

## Revelation 21- 22

### Introductory Comments

- Revelation 20 began a new cycle that begins with Christ's first coming and ends with his coming again and the new heaven and earth. The thousand years (totality of the New Testament era)
- God keeps Satan under his thumb and locks him in the abyss: There still will be persecution and still death, but Satan never gains complete control.
- Great Comfort: Evil will eventually implode on itself; Satan cannot win; God wins.
- Some Christians think that our final destiny is when our soul goes to heaven to be with God. Vander Meer rejects that notion as unbiblical. The Bible teaches that when we die the body goes to the ground and the spirit goes to Jesus (or to God). (See Philippians 1, Ecclesiastes 12: 7) But when the thousand years is done Jesus will raise our bodies and reunite them with our spirits Eternity will be lived out on this earth with a new body live (1 Corinthians 15) . The best of all our culture will be brought into the new kingdom.

### The New Heaven and Earth Revelation 21: 1- 5

*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*

- New— refreshed, renewed; the heaven and sky still exist, but are refreshed, just as our bodies will be refreshed and renewed. (see 1 Corinthians 15) This idea is repeated in verse 5
- Heaven and earth: Earth and sky-- All creation will be refreshed (renewed). [(see *Isaiah 2 (Micah 4: 1- 5); Isaiah 11: 1- 9; Isaiah 65 and 66: 22; 2 Peter 3: 13; Revelation 11: 15- 19)*]
- The first earth and sky will pass away
- [*Sea: place of death and tribulation-- place from which God's people were persecuted*]
- New Jerusalem: The people of God, Israel, the church (called out ones from both Old and New Testaments)—referred to as the “bride of Christ” (see *Isaiah 54: 1 and Ephesians 5: 25- 32*) Also, is the place where God is present (temple) and God and his people are one. The bride will come down to earth—here is where we will live.
- [*Dressed bride—dressed in pure clothing--- fully sanctified—fully made pure and holy.*]
- Voice from the throne: Commanded by God, the same God who commanded the universe into existence. (see *Genesis 1*)
- God living with people--- just as God once walked in the Garden of Eden, now he will be fully visible with his people

- God will wipe every tear from their eyes (see Revelation 7: 17)—God will comfort his people who will no longer know grief or pain.
- Old Order—We still have the earth. Real existence with animals (Isaiah 35) Real existence with a real body on a real planet. (“can’t wait to ride on the back of a tiger.”)
- Old order passed away --- I am making everything refreshed and new.

### **Judgment-- Revelation: 21: 6- 8**

- Alpha and the Omega (beginning and end) eternal one; God who judges who heaven and earth
- *[God separates his people from others; no universal salvation]*
  - To him who is thirsty I will give drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. (Jesus words to woman at the well. John 4) We are the children of God (Romans 8: 15)
  - Reminder: evil deeds bring eternal death, because those committing them do not believe in Jesus as their savior
  - Deeds that are beautiful and godly flow from true faith and are done by those who names are in the Book of Life.

### **Description of the New Jerusalem Revelation 21: 9- 22: 6**

- Bride (church) coming down from God to this earth
- Description of new life
  - Not literal
  - Symbolic (real and true, but there are deeper implications of the symbols).
- Symbolic numbers:
  - 12 gates—totally open for those who love the Lord to come in
  - 12 tribes of Israel: All Old Testament and New Testament believers welcome to come in.
  - Square of 4 sides: 4 is the number of completeness. 3 gates on each side—3 is the number of wholeness. It is complete and whole.
  - Wall 12 foundations—complete--- on them names of the 12 apostles— Testimony of the apostles is the foundation of the church.
  - Angel’s measure rod—symbolically shows that God is in control.
  - 12,000 stadia: 12 times 10 to the 3<sup>rd</sup> power.
  - 144 cubits thick ( 12X 12) Thickness is perfect. No enemy will ever get in. No believer ever will want to get out.
- Verses 19- 21-- Precious Stones: Show that the city is a beautiful, gorgeous, fun, wonderful place to be *[Beale: “In light of Isaiah 54, the precious stones together with the foundation, wall, and gates of the city in Revelation 21 are best seen as symbolizing the permanent safety of God’s people together with God’s glorious presence.(Beale p. 1084]*
- *[Hendriksen: Verse 21—streets of gold The city has avenues of pure gold, as transparent as glass. Every gate is the door to an avenue: avenues of pure gold, for they symbolize glorious truth. These avenues indicate that there is abundant*

*opportunity for communication with the Throne. There is ease of access to the rivers of life and the trees. (Hendriksen p. 247)]*

- Temple: We are temples of the Holy Spirit now and in that city God will live among us.
- Glory of God gives light— the Lamb gives light—Jesus said, “I am the light of the world”
- Vs. 24, 26: The kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Best of culture: art, science, music, maybe even sports. The best that there is will come in to the city.
- 22: 1—River of the Water of life as clear as crystal (sea of crystal)
  - Ezekiel 47—Ezekiel sees a trickle of water coming out of from underneath the bottom of the temple—becomes deeper— finally it is a raging river no one can cross—on the side of the river are trees (Ez. 47: 12), whose fruit is for the healing of the nations. That is a picture of Pentecost and Revelation 22— The Holy Spirit and the church produce fruit and leaves for the healing of the nations— we must go into the world and bring message of healing—the river flows into the Dead Sea and makes it fresh— We must go into a dead world and heart and make it alive and new— The church becomes source of life—fulfilled at Pentecost and here in Revelation.
- Verse 3—There is no longer any curse
- Verse 4—His name is written on their head— That is to say his character on them and has shaped them to be children of God.
- Many hymns were based on chapters 21- 22

### **The Epilogue Revelation 22: 7- 21**

- What will soon take place—A.D. 90- end of the New Testament age
- We find some of the same themes of the entire book of Revelation repeated in some of these verses
- Verse 17: [Spirit and Bride say come: The Spirit is working in the heart of the church so that the church welcomes the coming of Christ with great anticipation. Let him who hears say come: Those persecuted for their faith long for the kingdom to come as should we all no matter what we are going through.]— (Vander Meer: seemingly saying that God is telling us to come.)
- Verse 18- 19: *<sup>18</sup>I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. <sup>19</sup>And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*
  - Probably refers primarily to the Book of Revelation
  - In The Book of Revelation God reveals himself during the entire period from Pentecost to the second coming—So, in a broader sense this applies to scripture as a whole.
- Revelation ends with a blessing