

From the series, “Return To: Daniel and Revelation”

Heaven is Real

Revelation 21 and 22

*This book is first and foremost the **Bible** (KJV), with commentary. Won't you take a moment and ask for the original author and Creator of Heaven and Earth to guide you in understanding?*

REVELATION 21:

The subject of this chapter, beginning with verse 2, is the New Jerusalem, but before that is introduced, John tells how the present heaven and earth and sea are to be disposed of.

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

By the first heaven and first earth, John unquestionably means the present heaven and earth, "the heavens and the earth which are now." 2 Peter 3:7. The Bible speaks of a third heaven, in which are Paradise and the literal tree of life, 2 Corinthians 12:2 and Revelation 2:7. This is not heaven which is yet future; it is heaven which has existed for eternity. Peter speaks of three heavens and earths: those before the flood, the ones which now are, and the one which is to come down from heaven and be place finally upon the earth to come. In Revelation 21:1 John speaks of only the two heavens and earths.

The ones which now are he called the first, so that the future new heavens would be the second, and not the third, as Peter is supposed to reckon. Hence it is certain that Peter did not design to establish a numerical order, in accordance with which we should speak of one as the first, another as the second, and the last as the third. The object of his reasoning was simply to show that as a literal heaven and earth succeeded to the destruction of the earth by the flood, so a literal heaven and earth would result from the renovation of the present earth by fire.

There is no proof, therefore, that when Bible speaks of the third heaven, it refers simply to the third state of the present

heavens and earth, for then all the Bible writers would uniformly have so reckoned it. Thus the arguments of those who endeavor to disprove a literal Paradise and tree of life in existence now, fall to the ground.

The Bible certainly recognizes three heavens in the present constitution of things, namely, the first, or atmospheric heaven, which the fowls of the air inhabit; the second, the planetary heaven, the region of the sun, moon, and stars; and the third, high above others, where Paradise and the tree of life are found, Revelation 2:7, where God has His residence and His throne, Revelation 22:1-2.

Paul was caught up in heavenly vision, 2 Corinthians 12:2, to which Christ ascended when He left the earth, Revelation 12:5, where He now, as Priest-King, sits upon the throne with His Father,

Zechariah 6:13. Where the glorious city stands, awaiting the saints when they enter into eternal life, Revelation 21:2. Blessed be God that from that bright land intelligence has been brought to this far-off world of ours! Thanks be to His holy name that a way has been opened, which leads like a straight and shining path of light up to those blest abodes!

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

In connection with the view which John has of the holy city coming down from God out of heaven, a voice is heard, saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." The great God takes up His abode on this earth, but we do not suppose that God is confined to this, or any other one of the worlds of His creation. Here He has a throne, and the earth enjoys so much of His presence that it may be said that He dwells among men and dwells there in a different sense from ever before. Why should this be thought a strange thing? God's only-begotten Son is here as ruler of His special kingdom. The holy city will be here.

The heavenly hosts take an interest in this world probably above what they feel in any other; yea, reasoning from one of the Savior's parables, there will be more joy in heaven over one world redeemed than over ninety and nine which have needed no redemption.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." He does not literally wipe away tears from the eyes of His people, for there will be no tears in that kingdom to be wiped away. He wipes away tears by removing all causes of tears.

5 And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that sits upon the throne is the same being that is mentioned in verses 11 and 12 of the preceding chapter. He says, "I make all things new;" not, I make all new things. The earth is not destroyed, annihilated, and a new one created, but all things are made over new. Let us rejoice that these words are true. When this is accomplished, all will be ready for the utterance of that sublime sentence, "It is done." The dark shadow of sin has then forever vanished. The wicked, root and branch, Malachi 4:1, are destroyed out of the land of the living, and the universal anthem of praise and thanksgiving, Revelation 5:13, goes up from a redeemed world and a clean universe to a covenant-keeping God.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

The over comer's are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" Galatians 3:29. The promise embraces the world, Romans 4:13; and the saints will go forth upon the earth, not as servants or aliens, but as lawful heirs to the heavenly estate and proprietors of the soil.

