

Rev. 22:3-5. the Curse Cancelled, and the Kingdom Begun

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon explores the removal of the curse, the establishment of the eternal throne, and the resulting eternal service, vision, inscription, day, sun, and reign.

Scripture: Revelation 22:3

Topics: "Hope in Christ", "Eternal Kingdom"

Description

Horatius Bonar preaches on Revelation 22:3-5, emphasizing the cancellation of the curse and the establishment of God's eternal kingdom. He contrasts the current state of the world with the future glory where there will be no more evil, darkness, or suffering, and where God's throne will be established on earth. Bonar highlights the blessings of eternal service, vision, and reign for the redeemed, who will see God's face and bear His name. He encourages believers to live in light of this glorious future, which purifies, invigorates, cheers, and comforts them in their present struggles. Ultimately, he calls everyone to believe in Christ to enter this promised kingdom.

Transcript

"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--and they shall see His face; and His name shall in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light--and they shall reign forever and ever!"--Revelation 22:3-5.

Here we are carried back to the third chapter of Genesis--for here we have the undoing of the evil which the first Adam and the first sin wrought on man and man's earth. Here is blessing and dominion; nearness to God, and deliverance from all evil; the kingdom of light, and the endless reign of His saints. How bright the picture! What a contrast with the scene of the sentence and the expulsion from Paradise! What a contrast with the present evil state of earth, and the present tribulation of the Church! Here is the glory to be revealed in us; the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; the ending of all the woes and wickedness that have been depicted in this book. No more room for Satan and his demons. No more place for Antichrist; or for the beast, and false prophet. No more tolerance for evil and error. No more scope for misrule and disorder; no more conflict, and darkness, and tempest. All is perfection--the perfection of God and of the Lamb; not simply a perfect and glorious heaven, but a perfect and glorious

earth.

I. The removal of the curse. Many are the curses that have lighted upon earth--the original curse, with all the many curses that have flowed out of the first sin. It is true that there is no curse pronounced against the man, or the woman, or their race. That would have been inconsistent with the revelation of divine grace. It would have rendered unintelligible the love of God just announced. The curse is on the ground, and on the serpent; and this, though not directly aimed at man, affects man and his whole race. The curse has come in like a pestilence upon earth; and man must breathe the poisoned air.

All this is now reversed; the sentence is cancelled; the curse is exchanged for blessing. The cursed one is cast out of air and earth, into the bottomless pit. The atmosphere is purged. The sun scorches not by day, nor the moon by night. Thorns and thistles disappear. Fertility is restored to earth. The wolf lies down with the lamb, and the leopard with the lamb; and there is nothing found to hurt nor to destroy in the holy mountain of the Lord. There is the new earth wherein dwells righteousness.

II. The eternal throne. Here is the setting up of the throne. In the King's absence all things have fallen into disorder; while the presence of a hostile claimant or usurper has intensified the evil and increased the confusion. But now the usurper has been dethroned, and the true monarch comes in. 'The throne of God and of the Lamb are in it.' The new Jerusalem has come down out of heaven from God. The great kingdom has come. It is not only the kingdom of God, but of the Lamb. He is King forever. He is the center of the universe; head of all things in heaven and earth; the second Adam, who with His redeemed bride the Church is to reign forever and ever. This earth shall be honored in being made the seat of His eternal throne. It is no longer to be said, 'Earth is His footstool;' but the throne is to be in it; and its rulers are to be those who claim kindred with its once cursed soil. O matchless honor conferred on earth and on its sons! O exceeding riches of grace! Where sin has abounded, grace much more abounds!

III. The eternal service. 'His servants shall serve Him.' They serve him day and night in His temple' (Revelation 7:15). The words 'shall serve' are here used in reference to religious service, the worship of God (Matthew 5:10; Philippians 3:3; Hebrews 9:14). There the throne and the temple are one; those who serve in the kingdom, serve in the temple too. They are kings and priests unto God. It is priestly royal service to which they are called. And as the throne and the temple are one, so are 'God and the Lamb,' whether this means 'the Father and the Son,' or 'He who is both God and the Lamb.' It is not 'their servants shall serve them;' but His servants shall serve Him. It is to this high service that the redeemed are called--eternal service, in the city and palace and temple of God and the Lamb!

IV. The eternal vision. 'They shall see His face.' Those who 'saw the king's face' (Esther 1:14) were 'the first in the kingdom;' the nobles of the nobility, who stood nearest the king. It was blessedness, it was pre-eminence, it was honor. 'Blessed are the pure in heart--for they shall see God' (Matthew 5:8). 'I will behold Your face in righteousness' (Psalm 17:15). Not in a glass darkly, but face to face; not afar off, but near; not with cloud or veil between, but unclouded and unveiled--they shall see the face that is most glorious to behold. 'Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty' (Isaiah 33:17). They shall be employed in that worship and service which is the most honorable of all. They shall occupy the innermost circle of the universe; for they are the redeemed from among men. And then shall that word 'brought near through the blood of Christ' be no figure, but an eternal and glorious reality. 'You set me before Your face forever' (Psalm 41:12).

