

THE NEW JERUSALEM: LIVING WITH GOD
Revelation 21: 1- 7; 22- 27; 22: 1- 5; text Revelation 21: 3
November 1, 2020

I. The Hope of New Life

A. There many times when as Christians, we've seen our hopes dashed and our faith crushed

- 1. It was true for Christians in John's day.**
- 2. And it's true today.**

B. As we reflect on that, let us listen again to what the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write in 1 Corinthians 15:19.

1 Corinthians 15:19 (NIV) If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

C. In our scripture for this morning God promises that this life is not all there is, and calls us to hope for another.

Revelation 21:1 (NIV) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.
Questions:

- 1) Some reject the teaching that God is in control and guides all things. In spite of terrible things that have happened in this world, why is this important for me to believe? How do I understand Romans 8:28?**
- 2) What griefs, injustices, or tragedies have I or someone I loved endured that cannot be made right in this life?**
- 3) Some would dismiss the Biblical teaching of the new earth as "pie in the sky when you die." They would say that Christians should worry about this present world and not about the world to come. What would I say to such a person?**

II. The New Creation

Revelation 21:5 (NIV) He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

A. To understand what "making all things new", we must note that the one who is speaking is the one on the throne, the lamb, Jesus Christ.

B. He is the one who already made us a new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

- 1. There is a sense in which we are the same.**
- 2. But we are also different a different person.**
- 3. The sinful person we once were died with Christ and we have been reborn as child of God. [see Colossians 3]**

C. It will be similar with the old heaven and earth.

- 1. The old heaven and earth will be purified in the fire of judgment and will be renewed.**

2 Peter 3:12-13 (NIV) That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

- 2. All that is sinful, that made the world impure, will be destroyed.**
- 3. That is precisely what scripture means when it says, "and there was no longer any sea."**
 - a. The sea symbolized a place of evil.**
 - b. It was home of the anti-Christ, the beast from the sea.**
 - c. That place of evil will be destroyed forever.**

Questions:

- 1) Do I think that the new earth will be like this one, with rocks and trees, animals, mountains, and lakes? Will God give me work to do or will I just sing and playing on my harp? Will I still be discovering things or will I know everything there is to know? What evidence from scriptures would I give to support my answers? What other scriptures do I know that help me understand what the new earth will be like?**
- 2) How should what I am looking forward to on the new earth impact my life and decisions today, especially since I am already a new creation in Christ Jesus?**

III. The New Jerusalem

A. The new earth is meant to be the home of God's renewed people.

Revelation 21:2 (NIV) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

B. The new Jerusalem are all God's people who are a new creation in Christ Jesus.

- 1. Jerusalem was used by the Old Testament prophets to symbolically refer the people of God.**
- 2. In our text Jerusalem is not so much a place, as it is a people—God's people.**

C. The new earth is the place where God will live with his people.

Revelation 21:3 (NIV) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

- 1. After Adam and Eve sinned, they were cast-out of God's presence in the Garden of Eden, and two angels barred them from coming back,**
- 2. But now we have the promise that God will open the door of his dwelling to us.**
- 3. In fact, he is expecting us.**

John 14:2-3 (NIV) [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.

D. Living with God is to live in the place of ultimate security, rest, and peace.

Psalm 27:5 (NRSV) For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock

1. **What the Psalmist wrote reminded readers of how Bedouins often would open their tent as refuge to those traveling in the desert.**
2. **God does that for his weary people who come to the new earth.**

Revelation 21:4 (NIV) He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

3. **This verse also again reminds us that again that God destroyed such griefs along with the old earth.**

Questions:

- 1) **Do I agree that the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21, primarily refers not to a place, but to God's renewed people? Why or why not?**
- 2) **What do I imagine it will be like to see my Lord face to face and to live forever with him on the new earth?**
- 3) **As I struggle with some of the griefs in my life, how does it comfort me to know that the Lord is expecting me to live with him on his new earth? How can I be sure I will arrive there?**

IV. Being Renewed Like Christ

Revelation 21:2 (NIV) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

A. Our marriage to Christ will change us.

1. **In a Biblical marriage the two become one flesh.**
2. **In Ephesians 5:30-32 Paul writes that we the church is made one with Christ.**

Ephesians 5:30-31 (NIV) for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

3. **As we reflect on being one flesh with Christ, we should think about how Christ our head transforms us through the Holy Spirit.**

1 Corinthians 2:16 (NIV) "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

4. **Today we struggle with having the mind of Christ.**
5. **On the new earth, we will know fully what this means.**

B. Being in God's presence will also change us.

1. **In Revelation 21:2-27, John says that there is no temple, because the God and the Lamb, our Savior are the temple.**
2. **In Psalm 73, when the Psalmist was trouble with why the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer, he went to God's temple.**

Psalm 73:16-17 (NIV) When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.

3. **John's vision tells us that we will not have to go to God's sanctuary, because we will be in his presence and be enlightened by his light.**

Psalm 36:9 (NIV) For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

C. He will change us not only to give us healing and peace, but also that we might his agents of healing and well-being to one another.

1. **Revelation 22: 1- 5 speaks of the river that comes from the throne of God.**
2. **That life-giving river, also spoken of in the prophecy of Ezekiel 47, refers to the Holy Spirit, who unites us in eternal fellowship with God.**
3. **The tree of life that lines the street of the city produces fruit and leaves for the healing of the nations.**
4. **That fruit of the Spirit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control completely transform us into those who bless others and all creation.**

Questions:

- 1) **How am I comforted today to read about the full healing and peace I will receive in new heaven and earth when I will know eternal fellowship with God?**
- 2) **The leaves of the tree of life provides healing. From what in my life do I need healing?**
- 3) **As the fruit of the Spirit becomes more evident in my life, how does it help me to be an agent of God's blessing and healing today? When I am fully able to feast on the Spirit's fruit how should that enable me to be an even agent of agent of blessing and healing?**

In the story of Jacob, God sent frightened Jacob the dream of a stairway leading to his throne in heaven. From on top that stairway, God spoke to him, promising to be with him and God gave him the covenant promise he gave to Abraham and Isaac. "When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, 'Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it. He was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.'" (Genesis 28:16-17 NIV) Today, as we live as broken people in this broken world our Lord promises not only to be with us, but he promises someday to come down that stairway and bring us to be with him. Amen, Come Lord Jesus.