But the fearful and unbelieving have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. The word "fearful" has been a trouble to some conscientious ones, who have had fears more or less in all their Christian experience. It may be well, therefore, to

inquire what kind of fear is here meant. It is not fear of our own weakness, or of the power of the tempter. It is not fear of sinning, or of falling out by the way, or of coming short at last. Such fear drives us to the Lord for help. But the fear mentioned here is connected with unbelief, a fear of the ridicule and opposition of the world, a fear to trust God and venture out upon His promises, a fear that He will not fulfill what He has declared, and that consequently one will be left to shame and loss for believing on Him. Cherishing such fear, one can be only half-hearted in His service. This is most dishonoring to God. This is the fear which we are commanded not to have, Isaiah 51:7. This is the fear which brings into condemnation here, and will finally bring all who are controlled by it into the lake of fire, which is the second death.

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; 12 and had 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: 13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

This testimony is positive *that the New Jerusalem is the bride*, the Lamb's wife. The angel told John distinctly that he would show him the bride, the Lamb's wife. We may be sure that he did not deceive him, but fulfilled his promise to the very letter. He was shown the New Jerusalem, the city, which must therefore be the Lamb's wife. It would be unnecessary to offer a word of proof that this city is not the church, were it not that popular theology has so mystified the Scriptures as to give it this application. This city cannot be the church, because it would be absurd to talk of the church as lying foursquare, and having a north side, a south side, an east side, and a west side. It would be incongruous to speak of the church as having a wall great and high, and having twelve

gates, three on each side toward the four points of the compass. Indeed, the whole description of the city which is given in this chapter would be more or less obscure if applied to the church.

In writing to the Galatians, Paul speaks of the same city and says that it is the mother of us all, referring to the church. The church, then, is not the city itself, but the children of the city. Verse 24 of the chapter under comment, speaks of the nations of the saved, who walk in the light of this city. These are nations of the saved, who walk in the light of this city. These nations who are saved will constitute the church and are distinct from the city, in the light of which they walk. It follows that the city is a literal city built of all the precious materials here described. But how can it then be the bride, the Lamb's wife? Inspiration has seen fit to speak of it under this figure, and with every believer in the Bible that should be sufficient.

With this view, all is harmony. Christ is called Father of His people, Isaiah 9: 6, the Jerusalem above is called our mother, and we are here children. Carrying out the figure of marriage, Christ is represented as the Bridegroom, the city as the bride, and we, the church, as the guests. There is not confusion of personalities here. The popular view, which makes the city the church, and the church the bride, makes the church at the same time both mother and children, both bride and guests.

The view that the marriage of the Lamb is the inauguration of Christ as King upon the throne of David, and that the parables of Matthew 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Luke 12:35-37; 19:12-27, apply to that event, is further confirmed by a well-known ancient custom. It is said that when a person took his position as ruler over the people, and was invested with that power, it was called a marriage, and the usually accompanying feast was called a marriage supper.

The names of the twelve apostles in the foundations of the city show it to be a Christian and not a Jewish city. The names of the twelve tribes on the gates, show that all the saved from all ages, are reckoned as belonging to some one of the twelve tribes, for all must enter the city through some one of the twelve gates. This explains those instances in which Christians are called Israel, and are addressed as the twelve tribes, as in Romans 2:28-29; 9:6-8; Galatians 3:29; Ephesians 2:12-13; James 1:1; Revelation 7:4.

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. 16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. 17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. 18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

According to this testimony the city is laid out in a perfect square, measuring equally on all sides. The measure of the city, John declares, was twelve thousand furlongs. Twelve thousand furlongs, eight furlongs to the mile, equal fifteen hundred miles. It may be understood that this measure is the measure of the whole circumference of the city, not merely of one side. This appears to have been the ancient method of measuring cities. The whole circumference was taken, and that was said to be the measure of the city. According to this rule, the New Jerusalem will be three hundred and seventy-five miles in length on each side. The length, breadth, and height of it are equal. From this language, the question has arisen whether the city shown to John was a high as it was long and broad.

Taking the cubit at about twenty-two inches, the length which is most commonly assigned to the ancient cubit, it would give only two hundred and sixty-four feet as the height of the wall. Now if the city is just as high as it is long and broad, that is, three hundred and seventy-five miles, this wall of less than three hundred feet would be in comparison a most insignificant affair. Probably therefore the height of the buildings of the city is to be judged by the height of the wall, which is distinctly given.

The building of the wall was of jasper. This precious stone is usually described as of "a beautiful bright green color, sometimes clouded with white or spotted with yellow." This we understand to be the material of the main body of the wall built upon the twelve foundations hereafter described. Let it be remembered that this jasper wall was "clear as crystal", verse 11, revealing all the glories within.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first

foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

If we consider this description exclusively metaphorical, as is done by many who profess to be Bible teachers, and spiritualize away this city into ethereal nothingness, how unmeaning do these minute descriptions appear! But if we take it in its natural and obvious signification, and look upon the city as the prophet evidently intended, as a literal and tangible abode, our glorious inheritance, the beauties of which we are to look upon with our own eyes, how the glory of the scene is enhanced!

