** (3000) from which we get the English word **“liturgical”** which is used most often to describe a form of worship. God does not need for us to do anything for Him so He chose a word which basically means **“to worship”** Him. That is what He wants from us today and for eternity. He wants us to offer worship unto Him that expresses our recognition of His holiness and His love for us. Before He dealt with our sin problem which produced **“the curse”** and separated us from Him, we could not approach Him and enter His presence. Since He has conquered our sin problem by destroying our enemy, paying for the guilt which we owe Him and which had separated us from Him, there is **“no more curse.”** It is now gone forever and is replaced by **“the throne of God and of the Lamb.”**