

Christmas Fellowship Service in Malang, December 24, 2024 (Sunday Evening)

Peace and grace in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 21:1-8 can be divided into three parts as follows:

1. [verse 1] The new heaven and earth --> the renewal of attention.
2. [verse 2-3] The new man --> the renewal of the disobedient heart to become obedient.
3. [verse 4-8] The new atmosphere --> the renewal of characteristics to become without hatred, but with love.

Revelation 21:4-6

21:4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

21:5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

21:6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."

The theme is in [verse 5]" **Behold, I make all things new.**"

Actually, God had created the heaven and earth with the contents well, including men, who were as glorious and perfect as He was to be placed in garden Eden and preserved until being joyful. Nevertheless, they were tempted by the serpent or Satan until being disobedient by committing sin until being naked, fearful, ashamed, and driven out to enter the world. In the world, men keep on committing sins up to the peak, namely the sins concerning eating-drinking (smoking, getting drunk, drugs abuse) and marrying-being given in marriage until there is no control anymore in their life like the dog and swine. They are naked and not ashamed until being the same as Satan. Peter is the example. Men live in the curses of sins, weariness, heavy burden, sorrow, tears, and atmosphere of death until perishing forever in the hell.

This is an important lesson. The garden of Eden refers to the atmosphere of success. If we are successful in the marriage, ministry, job, and study, we must not be arrogant, but be careful always because Satan always pursues, tests, threatens, and makes fall until men perish.

God is not willing that the men He has created must live in the atmosphere of curses and death or perdition. Therefore, He wants to create the corrupted men to be new, namely being as glorious as He is for dwelling in the New Jerusalem through the process of renewal.

The second lesson is that we must not become disappointed or hopeless when we are in failure or destruction physically and spiritually and in our marriage or children because God is still able to renew.

How can God renew the corrupted men (in the atmosphere of death) to become the new ones (without the death)? The only way is through Christmas, namely the glorious God was born to be the same as man in Jesus for renewing the sinful men until being as glorious as He is.

Revelation 21:5-6

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It is the end or peak of the renewal for entering the New Jerusalem.

John 19:30

19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

The beginning of the renewal ("It is finished!") starts from the cross.

John 19:31-34

19:31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

19:32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.

19:33 *But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.*
19:34 *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

Jesus has died on the cross with the four main wounds (two in hands and two in feet) for saving or renewing the natives of Israel or the chosen people of God. The fifth wound, namely the biggest and deepest one in Jesus' side which was pierced with a spear by a Roman soldier until blood and water came out of it is for saving or renewing the Gentiles.

Thus, the beginning of the renewal is through Jesus' pierced side, out of which blood and water came.
The blood refers to believing in Jesus and repenting.
The water refers to the water and Holy Spirit baptism.

We get the new life, namely the life in righteousness. We are saved and renewed continually up to the peak, namely being as perfect and glorious as Jesus is to dwell in the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 16:17

16:17 *Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"*

Rejecting the renewal from the cross or keeping the man of flesh and blood that is sinful, one will enter "It is done!" for the punishment of God over the world until being in the hell forever.

What must be renewed for being able to enter the New Jerusalem? We learn from Mary.

Luke 1:26-34

1:26 *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,*
1:27 *to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*
1:28 *And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*
1:29 *But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.*
1:30 *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.*
1:31 *"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.*
1:32 *"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.*
1:33 *"And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."*
1:34 *Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"*

The renewal is from the heart which is doubtful and disobedient to the prophetic Word about the birth of Jesus or does not believe it as follows:

1. **Egoism**, until being afraid of sacrificing for Jesus. It means rejecting the Gospel Word or the truth. Consequently, there are many questions in life which are not answered.

Luke 1:13-20

1:13 *But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.*
1:14 *"And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.*
1:15 *"For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.*
1:16 *"And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.*
1:17 *"He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*
1:18 *And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."*
1:19 *And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.*
1:20 *"But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."*

The other example is Zechariah who was doubtful or did not believe the news about the birth of John, the Baptist. It means rejecting the renewal through the water baptism.

Romans 6:4

6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Colossians 2:12

2:12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

One rejects to be buried together with Jesus in the true water baptism.

The consequence is the spiritual dumbness, namely the meaningless words, lies, slander, and blasphemy. He cannot become blessings, but burdens and stumbling-blocks for others. He cannot worship God. His spirituality is dry. There are no satisfaction and joy. He only murmurs and gossips.

Celebrating Christmas, we must get the renewal from the doubtful and disobedient heart to believing Jesus as the only Savior. We repent or stop sinning and return to God (the faith becomes the brake so that we stop sinning) and get the water and Holy Spirit baptism. The tongue is anointed by Holy Spirit to be honest and able to testify and worship God. We live in righteousness. We are saved and blessed by God.

2. **Being doubtful or rejecting the true teaching or Bride Tidings** which preaches the second coming of Jesus as the King or Heavenly Bridegroom for sanctifying and changing us until being perfect.

Luke 1:33

1:33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Consequently, the door of the womb is shut. It means not experiencing the life renewal, but keeping on being the sinful man of flesh and blood like the woman who was bent over for eighteen years in the temple or being stamped with triple six by the Antichrist. It also means making God's heart grieved or not glorifying Him. The hearts of parents and pastor are also made grieved.

Luke 13:10-13

13:10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

13:12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." ?

13:13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

The condition is like Martha facing the shut door of tomb or the death of Lazarus for four days.

John 11:3,39-40

11:3 Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."

11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"

Martha and Mary who were gentle and loved God could be hard-hearted like stone because of facing the impossible problem, namely the death of Lazarus for four days. It refers to the gloomy future life, rotteness in sin, and perdition.

Celebrating Christmas, let us experience the renewal by the true teaching Word and sacrifice of Christ. It starts from the renewal of the hard heart to become gentle like Jesus, namely being strong and of good courage, not being disappointed and hopeless in facing impossibilities, not being proud of success, but always giving thanks.

The results are as follows:

- The door of the womb is opened. We are renewed. We keep faithful and fervent in spirit in the service and ministry to God. We keep on worshiping God as well as believing and hoping Him regardless of anything that happens. The door of the womb will also be opened physically.
- The door of the tomb is opened, namely the dead can be made alive.

John 11:43-44

11:43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"

11:44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a

cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

It refers to the power of God's preservation in the midst of the difficulties in the world until the time when the Antichrist reigns over the world for three and a half years. We are evacuated to the wilderness, far away from the presence of the Antichrist. We are directly preserved by the teaching Word and Holy Communion. Spiritually, we keep on living in righteousness and holiness. We are equipped with the ministry and gifts of Holy Spirit. We are used in the ministry for the edification of the perfect Christ's body.

It also refers to the power for removing impossibilities or solving all impossible problems.

It also refers to the power to give us beautiful successful future life in time of need.

- The door of Paradise or heavenly kingdom is opened for us.

The criminal who was corrupted, destroyed, without hope, and ashamed could confess his sin until the door of paradise was opened for him.

Luke 23:40-43

23:40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"

23:41 "And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong."

23:42 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

23:43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

We are changed to be meek and able to confess all sins, weaknesses, failures, and destruction. As a result, the door of God's help is opened. When Jesus comes a second time, we are changed to be perfect. We do not stumble in words, but only shout for joy, saying "Alleluia" on the glorious clouds until entering the marriage supper of the Lamb, the Paradise, and the New Jerusalem.

God blesses you.