Though it is not for mortal man of himself to conceive of the grandeur of the things which God has prepared for those who love Him, yet viewed literally, men may delight to contemplate the glories of their future abode. We love to dwell upon those descriptions which convey to our minds an idea of the loveliness and beauty which will characterize our eternal home. As we become absorbed in the contemplation of an inheritance tangible and sure, courage springs up anew, hope revives, faith plumes her wings. With feeling of thanksgiving to God that He has placed it within our power to gain an entrance to the mansions of the redeemed, we resolve anew, despite the world and all its obstacles, that we will be among the sharers in the proffered joy. Let us, then, consider the precious foundation stones of that great city, through whose gates of pearl God's people may hope soon to enter. However, many gemologists assert that it is difficult to identify the precious stones of the Bible in our day. Suffice it to say, they are beautiful beyond our imagination!

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

The beautiful city of God, built of materials most precious here on earth, is very appropriately described as having gates of pearl. But more than that, the scripture says that each gate is of a single pearl. Iridescent and glowing with the beautiful colors reflected from the foundations, these portals swing wide to welcome the redeemed to their eternal home.

In this verse, as also in verse 18, the city is spoken of as built of gold, pure, like clear glass, that is, transparent glass. Think for a moment what the appearance of a street so paved would be. The gorgeous palaces on either side would be reflected beneath, and the boundless expanse of the heavens above would also appear below; so that to the person walking those golden streets it would appear that both he himself and the city were suspended between the infinite heights above and the unfathomable depths below, while the mansions on either side of the street, having also powers of reflection, would marvelously multiply both palaces and people, and would render the whole scene novel, pleasing, beautiful, and grand beyond conception.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

With a temple is naturally associated the idea of sacrifices and mediatorial work, but when the city is located upon the new world, there will be no such work to be performed. Sacrifices and offerings, and all mediatorial work based on them, will be forever past. Hence there will be no need of the outward symbol of such work. But the temple in old Jerusalem, besides being a place for sacrificial worship, was the beauty and glory of the place. As if to anticipate the question that might arise as to what would constitute the ornament and glory of the new city if there is to be no temple therein, the prophet answers, "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

23 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. 24 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 honor into it. 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. 27 And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

It is in the city alone, probably, that there is no night. There will of course be days and nights in the new earth, but they will be days and nights of surpassing glory. In speaking of this time, the prophet says, "Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light

of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Isaiah 30:26. But if the light of the moon in that state is as the light of the sun, how can there be said to be night there? The light of the sun will be sevenfold, so that although the night is to be as our day, the day will be sevenfold brighter, making the contrast between day and night there as marked, perhaps, as at the present time. Both will be surpassingly glorious.

Verse 24 speaks of nations and kings. The nations are the nations of the saved, and in the new-earth state we are all kings in a certain sense. We possess a "kingdom," and are to "reign" forever and ever. But it appears from some of our Saviors parables, as in Matthew 25:21-23, that some will occupy in a special sense the position of rulers, and may thus be spoken of as kings of the earth in connection with the nations of the saved. These will bring their glory and honor into the city, when on the Sabbaths and new moons they there come up to worship before God, Isaiah 66:23.

Reader, do you want a part in the eternal glories of this heavenly city? See to it, then, that your name is written in the Lamb's book of life; for those only whose names are on that heavenly "roll of honor" can enter there.

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. 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.

The angel continues to show John the wonderful things of the city of God. In the midst of the street of the city was the tree of life. Although the word "street" is here used in the singular number with the definite article "the" before it, it is not supposed that there is but one street in the city, for there are twelve gates, and there must of course be a street leading to each gate. But the street here spoken of is the street by way of distinction, the main street, or as the original word signifies, the broad way, the great avenue.

The tree of life is in the midst of this street, but is on either side of the river of life. Therefore the river of life is also in the midst of the street of the city. This river proceeds from the throne of God. The picture thus presented before the mind is this: The glorious throne of God at the head of the broad way, or avenue; out of that throne the river of life, flowing lengthwise through the center of the street; and the tree of life growing on either side, forming a high and magnificent arch over that majestic stream, and spreading its life-bearing branches far away on either side. How wide this broad street is, we have no means of determining, but it will be at once perceived that a city three hundred seventy-five miles square, would have an ample space for its great avenue.

