

Aug 21, 2022



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

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Class Leaders:

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The story comes full circle in the Bible's last chapter. There we read of "the tree of life" growing beside the "river of the water of life"

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Father, don't let me forget the price it cost Your Son to undo the curse we set in motion way back in the garden of Eden. All I can say is thank You. All I can give You is my life

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

(Gen 3:11 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Apr 25, 2021)

**Series: Partners in a
New Creation**

**UNIT 3: The Great Hope
of the Saints**

NEXT WEEK

**A Welcoming Invitation
(Rev 22:10-21)**

The River of Life Rev 22:1-7

Lesson Background and Introduction

Water is closely associated with this tree in today's lesson. The image of water is used in both physical and spiritual senses in the Bible. In a physical sense, fresh (sweet) water has as its opposite water that is brackish (bitter). Fresh water sustains life (Judges 15:18-19; Job 38:25-27); brackish water, or lack of water altogether, yields the opposite (Deuteronomy 8:15; 2 Kings 2:19-22). The ultra-salty Dead Sea is aptly named! The prophets Ezekiel and Zechariah had visions that bear similarities to John's vision of the New Jerusalem. A feature of the city foreseen by Ezekiel and Zechariah was a river flowing out of it. The water of this river is so refreshing that it not only nourishes life; it changes the ultra-salty Dead Sea into a freshwater lake (Ezekiel 47:8; Zechariah 14:8; compare Joel 3:18). In Revelation, the concept of spiritual water includes the property of eternal life. Such water is seen as a divine gift, an ever-flowing fountain that provides life to those who drink from it (Revelation 7:17; 22:17). Many things have clearly defined beginnings and ends. We begin reading a book, then finish it. Transcending all our starts and stops of life is the timelessness of God, who was there at all the beginnings and will be there at all the endings. All this is illustrated by the New Jerusalem. It will be a city with unending day, an ever-flowing river of life, an ever-bearing tree of life, ceaseless worship, and priceless building materials. It will be ever new.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Water - John described a river, unpolluted, abundantly flowing from the Father and the Son. Throughout Scripture, rivers have symbolized God's provision. In heaven, no one or nothing will ever go without. This particular waterway also represents peace and rest (Isa. 48:18; Zech. 14:8; Ezek. 47:1-9). Water is a necessity for life. Our need for necessities never ends. In the new city, we will live in harmony with God and each other, the light (as compared with darkness) will make life beautiful, and food will make life healthy and productive. God doesn't give us something we don't need; He gives us more of what we do need.

Trees - The Tree of Life had its beginnings in Genesis. Now, in Paradise, the tree also stands. The tree or trees are lined along the river. Each of the trees is bearing fruit, and its leaves are for healing or health-giving.

Endless Time - What do we do in heaven with no time factors and for eternity? First, the effects of the curse are no more. No more working hard, pain, death, or tears. No more fraud, unemployment, greed, self-interest, corrupt courtrooms, taxes, and politics. Instead, there is the throne of God with the Lamb in the center of heaven that is the focus of our service to the Lord. Whatever we do will revolve around this throne.

Seeing God's Face - Moses longed to see God's face but was denied. But in heaven, the residents there will finally be able to behold the face of God. Also in heaven, everyone will proudly wear God's name. No more shame or doubt about knowing Him or Christians knowing Him.

Believing the Truth - The angel told John, everything you've seen is real. It will all come to pass for the believer. It will take place, not as humans interpret quickness, but all of a sudden, everything will start to unfold. Happy is the person who reads this Revelation given to John, trusts that it's true, and makes life adjustments accordingly.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

The Water and Tree of Life (Rev 22:1-2)

The water of life (1)

- Water of life that makes the city of God glad (Ps 46:4)
- Water of life that provides life to everything (Ezek 47:9)
- Water of life that flows from Jerusalem (Zech 14:6-9)
- Water of life that can flow from within us (John 7:37-38)
- Water of life that Jesus the Shepherd will lead us to (Rev 7:17)

The tree of life (2)

- Tree of life that provides blessings (Prov 3:18)
- Tree of life that provides righteousness (Prov 11:30)
- Tree of life that satisfies the heart (Prov 13:12)
- Tree of life that provides healing (Prov 15:4)
- Tree of life that provides fruit every month (Ezek 47:12)

The Lamb of God and His Light (Rev 22:3-5)

End of the curse by the Lamb (3)

- End of the curse on man and his work (Gen 3:17)
- End of the curse on woman and childbearing (Gen 3:16)
- End of the curse of death (Gen 3:19)
- End of the curse of disobedience (Deut 27:26)
- End of the curse not loving others (Matt 25:39-41)

Seeing the Lamb (4)

- Seeing the Lamb through having a pure heart (Matt 5:8)
- Seeing the Lamb through following and serving Jesus (John 12:26)
- Seeing the Lamb's glory by those who God has given to Jesus (John 17:24)
- Seeing the Lamb when perfection comes (1 Cor 13:12)
- Seeing the Lamb through being a child of God (1 John 3:2)

Light of the Lamb (5)

- Light of Jesus' transfiguration (Matt 17:2)
- Light of men (John 1:4)
- Light of the world (John 8:12)
- Light that dispels darkness (John 12:46)
- Light from heaven (Acts 26:13-15)

The Faithfulness and Blessings of Obedience (Rev 22:6-7)

Faithfulness of God's Word (6)

- A faithfulness that is based on a Divine promise (Heb 11:11)
- A faithfulness that should be committed to (1 Peter 4:19)
- A faithfulness that is irrevocable (Rom 11:29)
- A faithfulness that means it will be done (1 Thess 5:24)
- A faithfulness that cannot be disowned (2 Tim 2:13)

Blessings of obeying God's Word (7)

- Obedience through God opening our eyes (Ps 119:16-18)
- Obedience through hearing the Word (Luke 11:28)
- Obedience through doing what the Word says (James 1:22)
- Obedience to God's Word pleases God (1 John 3:22)
- Obedience that results in being blameless before God (Ps 119:1)