

Life in the Paradise of God

Revelation 22:1-5

INTRODUCTION

- A. Life, in this world, is so very fragile. If you do not believe me:
 - 1. Ask those who were going to work in the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001.
 - 2. Ask those who were going to Grandma's for a vacation when a drunk driver was having some fun.
 - 3. Ask those in the first century who were plucked from their homes and fed to wild animals because they pledged allegiance to Jesus.
- B. Because life is so fragile, we need some hope and comfort to make it through this life.
 - 1. If we never know how or when this life is going to end, why make any kind of effort?
 - 2. John allays such fears in our text, and he discusses "Life in the Paradise of God."

ETERNAL LIFE, vv. 1-2

- A. The angel who had been showing John the New Jerusalem showed John the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, through the middle of the street of the city.
 - 1. This picture of a beautiful mountain stream would surely have been a welcomed thought in the dry and arid climate of Palestine.
 - a. You know how refreshing it is to get a glass of cool, clear water on a hot day.
 - b. That's really the idea here - cool water for refreshment.
 - 2. Not only is there refreshing water in the New Jerusalem, but it is the river of the water of life.
 - a. This is the water of life, the water that will allow one to live eternally.
 - 1) Man has been in the search of eternal life since Adam left the Garden.
 - a) People all the time are looking for some way to live forever.
 - b) How many supplements are sold in health stores to reverse aging? How many people had their bodies frozen so that they can be thawed out when a cure for their disease is found?
 - 2) This water will allow one to live forever.
 - b. This is a river of the water of life - there's not just a little bit of water that people need to fight over, but there is an abundance of water.
 - 3. This water is bright as crystal - I've alluded to the fact that this refers to refreshing waters like a mountain stream.
 - 4. This water flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb.
 - a. This is the first time in Revelation that the reference is to both the throne of God and of the Lamb.
 - 1) Yet, this is not the first time in Revelation that Jesus is depicted as having a throne.
 - a) "He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered a sat down with my Father on his throne" (3:21).
 - b) "She brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne" (12:5).
 - 2) The picture is one of Jesus sharing authority with the Father. We know that in some way Jesus and the Father do share authority.
 - b. This water comes from the throne of the Father and the Lamb - this shows that the Father and the Lamb are the source of this river of life.
 - 1) Eternal life does come from the Father and the Son.
 - a) Jesus told the woman at the well, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall

give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn. 4:14).

- b) “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life” (Jn. 6:40).

- B. On both sides of the river was the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations, v. 2.
 - 1. The tree of life was on both sides of the river - Remember this is symbolic language and it’s not at all intended to be taken literally.
 - 2. The tree of life yielded a different fruit each month.
 - a. The idea here is certainly one of continual blessings; one is never going to go to the tree of life and find its fruit not in bloom.
 - b. Eve ate fruit that caused her to be cast from the Garden of Eden; but consuming this fruit will enable us to remain in the Paradise of God.
 - 3. The leaves were for the healing of the nations.
 - a. The nations of the earth are no more, and since sickness has been banished, there is no need for healing.
 - b. The idea is obviously one of spiritual blessings.
- C. In that heavenly city, we shall live forever.
 - 1. We will never learn that a loved one is about to leave this world, we will never be separated from our friends and we will never have to worry about death.
 - 2. We, and the saved of all the ages, will dwell eternally in the Paradise of God.

WORSHIPFUL LIFE, vv. 3-4

- A. There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, v. 3a.
 - 1. The reference to the curse likely refers back to Gen. 3: 17-19 where God cursed the ground because Adam ate of the forbidden fruit.
 - 2. The reason the curse has been removed is that the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; therefore, there is no longer a need for a curse because sin has been eradicated.
- B. His servants shall worship him, v. 3b.
 - 1. The term for “worship” here in the Greek is literally “serve.”
 - a. The word in its original usage meant to “serve for hire.”
 - b. The word came to be used by the Jews in a very special sense, to denote the service rendered to God by the Israelites as God’s special people.
 - 1) Thus, in religious usage, the term meant more than to be hired for a paycheck.
 - 2) It meant to serve God because you were his special people.
 - 3) We, as Christians, are God’s special people, and we shall serve him in a special way in heaven.
 - 2. There are many who seem to have the idea that we won’t do anything in heaven.
 - a. How wrong they are!
 - b. We won’t be sitting in a rocking chair on the porch of our mansion sipping iced tea for eternity.
 - c. We’re going to serve God, and listen, if you don’t like serving God, don’t go to heaven!
- C. His servants shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads, v. 4.
 - 1. God’s face has been hidden from man - When Moses asked to see God, God said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me and live” (Ex. 33:20).
 - 2. Yet, that veil shall be removed in Paradise, and we shall be able to see the face of God.
 - a. Jesus promised that the pure in heart would see God - “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Mt. 5:8).
 - b. “It has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 Jn. 3.2).
 - 3. What a glorious thought to think that we shall be able to gaze upon the face of God!

4. God's name shall be on our foreheads - this shows ownership - we shall belong to God in Paradise.

REIGNING LIFE, v. 5

- A. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light - this reiterates what we saw last week where the glory of God is the light of the New Jerusalem.
- B. They shall reign forever and ever.
 1. The people of God are here pictured as sharing in His glory.
 - a. Jesus had promised that the one who overcame would reign - "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Rev. 3:21).
 - b. In that Paradise, we shall be glorified.
 - 1) Paul says that we are "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together" (Rom. 8:17).
 - 2) The Lord "will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Phil. 3:21).
 - 3) "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4).
 2. Are you ready to be glorified with Christ?