But how can the tree of life be one tree, and still be on either side of the river? It is evident that there is but one tree of life. From Genesis to Revelation it is spoken of as but one the tree of life. To be at once on both sides of the river, it must have more than one trunk, in which case it would be united above in order to form but one tree. John, caught away in the Spirit, and presented with a minute view of this wonderful object, says that it was on either side of the river.

The tree of life bears twelve kinds of fruit, and yields its fruit every month. This fact throws light upon the declaration in Isaiah 66:23, that all flesh shall come up "from one moon to another" to worship before the Lord of hosts. The Greek phrase in the verse before us is, *kata mena hekaston*, "each month."

The Septuagint has here *men ek menos*, "from month to month." The redeemed come up to the holy city from month to month to partake of the fruit of the tree of life. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations, literally, the service of the nations. This cannot be understood as implying that any will enter the city in a diseased or deformed condition to need healing; for then the conclusion would follow that there will always be persons there in that condition. We have reason to believe the service of the leaves, whatever it is, will be perpetual, like the use of the fruit. The idea of disease and deformity in the immortal state is contrary to the express declarations of Scripture. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick", Isaiah 33:24.

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.

This language proves that the great God, the Father, is referred to, as well as to the Son. The marks of the curse, the deadly miasma, and the ghastly scenes of desolation and decay, will no more be seen on the earth. Every breeze will be balmy and life-giving, every scene is beauty, and every sound that of music.

4 And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.

The word "His," in the sentence, "They shall see His face," refers to the Father; for He is the one whose name is in their foreheads. That it is the Father, we learn from Revelation 14:1. This will be a fulfillment of promise in Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

5 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. 6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Here, again, we have the declaration that there shall be no night in the city, for the Lord God will be the light of the place. Christ Himself, through whom all these revelations have come, repeats the promise which has been the hope of men through the ages, "Behold, I come quickly." To keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book is to obey the injunctions connected with the prophecy, as, for instance, in Revelation 14:9-12.

8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. 9 Then said he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. 10 And he said unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy

still. 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

In verse 10 John is told not to seal the sayings of the prophecy of this book. The popular theology of our day says that the book is sealed, but this plainly contradicts what John was told. Verse 11 proves that probation closes and the cases of all are unalterably fixed. For eternity, before the coming of Christ; for in the next verse Christ says, "Behold, I come quickly." What presumption, then, to claim, as some do, that there will be probation even after that event! Christ's reward is with Him, to give every man as his work shall be. This is another conclusive proof that there can be no probation after that event. All the living wicked, those "that know not God," the heathen, and those "that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," the sinners of Christian lands, 2 Thessalonians 1:8, will be visited with swift destruction from Him who then comes in flaming fire to take vengeance on His foes.

The declaration of verse 11 marks the close of probation, which is the close of Christ's work as mediator; see also Daniel 12:1, when Michael (Christ) stands up, the record books are completed. We are taught by the subject of the sanctuary that this work closes with the examination of the records of the living in the investigative judgment. When this is accomplished, the irrevocable fiat can be pronounced, let he who is filthy and he is righteous, remain as they are forever from that time forward. The investigation of life records, beginning with Adam, is underway right now! Soon, none know how soon, it will take up the records of the living. And when that work is accomplished, the investigation is over and Christ's return will follow shortly thereafter.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14 Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Christ here gives to Himself the appellation of Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, verse 14, as before noticed, is the language of Christ. The commandments of which He speaks are His Father's. Reference here must be to the Ten Commandments as delivered on Mt. Sinai. He pronounces a blessing upon those who keep them. Thus in the

closing chapter of the word of God, and near the very close of the last testimony which the faithful and true Witness there left for His people, He solemnly pronounces a blessing upon those who keep the commandments of God. Let those who believe in the abolition of the law, candidly consider the decisive bearing of this important fact.

Instead of the reading, "Blessed are they that do His commandments," some translations have, "Blessed are they that wash their robes." There seems to be good evidence that the first transcription is correct. The latter transcription is a variation by the error of transcribers. The Syriac New Testament, one of the very earliest translations from the original Greek and reads according to the Authorized Version (the KJV). Cyprian, whose writings antedate any extant Greek manuscript, quotes the text as reading; "Blessed are they that do His commandments". We may therefore safely consider commandments as the genuine reading.

