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## GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CITY

by Joel Wheeler

What is the most beautiful city you have ever seen? Many cities all over the world have been described as being the most beautiful. But God through the pen of John the apostle describes a city in Revelation 21 that is the grandest of all. It is the beautiful city of God which is called heaven. This city is the most beautiful of all for more than one reason.

First, the city is the most beautiful of all because of its description. "And the building of the wall of it was of Jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass" (Rev. 21:18). God used the earth's richest jewels and the most precious metal to describe the richness of His provision for the saved in heaven. "The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones" (Rev. 21:19). Not only are these jewels highly valuable but display an array of color which includes green, yellow, red, purple and blue that is pleasing to the eye. God seeks to impress upon us the splendor and glory which only heaven contains.

Second, the city is the most beautiful because of its entrance. "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl..." (Rev. 21:21). God describes the entrance to the city as a gate that is made of pearl. Pearls are very valuable and some have sold for as much as \$200,000.00. A pearl is made when a tiny grain of sand becomes trapped inside the oyster. The oyster then produces a coating around the foreign object for protection against irritation. The pearl is the only gem that is formed due to suffering. The twelve entrances to God's beautiful city are made of pearl, which perhaps symbolizes that one enters heaven by sufferings. It is the suffering of

Jesus Christ which gives us access to the city of God (I Pet. 2:21). Jesus suffered at the hands of the Roman soldiers and if He had not died for our sins there would be no entrance to the city (Heb. 9:26).

Some individuals suffer persecution because they have put on Christ. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10b). The Christians in the first and second centuries were severely persecuted by the Jews and Roman government. In that sense, our own suffering gives us access to the city if we are faithful, even if we must die for Christ.

Third, the city is the most beautiful of all because of who will be there. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23). Heaven is the abode of God the Father. Jesus said on one occasion, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Many passages refer to the "Father which is in heaven". The apostle Peter writes that Jesus Christ "is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God" (I Pet. 3:22). The language of the apostle John tells us the glory of the Father and the Son fills heaven and there is no need for the sun or the moon.

The saved also shall be in that beautiful city which is called heaven (Rev. 21:24). Those that are among the saved are the apostles, faithful disciples and even our own loved ones who have "put on Christ". Heaven will be a reunion for the family of God (Eph. 3:15).

The beautiful city of God is beyond any human imagination. Only the Almighty God could have designed and

built such a magnificent city to be the eternal dwelling place for His people. Do you want to live in that beautiful city?

204 S. 10th. St.  
Thayer, Missouri

## ABORTION: A WOMAN'S RIGHT OR JUST PLAIN MURDER?

by Jeff Spencer

The four most common types of abortion are:

(1) **HYSTEROTOMY**. This is exactly like a Caesarean Section with one big difference. After a C-Section, the baby is taken to the intensive care unit and provided the best medical treatment. After a hysterotomy, the baby is cut free and left to die.

(2) **HYPERTONIC SALINE INJECTION**. A solution of concentrated salt is injected through the mother's abdomen into the baby's sac, poisoning the child. It usually takes an hour for the baby to die.

(3) **DILATION AND CURETTAGE (D&C)**. The surgeon reaches through the mother's vagina with a loop shaped, steel knife and cuts the baby into pieces. The assisting nurse has the grisly task of reassembling the parts to make sure the uterus is empty.

(4) **SUCTION**. Like the D&C, but instead of a knife, a powerful suction tube is inserted into the uterus. The baby's body is then torn apart and sucked into a jar. Over 75% of the abortions in the U.S. and Canada are performed by this method.

Many cliches have been used to defend a woman's right to have an abortion. They appeal to the gullible and others who have not logically thought the matter through. For example, we have probably all heard: "Every woman has the right to

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Eddy Gilpin . . . . . EDITOR

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control her own body." On the surface, this may sound reasonable, but is it? Modern science (as well as common sense) recognizes that there are two bodies and two lives involved in pregnancy. The woman who would have an abortion is not only exercising control over her own body, but that of another as well. Since sex is determined at conception and half of those aborted are females, obviously, the pro-abortionist does not believe that every woman has rights!

Another argument used to support abortion is: "Every child a wanted child." In other words, if the mother does not want the baby, killing it is considered the compassionate thing to do. Since when is a person's worth determined by whether someone "wants" him or not? If we buy into this invalid argument, how long will it be before we start exterminating the sick, the aged, and anyone deemed of little worth by an unfeeling society?

