

Second Coming of Christ_pt 14 When Time Shall Be No More

by Aeron Morgan

The sermon explores the nature of heaven as revealed in Revelation 21, emphasizing God's glory and the absence of a temple in the eternal city.

Duration: 57:48

Scripture: Exodus 25:8, Psalm 42:1-2, Ezekiel 48:35, Matthew 6:33, Acts 17:11, Revelation 21:22-27

Topics: "Second Coming"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the infinite holiness of God and the vast difference between God and humanity. He highlights the incredible prospect of being in the presence of divine holiness without any consciousness of personal sin. The preacher also emphasizes the importance of subjecting all teachings and experiences to the scrutiny of God's revealed word. He concludes by affirming the sufficiency and trustworthiness of the Bible in providing knowledge about the afterlife, heaven, hell, angels, and the redeemed or lost. The sermon encourages believers to rely on the sacrifice of Jesus, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the advocacy of God in order to prepare for the sight of holiness above.

Transcript

Let's turn in the Word of God then, shall we please, to Revelation chapter 21. Here we are, still considering ourselves with the eternal destiny of the Church. And in the twenty-first chapter, just the last section of it, verse twenty-two to the end.

And I saw no temple therein. John, of course, may I just say from the opening verse and down in verse nine and ten, is beholding from a vantage point the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. And he describes it with its gates, its walls, its foundations, the street of pure gold, as it were, transparent glass.

Now he says, I saw no temple therein. In fact, he's been telling us a lot of what is there, he's telling us now what isn't there. I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it. For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it.

And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

And they shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Isn't this a remarkable insight that God is giving us into the eternal realm, contained right here for every one of us to learn, to understand, in the Scriptures. Now may I say, by way of introduction tonight, that it's important to recognize that we must never, and I emphasize it, we must never go beyond what God has been pleased to reveal in the Scriptures. Never indulging in fanciful speculation, nor ever giving credence to certain visions and revelations which some would have us to accept as authentic descriptions of that life and that realm when time shall be no more.

I ask myself the question, can it be that God is deemed fit to exclude from the canon of Scripture certain details, leaves us there wondering what it might be like. Can it be that God has excluded from the Scriptures here such descriptions, such details, and then for people to have certain visions and glimpses into eternity to fill in the blanks. But very often, and I've listened to a number of men, I've listened to some tapes and watched some videos of those who speak of having had such revelation and being transported to heaven.

But I find so often one, such accounts they conflict with each other. So one sees this and another sees that, and they seem to be so different. But also, such visions or revelations that are found to be in total contradiction to the word of God.

Or, they have no means within Scripture by which they can be verified. Oh yes, I know that there are some of these visions, revelations, that are full of familiar Christian terminology. To the point that many Christians are convinced that their accounts of heaven and the afterlife are reliable.

But there is no support given to such ideas in the Scriptures. I agree with one who said that, quote, using the language of biblical Christianity is not the same as being biblical. So we can use the language, but it may not necessarily be true to Scripture.

Let's be reminded tonight, without being unduly skeptical of the supernatural, because we all believe in the supernatural, and thank God He does give visions, and He grants revelations that are words of knowledge. And we fully endorse a belief in the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Thank God we have them among us.

But let's be reminded that the Bible warns us about being taken in by false apostles, deceitful workers. Paul talks about Satan's ministers who are transformed into angels of light. So we have to ensure that we are not taken in to the point of being somewhat convinced with tales about extraterrestrial absurdities.

I heard one man talk about going to heaven. He had five hours in a motel room and went to heaven. And he was met by David, who took him in like a little hope-mobile.

And took him to a place that was supposed to be his mansion, and said, Now, this is just the one. We've got another one, because we know that your wife, she liked the old-styled homes and period furniture. And all that was there, and she loved a gold needle.

And there was this gold needle in the garden. And they were walking along and happened to tread on flowers, but because nothing dies in heaven, the flowers came up through the feet. You couldn't squash them down.

All that, it's absurd. It's absurd. And there's just no, no place in the Scriptures to endorse that idea.

You know, even Paul, even Paul dared not declare whatever it was that God showed him in his third heaven experience. He said, It is not lawful for me to utter whatever it was. I don't know just what it was.