15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and makes a lie.

A dog is the Bible symbol for a shameless and impudent man. Who would wish to be left in the company of those whose lot is outside the city of God? Yet how many will stand condemned as idolaters, how many as those who make lies, and how many more as those who love them, and love to circulate them after they are made!

16 I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Jesus testifies these things in the churches, showing the entire book of Revelation is given to the seven churches, which is another incidental proof that the seven churches are representatives of the church through the entire gospel age. Christ is the offspring of David, in that He appeared on earth in the line of David's descendants. He is the root of David, inasmuch as He is the great prototype of David, and the maker and upholder of all things.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Thus are all invited to come. The Lord's love for mankind would not be satisfied in merely preparing the blessings of eternal life, opening the way to them, and announcing that all might come who would; but He sends out an earnest invitation to come. He sets it forth as a favor done to Himself if those invited will come and partake of the infinite blessings provided by His infinite love. His invitation, how gracious, how full, how free! Not one of those who are finally lost will ever have occasion to complain that the provisions made for their salvation were not sufficiently ample. They can never reasonably object that the light given to show them the way of life was not sufficiently clear. They can never excuse themselves on the ground that the invitations and entreaties that Mercy has given them to turn and live, were not sufficiently full and free. From the very beginning, there has been a power exerted as strong as could be exerted and yet, still leave man his own free agent, a power to draw him heavenward, and raise him from the abyss into which he has fallen. "Come!" has been the entreaty of the Spirit from the lips of God Himself, from the lips of His prophets, from the lips of His apostles, and from the lips of His Son, even while, in His infinite compassion and humility, He was paying the debt of our transgression.

The last message of mercy as it is now going forth is the final utterance of divine longsuffering and compassion. Come, is the invitation it gives. Come, for all things are ready. The last sound that will fall from Mercy's lips on the ear of the sinner before the thunders of vengeance burst upon him, will be the heavenly invitation, Come. So great is the loving-kindness of a merciful God to rebellious man.

Yet, many will not come. Acting independently and deliberately, they refuse to come. So when they shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out, they will have no one to accuse, no one to blame, but themselves. They will be brought to feel this in all its bitterness when the time has come for the condemnation of the lost, true to the letter. Every guilty conscience will echo, Ye knew your duty, but you did it not. Dread words! It throws the weight of every man's perdition on himself, directly home. . . Ye knew your duty, but you did it not!

The bride also says, Come. But the bride is the city, and how does it say, Come? If we could be strengthened to behold the

living glories of that city and live, and should be permitted to gaze upon its dazzling beauty, and be assured that we had a perfect right to enter therein, and revel in its glory forever and ever, would it not then say to us, Come, with a persuasion which no power could resist? Who of us, in view of this, could turn away, and say, I have no desire for an inheritance there?

But though we cannot now look upon that city, the unfailing word of God has promised it, and that is sufficient to inspire us with implicit and living faith. Through the channel of that faith it says to us, come. Come, if you would inherit mansions where sickness, sorrow, pain, and death can never enter; if you would have a right to the tree of life, and pluck its immortal fruit, and eat and live; if you would drink of the water of the river of life that flows from the throne of God, clear as crystal. Come, if you would obtain through those glittering gates of pearl an abundant entrance into the eternal city; if you would walk its streets of transparent gold; if you would behold its glowing foundation stones; if you would see the King in His beauty on His throne. Come, if you would sing the jubilee song of millions, and share their joy. Come, if you would join the anthems of the redeemed with their melodious harps, and know that your exile is forever over, and this is your eternal home. Come, if you would receive a palm of victory, and know that you are forever free. Come, if you would exchange the furrows of your care-worn brow for a jeweled crown. Come, if you would see the salvation of the ransomed myriads, the glorified throng which no man can number.

Come, if you would drink from the pure fountain of celestial bliss, if you would shine as the stars forever in the firmament of glory, if you would share in the unutterable rapture that fills the triumphant hosts as they behold before them unending ages of glory ever brightening and joys ever new.

The bride does say, Come. Who of us can resist the invitation? The word of truth is pledged to us that if we keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, we shall have right to the tree of life, we shall enter in through the gates into the city. We shall feel that we are at home in our Father's house, the very mansions prepared for us, and realize the full truth of the cheering words, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Revelation 19:9.

