

Rev 26-07-29b

We're resuming our study here, looking at the kingdom of the father that replaces and in some way extends the millennial kingdom. The Lord Jesus Christ is on the throne during the millennial kingdom, and he is still on the throne in the kingdom of the father. And it fulfills the Old Testament promises that talk about a son of David who will sit on a throne forever.

And so there is in the same way that we are earthly and we partake of this creation, this heavens and this earth, we will transfer, we will transport, we will graduate, we will be promoted into the eternal kingdom of the father. And the kingship and the ruling authority of the Lord Jesus will seamlessly transfer and continue in the kingdom of the father. And so there's a resolution of passages that we'll take a look at here before long.

But as we continue reading here, the bull angel in verse nine of chapter 21, and you have seven, seven, and seven. Seven bulls, seven last plagues, one of the seven angels. I will show you the bride, the lamb's wife, or I will show you the woman, the lamb's bride.

That's a less great text. If you have any notes and it says M text, that's the majority text. That's an average of a bunch of later texts if you see the NU text, that's usually superior.

That's the Nestle Allen UBS text. But I will show you the bride, the lamb's wife. He carried away in the spirit to a great high mountain, showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.

We looked at this in some detail last time and we went back to chapter 17. The bull angels poured out their judgments in chapter 16, if you recall. And then one of those angels shows up in the next chapter at the beginning to describe for John the scarlet harlot.

And we saw that in 17.1. I just want to point something out that we have not seen before, but it has great personal application in my view. Flip back a few pages to chapter 17. One of the seven angels, very similar introduction, but instead of a high mountain, he goes to the desert, he goes to the wilderness.

So he carried away in the spirit into the wilderness, verse three, I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast and so on. The woman is arrayed, purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, precious stones and pearls. We are going to have colors and precious stones associated with the new Jerusalem, right? So here's a woman that's got colors and stones associated with her.

She's got this cup full of abominations. She's got this message on her head. Verse six, she's drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

I saw her and I marveled with great amazement. Think about this. John has seen many amazing things, but how many times has he said, I saw this and I marveled with great amazement? Why

does John marvel with great amazement? What's going on here? He doesn't know what to make of what he sees.

It reminds you of when this same John sat with the other disciples and Jesus would deliver a parable. Explain to us the parable of the soils. And Jesus would say, this is what the metaphor represents, right? And we need this.

We have the word of God that is before us. We are in this world and we are looking at this heavens and this earth. That's where this mystery, which is Babylon, the capital city of Satan, all through history, represents.

And the martyrs are those that have been slain for their faith in God and faith in the Lord Jesus. That's why you have both the sanctified ones and the martyrs of Jesus mentioned up in verse six, because this spans the ages in the same way that the book of life spans the ages. Those whose names have been written in the book from the foundation of the world, from the earliest days, names started being recorded in this book.

So this is a vast sweep, but it pertains to this heavens and this earth. Are you with me so far? Mystery Babylon, the capital city of Satan. Satan has been given this playground.

He's been given this laboratory and almost all of the space in it to conduct his experiment and his demonstration of how he and the fallen angels can run a world and a civilization and sentient beings with free will apart from God and have it be a success. And it has failed generation after generation, nation after nation, kingdom after kingdom, continent after continent. God said, I'll give you the entire earth.

You are the God of this world, but this little bitty section over here, the descendants of Abraham, those are mine. And you can have the whole rest of the planet and I will do more with my least of these people than you can do with all the rest of the nations and all the generations and all the centuries of time combined. And that's what has happened.

But it is under the sky. It is on this earth, the heavens and the earth. That's what this is for.

It is giving Satan free reign. Why doesn't God put him in the bottom of his pit now and we have a better world? God says, show me what you got. It's encapsulated in the book of Job.

Look at the first two chapters. If I do this, this will be the outcome. And God demonstrates that people of faith mess up Satan's plans.

And it has happened. And we wanna be the people that mess up Satan's plans. But this is on the earth.

This is the mystery that is Babylon, the harlot, mother of harlots, full of abominations, murdering people of faith all down through history. And so when John sees this in verse six, he says, I

marveled with a great marvel. I was metedzoed with a great dalmazo, so to speak.

