

Theme: One Story – One God, One Plan, One Story

Title: Yet to Come: No Place Like Home – Rev.21: 1-27

Aim: Rejoice in the sure hope of the promised city of God.

Intro: The saying goes, “Home is where the heart is.” When I was in college, when my parents or bro/sis-in-law dropped me off & went on their way back home – that was when I was most homesick. Even tho I had just spent time at home, I missed it (& the people I had left there) most terribly then. I remember once walking toward my dorm after once such occasion & asking myself, “What in the world am I doing here?” I had a good college experience & it was very imp that I was there, but I missed home. The same is true today whenever I have to be away from Andi & the girls for a short or long time. I miss & am ready to go home. Extra hard when some of the family live away from home. Always so very good when we’re able to all be together. It’s the people you love who make home home. For the believer, our eternal home is one we have never lived in nor ever seen. But it will be who is there that will make it home! Theme: One story – one God, one plan, one story – God’s story of redemption. As far as the Bible & our 2-year series w/this theme are concerned, the story is almost completed, just 2 more chapters; but the story will go on for eternity for those who are in Christ. We will dwell w/Him forever. In chap21 of Revelation, John has a vision of our eternal home [READ]. I) **In this final scene** (encompassing chap22) **John sees a new heaven & new earth**, as Peter prophesied (II Pet.3:13). ***“But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens & a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*** After the great white throne judgment & all those not in Christ – whose names are not “found written in the book of life...thrown into the lake of fire” (20:15), God will bring to fruition that promise – new heavens/earth. David Palmer (Casket Empty): God will “maybe create completely new, but more likely God intends to renew His creation, purged of evil,

sin & death.” We who are ocean lovers will have to take that up w/God, because John said, “the sea was no more.” I think that’s because the sea is symbolic of instability & danger, tumult. But I assure you, we won’t miss it. Then John saw an amazing sight: the “new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (vs2). Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for us (John 14:2)! II) **Note that on this new earth & in these new heavens & in this new Jerusalem there will no longer be any curse of sin.**

Everything & everyone that is part of the curse will be done away. Everything that comes between us & God will be put out of the way. The 1st I think about is no more sin! And I’m not thinking about the sin of others, but my own. The thing that most hinders sweet fellowship w/God in my life is sin in my life. Not only will it be possible to not sin in the eternal kingdom (as it is now), but it will be impossible for me to sin, because I will be perfected, made like Christ! Also, the things that make life difficult & sorrowful here will be done away: no more tears – every tear wiped away. No more death or that which leads to death – sickness! No more cancer, Alzheimer’s, heart disease, Covid-19! No “mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things [will] have passed away.” Then also, no more of any who oppose God – “the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable... murderers...sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters...liars.” All those will be thrown into the lake of fire, the 2nd death. We who are in Christ may have been all those things, but as Paul wrote in I Cor.6:11, we “***were washed, [we] were sanctified, [we] were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ & by the Spirit of our God.***” In Christ we are conquerors, who “will have this heritage” to drink “***from the spring of the water of life w/out payment.***” We are children of God & heirs w/Christ! III) **Note John’s description of the New Jerusalem.** Try to picture in your mind all that John saw. 1) Like a **Bride**, the wife of the Lamb. Now, we who are in Christ, the Church, we

are the Bride of Christ, but here the angel calls the new Jerusalem the Bride. There's no contradiction here, because we who are in Christ will dwell in the new Jerusalem. 2) She is **holy**, resplendent w/the glory of God, "its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal." 3) It will certainly be **secure**, with "a great high wall, w/12 gates (3 on each side) & at the gates 12 angels." If you think about it, why would the city need security? Evil is banished & God is in the midst. I can only think it will be to display the glory & majesty of God. On each gate will be the name of 1 of the tribes of Israel, w/all 12 represented. We're told by John that these gates are each a single pearl! Can you imagine the oysters from which those would come? The city wall will also have a strong foundation – 12 foundations to be exact, each foundation being place next to the other, around the city. Each foundation will be adorned w/precious stones/jewels, some of which I have never heard nor seen. There is jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, carnelian, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, amethyst. Andi will be in her element (loves jewelry)! Maybe that will make up for "no more sea." John recorded that on each foundation was the name of 1 of the "12 apostles of the Lamb." That unites the Old & New Testaments – 12 tribes/12 apostles. John described the streets of the city as being "pure gold, like transparent glass." Can you imagine? 4) **Massive** – measured 12,000 stadia wide & long & high (shaped like a cube, just like the Holy of Holies was shaped). 12,000 stadia are an estimated 1380-1500 miles high & long & wide! That would reach ½ way across the USA & Canada! One city – the new Jerusalem! The city will have ample room for the innumerable multitude of the redeemed. The walls will measure 144 cubits thick – the cubit being 1-1/2 feet. 144 cubits = 216' or 72 yards thick! 5) **Open** – the "gates will never be shut by day - & (get this) there will be no night there"! John recorded that nations & kings "will bring into [the city] their glory" & honor (24-26). So that certainly seems to

mean that there will be kings & nations in the kingdom – obviously righteous kings & nations. So, perhaps not all will live in the city, but will come in & out of it freely. However, **“nothing unclean will ever enter”** the city, **“nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”** Now, I don’t know if there will be a literal city like this. John described what he saw & mentally processed it as he could, enabled & inspired by God. But. Like the marriage supper, why wouldn’t it be literal? I believe there will be a city, thus described. What else would be the use of gold & pearl & precious stones? Won’t it be wonderful there?! It will be, but not simply because of the splendor of the city. I’ve skipped over some verses on purpose, but now will go back to them. The greatest thing about the new Jerusalem & the eternal kingdom is who will be there. By that I’m not referring to loved ones who have died & will be raised. That will most certainly be wonderful! To see & spend eternity w/those we have lost to the enemy death will be indescribably great. That in itself will make our eternal home a home. However, that won’t be the most precious thing about the kingdom. That won’t be what most makes it home. Rather, it will be IV) **The Unhindered Presence of God.** Vs3: **“Behold, the dwelling place of God is w/man. He will dwell w/them & they will be His people, & God Himself will be w/them as their God.”** He is who will make it truly home! In Palmer’s words, the city will be a “place of renewed relationship. God & [redeemed] humanity [will be] reconciled & will reign w/God forever.” Note vs22-23: **“And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty & the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, & its lamp is the Lamb.”** That’s why there will be no night there, because the glory of God will shine brighter than the sun. Again, Palmer wrote, “The New Jerusalem is God’s dwelling place that now fills the renewed heavens & earth.

There is no separate temple because the entire city is the temple. As God's people, we will live meaningful, everlasting lives in conscious praise to the Lord God Almighty. This life will be shared as fellow citizens of God's eternal city, New Jerusalem, the centerpiece of the new heavens & earth." "What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see, & I look upon His face, the One who saved me by His grace. And He takes me by the hand & leads me to the promised land, what a day, glorious day that will be!" Pray for those who are not yet in Christ. Live as strangers & aliens as you live out your life here. "This world (as it is) is not our home, we're just passing through." It's one story: one God, one plan, one story.