

A New Heaven, A New Earth, and a New City

Rev.21:1-8

Westend Bible Chapel

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Page | 1

I want to talk about these 3 things today. But before I do, I want to put things into perspective.

- Man's day
- Satan's day
- Lord's Day
- God's day.

Last time we looked the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth from Rev.20. Today we go beyond that. We move on to Chapter 21. The scene is after the Great White Throne judgement.

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea.

V1 ...Now I *saw* I saw is an introduction to a new vision. It is a glimpse of the eternal state.

We can say that Revelation chapter 21 begins a new section of the Book of Revelation:

- Jesus, the Lord of the Churches (Revelation 1:1 to Revelation 4)
- Jesus, the Lion over the nations (Revelation 4: to Revelation 21)
- Jesus, the Lamb among believers (Revelation 21 & 22)

Isaiah foresaw a time when:

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create a Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. (Isaiah 65:17-19)

Apostle Peter foresaw a time when:

Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat... Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:12-13)

It is worth remembering that the new heaven referred to does not mean the heaven where God is enthroned. The Bible uses the word heaven in three senses.

- The **first heaven** is the earth's atmosphere, the "blue sky."
- The **second heaven** is outer space, the "night sky."
- The **third heaven** is the place where God lives in glory.

When the Scriptures speak of a new heaven, they mean a new "blue sky" and a new "night sky," not a new heaven where God dwells.

The 3rd heaven needs no transformation.

New heaven... new earth: The ancient Greek word translated new here (*kainos*) relates to quality. It means "new in nature, new character, 'fresh'." It does not mean "new in time; or new in existence." If that were the case John would have used the Greek "Neos".

The present heavens and earth will be changed (Psalm 102) and be -recreated in the sense of re-newed.

Ecclesiastes 1:4, "*Generations come and generations go, but **the earth remains forever.***"

Our planet will be "thrown into a crucible of fire "; purified, altered, changed, and made brand new to exist forever.

Of old, you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, all of them will grow old like a garment, like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end. (Psalm 102:25-27)

The new earth is a rebirth of earth, renewed earth, a reclaimed earth, a resurrected earth. Jesus paid with His blood to redeem the earth, he would never destroy it, but rather deliver it from its bondage.

Romans 8:20 *For creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

The new earth will have *no more sea*: To the Jewish mind, the sea was a place of separation and evil. The sea typifies restlessness, storms, troubles, and changes.

On the island of Patmos John continually saw the sea before him. He knew what it was to be separated from fellowship with the 7 seven churches in Asia Minor, which were on the other side of the Aegean Sea.

V 2 . . . I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The holy city, New Jerusalem: This is the Jerusalem of hope (Hebrews 12:22), the Jerusalem above (Galatians 4:26), the place of our real citizenship (Philippians 3:20).

The terms holy and new distinguish the city. Because it is holy and new, it is different from any earthly city. The name Jerusalem gives it continuity with earth, especially with the place of our redemption.

We must understand that there are 2 Jerusalems. The earthy one and the celestial one. Ezekiel the prophet has much to say about the earthly one and its important role during the Millennial reign of Christ. This one referred to here is the heavenly one, which is seen coming out of heaven. It is a real, literal city. The apostle John gives us its measurements and describes the materials it consists of.

Like Jesus and the Holy Spirit descended out of heaven, so will the Holy City, which is the bride, descend out of heaven.

It is significant that this glorious dwelling place of God and His people is described as the holy city. Cities are places with many people, and people interacting with each other. This is not isolation, but a perfect community of the people of God.

Man has never known a community unmarred by sin. Adam and Eve only knew a limited community, and community in a larger context only came long

after the Fall. Here, in the New Jerusalem, we have something totally unique: a sinless, pure, community of righteousness, a holy city.

Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband: John used the most striking, beautiful image he could think of. The city is seen as a beautiful, spiritually adored bride. The most beautiful thing a man will ever see is his bride coming down the aisle, ready to meet him. John said that this is how beautiful the New Jerusalem will be.

- Rev 21:1-8 The eternal state
- Rev 21: 9-22:5 The millennial age.

Gold city, capitol city of the universe. Satellite city over the earth, suspended over the land of Palestine. The Holy city is only accessible to those who have experienced resurrection. The resurrected and raptured saints will dwell in the city forever. Jesus said, *“I go and prepare a place for you.”* That is the place. We will travel between the suspended city and earth throughout the millennium. After the Millennial Age, I believe the Heavenly Jerusalem will descend all the way down to land on earth, replacing the earth Jerusalem, and remain on earth forever.