He's knocked out of his sandals by this. What does that mean? I'm not, I can't parse. I can't figure out what I'm looking at and why I'm looking at it.

So what happens? The angel said to me, why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and the beast that carries her with the seven heads and the 10 horns. And then he goes on to explain. Just as Jesus says to his disciples, did you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all parables? And so then he explains to these who have stuck with him and come to him after the public delivery of the parable and have asked, they are seeking, they are knocking.

And Jesus says, do you not understand? I will explain it. And the idea here is John, I wonder if John had a little bit of deja vu. I remember feeling like this when Jesus told a parable and I didn't understand.

And he said, do you not yet understand? And then he would explain it. The angel says, what are you marveling about? I'll explain it for you. This is what happens in this life.

Think about us. There's circumstances, there's situations, there are issues that are raised. Well, who is right? Who do we vote for? Whose policies do we support? What wars abroad do we think ought to be fought and which ones should we get out of and cut our losses? I don't, I need help.

I need guidance. I need an explanation. And we have the word of God and it's like the parable.

It's like the vision. The word of God lays things out before us. And we say, I am not sure I know what I'm looking at.

John has this seven bowls angel present. What does angelos mean in Greek? Messenger. There is a messenger who takes this information from God here in the form of a vision and explains it, clarifies it, helps John understand it so that John can digest it and ultimately make application from it.

And by him doing so, it enables the people in the seven churches and all of us since then to do the same. But the word of God comes to us. We're not fully comprehending it.

And then there is a messenger who gives an explanation. I'm emphasizing this for a reason. This is our mode now.

This is why we have churches. This is why we have pastors and teachers. This is why in the first century, they had people with the gift of prophecy who could deliver divine truth before there was a written canon of scripture.

God communicates, someone could speak in tongues. I've always wondered why the whole

tongues thing? Why have this cryptic stuff that nobody can understand? And if somebody gives out with tongues, Paul says, don't do that unless there is somebody there to interpret. Now I understand, after all these many years, I finally get it.

It's the pattern. How many things are we seeing in scripture that are a pattern? Prophecy is a pattern and several things, there can be adumbrations, there can be matches to the pattern in different eras and different times in different ways. Tongues is a pattern just like this.

John sees the vision of the whore of Babylon with this cup sitting on this beast, seven heads, 10 horns. He says, I don't get it. It is as though someone stood up and spoke in tongues.

This bull angel who is a representative of God's judgment. If we wanna understand things, one of the ways we can do it is to think about the judgments of God. Where is God's judgment going to fall and why? It's not just any old angel.

It's not Gabriel, it's not Michael, it's not another angel, it's a bull angel. John sees this vision. God knows John's not gonna get it.

He's gonna see it and just be marveling means I was amazed and confused. What is this? The angel says, let me explain. This is like, don't speak in tongues unless there's someone there to interpret.

Don't come to a difficult passage of scripture that is full of metaphor or symbolism or other figures of speech that sort of wrap it in an enigma unless there is someone there to unravel the thing, to unwrap it, to explain it, to clarify it. Isn't this an amazing thing? God is so consistent in ways that we just didn't anticipate. He gave people the ability to speak in tongues, but he said, this is gonna marvelize and mystify a bunch of people.

You gotta have somebody there to explain it. John's gonna see this vision, but I'm putting a bull angel there to explain it. So what does the angel do? The angel says, what are you marveling about? I'll tell you the mystery.

And then he goes on to explain it. Down in verse nine, here is the mind that has wisdom. The angel is saying, do you follow me? Are you with me? Are you keeping up? Here's what the sevens represent.

Here's what the heads represent. Here's what the horns represent. If your mind has wisdom, you're going to keep trying.

You're gonna keep up and parse this and digest it. So we are now in chapter 21. Let me just read a little bit of chapter 21.

Keep chapter 17 and what we just looked at in mind. You've got that firmly. This is the mind that has wisdom.

This is the way God works. He gives something that's initially mystifying, but if you ask, seek, and knock, somebody will come explain it, right? So verse nine, one of the seven angels has the seven bolts filled with the seven last plagues. Same angel, in my view, or so similar, we can't tell the difference.

