

REVEALED Special Study– Genesis 1-3/Revelation 21-22

Revelation 21-22 does more than just conclude the book of Revelation—it brings **God's entire biblical story full circle** by echoing and fulfilling the themes introduced in Genesis 1-3.

1. A Return to God's Original Design (Genesis 1-2 → Revelation 21-22)

Creation in Genesis → New Creation in Revelation

- **Genesis 1-2:** God creates the heavens and the earth, a place of peace, beauty, and divine presence.
- **Revelation 21:1:** *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away."*
 - The Bible does not end with destruction but **renewal**—God restores His creation.
- **Genesis 2:10-14:** A river flows out of Eden, giving life.
- **Revelation 22:1-2:** *"Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life... flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city."*
 - The **river of life returns**, symbolizing the **restoration of perfect fellowship with God and eternal life**.

God Dwelling with Humanity

- **Genesis 2:** God walks among His people in the garden.
 - **Revelation 21:3:** *"Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God."*
 - Sin had **separated God and humanity**, but in the new creation, that separation is **fully undone**.
 - Small note: Christ walking among the lampstands, ie the church, is another image that in the here and now the Church is a small working model of new creation, with the ultimate fulfillment to come.
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2. The Reversal of the Curse (Genesis 3 → Revelation 22)

No More Sin and Death

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- **Genesis 3:17-19:** Because of sin, the ground is cursed, and humanity experiences pain, suffering, and death.
- **Revelation 21:4:** *"There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*
 - The curse is **completely reversed**—God's people will no longer suffer.

No More Separation from God

- **Genesis 3:23-24:** Adam and Eve are **exiled from Eden** and kept from the Tree of Life.
- **Revelation 22:14:** *"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city."*
 - Access to the **Tree of Life is restored**, meaning eternal life in God's presence.

No More Evil in God's World

- **Genesis 3:15:** God promises that the serpent (Satan) will be defeated.
 - **Revelation 20:10:** *"The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur."*
 - The **serpent's defeat is completed**—Satan's deception and rebellion are fully destroyed.
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3. The Garden Becomes a City

- In Genesis, God places Adam and Eve in a **garden** (Genesis 2:8).
- In Revelation, the story ends not in a garden but in a **city—New Jerusalem** (Revelation 21:2).
 - The city is **not a departure from Eden but its fulfillment**—humanity has **multiplied and cultivated the world**, and now God establishes His perfect kingdom.

Scholar Insight: N.T. Wright

"The new creation is not a return to Eden, but a transformation of the entire cosmos into what God always intended it to be." (Surprised by Hope)

Final Thought: Revelation Completes the Story

- **Genesis begins with creation; Revelation ends with new creation.**
- **Genesis starts with a garden; Revelation ends with a city.**
- **Genesis tells of humanity's exile from God's presence; Revelation tells of God dwelling with humanity forever.**

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- **Genesis introduces the Tree of Life; Revelation restores it.**
- **Genesis reveals the curse; Revelation announces its removal.**

The Bible isn't a story of escape from the world—it's a story of restoration, renewal, and God's faithfulness from beginning to end.