

OUR KING & HIS BRIDE

Revelation 21-22

Then I saw *her*—the one the Warrior King had been fighting for all along. She was the one the enemy wanted to destroy with death, the one he wanted to discourage with sadness. She's the one he wanted to stain with sin.

She is us—Jesus's bride—people from throughout history and all over the world. I saw her stand before her Groom—*radiant*—wearing pure white and shining like a precious jewel. But she wasn't just a beautiful bride, she was also a city! The city our hearts have been homesick for—even though we've never been there—where God lives with us and makes His home with us forever!

But then I saw that she wasn't just a city either! She was a temple as big as the world, filled with the fullness of God's presence! And I saw this heavenly city-temple-bride come down to earth, like a marriage of heaven and earth, and as it did, God made heaven and earth one again, renewing all things. Everything was just as splendid and beautiful as it ever could be!

And I heard His voice. With the tenderness of a father and the authority of a King, God said to my face what our hearts had only heard as echoes these past thousands of years, "It is finished! Everything is new! Everything I started, every promise I ever made is complete."

Then an angel took me on a walk to explore this renewed earth. I never want to forget what I saw.

I saw what was in God's heart when He created the world. I saw what He kept inviting us into on page after page of the story. I saw a place where the beauty and harmony of the Garden of Eden covered everything, and the whole earth was full of His glory!

I saw God's throne! No longer just in the heavens, but now firmly here on earth, where we could see Him face to face, and He could live with us.

I saw the River of Life flowing through the city straight from His throne—His living-water presence giving life to all the earth.

And just as the Tree of Life once stood in the center of the Garden of Eden, I saw the Tree of Life alongside the river. It was always fruitful and green, and people of every nation who were once broken and held captive to evil came to eat its life-giving fruit, just like God offered us in the beginning.



I saw the whole earth bustling with people of every skin color, speaking every language, a rich palette of hues and tones, hands lifted, voices raised as they streamed into the city to worship the King with the best and most beautiful of what their hands and hearts had made.

But as I looked around, I also noticed what was not there.

For the first time in all my life, I didn't see anyone sad or crying. I never saw a single trace of pain on anyone's face or hanging heavy on their bodies. All the pain, all the tears from following Him in a world held hostage to sin were tenderly wiped away, never to be felt again.

I never saw the day change to night. I saw no sun or moon, for there was never any darkness, never any place for sin to hide. All was open and honest and thriving in the light of God's presence.

And there was no sea! Maybe that doesn't sound like good news to you, but to us who view the sea as dark and chaotic, as the place where, in all our stories, beasts crawl out to wreak havoc on the land, this is amazing news.

The earth now had no enemies.

And I didn't see a single trace of the curse. The evil that seeped into every cell of our bodies, every thought of our mind, every conversation we've had, every plant and animal—was gone! No more sin, sorrow, or sickness because there was no more separation from God. Instead, God seeped into every cell of our bodies, every thought of our mind, every conversation we had, and all over creation. Everything was set free to enjoy the blessing of God's presence!

I saw the victorious King finally receive the reward for all of His suffering and then generously share that reward with His bride.

Then as the visions slowly faded, I heard King Jesus's voice ring out, "John, I'm coming soon! You've got to tell everyone about this! This is what's in store for those who have courage and persevere!"

And my heart cried out, "Yes, Jesus, we can't wait for You to come!"

I wonder, friend, what does your heart desire? As you finish reading this story and hear that our King is coming soon, does that not make your heart long for His return?