Isaiah who is speaking about the Millennium, in Isaiah 60

Arise, shine;

For your light has come!

And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.

² *For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,*

And deep darkness the people;

But the LORD will arise over you,

And His glory will be seen upon you.

*³ The Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.*

... The sun will be no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

Isaiah 4:5 -6 another reference to the millennial reign of the Messiah says
:*5And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. 6And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.*

V And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 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."

The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them: Moses' tabernacle represented the dwelling place of God on earth. But this temple - city is the reality of His presence.

He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people: This succinctly states essence of God's desire and man's purpose. Simply, God's desire is to live in close, unbroken fellowship with man, and man's purpose is to be a people unto God.

- 1) Church Age = An habitation of God through the Spirit in the believers
- 2) Millennial Age = The throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it

3) The Eternal state = God will be all in all and make His tabernacle with men.

The former things have passed away: The New Jerusalem is distinguished by what it does not have — no tears, no sorrow, no death, or pain. Later it will be shown that the New Jerusalem has no temple, no sacrifice, no sun, no moon, no darkness, no sin, and no abomination.

These are the “no mores” of scripture.

In the Millennium righteousness reigns for sin is around, but in the eternal state righteousness dwells for no sin is around.

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. After the old order, after the millennium, God Himself will dry up all teary eyes.

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.*”

Behold, I make all things new: This statement is in the present tense, “*I am making everything new.*” This is the consummation of God’s work of redemption, renewal, and resurrection, having begun here and now in our present time.

Paul saw this transformation at work in the natural man, on this side of eternity: *Therefore, we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day... Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 4:16, 5:17)*

All things new: Anything you or I can possibly think of is being made new. ALL. God says in v 5, “*I make all things new.*” He is not saying he makes new things. He is saying, I make existing things new.

Write, for these words are true and faithful: John was probably so astounded by these words that he forgot to write — and must be told to do so.

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. “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*”

It is done! God’s eternal purpose in Jesus is now accomplished. Ephesians 1:10 has been fulfilled: *that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; in Him.* At this point, all things have been resolved or summed up in Jesus — it is done!

I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts:

He who overcomes shall inherit all things: Those who overcome (by faith in Jesus, as in 1 John 5:5) enjoy a special relationship with God (I will be his God and he shall be My son).

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

Those who reject Jesus are specifically prohibited from entering the New Jerusalem.

Cowardly(fearful): those who would not profess Christ for fear of the reproach of man. In other words, for safety’s sake, they deny Christ. Its too

great a risk for them to believe. Its too costly for them to give up what they value here and now. They are timid, afraid, cowards, chicken and ashamed of Christ. The fearful will never enter Heaven.

Unbelieving: these are those who do not believe what they do not see. They only believe what they see. So that they reject the message of faith, the message of the gospel of salvation. It is believing without seeing that gets a person saved. The unbelievers will never see the kingdom of Heaven.

Abominable: These are those who are polluted with all kinds of filthy evils of the world. For example, we all know, that the unnatural sexual vices of homosexuals and lesbians are abominations in the sight of God. No unrepentant homosexual will inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Murderers: These those who are the sons of Cain. Cain was a murderer and the son of Satan, who is a murderer from the beginning. These have no regard for human life. No unrepentant murder will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Whoremongers: These are also known as fornicators. These are those who practice and promote sexual activity outside marriage. Fornications drives from the Greek word = Pornos.

Sorcerers: These are those who are devoted to magical arts. Those who that use drugs, potions, spells, and enchantments. They dabble in demon worship, black masses, and Satanic sacrifices.

Idolators: These are those who worship and serve anything inanimate or animate, beasts or men, god, or gods, besides the true living God, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Liars: These are children of Satan. Satan was the first liar. When he lies, he speaks his native language? He is the father of all lies. Those that like are like him.

All these will be thrown in the lake of fire, which burns with sulfur. Burning sulfur smells terrible. The striking of matches and the strikings of lighting is what the smell of burning sulfur is like.

The smell represents the stench of sin. The stench will be unbearable in that awful place. The eternal punishment they will incur will be even more unbearable.

What a tragic end for all who refuse the love of Jesus and the free gift of salvation. It does not have to be anyone's fate at the end of life.

How can we have the assurance of Heaven?

1. Recognize our sinfulness

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in^[a] Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. Believe Jesus died for you, personally

Acts 16:31

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved

3. Receive Him as Saviour

John 1:12

¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

4. Trust God's promise

John 20:31

³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[a] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

2573