

The Commencement of Eternity
“THE REWARD OF OUR FUTURE HOME”
Revelation 21:1-8

Theme: Jesus is preparing a place for us in which we will dwell with Him eternally.

I. THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM – 21:1-5

A. *The Establishment of What Is New – vv. 1-3*

1. As we mentioned last week, at the judgment of sin, not only are men judged, but heaven & earth are destroyed – *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.”*
2. Thus, we see here that God creates an entirely new earth and Heaven different even in physical form (*“... and there is no longer any sea.”*) – thus indicating that even the basis of life will be different since the presence of water and the “water cycle” as being water sustains life on earth.
3. The term “new” indicates newness of quality and not chronologically – thus it will be something brand new – fresh and never before seen.
4. A New Jerusalem – descends from Heaven – *“And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.”*
 - a. This seems to be a fulfillment of *John 14:2; Hebrews 11:10, 16*
 - b. It is implied that the New Jerusalem already exists in heaven – *Hebrews 12:22-23*
 - c. It is being made ready for its purpose – like a bride adorned for her groom and when God creates the new heaven and the new earth, the new Jerusalem will descend into the midst of that holy new universe – cp. *Revelation 21:10*
5. Unlike ever before, the tabernacle of God will be with men – *“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold the tabernacle of god is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.”*
6. First it was in Eden → Wilderness → Temple → Bodies → New Jerusalem.

B. *The Elimination of What Is Old – vv. 4-5*

1. In establishing what is new, it will have been necessary to get rid of all that is associated with the present fallen world – cp. *Isaiah 65:17.*

2. Having destroyed the physical world, God allows the former things to be passed away spiritually as well – *“... and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”*
3. This even is pre-shadowed by the work of grace in which we are made fit for this environment – *2 Corinthians 5:17*
4. God desires that it be recorded that He will cause all things to be new – *“And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’”*

II. THE INVITATION TO THE NEW JERUSALEM – 21:6

A. *The Accomplishment of the Messiah*

1. The statements of finality here suggest that what is in view relates to the whole drama of human history from creation to the eternal state – the redemption of man: *“Then He said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end...’”*
2. Thus, this is a statement of the successful atonement that Christ accomplished and the successful completion of redemptive history – all the elect have been delivered even as promised by Christ -

B. *The Accommodation of the Messiah*

1. In the great love for sinners that prompted His sacrifice, Jesus states His desire for men to come and partake of that which He has made available – cp. *John 4:10-14*; *John 7:37-38*
2. Thus, Jesus is speaking of the availability of eternal life that He desires to give to all men – *“... I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.”* – cp. *2 Peter 3:9*

III. THE INHABITANTS OF THE NEW JERUSALEM – 21:7-8

A. *The Entrance of the Believing – v. 7*

1. The *“overcomers”* are those who have gained the victory over sin through faith – cp. *1 John 5:4-5*
2. Because of the power of Christ’s resurrection, those who overcome are promised a full inheritance – cp. *1 Peter 1:4*
3. *“Overcomers”* are called *“sons”* who inherit all things – *“He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.”*
4. First God loved us enough to give us His Son; then, He gave us His Spirit; and, finally, He gives us the joy of Himself.

B. *The Exclusion of the Unbelieving – v. 8*

1. In contrast to the abundant blessings that come to the child of God, is the sad inheritance of unbelief – *“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone ...”*
2. Their destiny is so terrible that John reiterates it – *“their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*
3. Those for whom heaven carries little interest are those who are likely not headed there – who struggle with a love of this world and a lack of genuine faith.
4. But for the truly saved, those who are being transformed and growing in the faith, their interest is fastened upon the hope of glory – cp. *Psalm 73:25-26; Colossians 3:1-2; Matthew 5:8; 1 John 3:1-3*
5. This desire to be purified and enter the glories of heaven results in definite impact on the life of the believer:
 - a. **Character:** It produces Christian character that remains consistent with the glories of Christ and the awareness of the responsibility to manifest that glory in our daily living.
 - b. **Comfort:** It produces a comfort through trials and distresses associated with the sinful state on this earth –
 - c. **Consecration:** It produces a desire to avoid the lusts of the flesh
 - d. **Commitment:** It produces the commitment to the effort of faithful service to the work of the Lord – knowing that we will reap if we faint not.