And they seem to be interchangeable angels. If it's the same one or a different one, doesn't really matter. He's identified identically.

So he carries me away in the spirit, John says in verse 10, to a great and high mountain, showed me the great city, holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a Jasper stone, clear as crystal. Great and high wall, 12 gates, 12 angels at the gates, names written on them, names of the 12 tribes of the children of Israel.

Verse 13, three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, three gates on the west. I just had a thought as I was preparing for this lesson tonight. It just dawned on me.

You just have to keep looking at a thing until you really see it. Do you see this verse? Do you see verse 13? What do you see in verse 13? I was suddenly amazed at verse 13. In the new heavens and the new earth, there is north, east, south, and west.

Something defines north. We have the North Pole, magnetic north, you know, the spin of the earth and all of that. But there's still north, east, south, and west.

There must be some sort of compass that will tell you what direction you're looking, what direction things are pointing. John's up on a high mountain, and some kind of way he knows which way is north. I suspect that the, I visualize that the mountain that John is on is like the Mount of Olives.

And you could sit on the Mount of Olives and look at Jerusalem. John has been there many times with the Lord Jesus. And he is now on a great and high mountain.

I think this is like the new Mount of Olives, and it's to the east of the city. And so he knows from his perspective, which way is north, because he's always looked at Jerusalem from that direction. In any case, that's an aside.

That's not where we're going. The wall of the city had 12 foundations. On them were the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb.

He who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates and its wall. City is laid out as a square, length just like its breadth, measured the city with the reed. Notice the 12s here.

We've already had 12 gates, 12 foundation stones after the 12 apostles and the 12 tribes of Israel. Now we've got 12,000 furlongs. Its length is 12,000, its breadth is 12,000, its height is 12,000.

He measures the wall, 144 cubits, 12 times 12 is the height of the wall. Depending on the version you look at, some of them say the thickness of the wall, but it's the height. It's the height of the wall.

Don't ask me how I know that. To the measure of a man, that is of an angel. The angel is measuring, but it's a man's cubit.

Apparently angels may be a little bit bigger than us. And so he wants this to be in human measurement. So this is the cubit of a man or the rod of a man.

And notice, and see the parallel in the description. You remember when he's describing the mystery Babylon, jewels, pearls, number of heads, number of horns, adornment, and all the rest of it. He's doing the same thing here.

So in great detail, foundations were adorned with all kinds of precious stones. The first foundation was Jasper, the second Sapphire, the third Chalcedony, the fourth Emerald, the fifth Sardonyx, the sixth Sardioth, the seventh Chrysolite, the eighth Beryl, the ninth Topaz, the 10th Chrysoprase, the 11th Jacinth, and the 12th Amethyst. The 12 gates were 12 pearls.

Each individual gate was a one pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold like transparent glass. And it continues, I saw no temple in it, and so on. What is the difference? Pop quiz question here.

What is the difference in what we just read and chapter 17? You see the vision. This is the city that is like a bride adorned for her husband. This is the woman, and this is her description, just like chapter 17 was the description of a woman with colors, jewels, materials, and so on.

What's the difference? Is John amazed? What do you think is more amazing, the Scarlet Harlot or the New Jerusalem? Which one would blow your sandals in the creek? This is the most amazing city ever. John doesn't say, I was amazed. And the Bull Angel doesn't say, John, why are you amazed? This is a fascinating detail to me.

Can't find anybody that talks about it, but to me, this is incredible. And there's a great piece of application here, in my view. Do you see the difference? How come John is not amazed? This has got to be, I mean, a city built four square, there's debate, nobody can figure out, is this a pyramid? Because it's 12,000 by 12,000 by 12,000.

Its length, its depth, and its height are all 12,000 stadia. So is it a pyramid? Is it that high at the center? Or is it a cube? My money is on a cube. Guess why? Without departing into a rabbit trail, go back and look at the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and in Solomon's Temple.

The Holy of Holies is a perfect cube. It is the same in its width, its depth, and its height. This is the ultimate Holy of Holies, with God as its center.