"Let him that hears say, Come". We have heard of the glory, of the beauty, of the blessings, of that goodly land, and we say Come. We have heard of the river with its verdant banks, of the tree with its healing leaves, of the bowers that bloom in the Paradise of God, and we say, Come. Whosoever will; let him come and take of the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

What is it to add to, or take from, the book of this prophecy? Let it be borne in mind that it is the book of this prophecy, or the Revelation, which is the subject of remark. Hence the words in regard to adding to or taking from are exclusive to this book. Nothing can be called an addition except something added to it with the intention of having it considered as a genuine part of the book of Revelation. To take from the book would be to suppress some part of it. As the book of Revelation could not be called an addition to the book of Daniel, so if God should see fit to make further revelations to us by His Spirit, it would be no addition to the book of Revelation unless it should claim to be a part of that book.

20 He which testifieth these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The word of God is given to instruct us in reference to the plan of salvation. The Second Coming of Christ is to be the climax and completion of that great plan. It is most appropriate, therefore, that the book should close with the solemn announcement, "Surely I come quickly." Be it ours to join with fervent hearts in the response of the apostle, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Thus closes the volume of inspiration with that which constitutes the best of all promises, and the substance of the Christian's hope, the return of Christ. Then shall the elect be gathered, and bid a long farewell to all the ills of this mortal life. How rich in all that is precious to the Christian is this promise! Wandering an exile in this evil world, separated from the few of

like precious faith, he longs for the companionship of the righteous, the communion of saints. Here he shall obtain it, for all the good shall be gathered, not from one land only, but from all lands; not from one age only, but from all ages the great harvest of all the good, coming up in long and glorious procession, while angels shout the harvest home, and the timbrels of heaven sound forth in joyous concert. A song before unheard, unknown, in the universe, the song of the redeemed, shall add its thrilling notes of rapture and melody to the universal jubilee. So shall the saints be gathered, to be joyful in one another's presence forever and ever. While the glory of God, like a molten sea, bathes the immortal company.

This gathering has nothing in it but that which is desirable. The saints can but sigh and pray for it. Like Job, they cry out for the presence of God. Like David, they cannot be satisfied till they awake in His likeness. In this mortal condition we groan, being burdened, not for that we would be "unclothed, but clothed upon." We can but be "upon tiptoe" for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Our eyes are open for its visions, our ears are waiting to catch the sounds of the heavenly music, and our hearts are beating in anticipation of this infinite joy. Our appetites are growing sharp for the marriage supper. We cry out for the living God, and long to come into His presence. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. No tidings more welcome than the announcement that the command has gone forth from the Lord to His angels, "Gather together unto Me My elect from the four winds of heaven."

The place of gathering has nothing but attraction. Jesus, the fairest among ten thousand, is there. The throne of God and of the Lamb, in the glory of which the sun disappears as the stars vanish in the light of day, is there. The city of jasper and gold, whose builder and maker is God, is there. The river of life, sparkling with the glory of God and flowing from His throne in infinite leaves and life-giving fruit, is there. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Noah, Job, and Daniel, prophets, apostles and martyrs, the perfection of heavenly society will be there. Visions of beauty are there; fields of living green, flowers that never fade, streams that never dry, products in variety that never ends, fruits that never decay, crowns that never dim, harps that know no discord, and all else of which a taste purified from sin and raised to the plane of

immortality, can form any conception or think desirable, all these will be there.

We must be there. We must bask in the forgiving smiles of God, to whom we have become reconciled, and sin no more. We must have access to that exhaustless fount of vitality, the fruit of the tree of life, and never die. We must repose under the shadow of its leaves, which are for the service of the nations, and never again grow weary. We must drink from the life-giving fountain, and thirst nevermore; we must bathe in its silvery spray, and be refreshed; we must walk on its golden sands, and feel that we are no longer exiles. We must exchange the cross for the crown, and feel that the days of our humiliation are ended. We must lay down the staff and take the palm branch, and feel that the journey is done. We must put off the garments of our warfare for the white robes of triumph, and feel that the conflict is ended and the victory gained. We must exchange the toil worn, dusty raiment of our pilgrimage for the glorious vesture of immortality, and feel that that sin and the curse can nevermore pollute us. O day of rest and triumph, and every good, delay not thy dawning. Let the angels be quickly sent to gather the elect. Let the promise be fulfilled which bears in its train these matchless glories. EVEN SO, COME LORD JESUS.

End

Condensed from the 1865 to 1911 editions of:
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(1873) and “**Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation**” (1881-
1911).

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