There were certain things that God revealed to him, but he did not communicate them. And I say to my friends, what a difference to the commercializing of the experiences certain ones claim to have had. Now, we have a responsibility to subject all teachings, all visions, all revelations, all phenomenal occurrences to the scrutiny of God's revealed and infallible Word.

Just like the Bereans in Acts chapter 17 and verse 11, they put to test everything that the Apostle Paul preached. They put it to test by the Word of God. And having said that, let me affirm that if you want to know anything about the afterlife, about heaven or hell, of the angels, of the redeemed or of the lost, the Word of God is absolutely sufficient and trustworthy.

We've got it all here, friends, as much as we need to know. Deuteronomy chapter 29 and verse 29, The secret things belong unto the Lord our God. But those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

So whatever God has given to us is found here in the Word of God. And there are great dangers when we go outside of that. I thought I should just share that tonight.

So let's look then at what the Bible further says about this eternal dwelling, the dwelling place of the redeemed. We call it heaven. And I just want to remind you of the distinction the Bible makes with reference to the heavens.

In the Bible it speaks not only in the singular of heaven, but also in the plural, the heavens. And there are three such regions. There's the atmospheric heaven.

That's the region immediately above us, and it goes up quite a way. The atmospheric heaven. But then there's the planetary heaven.

The region above that, where we have the whole solar system. The sun, the moon, the stars, all those incredible galaxies. The planetary heaven.

But then we have what the Bible talks of as the third heaven. And that is God's unique personal dwelling place. To say that, of course, must be qualified, because God cannot be confined to any place.

We speak of the omnipresence of God. The fact that God is everywhere, at one and the same time, and with his whole being. In fact, you realize that God created the universe.

Before the universe, there was God. So if he made it, he's bigger than it. So this vast universe is contained within a vaster God.

Now, I can't take that in. My puny mind can't grasp that. But you remember what Solomon said when he is going to build a house? He said, what, me build a house for God? Why? The heaven of the heavens can't

contain him.

And yet he does occupy a place we call heaven. And such a place where God dwells will be our abode forever. That is why Paul, in Philippians 3.20, he says, our citizenship is in heaven.

From whence also we look for our saviour. He's coming from heaven to take us to heaven. And it is here the elect will dwell with him for all eternity.

Now, last week we observed what the Bible says about this holy city. The new Jerusalem. It's a heavenly city, descending from God out of heaven.

A real place which God has made to be inhabited by the redeemed. A realm of inexpressible and unfathomable glory. Ezekiel had a vision of that heavenly realm.

He beheld the throne of God. It prostrated him before God, when he saw it in all its splendor. The center of that vision, of course, was the eternal throne.

And in different language, but similar ideas are conveyed to us. The brilliant reflections of polished jewels and colored wheels of light. All intermingling their glorious living beings, which ran to and fro like bolts of lightning.

There was such a display of majesty and power and sovereignty. And what is being conveyed to Ezekiel, who was by the river Kibar, with other of those in captivity. What was being conveyed was the immaculate glory of God, the sovereignty of God.

It must have come with tremendous encouragement to him. But they were expressions that seemed to be inadequate in describing just what he actually saw. And he's taken up with the throne of God.

And who wants to be taken up with anything else? Not that I am advocating any attempt at visualizing that celestial habitation. I trust we're not into that. Let me say tonight, friends, that no man, no person has the ability to imagine such an awesome and transcendent creation of the Almighty.

This holy city, descending from God out of heaven. And as we saw last week, all those incredible things that are said about it. So here in Revelation 21, you'll remember we saw a little of it last week.

Its majesty, its means of security, its measurements, its materials. And I just come to these last few verses of the chapter and observe with me now the distinctions of the city. The distinctions.

We saw the descent of the city, a description of the city, now the distinctives of the city. And we have read from verse 22 down to verse 27. And in that little section, there are three things that take our attention.

That's what will occupy our study tonight. First, there is the imminence of God. I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

Now, in earthly cities, there are two places of particular public importance and interest. And usually, of course, they are the focal point of tourism. Wherever you travel in the world, you'll find people making for these two places, if there are the two.

