



Gawler Baptist Church
Revelation: God's Word to a Sent People
Study 28—Rev 22:1-21

Read the whole chapter together before you start the study and share your thoughts with one another. What is your overall impression from the chapter?

This chapter catches up the history of the world, and in particular, salvation history. Here we see again the great liberating truths of the cross and the destiny of God's people. This is the consummation of history.

The End and the Beginning

We have seen how closely Revelation is linked with the OT, and this is particularly clear in chapter 22. It is the restoration of all that was lost at the fall in chapter 3 of Genesis.

- Describe what pictures come to your mind as you consider: the Garden of Eden (Gen 1:29,30; 2:5-14), the world after the entrance of sin (Gen 3:14-19) and the new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1-22:5). Compare and contrast them.

The Holy City

The description of the New Jerusalem (symbolising all God's people and life in the new creation) continues in this chapter.

- What things characterise it?

The whole of the life of the city revolves around the river and is sustained by it.

- What do you see as the relationship between this and verses such as Jn 7:38; 4:10,14; Isa 12:3; 44:3?

The Tree of Life

On each side of the river stood the tree of life. Not many trees next to the river, but one tree on both sides. This is a further allusion to the garden of Eden (Gen 2:9; 3:22-24). Adam and Eve were free to eat of the fruit of that tree for eternity. But they rejected it in favour of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, this was, in effect, the tree of death. Once sin entered the world, and people were banned from garden, God set cherubim with flaming swords to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen 3:24). What was lost is now restored as in Rev 22 the tree stands in the centre of paradise and there is nothing to stop any approach.

- What things stand out to you about the tree of life and its function within the new city?

The word used for tree here is not the usual one used for a fruit bearing tree but is actually the word used to refer to a plank of wood, a dried piece of timber. This is the same word used referring to the cross on which Jesus died and by which He healed us. See Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Gal 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24.

- What do you see is the significance of this?
- Why will there no longer be any curse? See Gen 3:14-19 & Gal 3:13.
- Gal 3:13 tells us that Jesus has set us free from the curse of the law. How does that work out in our daily living?

See His face [4]

In the New Jerusalem we will see the Lord face to face (cf. Ex 33:20).

- What do you think it will be like to see God face to face?

Once again we have a reference to God's name on foreheads. The idea of a name has been significant in the Book of Revelation (see 2:17; 3:5,12; 14:1).

- What does it symbolise here and what is its significance?

As you read through this chapter, you will notice a number of occasions where it refers to the time being near, or Jesus returning soon (vv. 7,10,12,20).

- This was written nearly 2 000 years ago, so in what sense is Jesus' return near?
- Given the sense of urgency evident in the chapter, what implications does this have for us as believers in an unbelieving world?