

Revelation 21:1-8 "Happily ever after!"

Building 429... Sometimes it feels like I'm watching from the outside Sometimes it feels like I'm breathing but am I alive I won't keep searching for answers that aren't here to find *All I know is I'm not home yet*

This is not where I belong... Take this world and give me Jesus This is not where I belong!

Our passage of God's glorious word brings us to the completion of the story of the world. The story of the world is *not a tragedy* that ends in death and shame but a comedy that ends in cosmic renewal and the marriage of the Lamb and his bride. Those who believed on Jesus and surrendered their lives to His Lordship will now know ETERNAL Joy and fellowship with the God who made us. Yes, We will live "Happily ever after!" **PRAY**

Let us stand together as we give honor to God's word and read aloud.

Revelation 21 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. **2** Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. **4** And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." **5** Then He who sat

on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” **6** And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. **7** He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. **8** But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

Barnhouse "In this chapter we see that the history of time is finished; the history of eternity is about to begin."

Oh the wonder of the first 4 verses in chapter 21... note that in verse 1 **“the first heaven and the first earth had passed away”**, and then at the end of verse 4, **“the former things have passed away.”** These two statements bracket 21:1-4 and indicate that their main thrust is that *the old is gone.*

And then the next section, 21:5-8, opens with God asserting, **“I am making all things new.”** So we could summarize these 8 verses with Paul’s phrase, **“THE OLD HAS PASSED AWAY; THE NEW HAD COME”**

2 Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Revelation 21 verse 1... Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

Now I saw! Much of what John saw caused his heart to weep... not this! As Moffatt says, "From the smoke and pain and heat it is a relief to pass into the clear, clean atmosphere of the eternal morning where the breath of heaven is sweet and the vast city of God sparkles like a diamond in the radiance of his presence"

Now I saw a new heaven and a **new** earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

The ancient Greek word translated **new** here (*kaine*) means "new in character, 'fresh'." This isn't just the **next** heaven and the **next** earth; this is the *New* heaven and *New* earth replacing the old (the first earth had passed away). **"A Whole new world"**

I love New things! **Also, in Isaiah 65:17 God says prophetically that He will create a new heaven and a new earth, and the ancient Hebrew word for "create" (*bara*) means to "create out of nothing," instead of re-fashioning existing material.**

God will start over again with an entirely new heaven and new earth.

People today are into recycling – paper, metal, plastic, even motor oil – everything is being recycled!

I do my part but God's not going to recycle but make "NEW" **The earth is a no-deposit, no-return planet! God will not recycle it!**

Finishing verse 1... Also there was no more sea. To the Jewish mind, the sea was a place of separation and evil. Already in the Book of Revelation it is shown to be the source of the Satanic beast (Revelation 13:1) and the place of the dead (Revelation 20:13). **In John's day the sea meant danger... storms... separation—Remember he was exiled on an island at the time** Also; Not needed for its cleansing action: 70% of earth covered to an average depth of 2.3 miles, antiseptic salinity (3.5%) purges, cleanses, and preserves our planet.

2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. *Here John describes the fulfillment of Isaiah 52:1, where Jerusalem, the holy city, is called to put on beautiful garments, and it also fulfills Isaiah 61:10, where the redeemed are likened to a bride who “adorns herself with her jewels.”*

John uses the most striking, beautiful image he can think of. How beautiful was my Hannah coming down the aisle to meet me. **JOHN SAYS THAT THIS IS HOW BEAUTIFUL THE NEW JERUSALEM WILL BE.**

Spurgeon adds, "I do not think the glory of Eden lay in its grassy walks, or in the boughs bending with luscious fruit-but its glory lay in this, that the 'Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day.' Here was Adam's highest privilege, that he had companionship with the Most High."

In John 14:2 before He ascended into heaven Jesus told His disciples, ***"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."*** We can assume for the last 2000 years Jesus has been preparing us a place. The carpenter has been hard at work building for us a heavenly home.

If God made this earth in 6 days... ***so much of it radiantly beautiful***... and He has been working on our "HOME" in heaven for 2000 years... we are living in a garbage can compared to what God's got going for our heavenly home!

In My Father's **house**

Heaven is home! A home that carries no memories only dreams... Of all the images used to describe heaven... paradise, a Kingdom, the Celestial City... none is as compelling as the image of **home**...

Even in the best homes not all memories are good, as in the worst not all are bad. ***We all still long for home***... for the disciples gave theirs up to follow Jesus... and now He comforts them with a home that has no **memories**... only **dreams**.

Now we see it coming down out of heaven... as beautiful as a bride! This city is decked out! It's dressed to please. I've never met a groom who was disappointed with his bride on his wedding day! Likewise, you won't be disappointed with your heavenly home! If you think there's an aspect of life on earth you'll miss - forget it! Eternity will more than compensate! The eternal city will satisfy your every desire!

3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. **LET US READ THAT AGAIN!** 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.

Presence of God with the absence of grief! Beautiful!