There's not always the two, there's generally the one. That is, palaces and temples. If you go to London, everyone wants to see Buckingham Palace.

But also, in the great cities of the world, it's either the great churches or temples. In London, they go and visit St. Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey. In other places where there is the predominance of Buddhism or others, there's these great ornate temples and people visit them.

Now, with palaces, there's always the hope of glimpsing royalty who reside there. I remember just a week before we came to Australia in 1971. We thought, oh, it was our last week in London, we'd been passing London.

We thought we'd take the children up to London, it was Christmas time, and all the wonderful lights. So we went up and I stopped the car right on Trafalgar Square, a big, big roundabout. Trafalgar stopped right on the square there, because there was this little nativity scene.

And a policeman came up, and he said, you can't stay here. I said, I know. He said, I said, I just wanted the children just to see that nativity scene for a moment.

No, he said, the Queen is coming by. And he said, I've got to keep the whole place clear here. She was going to a cinema in Leicester Square to watch the premiere showing of one of the films.

So I thought, if she's coming around this way, she may not have left the palace yet. So I went round Trafalgar Square, down the mall, right to Buckingham Palace. And there was not a lot of people around there.

There were a thousand or more people jammed in Leicester Square waiting for her to arrive there, to have a glimpse. When we got to the palace, there was hardly anybody there, excepting a couple of policemen, a police inspector. I said, excuse me.

I said, is it right the Queen is coming out? He said, yes. She shouldn't be long, she'll be out. He said, by the way, he said, are you one of them? He recognised my Welsh accent.

And just prior to that, there had been some activities by the Welsh nationalists. They had been blowing up something or other, you know, because they didn't like the English. Anyway, we stayed there for a few minutes.

And sure enough, out comes this car, stopped within a matter of feet, and Queen. Hello, Eireann, she says. Well, she didn't really call my name, but, you know, they did wave.

They did wave. And on she went. And I guess this is what people do.

They visit these places hoping to see some dignitary. But with temples, some even dare not only go to see the architecture or whatever, the way in which they are so magnificently ornamented, but they even dare to participate in certain of its rituals for the purpose of some good fortune, since, of course, it is claimed that there, in a temple, they are meeting with some god. So here we have, in our cities, here in this world, two places of great interest, the palace, the temple.

In the Old Testament, you have a temple with its inner holy place, the locus of the presence of God, the access to which was with great limitation. It was the high priest who came into that holy place in a representative role for the people. He had already offered in the outer court the offering that God had prescribed, the sacrifice and brought into that holy place the poured out blood.

The temple is a meeting place. A meeting place principally, primarily with God. I only wish that every person coming in through these doors in every meeting, and I'm not being judgmental here, but I only wish that everyone had that anticipation.

They are coming to meet with God, to meet with God. To expect a confrontation with God. It's a meeting place.

In fact, the last verse of Ezekiel's prophecy indicates a day when the temple in Jerusalem will once again know the awesome presence of God. A temple that's going to be built. We refer to it as the millennial temple.

Because the other one, of course, was destroyed in AD 70. And in Ezekiel's day, he saw the glory of God depart because of the sins of the people. But the promise that there would come a day when the glory would once again be seen in the temple of God.

There will come a day, friends, when that temple will be erected and the presence of God will be there. And we know it will be in the person of his son, the Messiah. Because he's coming back.

And then it will be said, Jehovah Shama. The last verse in Ezekiel. Jehovah Shama.

The Lord is there. And what we have to remember, you see, is that the very heart of Judaism lies in the assembling of God's people in a sanctuary. In Exodus 25 and verse 8, God said, Let them build me, let them make me a sanctuary where I may dwell among them.

And you have this psalmist expressing his desire to meet with God, this meeting place. To meet with God in that temple. For instance, in Psalm 42, in the opening verses, As the heart, that is, as the stag, panteth after the waterbuck, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat, day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God? And do you know how he knew he could meet with God? He was in the temple. He says, When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me.

For I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God. With the voice of joy and praise. With a multitude that kept holy day.

He remembered the times when he went up to the temple. With great joy, people rejoicing at some feast time. Oh, he says, when am I going to come there again? Just to meet with God.

