

PRELUDE TO REVELATION CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE AND TWENTY-TWO

In verse one of Revelation, chapter twenty-one, John sees the earth as it goes into eternity, this is after it has come through the millennium, Christ has finished His work and has delivered the kingdom back to the Father. (I Cor 15:24-28) Now there is a new earth, and it's the way God ordained it to be from the beginning.

In verse two, John sees the city, New Jerusalem, and it is a spiritual city, as you will learn as you read the next two chapters of this book. Having said that, let us read I Corinthians 2:7-16; *"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."*

In chapters 21 and 22, we get a glimpse into the mind of God as to what He had in mind in the Garden of Eden; creating for mankind a heavenly place to live here on the earth. He also wanted man and woman, whom He had created to love and adore Him with pure a love, as they would dress and keep the earth.

So, in order for mankind to love and adore God with a pure love, it had to be a tried love; and since it had to be a tried love, then there had to be a choice involved. Therefore, God gave Adam and Eve all the natural fruit bearing trees and they enjoyed it, and were very happy. But in order to give them a choice, God also put two other trees (or laws) in the Garden of Eden, called the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. These trees (or laws) had to do with God's instruction in Genesis, chapter one that said, "To multiply and replenish or refill the earth."

In Genesis, chapter 1:31; **God saw everything that He had made, and it was very good..., that included the serpent, and it included the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil also.** The only thing that God saw that wasn't good, was for man (Adam) to be alone, without a mate. So He created a helpmate (Eve) to be

His wife. (Genesis 2:18-25)

The Lord God set the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden, so that they could live after knowledge **if they chose**. The Tree of Knowledge was very good when it was used in conjunction with the Tree of Life. When this Tree of Life was joined to the Tree of Knowledge, it would produce children; sons and daughters with eternal life. But in order to give Adam and Eve a trial as to whether they would keep His Word, God also allowed the serpent whom He gave to be a servant unto Adam and Eve, to be inspired by the devil to tempt His children, as to whether they would wait on God's time to come together to bear children, or would listen to the serpent and eat of the Tree of Knowledge without it be connected to the Tree of Life.

Partaking of the two Trees by the will of God, would have been Adam and Eve's coming together with God's blessing in the intimate relationship that He ordained for man and wife to enjoy, fulfilling God's Word of "multiply and replenish" the earth with more sons and daughters with eternal life. But something happened..., the serpent came to Eve and tempted her, and she succumbed to the temptation and partook of the Tree of Knowledge without God's blessing, by having an illicit affair with the serpent; him being a servant and very close to mankind. Then she enticed Adam and he also, "ate of the Tree of Knowledge" with Eve, and it brought forth death, not being connected to the Tree of Life. This brought about the fall of mankind. Therefore, Eve was impregnated with two seeds and bore twins; Cain and Abel. Cain was the serpent's son and Abel was Adam's son.

After the fall of mankind, God cursed the serpent which was like unto man, and he became a crawling reptile or snake. God changed the law of reproduction in Eve's body, so that her "season of cycles" would be once every 28 days or so; and greatly multiply her sorrow in bringing forth children. And to Adam, God also had a punishment. God cursed his servant (the serpent) turning him into a crawling reptile. From that point on, Adam would work in the fields and "eat bread in the sweat of his face." That ended the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:8-19) Now there were two seeds in the earth that were to grow together, until the final harvest that Jesus spoke of in Matthew, chapter thirteen.

Eden was lost, but was it lost forever? God picked up the Tree of Life and set guards to keep the way of the Tree of Life, as He withdrew His Spirit from Eden. The world has gone seven thousand years since then, but God is a restoring God. That is what Revelation, chapters 21 and 22 are about. It's the Spirit of God coming back to the earth after He has produced His family and tried them, by allowing them to be tempted in an environment that tried their faith for seven thousand years. But here we see God coming to dwell with what He has produced. Everything we see as the city is already here. God now has all His family home, and here He comes to earth to dwell with them throughout eternity. Again, this is spiritual.

KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE FINAL TWO CHAPTERS

Chapters 21 and 22 of the book of Revelation goes together perfectly, and can not be easily understood unless we look at them in this manner. To separate them would be a big blow to our spiritual ability to arrive at a coherent explanation. Chapters 21 and 22 must be looked at as one picture. So before we attempt to understand the last two chapters of the Bible, we have to decide whether the city here is literal or is symbolical. This is a must if we are to understand what John saw. The city is spiritual, only the land area or location is literal (or tangible).

The city described in these last two chapters of the book of Revelation is what God began to do in Genesis, the first book of the Bible and is completed in the last two chapters of the Bible. So, we look at the city as being something that God did through time, we see the Great Redemption Story here. It brings a clear picture of His working from Genesis through time, until its completion at the end of the Bible.

Thus we arrive at this conclusion..., the city is a symbolic city. Why would God show it to John like this knowing that many would not understand? Many times the things of God are hidden from the natural man, because it is not for them, but it always brings great joy and rejoicing to the spiritual person when God reveals a great mystery unto them, as is recorded in I Corinthians 2:7-14; as we have already read.

For instance, the beasts that John saw in various chapters of this book was symbolical also, because he could not see a spirit, so God let him see a natural beast, so that he could give him something in the material realm for a basis to interpret from. It is the same way concerning the city, New Jerusalem. It's seen as a natural city, in order to arrive at a spiritual understanding.

What happened in Eden was that God took the spiritual Eden away, but left the natural Eden, "the Tree of Knowledge" here on earth. He removed the Tree of Life, which was a spiritual environment that man could enter into. Yes, it was a blissful place; but after the fall, He set guards to keep the way to the Tree of Life. So what John is seeing in Revelation, chapters 21 and 22 is the spiritual Eden coming back to earth.

In Genesis, God took the Spirit of Eden, but left the land area. In Revelation,

chapter 21 and 22, what we see is God coming to tabernacle amongst His children, and bringing the Spirit of Eden back to the earth. It's the exact same place that the original Eden was. May I emphasize again, **it's all spiritual**. There's nothing natural or literal about this city at all. It's all spiritual.

For a final thought before approaching this city: When God took away the spiritual Eden, He did not take one single grain of sand with Him or anything tangible or natural. When this city comes down out of heaven, not one tangible or natural thing is coming down. It's God coming back to earth, and the city is what He has produced through time and is completed here.

Now let us approach Revelation, chapters 21 and 22 from this standpoint, and watch it become as clear as crystal..., like unto clear glass. And may God help us.