

(Beyond) Restoration: Acts 3:18-21

Sunday, November 27, 2022

Covenant Church

Pastor Zack Phillips

Acts 3:18-21

18 In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. 19 Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, 20 so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, 21 who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets.

A. What Advent Is

B. Why Future Hope is Important

1. Biblically

1 Cor 15:19 If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

Rev 22:20-21 The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." / Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! / 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

2. Justice

"[At secret prayer/worship meetings] The slave forgets all his sufferings, except to remind others of the trials during the past week, exclaiming: 'Thank God, I shall not live here always!'... —Peter Randolph

"My knees bones am aching, / My body's rackin' with pain, / I 'lieve I'm a chile of God, / And this ain't my home, / 'Cause Heaven's my aim." —recalled by Anderson Edwards

3. Not cosmic

C. (Beyond) Restoration

1. Restoration

Lost	"Restored"
Life free from pain, suffering, death (Gen 3)	"Death will be no more, mourning and crying and pain will be no more"
Intimacy with God walking with us in the Garden	"God himself will be with them"
Nakedness without shame	No more sexual lust (Augustine 21742)

Originally	In the New Jerusalem
A <i>garden</i>	A garden-city with human culture retained as glory and history mattering and redeemed (apostles' names, tribes' names)
An <i>earthly</i> paradise	A fusion of heaven and earth, no divide between them, so the best of the spiritual and the best of the physical wedded

One tree of life	Tree of life on either side of river that flows through the middle of city, 12 kinds of fruit, producing fruit each month, for the healing of the nations
[Temple]	“no temple...for its temple is the Lord”
Light, sun, moon, stars	“no need of sun or moon...” for God himself/the lamb is the light
Day and night	“there will be no night there”
Serpent’s twisting the truth	“nothing unclean... no abomination or falsehood”; “nothing accused”
Physical body	Spiritual body
Augustine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability not to sin • Ability not to die • Free will to choose Good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to sin • Inability to die • Freer will that is “immovably fixed in a delight in not sinning”

Ezekiel 40-48

Revelation 21-22

The city and its dimensions

- There is a “structure like a city” (40:2)
- with defined measurements for its length, width, and circumference (48:15-16, 35)

- The holy city, the new Jerusalem, comes down from heaven from God (21:2; cf. 21:10)
- with defined measurements for its length, width, and height

The city gates (and wall and foundations)

- There are three gates on each of the four sides of the city, each named for one of the twelve tribes (48:30-34)
- The outer gate of the sanctuary shall remain shut (44:1-2), and the gate of the inner court that faces east is closed every day except for the Sabbath and the day of the new moon (46:1)

- There are three gates on each of the four sides of the city, each named for one of the twelve tribes (21:12-13). *The gates are made of pearls (and the streets of gold) (21:19-21).*
- *The gates are never shut (21:25).*
- There are twelve foundations to the city wall, each named for one of the twelve apostles (21:14). *The foundations are made of specified jewels (21:19-21).*

The Temple:

- Zadokite priests (48:11-12) have charge of it (40:45)
- It has a most holy place (41:4) and a table before the LORD (41:22)
- The LORD’s glory fills the temple (43:5; 44:4)

- There is no temple for the LORD and the Lamb are the temple (21:22)

Inhabitants of the city:

- The tribes of Israel, resident aliens (47:13-14, 21-23, 48:1-7, 23-29), Zadokites (48:11-12), Levites (48:13-14), and “the prince” (48:21-22) have land allotments;
- the tribes are city workers (48:19); and
- while the LORD will “reside among the people of Israel forever” (43:7), allowing “foreigners” into the sanctuary is an “abomination” (44:7; cf. 44:9).

- *The nations will walk by God’s light and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into the city (21:24; cf. 21:26).*

No defilement

- When the glory of the LORD returns, Israel shall no longer defile the LORD's holy name (43:7)
- Nothing unclean (21:27) or accursed (22:3), no abomination or falsehood, will enter the city (21:27)

Water

- Water flows out from the temple (47:1-2).
- It is fresh water so that "everything," particularly many kinds of fish, "will live where the river goes" (47:9-10)
- Water flows from the throne of God and the Lamb through the middle of the city (22:1)
- *This is the river of the water of life, bright as a crystal* (22:1)

Trees

- There are many trees on the river bank (47:7)
- that will bear fresh fruit every month;
- the leaves are for healing (47:12).
- On the river banks are *the tree of life* (22:2)
- with twelve kinds of fruit producing fruit each month
- the leaves are for *the healing of the nations* (22:2)

Access to God

- While the name of the city is "The LORD is there" (48:35), seemingly only the priests shall come near to the LORD (44:15)
- "God himself will be with them" (21:3), meaning that *seeming all of God's servants will see His face and His name will be on their foreheads* (22:4).

Other

"Death will be no more; / mourning and crying and pain will be no more" (21:4)
There is no sun or moon for God's glory is its light and the Lamb its lamp (21:23; cf. 22:5). There is no night (22:5).

[God] foreknew that some of the angels, in their pride, would wish to be self-sufficient for their own felicity, and hence would forsake their true good; and yet he did not deprive them of this power, judging it an act of greater power and greater goodness to bring good even out of evil than to exclude the existence of evil. —Augustine, *City of God*

Rev 13:8 (NIV) All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.