

NEW HEAVEN, NEW EARTH, NEW JERUSALEM

Introduction:

1. After seeing the defeat of the enemies of the church – the harlot, the false prophet, the beast, and the dragon – John saw the coming Day of Judgment.
2. Now, at last, he is presented with a view of the eternal home of the faithful.
3. Some commentators say that this passage is meant to describe the church on earth in her victory over her enemies.
4. Although the church of Christ is glorious (Ephesians 5:27), the description better fits the heavenly home of the righteous.

I. New Heaven and Earth (21:1-8)

- A. With the departure of the first heaven and earth, John was allowed to see a new heaven and earth.
 1. The first heaven and earth were destroyed when Jesus returned on the Day of Judgment (20:11).
 2. As a result, now there was no more sea.
 3. Remember that the sea had represented the “sea of humanity” that was so often raging against God (13:1; 20:13; Isaiah 57:20).
 4. The wicked having received their punishment in the lake of fire, there is no more sea to trouble the saved.
 - a. Also, there had been a symbolic sea that stood between the righteous and the throne of God (4:6; 15:2).
 - b. Now, there is no more separation – man can dwell in the presence of God; thus, there is no more sea.
- B. The new heaven and earth symbolize a new dwelling place for humanity.
 1. This does not refer to a literal, physical planet with an atmosphere in a created universe.
 2. The language has been used previously to describe the downfall of a nation and the rise of another (Isaiah 34:3-5; 51:4-6, 16).
 3. The language has been used previously to describe the change from the Law of Moses to the Gospel of Jesus (Isaiah 65:15-19; 66:22-24).
 4. The language has been used previously to describe the change from the physical realm of earth to the spiritual realm of Heaven, just as it is used here (2 Peter 3:1-14).
- C. This new home for man is also called “New Jerusalem” and will be described in the following passage.
- D. It is pictured as coming down from God out of Heaven – symbolically indicating its divine origin.
 1. How can this be a description of Heaven if it is coming down from Heaven?
 2. The term ‘heaven’ is used often in modern vernacular to refer to the home of the faithful in eternity.
 3. However, Heaven existed before the world of man was created.
 4. Heaven is the eternal home of God!
 5. Jesus went to Heaven to prepare a place for His disciples (John 14:1-6).

The Book of Revelation

Lesson Thirty-Two

Revelation 21:1 – 22:5

6. The place prepared is in Heaven, but it is not all of Heaven!
 7. New Jerusalem is a description of the Christian's home in Heaven.
 8. This is the city longed for by the faithful of all the ages (cf. Hebrews 11:10; 13:14).
- E. A voice from Heaven announced that God and man would dwell together in this holy city which is also a tabernacle.
- F. In this holy city there will be no tears, no death, no sorrow, no crying, and no pain – for sin and death are defeated and removed forever! (Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:54-58)
- G. God (the Father or the Son) spoke from the throne, declaring: "Behold, I make all things new."
- H. He provides everlasting life and promises eternal fellowship.
1. All the promises that sustain the Christian through the trials of life are now seen as fulfilled.
 2. This is a picture of rewarded faithfulness from a trustworthy God.
- I. However, the wicked do not inherit such promises; instead, receiving punishment in the lake of fire and brimstone.
- II. New Jerusalem (21:9 – 22:5)
- A. An angel invited John to come with him for a closer look at the Lamb's bride – new Jerusalem.
1. The word for 'new' in verse 2 refers to something "new in kind" – thus, superior to that which preceded it.
 2. The following description shows the superiority of Heavenly Jerusalem over the earthly city.
 3. The marriage of the bride of the Lamb is contrasted with the judgment of the harlot.
 4. The holy city of God is contrasted with the great city of Babylon.
- B. The city is glorious because God dwells within it.
- C. The city is illuminated by the magnificent glory of God (cf. 4:3).
- D. The city is perfectly safe, symbolized by a great wall with 12 gates and 12 angels. (Remember that all enemies have been defeated and destroyed.)
- E. The city is secure, for it sits upon 12 foundation stones.
1. The names of the 12 tribes of Israel inscribed on the gates represented the faithful under the Old Testament.
 2. The names of the 12 apostles written on the foundations represented the saved under the New Testament.
- F. The city is perfect, for it is foursquare – in the shape of a perfect cube.
- G. The city is immense, measured at 12,000 furlongs in each direction.
1. Obviously, these numbers are symbolic.
 2. 12 is the perfect religious number; 1,000 is the number of fullness.
 3. If taken literally, the city is 1,500 miles in length, breadth, and height! (Cf. 1 Kings 6:20 – the dimension of the Most Holy Place)
- H. The wall was measured at 144 cubits (12 X 12), approximately 220 feet.
- I. The city is precious, walled with diamonds and made of pure, clear gold.
- J. The gates were made of pearl, and the street was also pure, clear gold.
- K. The city is pure, for only those who are fit for Heaven may enter.
- L. The city is holy, for there is no need for a Temple – God dwells immediately with His people.
- M. The city is populated by people from all nations – saved in Christ.

The Book of Revelation

Lesson Thirty-Two

Revelation 21:1 – 22:5

- N. The city is a source of life – both the water of life and the tree of life are accessible to the inhabitants.
- O. There is no curse in this city for the very throne of God is present.
- P. The city is a place of fellowship where God is seen face to face!
- Q. The city is a place of light, for there is no night there.

Conclusion: *Don't you want to go to Heaven?!*