And then in chapter 73, psalm 73, and verse 17. In this psalm, he sees something of the prosperity of the wicked. And he can't understand how it was there's crowns for the wicked and there's crosses for the righteous.

It doesn't seem to be right somehow. Those who were living right were finding things all going wrong. Those who were living wickedly found things just falling into their lap.

In fact, he said in verse 2, as for me, my feet were almost gone. My steps had well nigh slipped. I was envious at the foolish.

Of course, later on when he's writing this, he realizes they are foolish. At that particular time, he didn't think of them as fools. He was envious when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

And then down to verse 16, 17. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end.

Into the temple. The temple was the place of communion. Place of celebration.

A place of revelation. God was there. God was there.

But come away now from the old to the new. From the outward earthly ritualism and symbolism. To this heavenly realm which John is describing for us in Revelation 21.

And this significant detail in verse 22. And I saw no temple therein. You think, well, surely this was about the first thing and a major thing you'd see when you went to heaven.

A temple! But John said, I saw no temple therein. And I'm interested, notice the word for temple there. There's the word, and I use it just to show you the difference between this and another word.

It's the word naos. It's not an hieron. The hieron, not the iron, the hieron.

Is the entire building with its precincts and distinct from the naos. The naos is the inner sanctuary. Remember in the tabernacle you had an inner sanctuary.

It was called the holy of holies. That's where the shekinah glory was made manifest. Above the ark of the covenant, between the cherubim.

When the priest went in there with the blood that had been shed. And on that basis alone he had access to God. And so I saw no inner temple there.

This inner sanctuary. This place where it was known, this is where the presence of God was manifest. Our friends, in heaven the throne is central.

And upon it the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. They are the temple. This is what John says.

I saw no temple there. For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. Indicating that we shall be as blood washed ones.

In immediate nearness to our God and Redeemer. Hallelujah. When we are in that city, we will be in immediate nearness to God and the Redeemer.

That's where He is. He and the Lamb, they are the temple of it. We don't have to have another structure.

A limited sphere in which to have some manifestation of the presence. Oh, the whole city is full of His glory. Wherever you are in that city.

Which, as you remember, is 1500 miles wide and 1500 miles long and 1500 miles high. But wherever you are, the immediate nearness of God. There is an immediate vision.

There is a spontaneous communion. We shall behold Him. There is no veil.

There is a veil in the temple. There is no veil here. There is no prohibition.

There is no limited access. Pilgrim days are over. Faith gives place to sight.

The partial is displaced by the full and the final. Preachers will have had their day. That's why I make most of it now.

Preachers will have had their day. Mark this. Intercessors will no longer present needy ones before an unseen Lord.

Why? Because administrations are direct. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, they are the temple of it. We don't look for a palace.

We don't look for a temple. Here they are combined in this superior, sovereign government of God. And He receives us in His immediate presence that we might offer to Him the worship of our hearts.

And there is no let up. It's not half past seven till nine o'clock and then wait until Sunday morning. You see, here on earth, we are now the temple.

This is not the temple, friends. This is not the temple. We are the temple.

The church. This is where God dwells on earth. Not in temples made with hands.

He dwells in His church. We have been built together and habitation of God through the Spirit. But there, He is the temple.

He is the temple. Indeed, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, 28, it's then, see, when Christ has reigned and all those kingdoms have been lorded over by Him, He is going to then hand everything to the Father. And God will be all in all.

And this is where it is. God is all and in all. And this is how now we can reconcile some seeming contradictory passages.

Just turn back to chapter 11 for a moment. Revelation chapter 11 and verse 19. Now here it says, the temple of God was opened in heaven.

But our text in chapter 21 says there is no temple in heaven. Turn over to chapter 15 and verse 5. After that I looked and behold the temple of the tabernacle of the testament in heaven was opened. But in Revelation 21 it says, I saw no temple therein.

The temple, friends, in heaven is not a material building. It is God Himself. It is God Himself.

But there is an earlier verse which I think helps us in our interpretation. That's chapter 7 and verse 15. Speaking of those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb and come through great tribulation.

Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. And I was interested to observe as I just looked at this text in its original language.

That it could be put like this literally. And the one sitting on the throne shall tabernacle over them. God is the temple and He will spread His glory over them.

