

A Study in the Book of Revelation – Lesson 21

We have come to the point in God's Word where we read about the final circumstances of God's plan for mankind. We can go back to Genesis and see mankind's beginning. We have here in Revelation the fulfillment of mankind's purposes.

What is man's purpose or purposes?

Revelation 21 and 22 are _____ chapters! We have to recognize that the Bible does not provide very much information about eternity. These two chapters provide the majority of the entire revealed Word about the subject.

Last week we ended our study of Revelation 20 with the Great White Throne Judgment. There we read, prophetically speaking, about the judgment of all unsaved dead people from the beginning to the end of the Millennium. That brings about the end of all the unsaved.

What is left is the final fulfillment of all of God's promises for those who have put their faith in the Lord from creation to eternity.

There are three particular sections in this chapter that are indicated by the phrase "and I saw" (21:1, 2, 22). It is the Greek phrase καὶ εἶδον. Remember: John is seeing a _____.

Revelation 21:1 – A New Heaven and a New Earth

There is much debate about the meaning of “new” in this context. Revelation 20:11 states that “earth and heaven fled away.” Peter records in 2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12 that the elements will be destroyed by fire.

So, what does “new” mean here? Is it a “new” of existence or a “new” of quality? What is the difference?

A “new” of existence means that the physical substance of the heavens and earth are completely destroyed to the point of non-existence. The majority of conservative Bible scholars hold to this view.

Charles Ryrie, John Walvoord, as well as many others hold this view. They use Romans 8, 2 Peter 3, and Rev. 20 & 21 as basis. In this view, the heavens and earth are re-created _____ brand new. If you hold this view, you are in some pretty good company!

Dr. Bowman and this guy sitting in front of you hold to a “new” of quality. In this view, the heavens and the earth are _____ brand new. Consider the following Scriptures:

Psalm 78:69 – “And He built His sanctuary like the heights, Like the earth which He has founded [established – KJV] forever.”

Psalm 104:5 – “He established the earth upon its foundations, So that it will not totter forever and ever.”

Ecclesiastes 1:4 – “A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever.”

Matthew 25:41 – “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels...’”

Here's one more: 2 Cor. 5:17 – “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

So, if the Scripture has to be true, then the verses I cited above have to be true and the verses stating destruction also have to be true. How do you solve this dilemma?

Revelation 21:2 – 22:5 – The Holy City – The New Jerusalem

Here we have the description of our heavenly _____. According to Hebrews 12:22-24, this city will be the eternal home for the saved of the Church and the Old Testament. Rev. 21:7 states that all who overcome (in salvation) will be here as well.

Pastor Ward believes that this is the place that Jesus references in John 14.

The city is as beautiful as a _____ - Rev. 21:2. The beauty is described in detail in 21:9-22:5.

It is believed by many conservative Bible scholars that the New Jerusalem will be hovering above the earth during the Millennium, but will be on earth for eternity. Dwight Pentecost in his book, *Things to Come*, indicates this view. Support for this view can be seen in Ezekiel 40-48 where there will be an earthly Jerusalem and an earthly temple.

For the first time since the _____ there will be a new intimacy between God and man (21:3-4). In eternity, man both God the Father and God the Son will be with mankind. Holy Spirit?

Take note that 21:4 does not happen until _____ the Great White Throne Judgment. The blessings of heaven will be after the Lord makes all things new. There will be no more...

Notice the dramatic statement of Christ in 21:5-6. Jesus says, "Behold, I am making all things new." The importance of the statement was such that Jesus Himself instructs John to record the statement, that it is "faithful and true."

The next statement is just as emphatic! "It is done!" What is completed here? The specifics are not stated, except by way of context. Think about all that has already transpired:

At this point, what do we know is done, completed, or better stated accomplished?

Notice there is a contrast given between two classes of mankind in 21:7-8:

John's visual description of the New Jerusalem – Revelation 21:9-22:5

We have to remind ourselves that John is describing what he saw in the vision. He can only relate that which he saw in terms that he would understand. So, what is evident in this visual description is that the city itself is of immense beauty!

One of the seven bowl judgment angels is involved here. Take special note of verse 11. What does it say about the first of all? It had the _____ of God. The appearance of the city was like a jewel.

Whatever the actual materials that Christ used to construct the city are, they certainly reflect the glory of God. God uses only the _____.

Let us take a moment and examine the materials.

Notice something about the different groups represented in the city.

21:12a - _____

21:12b - _____

21:14 - _____

The city is a _____. The length of each side of the city is σταδίων δώδεκα χιλιάδων or 12,000 stadia. A stadion is about 600 feet. So, that would make the city

$$\left(\frac{600 \frac{\text{feet}}{\text{stadion}} * 12,000 \text{stadion}}{5280 \frac{\text{feet}}{\text{mile}}} \right) = 1,364 \text{ miles long on each side!}$$

That distance is like driving from Virginia Beach to _____ or from Miami to _____.

That is one huge city! Ryrie writes, “Shaped foursquare like a cube, the city is 1,380 mi. (2,220 km) on each face, including height, with a wall 72 yd (66 m) thick. It has been calculated that even if only 25 percent of this space were used for dwellings, 20 billion people could be accommodated spaciously.”¹

There is something missing from the city according to 21:22. What is it?

There is no need for the light of the sun and moon in the city!

Who will be allowed into the New Jerusalem?

¹ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update, Expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 2043.