



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 184 - Our Bright, Glorious Future

(Revelation 21-22)

Holy of Holies

The dimensions of the New Jerusalem are clearly meant to be symbolic. Who would ever build a wall 1,500 miles long and 1,500 miles high? The significance of these symbolic numbers is that they form a perfect cube: an object with three dimensions—height, width and depth. It symbolizes the Holy Trinity dwelling with His people. Just as the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle and in the temple was a perfect cube, so is God's dwelling place in the midst of Old Testament Israel. And the huge size indicates there is room for all believers of every century.

- In the Old Testament before the time of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, why was the Most Holy Place inaccessible to everyone but the high priest—and even he was only able to enter one day each year?
- At His birth, God's Son became a man and "tabernacled" among us, hiding His divinity behind the *curtain* of His human body. Describe some occasions in which He pulled aside that curtain to show His disciples His divine nature.
- At Jesus' death the curtain dividing the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place was split in two from top to bottom. How did that torn curtain foreshadow our eternal future, living in God's presence and looking upon His glory?

New Eden

In Genesis 2 Moses describes the Garden of Eden as containing a river and the tree of life. When Revelation describes the New Jerusalem, it has the river of life and the tree of life right in its midst. God has brought us full circle from the perfect Garden of Eden, which mankind ruined through sin, to a new and perfect garden, restored by Jesus Christ our Lord.

- Discuss what our life on earth would be like today if Adam and Eve had not sinned, and all of us were perfect.
- Have you ever visited places that gave you a glimpse of the glorious world mankind could have built, if we had remained faithful to God and used our gifts and talents to enrich each other's lives, enhance creation, and glorify God?
- How do you picture eternal life in the new heavens and new earth that Christ will restore to us on the Last Day?
- How can this brief glimpse into our eternal life give us courage and confidence while still in this world?

"I'm Am Coming Soon."

Jesus made this promise 2,000 years ago. That hardly seems like someone who is "coming soon." But as Peter reminds us, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed" (2 Peter 3:9-10). After removing the curse and all sources of evil from His creation, Jesus will restore to us the new heavens and the new earth, our perfect and eternal home.

- How should Jesus' words, "I am coming soon," give us an urgency to be busy doing the Lord's work of sharing the Gospel of His salvation?
- What things in your life most compel you to pray, "Come, Lord Jesus"?

Revelation Resources:

Men's NetWork Bible Study - *Explaining All the Scary Stuff in Revelation* (www.mensnetwork.com)

Crossways International's Bible study courses: (www.crossways.org)

Concordia Popular Commentary: *Revelation* by Louis A. Brighton (www.cph.org)

Courage for Today, Hope for Tomorrow - A study of the Revelation by Esther Onstad (www.augsburgfortress.org)