The bottom line of the abortion controversy may be summed up with one simple question: **"Is the inhabitant of the womb a living, human being?"** If not, one can hardly call abortion murder. If so, one can hardly call abortion anything else!

Often people will argue that abortion is acceptable because you are only aborting a fetus and "a fetus is not a person". This is not true. Medical science acknowledges that the genetic package is complete at conception. All forty-six chromosomes

which determine a person's characteristics are present. Human life has begun and for the next nine months, the child simply matures in its mother's womb. In a tract entitled: "Language of Illusion: The Abortion Slogans," Jean Garton writes:

Our individual biological system begins at conception and ends at death, providing us with the obvious fact that life is a continuum. At all stages of this continuum, we are human, as the science of genetics can document. Thus our humanity does not depend on our size, stages of development or place of residence.

Calling human beings "embryos" or "fetuses" serves the same purpose as calling them "adolescents" or "adults." These scientific terms are used to indicate where a person is in his or her development. They were never meant to imply that the unborn child is not human. As the "infant" is different from the "adolescent" in terms of development and dependence, so the "fetus" is different from the "infant." Yet all are genetically human and, therefore, persons.

It is interesting that the New Testament uses the same Greek word (brephos) for describing the fetus as it does in describing small children. Luke 1:41 and 44 tells us that the "baby (brephos) leaped in her womb." The same word is also used in Luke 2:12, 16 and 18:15 in describing newborn babies. Brephos is translated "young children" (KJV) in Acts 7:19. Some other passages which refer to the status of a child in the womb are Job 3:11 and 16 (where the victims of the "hidden untimely birth" or miscarriage are described as "infants which never saw light"), Psalms 139:13-16, Ecclesiastes 11:5, and Jeremiah 1:5.

I believe that most members of the Lord's church stand in opposition to abortion, but often, perhaps in an effort to appear charitable, we make statements which totally deny our reason for opposing abortion in the first place. For example, you may have heard some say, "I believe that abortion is wrong **except in the case of rape or incest.**" When such a statement is made, I have to ask, "Why do you believe abortion to be wrong?" The answer: "Because it is murder." Exactly! So since when do we have the right to murder a child because we are unhappy with the way he or she was conceived? Pregnancy resulting from rape, incest, or, for that matter, immoral living may be "unwanted" and difficult to bear. The fact remains, however, that an innocent life has begun. To take that life constitutes cold-blooded murder regardless of the reason! Imagine someone saying, "Killing toddlers is wrong unless the child was conceived through rape or incest." **The only difference between killing a baby in the womb and killing one in the crib is that the child in the crib is older!**

It has been said that the most dangerous place for a baby today is in its mother's womb. What a monstrous society we have become! The advocates of abortion are going to find themselves in a very uncomfortable position when the Lord returns in judgment. God includes those "without natural affection" in the list of people "worthy of death" (Rom. 1:31-32). "Hands that shed innocent blood" are included in the list of seven things the Lord hates (Pro. 6:16-19). Those who would perform, have, or encourage another to have an abortion certainly qualify for God's terrible wrath. Remember: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

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**A WOMAN****DOES HAVE THE  
RIGHT TO CONTROL  
HER OWN BODY,****BUT****THE UNBORN CHILD  
IS NOT HER BODY.**

- THE GENETIC CODE OF THE UNBORN IS DIFFERENT FROM MOTHER'S.
- THE UNBORN MAY NOT EVEN BE THE SAME SEX AS THE MOTHER.
- THE UNBORN MAY EVEN HAVE A DIFFERENT BLOOD TYPE.
- THUS, THE UNBORN IS A NEW, UNIQUE HUMAN LIFE.

Let us always seek to protect human life.  
(Prov. 6:16ff)

As Christians, we need to stand up courageously for the rights of the unborn. We must pray that through God's providence this slaughter will cease; but as His servants, we must also be active in speaking out. God has never been pleased with one who buries his head in the sand and ignores unpleasant issues. Know where your politicians and doctors stand on this subject and act accordingly. In addition to all this, let us not forget that there are many young girls and women who have been beguiled by the foolish philosophy of a godless world (cf. Rom. 1:21-22). They need to be shown by a compassionate brotherhood that God still holds out His promise to forgive all who respond to Him in penitent obedience (Acts 2:38)

*One can conquer a bad habit easier today than tomorrow.*

## "THE LORD DOTH PUT A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EGYPTIANS AND ISRAEL"

by Eddy Gilpin

There are many types (shadows) in the Old Testament whose antetypes (true substances) are found in the New Testament. Among these are the nations of Israel and Egypt. According to Acts 7:14, there were 75 souls which originally went down into the land of Egypt. Over time, these grew into a populace nation, as seen by the fact that there were 603,550 fighting men which left in the exodus (Num. 1:46). While they were yet a small nation, God chose them in order to carry out His purposes (Dt. 7:7). Israel thus became His chosen people.

