

Read Revelation!

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” (Revelation 1:3)

Chapter 21: The New Creation!

In Revelation 20:11 we read that, at the end of the kingdom age on earth, *“the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.”* Chapter 21 tells us that when the old creation is obliterated, God will make a new creation.

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away . . .” (verse 1)

The Book of Genesis tells us how the sin of Adam brought a curse on the original creation (Chapter 3). Men now experienced shame, fear, and guilt. Suffering, sorrow, and death came into the world. Human beings would be born sinners. In the Book of Revelation we find that God is going to end the old creation and make a new one. The new creation will be perfect, and believers in Jesus Christ will live there! Read about the new creation in Isaiah 65:17 and II Peter 3:13. God could have destroyed the cursed creation right after man sinned, but instead He determined that things would continue as they were. History continued with the world in its cursed condition, but at the appointed time God came to earth in the person of His Son and accomplished man’s redemption through His atoning death and victorious resurrection. By His grace, God made it so that any man, by putting his faith in Christ, could choose to live in the new creation. One of the most important messages of the Bible is that things are not as God made them at first. The sickness, sin, misery, and death of our existence came as a result of man’s sin. Eventually, God will change it all, and *“make all things new.”* Now He waits for people to repent and prepare for the new world (II Peter 3:9).

I. The Changes (verses 1-8)

A. God’s Tabernacle on Earth (vs. 1-3).

The first part of John’s vision of the new creation showed him the New Jerusalem (called *“Jerusalem which is above”* in Galatians 4:26, and *“the heavenly Jerusalem”* in Hebrews 12:22) coming down from heaven to earth *“as a bride*

adorned for her husband.” The Bride of Christ, His Church, will be in that city as it descends. Right now this city is the special abode of God, of angels, and of departed Christians (See Hebrews 12:22-24). It exists somewhere in space. When the new creation is made, God’s heavenly city will come to sit on the earth, and a voice will declare,

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men . . .”

God is everywhere, but the Bible repeatedly teaches that He lives especially at a certain location in Heaven and in a certain place on earth. His heavenly abode is the New Jerusalem, of course, and David called it “*the house of the Lord*” (Psalm 23:6). His earthly abode has also been called God’s house. At first, it was Jacob’s Bethel (Genesis 28:16-17). Under Moses it was the Tabernacle (Exodus 23:19, 25:8-9). Then His presence moved into Solomon’s Temple (I Kings 8:10-11). God walked with His people also in the form of the Angel of the Lord (Genesis 22:1-18), and in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14, 18). When Jesus died on the cross, God’s Spirit ripped open the veil that shut in the Holy of Holies and vacated the Temple (Matthew 27:50-51). Now His Spirit lives within the bodies of Christians, and the local church is called the “*Temple of the Holy Ghost*” (I Corinthians 6:19, Ephesians 2:19-22). When God makes the new creation, His heavenly home will come to earth and also be His earthly home.

A. No More Sorrow (v. 4).

Look carefully at the wording of verse 4. First, God will wipe away the tears in the eyes of His people. Notice that it does *not* say that there will be no tears in Heaven! We see tears in Heaven also in Revelation 7:17. Before the new creation, saints in glory will sometimes cry. Why will they cry? The Bible indicates that departed believers can know some of what is going on here below while they enjoy the glories of the heavenly city (See Luke 15:10 and Hebrews 12:1). We hear their cry to God for vengeance upon the wicked on earth in Revelation 6:9-11. Some heavenly weeping is over sadness and sin on earth. They have the matchless comfort of God’s presence to help them handle what they know about the events of earth, but they may well shed some tears. Tears will also be shed after the Rapture by Christians who “*suffer loss*” at the Judgment Seat of Christ (See Matthew 25:14-30 and I Corinthians 3:13-15). We will also weep when we see the people condemned to the Lake of Fire after the Final Judgment. This, of course, is the context of the verses at the beginning of Revelation 21. We will be there for the Judgment (Psalm 37:34), and we will see Revelation 20:15! Certainly, we will weep. But God will comfort us, and wipe away those tears. Then He will usher in a new era, where there will be

“ . . . no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain . . . ” (verse 4)

The new creation will not have the curse of sin, and the sorrow that came in Genesis 3 will be removed in Revelation 21.

C. No more Pain (v. 4).

D. No More Death (v. 4).

Look at I Corinthians 15:22-28. When the Kingdom of Christ on earth (the Millennium) ends, the old creation will pass away. Then Christ will turn the rule over to His Father, and the new creation will begin. At this time, death will forever come to an end. Everybody will live and serve in the body (glorified bodies) *forever!*

E. Eternal Inheritance (vs. 5-8).

Revelation 21:5-8 speaks of the inheritance saved people will receive in the new creation. This is also mentioned in Romans 8:16-18 and Ephesians 1:12-14. What will we inherit? The Bible says, "*all things*." What belongs to Christ will belong to us. We will own all of creation! Verses 6 through 8 give an invitation and a warning to those who read. Everyone is invited to partake of the "*water of life freely*." Those who do become sons of God and heirs of the new creation. Those who don't will end up in the Lake of Fire.

II. The City (verses 9-27).

Now we will look at John's description of the New Jerusalem. Remember that this real city (called "*a place*" in John 14:2) now exists out in space, but when the new creation comes, it will descend to the earth (vs. 1-3).

A. It is "*the Bride*" (vs. 9-10).

Because the Bride of Christ, the true church, all of God's saints assembled, will inhabit the city, it is called by this name.

B. It Has Walls, Gates, and Foundations (vs. 11-14).

The 24 elders of the earlier chapters are identified here as the patriarchs who gave us "*the twelve tribes of the children of Israel*" and "*the twelve apostles of the Lamb*." Of course, the inhabitants of the city will be both Old Testament and New Testament saints.

C. It is "*Foursquare*" (vs. 15-17).

Notice that this means it is a *cube*! Remember that both David (in Psalm 23:6) and Jesus (in John 14:2) called the heavenly city a house. We see now that it is both a city and a house—a house-shaped city! It is 12,000 "*furlongs*" long, wide, and high. This is huge, over 1300 miles each way!

D. It is Beautiful (vs. 18-21).

The amazing description given of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 was written to help us long to go there!

E. It is Glorious (vs. 22-27).

See that God and Jesus are themselves the center of worship and the source of light in the New Jerusalem. See also that no sinner can enter it. Only the saved, those written in the "*Lamb's book of life*" will be admitted. Friend, are you going to the heavenly Jerusalem? Are you one of God's own sons? Have you been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb? Is your name written in the Lamb's book of life? The Book of Revelation is calling you to salvation. Won't you come to the Son of God and be saved?