This fulfills what Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 25:8 – “He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken.” It fulfills Isaiah 35:10 – “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away” and Isaiah 65:19 – “*I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.*”

No more tears of loneliness, No more tears of loss, No more tears of sorrow over sin

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Randy Alcorn... What Won't Be in Heaven?

No death, no suffering, abortion clinics, or psychiatric wards. No rape, missing children, or drug rehabilitation centers. No bigotry, no muggings or killings. **NO WORRY OR DEPRESSION** or economic downturns. No wars, no unemployment. No anguish

over failure and miscommunication. No mourning. No pain. No boredom. No arthritis, **no anxiety** no handicaps, ~~No~~ suicide, no taxes, no bills, no computer crashes, no weeds, no bombs, no drunkenness, no traffic jams and accidents, no septic-tank backups. No mental illness. **No unwanted e-mails.** Close friendships but no cliques, laughter but no putdowns. Intimacy, but no temptation to immorality. No hidden agendas, no backroom deals, no betrayals.

No more undertakers and gravediggers! **There'll be no cemeteries on the new earth! Death is dead!**

I long for a home like that!

John continues in verse 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

One commentator said, "Presumably this means not only that everything will be made new, but also that everything will stay then new. The entropy law will be 'repealed.' Nothing will wear out or decay, and no one will age or atrophy anymore." (H. Morris)

And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." **Every verse in 21:1-8 depicts the fulfillment of something promised in the Old Testament. God keeps his word. He will do what he says, and because he is faithful and true, he commissions John to write.**

6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. *This fulfills the call in Isaiah 55:1 to the thirsty who have no money to come and drink freely. "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price." The promise in 21:6 is designed to make us thirst for the water of life more than we thirst for anything else in life.*

As Hamilton says in his commentary... *"Not to love God's mercy is to fail to love the most beautiful and astonishing reality that God has created. Is there anything you wouldn't give to gain the ability to drink from that well. There is no monetary price to buy this. No amount of money will get you a drink from this water. The only thing that qualifies you for a drink is thirsting for it."*

HEAVEN! As what CS Lewis calls the "inconsolable longing"

"There have been times when I think we do not desire heaven, but more often I find myself wondering whether in our heart of hearts, we have ever desired anything else... it is the secret signature of each soul, the incommunicable and unappeasable want, the thing we desired before we met our wives or made our friends or chose our work, and which we shall still desire on our deathbeds when the mind no longer knows wife or friend or work."

Our hope in Christ for the future is the mainspring and the mainstay of our joy here. It will animate our hearts to think often of heaven, for all that we can desire is promised there. Here we

are weary and toilworn, but yonder is the land of *rest* where the sweat of labor shall no more **bedew** the ***worker's brow***, and fatigue shall be forever banished. To those who are weary and spent, the word "**rest**" is full of heaven. We are always in the field of battle; we are so tempted within, and so molested by foes without, but in heaven we shall enjoy the *victory*, when the banner shall be waved aloft in triumph, and the sword shall be sheathed, and we shall hear our Captain say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." We have suffered bereavement after bereavement, but we are going to the land of the *immortal* where graves are unknown things. Here sin is a constant grief to us, but there we shall be perfectly *holy*, for there shall by no means enter into that kingdom anything which defileth. Hemlock springs not up in the furrows of celestial fields. Oh! is it not joy, that you are not to be in banishment for ever, that you are not to dwell eternally in this wilderness, but shall soon inherit Canaan? Nevertheless let it never be said of us, that we are dreaming about the *future* and forgetting the *present*, let the future sanctify the present to highest uses. Through the Spirit of God the hope of heaven is the most potent force for the product of virtue; it is a fountain of joyous effort, it is the corner stone of cheerful holiness. The man who has this hope in him goes about his work with vigor, **for the joy of the Lord is his strength**. He fights against temptation with ardor, for the hope of the next world repels the fiery darts of the adversary. He can labor without present reward, for he looks for a reward in the world to come.

7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

If you trust in Christ and thirst for God, he will be your God – your provider, protector, savior, and defender – and you will be his son or daughter, an heir of all that is His. But if God is not what you worship, if you thirst for things other than him, your life will show it. If you do not trust Christ and thirst for God, 21:8 is talking about you.

HEAVEN IS NOT AUTOMATIC...

WHICH WAY YOU WENT Years ago a man was searching his family roots and visited several cemeteries and read many inscriptions on the tombstones. There was one tombstone on which was engraved **"Pause now stranger as you pass by; as you are now, so once was I. as I am now , so soon you will be. Prepare yourself to follow me!**" Next to the tombstone someone placed a piece of wood engaged with this note... **"To follow you I am not content until I know which way you went."**

8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

WE ALL PREPARE FOR TRAGEDY... we buy life insurance, health insurance, car insurance... **Do you have** death insurance...

Have you prepared for death by receiving the free gift of God in Christ Jesus.

Acts 4:12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Cancer Story

Randy Alcorn on heaven... Now is the time to make things right with God. Confess your sinfulness and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on your behalf. You are made for a person and a place.

Jesus is the person, and Heaven is the place. They are a package—they come together. You cannot get Heaven without Jesus, or Jesus without Heaven.