To shelter and to protect them so there will never be any kind of fear to plague believers again. Can you think of this? It's not now just a little house and a little section called the inner temple, the naos. In which there is a manifestation of the Shekinah glory.

But here is God and His glory fills the city. We are forever enveloped by His glorious presence. Hallelujah.

We don't say well listen I'm just going up to the temple to worship. We'll be there in His presence. That glory will envelop us.

And I think this is where coming back now to chapter 3. Chapter 3 it all makes sense now. Chapter 3 and verse 12. Here's a promise to Him that overcometh.

Will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. So there we are in that city of God. And we are as pillars in it.

Not to be moved. Who'd want to be moved anyway? In that temple of God. In God Himself.

Now friends we are the temple we said and God is in us. Then He is the temple and we are in Him. All praise the Lord.

So we talk about the imminence of God. God is there. You couldn't be closer to God than there.

We have a permanent place of worship in His very presence. And whatever else may be part of that celestial life. Worship is never ending.

Never ending. And in absolute perfection. Psalm 27 and verse 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord.

That will I seek after. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. To behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple.

Well friends if you've got that kind of a longing. One of these days it's going to be fulfilled. We'll be in His house forever.

We're never going to leave there. And we will be before Him. Inquiring of Him.

Worshiping Him. Revelations that will come from Him. Oh there's so much that's beyond our understanding.

The imminence of God. Something else about the distinctiveness of this place called Heaven. Not only the imminence of God but the irradiance of God.

Because it says that the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it. Now I don't think that that necessarily means that God is going to extinguish the sun. And if you do that of course the moon has no light because it's a reflected light.

I don't think He's going to put out all the stars. That may be so, I don't know. It simply says there's no need of it.

We won't depend on the sun or the moon or the stars for light in that eternal city. It says, For the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof. Now we can't envisage a world without the sun.

But it says here that there will be no need for the sun or the moon to shine in it. For the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof. In other words there is no other light source needed but God and the Lamb, the glorified Redeemer.

And I don't know but I seem to feel that we are being addressed by one who is struggling to describe the indescribable. The glory of God did lighten it. We can't dig it in really, can we? Such brilliant light, such that was never seen on earth.

Paul says in 1 Timothy 6, 16, he said, God who only has immortality, he dwells in light and to which no man can approach, whom no man hath seen nor can see. That's in the present. But then, then we shall have bodies able to stand the full impact of that glorious light.

What an incredible thing. We'll be in the immediate presence of God whose glory is greater, brighter than all the suns put together. And yet we'll be able to stand it.

Now when Moses went into the presence of God, as you remember at Mount Sinai, he was only there for just a short while, well 40 days anyway. But just a brief while, when he came down, that glory was upon him. The glory of God.

Why? The people couldn't look at him. And they said, Moses you'll have to veil your face. Which he did.

But then of course it faded. He didn't wear that veil forever. Just until that glory faded and then he was as he had been previously.

My friends tonight, if Moses had to veil his face for the glory of God that had transfigured him for just a season, and which was affecting all who looked upon him, what about us being in that glory permanently? Permanently. And this is an astonishing thing. And possible only because we have been made holy.

We couldn't abide it, if it wasn't for the fact that we have been made holy. 2 Thessalonians 2 and verse 14. 2 Thessalonians 2 and verse 14.

But unto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Something of Christ's own glorious holy nature imparted, imputed to us. I couldn't help but recall today the hymn of Thomas Binney.

It's number 60 in the redemption hymn now. Eternal light, eternal light, how pure the soul must be when placed within thy searching sight. It shrinks not, but with calm delight can live.

And look on thee. The spirits that surround thy throne may bear the burning bliss. But that is surely theirs alone, since they have never, never known a fallen world like this.

O how shall I, this is what struck me, O how shall I whose native sphere is dark, right here, whose mind is dim, before the ineffable appear. That's how he describes God. The ineffable, the all glorious one, who is absolute light.

The ineffable. Let me read that again. O how shall I whose native sphere is dark, whose mind is dim, before the ineffable appear.

And on my naked spirit bear the uncreated beam. To think that I can stand there in the presence of infinite holiness. He says, how, how? And then that lovely verse, there is a way for man to rise to that sublime

abode.

