

Chapter 21

The Millennial Kingdom has ended and the Great White Throne Judgment has ended, now our attention is turned to the events of eternity.

¹And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

John saw a new vision and he described it as a “new heaven and a new earth...”

John used the Greek word *kainos* for new.

John MacArthur noted:

Kainos (new) does not mean new in a chronological sense, but new in a qualitative sense. The new heaven and the new earth will not merely succeed the present universe in chronological sequence; they will be something brand new, fresh, never before seen.¹

John used the word Greek word “*parerchomai*”, it means *to perish or pass away*.

Scholars disagree as to whether or not the present earth will be done away with or simply remade. Based upon the Greek word *Kainos* one can argue that the present earth will be done away with and new heaven and new earth will come forth. Numerous Old and New Testament passages support the idea that the present earth and universe will be replaced by something entirely new and different. Note some of the following passages.

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Revelation 12-22* (Chicago: Moody, 2000) 263.

“Of old you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. Even they will perish, but you endure; and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing you will change them and they will be changed” (Psalms 102:25-26, NKJV).

“Heaven and earth will pass away” (Luke 21:33a, NKJV).

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up . . . looking for and hastening the coming day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?” (2 Peter 3:10, 12 NKJV).

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them” (Revelation 20:11, NKJV).

“For there was no more sea.”

Will the “new earth” have a sea or not? Throughout the book of “the sea” often represented evil, e.g. the beast rose up out of the sea. Is this John’s symbolic way of telling his readers that there will be no evil in the new heaven and earth? Possibly but it would appear redundant to use this as a means to assert that there will be no evil in the new heaven and earth, since that is emphatically made clear later in this text.

MacArthur argued:

The sea is emblematic of the present water-based environment. All life on earth is dependent on water for its survival, and the earth is the only known place in the universe where there is sufficient water to sustain life. But

believers' glorified bodies will not require water, unlike present human bodies, whose blood is 90 percent water, and whose flesh is 65 percent water. Thus, the new heaven and the new earth will be based on a completely different life principle than the present universe.²

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

John must have been in awe as he beheld such a sight of grandeur. Note that the city was coming down from God out of heaven. MacArthur refers to it as “the Capital of the New Heaven and the New Earth.”

³And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

Again, as on many occasions, the voice is not identified. The message that is being spoken is of great importance, however.

“The tabernacle of God is with men...”

There is a rich symbolism contained herein. In the Old Testament, the tabernacle of God was a portable structure that was moved from place to place as the Israelites journeyed about. It always represented the presence of God to them. Thus, this speaks of God's abiding with his people and they with him. It will be the fulfillment of every believer's hope, to be in the presence of God fully.

² MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, 263.

⁴And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Since the holy city which John saw descend out of heaven is “new” there can be no remnant of the old order. This is a promise that no sorrow, suffering or death will ever enter into that perfect place, the new heaven and earth. God will see to that.

⁵And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

“He that sat upon the throne...” This is without a doubt, God. What God has to say can be trusted. Sins curse and devastation have been done away with.

⁶And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

God invites everyone to come and drink from the fountain of living water. This text does not teach universal salvation, but it does offer salvation to everyone who will come to Jesus, who is the water of life.

⁷He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Who are those who overcome? “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” I John 5:5 Chuck Swindoll captured the spirit of this verse well:

The one who overcomes is not the one who has lived a perfect life, obeyed the Ten Commandments, or observed

numerous rites and rituals. Rather, people overcome the world through *faith alone*. . . The way a person becomes an overcomer is not by his or her own efforts or merits, but solely through faith alone in the Son of God alone.³

⁸But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Why are the cowardly and liars spoken of in two categories? The first are afraid to accept Christ and bear the ridicule of the world. The second are those who have denied their sin and need of Christ as Saviour.⁴

Note that John lists the “fearful or cowardly, the unbelieving, the abominable and murderers, sexually immoral (whoremongers), sorcerers, that is, those who practice witchcraft, séances and magic arts, and all liars.”

Their destiny is eternal separation from God in the lake of fire.

John Phillips offered:

It is this kind of person who has made the cities of earth centers of wickedness; all such will be banned from the new world. Sin has wrecked and rined this world, and God is determined it will not ruin the world to come. The most sovering statement of all is that the unbelieving will be in the lake of fire. The unbelieving! Men might concede that the abominable should be there and the murderers—but the

³ Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's New Testament Insights: Insights on Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 275.

⁴ Jerry Falwell, executive editor; Edward E. Hinson and Michael Kroll Woodrow, general editors, *KJV Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1994.

unbelieving! Yet unbelief is the father of all wickedness. It opened the gates of Eden to sin and has kept men away from God and His salvation ever since.⁵

⁹And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

John is invited by one of the seven angels who had the seven bowl judgments to come and see the bride.

¹⁰And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

John is carried away in the spirit, which simply means that he was in a trance like state. This verse is viewed in one of two ways. 1. John is associating the Bride of Christ, the Church, as being the New Jerusalem. 2. The New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, contains the Bride of Christ, the Church.

It would seem more logical in the latter case. However, the scene that John is seeing is beyond description.

New Jerusalem Described

- ❖ **Glistened with the light of Gods glory, being like sparkling crystal. V. 11**
- ❖ **High walls with 12 gates, 3 gates on each side with 12 angels. V. 12 -13**
- ❖ **Twelve tribes of Israel names inscribed on the gates. V. 12.**

⁵ John Phillips, *Exploring Revelation: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1987), 250.

- ❖ **The city walls had 12 foundations with the Apostles names inscribed. V. 14.**

¹¹Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; ¹²And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The Dimensions of New Jerusalem

- ❖ **The city lies four square, that is, it forms a cube. V. 16**
- ❖ **The city is 12,000 furlongs high, wide and long. (1500 miles). V. 16**
- ❖ **The walls are 144 cubits thick, that is, 216 feet. V. 17**

¹⁵And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. ¹⁶And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. ¹⁷And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

More details about the City walls and foundations

- ❖ **The walls were crystal clear and glistened like gleaming gold. V. 18**
- ❖ **The foundations were garnished with all kinds of precious stones. V. 19**
 - **Jasper, crystal clear**

- **Sapphire**
- **Chalcedony, an agate like quartz of bluish color**
- **Emerald, a glowing dark red stone**
- **Sardonyx, a multicolored stone often with stripes.**
- **Sardius,**
- **Chrysolite,**
- **Beryl, a gold colored gem**
- **Topaz, a golden yellow or green**
- **Chrysoprasus, a greenish golden color**
- **Jacinth, a reddish blue or deep purple**
- **Amethyst, a pale blue quartz with varying shades to a deep purplish blue**

¹⁸And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. ¹⁹And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; ²⁰The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. ²¹And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

God and the Lamb

²²And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. ²³And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. ²⁴And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. ²⁵And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. ²⁶And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. ²⁷And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1. No need for a temple. V. 22
2. No need for the sun or moon. V. 23
3. No need for locks or fear. V. 25
4. No need to fear evil. V. 26

The final section deals with God and the Lamb as being the source of the Light in the New Jerusalem. The section is self-explanatory and needs no comment. One thought to ponder however pertains to the Light. The New Jerusalem will be illuminated by the Shekinah Glory of God. In the creation account found in Genesis one will note that light existed before the creation of the sun, moon, stars, etc. One can only surmise that light was the Shekinah Glory of God.

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