Why would, if the Holy of Holies had been a pyramid, then I would think the New Jerusalem's a pyramid. Holy of Holies was a perfect cube. And I think the New Jerusalem, as God's ultimate, final, and eternal Holy of Holies, is essentially a cube.

Although I think there's some dimensionality here that we can't grasp. So, where am I going with this? Why is John not amazed? What is the amazement factor? Why isn't John amazed? Might be a better way to ask the question. Where is he? Turn back with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

1 Corinthians chapter 13, verse nine. You can start at verse eight. Love never fails.

Where there are prophecies, they will fail. Where there are tongues, they will cease. Where there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

I think, wow, I don't want knowledge to vanish away. I've worked hard to gain biblical knowledge. What's he talking about? Think of that pattern.

Tongues are going to cease. Having something opaque appear, having something difficult because of the limitations of our earthly mind, and having to receive guidance, and have it be explained and decoded for us, like Jesus does with the parables, like the bowl angel does with the scarlet harlot. Paul says, that's gonna vanish away.

Love is never gonna go away. Love is gonna go into the future. But these prophecies, they're gonna cease.

What is a prophecy? Eschatology is a difficult subject. People are always trying to say, I'm not sure I understand this prophecy. Was it fulfilled? To what extent was it fulfilled? Is it metaphorical? Is it material? Is it spiritual? Is it literal? Prophecy is difficult, and we need help understanding it.

Somebody needs to explain it to us. We're gifted with the Holy Spirit for that. But prophecies are gonna fail.

Tongues are going to cease. You're not gonna get gibberish that has to be interpreted by somebody. Where there's knowledge, this is like, well, you've got knowledge and I don't, so you've got to impart your knowledge to me so that I can understand what you understand.

I think that's what knowledge means here. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. Things are partial.

Things are imperfect. They're incomplete. I get a thing, but I've got to work on it to improve my understanding of it.

When that which is perfect has come, would you say the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven, from God, I would say that is that which is perfect. It is God's Holy of Holies coming

down. When that which is perfect has come, that which is in part will be done away.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child. I understood as a child. I thought as a child.

What do we do with children? You spend all of your time with children explaining, imparting knowledge, teaching things, helping them figure things out, helping them learn to figure out for themselves, right? John is still on this earth looking at an earthly manifestation, the kingdom of Satan and its capital city, the mystery that is Babylon, lies, abominations, murders, blood, and death that have characterized human history from the very beginning. And when he sees it depicted, the angel has to explain it. And a large part of chapter 17 is the angel explaining to John what he's looking at.

Look at John on the high mountain with the very same angel looking at the new Jerusalem. Doesn't need a single thing explained. Isn't this exciting? When we get to glory, if we have prepared ourselves, if we have made ourselves ready, if we are overcomers like John, when we get there, it's gonna make sense.

Not gonna need a guide, not gonna need a handbook, not gonna need a dictionary or some sort of helpful literature. John looks at it and it all makes sense to him. It is not explained to us.

I've been racking my brain and researching and you saw last time, I've gone through the layout of the tribes in the Old Testament encampment in Numbers 2 and the jewels and the breastplate of the high priest, what are their order, which tribe do they belong to? And trying to figure out these jewels, what is their significance? Because they are given to us. What does all of this mean? Why are these various precious stones associated with various things? And I want the angel to go to John and say, well, John, you see these stones? That's what this means. And this is associated with that.

And this is significant. And the angel never does it. I was asking myself, why? Why is this so difficult to figure out? This is what Paul says.

For now we see through a glass dimly, darkly, verse 12, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I am known. And now abide faith, hope, and love.

These three, that's why we started out in Thessalonians. You want to be an overcomer? Faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is love.

Love is the measure. You got to have your faith and hope cooking and love will result and evidence how well we're doing in faith and in hope. Our work of faith, what we make move, our labor of love, what it costs us personally, and our patience of hope, bearing up under whatever the circumstance is, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, his hope endured the cross and despised the shame.

Look at where he is now, seated at the right hand of the father. So you contrast chapter 17 with

chapter 21 and realize this will be us. John represents us as overcomers.