During the stay of the Hebrews in the land of Egypt they saw many changes, the greatest of which was the rise of a new Pharaoh "which knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8). This new king began to inflict God's people with burdens and tasks. They became taskmasters over them and the Hebrew people became nothing more than slaves. Through the revelation of what occurred, one can see the type/antetype system unfolded. This new Pharaoh becomes a type of Satan, as it is he

who inflicts these burdens and this bondage upon the Israelites. The land of Egypt is representative of sin. Since Israel is captive there, it portrays the captivity to which one is subject when sin rules his life (Jn. 8:34; Rom. 6:16). Moses becomes a type of the Savior himself as he frees the nation from bondage (Dt. 18:15). Further investigation reveals that the Red Sea is symbolic of baptism (I Cor. 10:2), the wilderness wandering a type of life in the world, the crossing of the Jordan River a representation of death and the land of Canaan a type of heaven itself.

While it is obvious that many lessons can be gleaned from the account of the Israelite nation, the attention of each reader is called to one particular phrase recorded in the midst of the series of plagues brought upon Egypt. After having brought nine plagues of judgment upon the nation of Egypt God revealed to Moses that there would be one plague more, after which Pharaoh would let the people go (Ex. 11:1). After revealing to Moses that this plague would involve the death of all firstborn in the land of Egypt (Ex. 11:5), God further stated that, although there would be a great cry throughout Egypt, nothing would be found amiss in the land of Goshen (Ex. 11:6, 7a). His purpose in this distinction was given as being "that ye may know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" (Ex. 11:7b). Thus, in terms of type and antetype, God desires a difference between His people and those of the world.

Today, sadly, in many instances, there is little distinction between the people of God and the people of the world. The bold line of demarcation desired and drawn by God is being moved, faded, or completely erased by many. There was a time when members of the church of Christ refused to be associated with the evils of the world. However, modernism has steadily made its presence known until that line of separation has become less visible.

The sins associated with sensual desires were once "avoided like the plague" by members of the Lord's body. But, today it would seem that dancing, gambling, social drinking, the use of tobacco

and other such sins have somehow been allowed to "cross the line". Has God changed in His thinking towards these and other worldly matters? Certainly not! To what then can one attribute this lack of respect for God's word in many instances? Surely it must be a lack of concern for the fact that "the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."

As God's people, we are to be "the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13), "the light of the world" (Mt. 5:14) and "a peculiar people" (Tit. 2:14) that denies "ungodliness and worldly lusts", lives "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit. 12), walks "in the light, as He is in the light" (I Jn. 1:7) and shines forth an example as "a city that is set on a hill" (Mt. 5:14). None of this can be accomplished as long as some are content to negate the difference that God has placed between the "holy and the profane". He has placed a line of distinction between His people and those of the world, and He expects there to be a distinction between the two.

Another observation along this line is the idea of fellowshiping the denominational world. In Ephesians 5:11 Paul stated, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Contained in this passage are two commands. The first is, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." The second is, "But rather reprove them." What could be considered a greater "unfruitful work of darkness" than a religious body claiming to be based on truth which has no basis in truth, nor with which the Lord had anything to do? And, what could be further from "reproving" such a thing than an attempt to extend outright and open fellowship to it?

If such "looseness" is allowed in worldly matters such as the aforementioned, and such disdain for God's word as is evident in attempts to fellowship the denominational world, perhaps there will be no distinction between "the church" and the world. This is the case because if such continues to the point that there is no distinction, there will be no "church". That is, there will be no church which the Lord recognizes as His own. Truly, "the

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Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." But, "Israel" (the church) had better wake up to the realization that this line of difference is being attacked by modernistic thinking, and defend her borders. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (II Cor. 6:17).

*When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept;  
When as a youth I laughed and talked, time walked;  
When I became a full-grown man, time ran;  
When older still I daily grew, time flew;  
Soom I shall find in traveling on, time gone.*

If you are a Christian, you can expect folks to criticize; but you ought to live so that nobody will believe them.

*If you can't be a highway,  
just be a trail.  
If you can't be the sun, be a star.  
For it isn't by size that you win or you fail-  
Be the best of whatever you are!*

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**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

**GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelations 2:10).

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