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GENESIS: REVELATION FORETOLD!

There are many connections between Revelation and Genesis. Perhaps that is why Scripture seems to make reference to a future restoration of Edenic principles: "The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; He will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing" (Isa 51:3). A small sample of such connections follows:

1. There is gold in the new city (Rev 21:21) and the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:12).
2. A river flows from the throne (Rev 2:10) and from the garden (Gen 2:10). The Tree of Life resides in both Eden and in the city (Gen 2:9; Rev 22:2).
3. Both the garden and the city have been specially prepared for man (Gen 2:8,9; Rev 21:2).
4. The garden was a type of paradise with no sin and the city is a paradise with no sin.
5. God walked with man in the garden as He will in the new city (Gen 3:8; Rev 21:3).

Further we see that in Genesis the terms Eden and the Garden of Eden are often used interchangeably. However, in Genesis 2:8 we see that the Garden was planted on the east side of the land of Eden, hence the Garden OF Eden. Once the fall came, Adam and

Eve were driven out of the Garden and must have gone through an eastern gate, because after they left, God put a cherubim there to keep everyone out. The cherubim were only placed on the east suggesting that this was the only place the Garden was accessible.

In fact, the ancient word "paradise" even means "an enclosed garden." Taking this a step further. When Cain was driven away he went further east (Gen 4:16) and, therefore, further away from God and His paradise. This is also why the Tabernacle always had its entrance from the east side. The only way to enter our paradise (heaven) is from the east. In Ezekiel 47:1-2 we see the River of Life flowing from the throne, and it appropriately flows east. The Wisemen who came to see the baby Jesus came from the east (Matt 2). Likewise, the Jews have the Eastern Gate cemented shut in Jerusalem because only the Messiah is able to go through that gate. It is believed that when Christ returns He will go through the Eastern Gate or sometimes called the Golden Gate.

We see further evidence that the Garden of Eden foreshadows our heavenly home when we look at the River of Life that flowed DOWN from the center of Eden and separated into four other rivers. This means the Garden was a mountain. As a matter of fact, even Ezekiel calls Eden a mountain when talking of Satan: "You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones" (Ezek 28:13-14). This is why God makes so much of mountains in Scripture. For example, Isaac was nearly sacrificed on Mount Moriah where the temple was later built. The Ten Commandments were given on Mount Sinai. Jesus was Transfigured on a mountain, tempted on a mountain, ascended from a mountain, and gave His Sermon on the Mount from a

mountain. Elijah called down fire while on Mount Carmel. When sin came into the world, Adam and Eve were restricted from the Mountain of God. Likewise, later only Moses, the priests and the 70 elders were allowed to meet God on Mount Sinai, and even then only after making atonement through a sacrifice (Exo 24). Any one else who touched the mountain would die. Clearly mountains represent not only the Garden of Eden, but heaven, the very thing Eden symbolized. We read in Revelation: "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev 21:10). That is also why we read in Hebrews: "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly" (Heb 12:22).

We also read of the rivers and the surrounding area of the Garden: "The name of the first [river] is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there) (Gen 2:11-12). Note that there are three articles found here: gold, resin and onyx. First let us address the onyx. In Exodus 25:7 and 28:9-12 we see that the High Priest was to wear two onyx stones with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel on them. The purpose of these stones was explained, "Fasten them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. Aaron is to bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the LORD" (Exo 28:12). A memorial of what? The only time we see this stone prior to this is in the Genesis account of Eden. When the people looked at the priest they were to see a Holy Man like Adam in heaven. We will examine the priest in a moment, but for now realize that God wanted the people to see that He was going to restore them to the Edenic paradise once again.

Second, we deal with the resin or bdellium. Later on we see that the Israelites received manna from heaven while in their desert

wandering. We read, "The manna was like coriander seed and looked like resin" (Num 11:7) The word for resin is the same Hebrew word (bedolach) used in Genesis for resin and is nowhere else used in Scripture. In Exodus we are told the color of the manna eaten by the Israelites: "The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed [same Hebrew word for resin] and tasted like wafers made with honey" (Exo 16:31). Therefore, if the manna was white and it looked like resin, the resin in Genesis must also be white. That makes clear the reference in Revelation: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it" (Rev 2:17). This resin in the Edenic paradise foreshadowed the white stone to come, where we will receive a new name which only comes by being made new in the spirit. It is also worth noting that the references to resin and onyx were made to the Israelites while they passed through the area believed to be Havilah, the general location of the Garden of Eden.