V. The eternal inscription. 'His name shall be in their foreheads.' The one name of God and the Lamb shall be engraved--not on their 'vesture or thigh,' not on the palms of their hands, but on the forehead--visible, conspicuous, glorious, never to be erased; engraved by no earthly Bezalel, upon earthly gold or gems--but upon foreheads which have been washed in blood, and smoothed from every wrinkle and stain by the hand of Him who redeemed them for Himself. Jehovah's name, written by Himself, on our foreheads--how great the honor and the blessedness! (Revelation 3:12).

VI. The eternal day. This is stated 'negatively'--no night, no need of lamp nor of the sun! (Isaiah 60:19). Here on earth, night alternates with day; here we must either have lamp or sunlight because of the darkness. Not so there. All is day--day without night; light without darkness. No night! nor any of the things that make night so dreaded and dreary--no pain, nor sickness, nor weariness, nor tossing to and fro, nor danger, nor enemy, nor storm. All these have passed away with the night, out of whose bosom they came. Everlasting day! Everlasting light! Everlasting spring!

VII. The eternal Sun. 'The Lord God gives them light.' The Lord God is a Sun even here. He is in every sense to be our Sun hereafter, superseding all other suns and lights. 'The Lord shall be their everlasting light.' 'The Lamb is the lamp thereof.' The light of heaven and earth, of all things material, and all things spiritual--is to come from the face of Jehovah Himself--the one sun of the universe, the one sun of the soul! Then shall we know, as we have never done before, the meaning of the words, 'I am the Light of the world.' 'The day shall break, and the shadows flee away.' All that we have hitherto known of light, outward or inward, material or immaterial--shall be as nothing to the effulgence of that eternal day.

VIII. The eternal reign. 'They shall reign forever and ever!' It is not merely everlasting life, but an everlasting kingdom, that is in store for us. It is dominion, and glory, and honor, such as that which belongs to Him who has redeemed us by His blood, and made us God's kings and priests. From the lowest depths we are taken to the highest heights; from the degradation of bondage to the liberty of the sons of God--the inheritance of the saints in light. And of this kingdom there shall be no end. Christ does not deliver up the kingdom in the sense of parting with it, but in the sense of presenting it complete and glorious (1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22). Our reign is like Christ's--an eternal reign.

A bright future is this for everyone who has received the testimony of the Father to His beloved Son; for on our reception of that testimony does our right to that kingdom depend. That future is meant to impact upon our present--and that in many ways. It is so lovely a prospect that it cannot fail to influence us now.

(1.) It purifies us--For all in it is pure and perfect. We gaze into its glorious vista, and take on its perfection and purity. Like light, it transforms each object on which it rests into a brilliance like itself.

(2.) It invigorates--The prospect of an inheritance like this nerves us for conflict, and makes us invincible. It rouses us when called to the great battle of life with Satan and the world. It enlivens mightily.

(3.) It cheers--A hope like this lifts us out of depression, and bids us be of good cheer. The light will soon swallow up the darkness. The time is short. The glory will be enough to make up for all!

(4.) It comforts--We need more than cheering; for sorrow sometimes covers us with so thick a cloud that we cannot see through. It crushes us, and breaks us to pieces. It smites us to the dust. Then we get a glimpse of the glory beyond--and are comforted. After all, ours is 'light affliction,' and 'but for a moment.' It will soon be swallowed up in the eternal joy!

Our title to all this surpassing and eternal glory is simple the blood of the Lamb. He has bought it for His Church; and it is hers forever. The nightless day, the unsetting sun, the incorruptible life, the undefiled inheritance, the new name, the heavenly city, the everlasting kingdom--all are hers; hers through 'the blood of the everlasting covenant.' She is to walk worthy of it here--worthy of such a crown, such a heritage, such a city, such a Bridegroom, such a joy. 'Be holy;' 'be perfect;' 'walk worthy of the Lord.'

The entrance stands ever open, and each one is invited to go in. 'All things are ready.' You dwellers in the highways and hedges--go in. There is the marriage hall, and the marriage feast, and the loving welcome of the Master--go in.

'He who believes' enters in. We go in when we credit the divine record concerning the Son of God, and concerning the eternal life that there is in Him, for the dead in sin. It is not working, nor buying, nor waiting--but believing--which secures this eternal kingdom. Believe, and enter! Believe, and be blessed!

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