An offering and a sacrifice of Holy Spirit's energies and advocate with God. These, that is Christ, the Holy Spirit, the blood. These, these prepare us for the sight of holiness above.

The sons of ignorance and night may dwell in the eternal light through the eternal love. Wow. Oh, the profundity of that.

You know, when Isaiah caught a glimpse of the ineffable, can we use Thomas Binney's term? When Isaiah caught a glimpse of him, what an anguished cry escaped him. Being overwhelmed with a sense of his own personal depravity. Woe is me, he says.

I'm undone, I'm a man of unclean lips. I dwell among the people of unclean lips. Let me ask tonight, friends, how else could a sinner feel in the presence of absolute purity? Dr. Tozer said, such an experience cannot but be emotionally violent in the presence of divine holiness.

Listen, friends, we know, we know nothing like divine holiness. Nothing like it. It's incomparable, it's incomprehensible, it's utterly unique.

An untarnishable whiteness, the like of which we have never seen. This glory of God. The irradiance of God.

That which is inherent, it's coming out from Him. This is God. His being is ablaze with light that's indescribable.

And as Tozer further says, he says, the natural man is blind to it. He may fear God's power and admire His wisdom, but His holiness he can never, he can never even imagine. It's little wonder that the writer of the Hebrews says, follow after peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

Don't you think that must be one of the most important messages that preachers can preach? If, friends, we cannot see God without holiness, why is it not that this is the predominant message in the church? Holiness. Although, having said that, we list when we talk about it, we don't fully understand it. All we can do is trust to the Holy Ghost to do something in us that produces His own nature.

Brings forth a character of His own holiness in us as we yield ourselves to Him. Didn't Jesus say, blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God. Nobody else.

Nobody else. Narrow, isn't it? Oh, come on. Give or take a little bit.

No, no, we're dealing with God, friends. We're dealing with infinite holiness. We can excuse and God can't.

We can be conditioned by it, God can't. But wonder of wonders, in that celestial home of the saved, we shall see Him. It says in verse 4 of the next chapter, we shall see Him.

Literally, we shall look upon Him. And here's the thing, the reason why I drew your attention to either, two things, the reason why. One, because of the incredible, immeasurable distance between this infinitely holy God and this depraved, defiled man.

And even the best of holy men still feel unclean in His presence, like Isaiah did. But the other reason is this. And to me, I tell you, I just wept before the Lord when I even meditated upon it.

No cry shall escape us like Isaiah, because there will be no longer any consciousness of personal sin. Isn't that incredible? When we are there in that holy city, the new Jerusalem. No consciousness of personal sin.

My! There is no shadow of darkness there in any character who appears before Him. All is light in Him and in us. Now, only in Him is there absolute moral perfection.

Ours will be a relative and contingent holiness. Shared by imputation and by impartation on the basis of the Lamb's atoning work. That's why we'll never forget the Lamb.

He is the Temple. The Lamb is the Temple. And the Lamb is the light.

It's the Lamb. It's the Lamb. But think of it tonight.

Think of it. Mid, you and I. Oh, so vile, so wretched, so depraved. I heard a tape yesterday of a preacher last Sunday morning.

He said, you know, we shouldn't think too bad. Listen, there's a Pentecostal preacher in a very large church. We shouldn't think of ourselves too badly, you know.

We may be sinners, but we're not all that bad. He even suggested that there are angels who regret now that they fell. I've never heard such rubbish in my life.

I tell you, friends, man is absolutely warped. He's totally depraved. He's got nothing of any goodness in him at all.

And if a man protests and says he does, it's contrary to the Bible. There is none good, no, not one. Not one.

But think of it. Made morally fit, appropriate to abide, unconsumed in the presence of the ineffable. Isn't that astonishing? I just want to crawl under the seat.

Astonishing, friends. Oh, the glory of his presence. The amazing thing is that we'll be able to abide that presence.

Pillars in that temple. All glory be to Jesus. Hallelujah.

Let me just mention one thing further tonight. Concerning the imperialism of God. Because notice what it says here in verse 24.

The nations of them that are saved shall walk in it. And the kings of the earth to bring their glory and honor into it. This holy city, the new Jerusalem, which has come down from God out of heaven.