And I'm assuming we're going to be overcomers. There's no good reason why every single one of us should not be an overcomer. And were we to be planted on the great and high mountain and look down at this new Jerusalem, we can't understand it now and we don't need to understand it now or it would be explained.

But it will make perfect sense. John is not amazed. John says, oh, okay, of course.

Of course the gates are a single pearl each and a pearl comes from an unclean animal, shellfish, which is off the menu for Old Testament Israel. And yet the pearl, which is the product of the unclean animal, there's 12 pearls that define entrance to the new Jerusalem. Pearls, they started out with an imperfection, with a grain of something that irritated the flesh of the oyster and he began to coat it.

And what started out as a bad thing and an irritation and a corruption, if you will, it's not a healthy thing, generates this pearl. And it is a pearl of great price. And you remember the parable Jesus told about the dealer in pearls who sees this one, sells everything he has so that he can own it.

It's a pearl, comes from manifestly unclean. I mean, shellfish are right out for the law of Moses. But from uncleanness comes something of iridescent beauty.

From this life where we struggle, we wrestle against principalities and powers on the outside, our fallen nature on the inside, distractions and failures by those around us. We're trying to navigate the rocks and shoals. We're trying to head on the upward way.

We're trying to get to Beulah land. We're trying to be qualified to enjoy the unclouded day and the city of gold, transparent gold that glows with its own light, sourced in the glory of God. I want to be there.

And when I get there, I want to be like John on the mountain. He doesn't ask any questions. Doesn't ask the angel, what meaneth this? Because he gets it.

This is where we're going. The old gospel song that says, "'We will understand it better by and by' is true. Look at John in 17, need a lot of help in this life, in this earth, under this sky, get to the eternal future.

It makes perfect sense. He doesn't ask a single question and he doesn't explain it to us either because he knows we're not ready for that. He's giving us the outline.

He's giving us a foretaste of glory divine, but we have confidence that we will know even as we are known. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13. That is why it is so difficult to find a correspondence of these gems.

I will give you one fun detail here. You notice the city is laid out as a square. We talked about the 144,000 and the 12s that are involved here.

And you can do the multiplication and figure out area and all kinds of things. But remember when he first started describing it in verse 12, he said the foundation stones, the gates in verse 12 are named for the tribes. And in verse 14, the city wall has 12 foundations and they have the names of the 12 apostles of the land.

Now in verse 19, the foundation, he comes back to the foundations of the wall. And this is where we're gonna close. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones.

And then it gives the stones. It says all kinds, why don't we just have a list? What do we have here that is different than a list? It's an ordered list. A list, what do I need for breakfast? Eggs, butter, salt, pepper, bacon, toast, a plate, a fork, something to drink coffee out of.

I can list those in any order. An ordered list is meaningful. And anytime the Bible says first, second, third, it's there for a reason.

So the all kinds of precious stones in verse 19, the first is Jasper, the second, Sapphire, the third, Chalcedony, the fourth, Emerald, the fifth, Sardonyx and so on. Now, what do we know about these foundation stones? They've got names, right? And the names of the 12 apostles. Every list of the 12 apostles, and there's three fulsome lists that you can find in the Gospels and in Acts starts the same way.

Say it with me. Who are the disciples of the Lord Jesus that became apostles? Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew. Then it's like Gilligan's Island and the rest, right? But you think about the first.

Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, who is Nathanael, right? Those six, that order never varies. So if the stones are in order, can we relatively with confidence associate a stone with an apostle? That being the case, if the first stone is Jasper, who is Jasper? The guy that's already got two other names, Simon slash Peter. So now he's gonna be Simon, Peter, Jasper.

I would submit that these are ordered for a reason and the disciples are listed in order for a reason. And we'll get to, okay, so what in just a moment, but let's just follow this out. So if Jasper is Simon, Peter, then the second is Sapphire.

That would be Andrew. The third is Chalcedony, James. The fourth is Emerald.

John, turn with me back to chapter three. I'm sorry, chapter four in Revelation. I don't trust my memory.

I'm pretty sure it's verse eight. I'm close. So it's verse three, chapter four, verse three.