Thirdly, the gold was significant. We know that the Temple foreshadowed heaven: "They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven" (Heb 8:5). That is why the Temple was covered in gold (Ex 25, 1Kings 6). The clothing of the High Priest was also layered with gold (Ex 28). It should be no surprise then, that so many Old Testament passages use the imagery of precious stones to foreshadow salvation. A few examples follow:

- "Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD" (Isa 60:6).
- "Surely the islands look to me; in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your sons from afar, with their silver and gold,

to the honor of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has endowed you with splendor" (Isa 60:9).

· "O afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires. I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones" (Isa 54:11-12).

It should be no surprise then that Revelation describes our paradise in such a way: "The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass" (Rev 21:18-21). Gold was significant not only in the beginning, but also is in the end.

I said I would discuss the Holy Priest who foreshadowed the redeemed man. The priest was to wear white linen (Exo 28) just as in heaven we, too, receive white linen to wear: "Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints)" (Rev 19:8). Further we see that part of the curse was sweat, "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Gen 3:19). That may be why no clothing was to be worn that made the Holy man sweat, "They are to wear linen turbans on their heads and linen undergarments around their waists. They must not wear anything that makes them perspire" (Ezek 44:18). In heaven, the curse is wiped away, and as a model of the redeemed man, no curse should be found. Also on the priest's chest was a gold plate engraved with

the words, "Holy to the Lord" (Ex 28:36) showing the symbolic removal of the curse upon the priest. We already discussed how his breastplate was covered with gold and precious stones.

The garden was also abundant in vegetation, another symbol of prosperity. In more places than we have room to mention, trees are used in reference to Godly men (Gen 18:4-8; 30:37; Jud 3:13; 4:5; 1 Kings 19:5; John 1:48 etc.). We see that every blessed man is seen as having his own vine or tree for protection and comfort. We read of these blessings, "During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, each man under his own vine and fig tree" (1 Ki 4:25). Likewise our heavenly home is described with such blessing: "In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken" (Mic 4:1-4). We also read in Zechariah, "In that day each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree, declares the LORD Almighty" (Zec 3:10). It is for the purpose of showing blessings that planting and flourishing is almost always used in reference to God's work throughout Scripture. Psalms states, "He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers" (Psa 1:3). In Jeremiah we read, "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear

when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" (Jer 17:7). Isaiah writes, "In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit" (Isa 27:6). Even the lampstand in the Temple was described as a tree with branches and yet pure gold (Exo 37:17). The Cedar walls within the temple [a model of heaven] were carved with flowers, palm trees and vines (1 Kings 6:15-36), all showing God's abundant blessings through Edenic symbolism. In celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Booths the Israelites were to make booths of foliage and palm branches to symbolize God's protection. During this time they were to leave the security of their homes and walled cities to live out in the open in unprotected booths. God promised that He would protect and watch over them, they didn't need to trust in walls or other means of security: "Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Sovereign LORD, the God of Israel. I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the LORD your God" (Exo 34:23). This feast should have reminded them of the Paradise of Eden and the Paradise to come. During this time they were told to sacrifice 70 bullocks (Num 29:12ff) to symbolize the original 70 nations of the earth in Genesis 10. Therefore, they were celebrating the gathering of the nations into God's eternal Kingdom when atonement would be made for them. Interestingly enough, the Israelites forgot about this feast and did not practice it until their return from Babylon (Neh 8:13-18). It would be through Israel that Christ would come (Rom 9:5) to redeem and restore His people for a paradise much better than that of Eden, this time it would be heaven. As Jesus said, "In My Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:2-3). Revelation is not a separate book from the rest of Scripture, it is merely the conclusion of Genesis, the last act, and without it, the

story of salvation is incomplete.