Just suspended over the new earth. And then if we were to read the following verses, they show that a way is open for those on the new earth to enter in through the gates into the holy city. The new Jerusalem.

You say, well, who would they be? Well, in the city, the new Jerusalem, of course, the church will be there. The bride of the Lamb. Enjoying an unequal privilege of residing near the throne.

But what is this that John goes on to mention? He says, of nations and kings of the earth who bring their glory and honor into it. That is, into the holy city. Now it seems that the holy city is at the very center of the universe.

Or as someone has described it, it becomes the headquarters of the believers. And people dwelling on the new earth, being able to enter the city for worship. Now it says nations.

Nations they are referred to. But simply peoples. The word nations sometimes is translated in the scriptures Gentiles.

Nations and kings of the earth. But let me say, friends, no monarch will be basking in his own renown and fame. Because the only ones of such previous rank are those who have known the grace and the mercy of an all-holy and sovereign God.

And they don't have any kingdoms now anyway. Because they've all been taken by him. The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ.

They're all his. But here's the wonderful thing then. The church also shares with Christ in reigning over this new earth.

So who are the inhabitants of the new earth? Well, it can only be Gentile believers who are not part of the church. Or they're not part of the restored nation of Israel. Gentile believers who have been saved during the tribulation.

And don't forget those who were born even during the millennium. One of our Pentecostal forebears in America, Ralph Riggs. He also affirms that, and I quote from him, These are surely the great host of the saved of the millennium.

Which he so uniquely describes as the church of the after-born. As distinct from those referred to in Hebrews 12, 23, that we are the church of the firstborn. And he goes on to say that they are the sheep nations.

Who are invited to share the kingdom at the time of the judgment of the living nations. And let's not forget that Matthew 24, 14 talks about the gospel of the king shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations. And then the end shall come.

The end of the Jewish age. The end of the millennium. Then it will come.

When all those nations have received this gospel of the king. Who is Jesus. King of kings and Lord of lords.

So there are certain Gentile believers. May not be a great number, but there are certain Gentile believers. But also it appears the restored and redeemed remnant of Israel will be there.

And there will be a fulfillment of the prophecies in Isaiah 60 and 66. They are quite remarkable because they have very similar language to what we have here in Revelation 21. Chapter 60 of Isaiah, verse 19 to 21.

The sun shall be no more thy light by day. That must be after the millennium. Because in the millennium is still this old world.

Because it's not the new heavens and the new earth yet. The sun shall be no more thy light by day. Neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee.

But the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light. And thy God, thy glory, thy sun shall no more go down. Neither shall thy moon withdraw itself.

For the Lord shall be thine everlasting light and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. The people also shall be all righteous. They shall inherit the land forever.

Notice that forever. The branch of my planting, the work of my hands that I may be glorified. And in chapter 66, verses 22 and 23.

For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another and from one sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. They shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of men that have transgressed against me.

For they were and shall not die, etc. Every inhabitant of the new earth will obviously be saved and will walk in the light of the glory of God. They must have their names therefore in the book of life.

And for them there is everlasting life. Because there is no judgment referred to after the millennium. The great white throne, but after that there is no judgment.

So sin must have been finally dealt with. And we know that sin then will never ever again pollute God's universe. It will never enter either the new earth or the holy city to bring defilement again to God's creation.

What a wonderful thing then. There will be this free access to the new Jerusalem. It says the gates are never closed.

Verse 25. The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day. For there shall be no night there.

No curfew. That day never ends. So there is no night there.

And every person brings glory and honor to the only sovereign. God Almighty and the Lamb. Isn't this a wonderful thing? God is accessible to everyone who wins his way up those terraced slopes.

Everyone who comes. What a God we serve. I want to say that it all seems too wonderful.

Certainly an awesome prospect. Being in that immediate presence of divine holiness. But the blood of Jesus has made us suitable to be there.

Worshipping our God and King. Hallelujah. I want to go home.

Praise the Lord. Isn't he wonderful? He is wonderful, friends. I could talk about him all day and all night.

He's the only one worth talking about. Let's stand in his presence, shall we? Oh, praise the Lord.

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