Three looks like an eight, doesn't it? So after these things, I looked and behold, door standing open in heaven. The first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me saying, come up here. Who's the first voice that spoke with John in chapter one? It was the Lord Jesus.

So this is the voice. There's a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. But the first voice, come up here.

I will show you things which must take place after this. Immediately I was in the spirit. Behold, a throne set in heaven and one sat on the throne.

Notice verse three, can write this out in the margin in chapter 21. He who sat there on the throne was like what? A Jasper, first stone in the list and a Sardius stone. I go back to the list in verse 20 of chapter 21.

The fifth stone is Sardonyx and the sixth stone is Sardius. So Jasper and Sardius are associated with the one who sits on the throne. So I go through my list.

Who's number six? Peter's number one, that's Jasper. Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew slash Nathaniel. What do we know about Nathaniel? He's only mentioned in terms of any information to speak of in the gospel of John.

And he's mentioned there twice. And at the outset, when John is baptizing at the Jordan and several of the future disciples are down there watching him baptize, the Lord Jesus is baptized by John. And then verse 35 of chapter one of John, John stood with his disciples looking at Jesus.

John the Baptist says, behold the Lamb of God. Two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and seeing them following said, what do you seek? They said to him, rabbi, teacher, where are you staying? He said, come and see.

They came and saw where he was staying. Remained with him that day about the 10th hour. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

He first found his own brother, Simon. You get the idea that the other disciple, that it was John and Andrew that saw this because John doesn't name the other disciple. He never names himself in his gospel.

So John and Andrew are the ones who are there. Andrew goes and finds Peter. Found his own brother, Simon and said to him, we have found the Messiah, which is translated the Christ.

And he brought him to Jesus. When Jesus looked at him, he said, you are Simon, the son of Jonah. You shall be called Kephas, which is Aramaic for Petras, which is the rock, the stone.

The following day, Jesus wanted to go to Galilee. So he found Philip, Peter, Andrew, James, John. Philip is number five, right? He found Philip and said, follow me.

Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, we have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote. Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Notice the parallel between Peter's introduction to Jesus by Andrew and Nathanael's introduction to Jesus by Philip. They're virtually parallel. Somebody has seen Jesus and comes and tells the individual, we have found him.

And this creates a point of decision for the recipient of that information. What trust and confidence do you repose in the messenger? If it's your own brother coming and telling you, you tend to give him some credence, but Philip and Nathanael are always found together. In the other gospels, it's Philip and Bartholomew, but they're always found together.

So you get the idea that these guys know each other. Andrew knows his brother, Simon. Philip knows Nathanael and vice versa.

So Philip comes, says, we found him. Nathanael says in verse 46, can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, come and see. The Lord Jesus said to John and Andrew, come and see.

Andrew says to his brother, essentially, come and see. So he brought him to Jesus, right? So in verse 47, Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him. He said of him, behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit.

He's not a liar. Liars have their part outside the city. They will dwell outside the city, the faithless and all liars.

Here is a man in whom is no deceit. This is the signal quality called out by the Lord Jesus about Nathanael. He's the number six foundation stone.

And that property is associated with God on his throne back in chapter four of the revelation. Anyway, it's fascinating. I'm not gonna go down that road very far, except to say there is so much here.

And I think John instantly understood a lot of these things that we will understand when we are raptured, when we are promoted, when we enter into the heavenly realms, when we go to the place that the Lord Jesus has prepared, and when the millennial kingdom is finished, Gog Magog is accomplished, the great white throne judgment is complete, the old heavens and earth have passed away and everything therein, we will then know as we are known. John needs no explanation for this incredible vision of the city of gold and the presence of the land, which is its light. Nobody needs to explain it to him.

And if we are overcomers, nobody will need to explain it to us. How do we get there? Faith and

hope and love. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, how grateful we are for this wonderful pulling back of the curtain, just enough for us to see this incredible future that awaits us because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf, in bearing our sins, enabling us to be cleansed, to come to you and be related to you as our heavenly Father and we your children. We pray that we can be sons indeed and children indeed, that we can overcome by faith, by patience, by cultivating the hope and the love that are the signature elements of being a disciple of your son, the Lord Jesus. We pray these things in his name, amen.