

The Apocalypse of St. John

Chapter 22

Q. & Clarifications from last week:

A. Where does the word "Theosis" come from: "Theos" meaning God and "henosis" meaning union.

B. Why the nonsensical descriptions of stones & metals (e.g. "sparkling like crystal-clear jasper," and "the city was pure gold, like clear glass")?

-Recall the Apocalyptic interpretive keys on the board. Also recall Rev. 7:14 where it says those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Its meant to convey a message not an image. So, for example, the city (v. 18) & its streets (v. 21) were "pure gold as clear as glass" could mean the Heavenly Jerusalem shares in Christ's royalty -represented by gold- (we are called "a kingdom of priests," Rev. 1:6). Then, this adopted royal status as sons of the Most High, makes us worthy of the clear vision of God (Rev. 22:4 states we "will see His face"). Ultimately the main point of the various stones is that the Heavenly Kingdom will be priestly b/c the stones that are contained within it correspond almost to those worn by the O.T. high priest on his garments.

C. What word does St. John use in Greek for "son." According to Strong's Concordance: υἱός huiós, hwee-os'; apparently a primary word; a "son" (sometimes of animals), used very widely of immediate, remote or figuratively, kinship:—child, foal, son.

INTRO:

Read 22:1-5

OSB (Orthodox Study Bible) Note 22:1a

[Skip: OBS (Orthodox Bible Study): (v. 1) This river of the "water of life" flows from the very Presence of God.]

ADD: It was during the feast of Tabernacles that Jesus made the connection between the water of life and the Holy Spirit. "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn 17:37-39).

Unlike other rivers that can be muddy, this river is said to be "clear as crystal" to show it contains the very life of God. It is down the middle of the street to show it is accessible to all. P. 220

OSB: (v.1) Once again the and His co-equal Son are portrayed as sharing the same authority and throne). P. 220

OSB (Orthodox Study Bible) Note 22:1b

OSB Note 22:2, 3

1 Pet 2:24 - [He] Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousnesses -by whose stripes you were healed.

Gal 3:13 - "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, '*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.*'"

OBS: Notice that even the river of the water of life (v. 2) goes down the middle of the street, meaning it is available for all ("to him who who thirsts" as it says in 21:6). This tree produces twelve fruits, one for each month, and its leaves are for healing. In other words the Kingdom, there is abundant variety and healing for everyone of life's wounds. P. 220

OBS: Then this glorious vision reaches a climax. In the city of God "there shall be no more curse" (v. 3). The curse of death, suffering and sorrow, which has darkened the steps of man since he left the Garden (Gen 3:17-19) will be no more. P. 221

ADD: In this midst of the Heavenly Jerusalem will be the Throne of God and of the Lamb, just as God's throne, the altar, is in the midst of the Sanctuary. OBS: God's servants will approach this Divine throne with joy and worship Him.

OSB Note 22:4

OBS: At last the pure in heart will see His face (as promised Matt 5:8); In this age, no one could behold His face without dying (Ex. 33:20), but in that blessed age, His servants will look upon their King and live forever.

OSB Note 22:5

OSB: The uncreated light is the light of God Himself. This will enlighten them and fill the city so that "there shall be no more night there (v. 5)." They will bask in this Joyful Light and reign with God "unto ages of ages."

[Skip? Q. What is this Uncreated Light of God?]

OSB: This section was the concluding triumphant final vision of the Apocalypse. It is given as the final word, a word of peace and a vision of joy. This sight of the heavenly Sion which is glorious and triumphant and eternally secure in the joy of heaven is meant to help sustain the Church through the dark days of this present age P. 221

Read 22:6-9

OSB: We now begin the final commendation of the Revelation of St. John. These words are faithful & true" (v. 6) certifies the Revelation is certain to be fulfilled.

ADD: "which must shortly take place..." -the Apocalypse has immediate relevance (i.e., for the audience who first received it) as well as relevance for Christians of all generations. It also has a final fulfillment at the close of this age (the end of the world).

OSB Note 22:7

Num 6:23 - "[May] the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be merciful to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."

ADD: This (v. 7) is the sixth of seven beatitudes in the Apocalypse. OSB: Those who keep the words of the prophecy of this book and resist the beast will be blessed and inherit all these things when the Lord comes. -P. 223

OSB Note 22:8, 9

Read 22:10-11

OBS: The persecution from the state had already begun (of which John's presence in Patmos was evidence), and the spread of the cult of emperor worship was soon to face all Christians with the decisions of their lives.

OBS: "He who is "unjust," "filthy," "righteous," or "holy," ---be this still. In other words: All are called to decide now.

Read 22:12-13

OSB Note 22:12, 13

OBS: The decision about one's moral and spiritual stance is urgent because Jesus is coming soon (v. 12), and His reward is with Him, to "give to everyone according to his works."

OBS: Note that in 21:6 God the Father declared Himself to be "the Alpha and the Omega," "the beginning and the end" and now Christ declares this of Himself. This is further proof of the co-equality and consubstantiality of the Father and of the Son. Christ is one nature (essence) with His Father (John 10:30) and both share equally with the Holy Spirit in the creation of the world out of nothing.

Read 22:14-16

OSB Note 22:14, 15

OBS: Christ pronounces the final blessing (v. 14) of the Apocalypse (the seventh beatitude) upon those who keep the commandments or wash their robes in His precious Blood (making them white, 7:14).

OBS: The "dogs" are the sexually impure. This title is used in Deut 23:18-19 to describe homosexual and pagan cultic religious prostitutes.

ADD: To review, here (v. 15) Jesus tells us the kind of sins that will separate us from Him: sorcerers (included use of mind altering drugs and occultism), sexual immorality (pornea) is all sexual activity outside the covenant of marriage between a man and woman, murders (is the intentional taking of innocent life), idolaters (are those who put anything before God and His truth). "Whoever loves and practices a lie" means those who willfully reject God and His truth. Christianity can be summarized as "living the truth & living in union with God."

OSB Note: 22:16

OBS: When it says (v. 16), "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify," this is our Lord reaffirming the authenticity of this revelation. It is He who speaks; He has sent His angel; What John has written was by His authority.

OBS: When our describes himself as the "Root and Offspring of David" This speaks to His human origin as the true Messiah and descendant of David whose human origin was prophesized in the Old Testament.

When our describes himself as the "Bright and Morning Star" this witnesses to His eternal Divinity. Both of these are alluded to prophetically by David himself in Psalm 109 where David states, "

In other words he is both transcendent as God ruling over history, and a participant in history as a man who is a partaker of our human nature through His incarnation.

Glory to Jesus Christ!
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