



GOOD NEWS

FOR A SIN SICK WORLD

Scripture | Revelation 21

Revelation 21 is the climax of the letter and the Bible as a whole. It begins with creation and ends with new creation here. Once again the will and purpose of God to be with man is reality. The author isolated from family and friends is given a glimpse of what is to come. It surely comforted him. For example, the sea which separated him from those he loved was gone in the ecstatic vision. But that was just the beginning. Only God can make all things new. What man forms and fashions is like himself – finite and limited. Thankfully, John obeyed the heavenly command and wrote it all down. If we could see what John saw on Patmos, we would see what we've been looking for all along. Heaven is home.

Observation

READ REVELATION 21.1-8 | John saw unending peace in our heavenly home.

What promises do you find in vv.1-8? How can these promises influence our actions today as they would have the original readers?

What are some of the characteristics that stick out to you about the new heaven and new earth from these verses? Which is most personally meaningful to you? Why?

In verse 2, John described the church as the bride of Christ. Why is this image a good one? Why is it significant that Christ's bride is both a place and a people?

What is the goal of all redemption, as described in verses 1-4?

In verse 5, John recorded hearing God proclaim, "I am making all things new." Is this a promise we only experience at that time, or something we can experience now?

Where are some places we might turn to satisfy our spiritual thirst, other than to God? Why do those things not ultimately satisfy?

Look back at verse 8. Why is it important that we see this verse as part of the new order God is creating?

What happens if we neglect to take this promise into account with all the others?

READ REVELATION 21.9-21 | John saw the beautiful perfection of our heavenly home.

Where is John taken to see New Jerusalem? Where is he taken in 17.1-3? What does he see there? What other contrasts are seen?

Why did it have twelve gates? What was the purpose of gates in the ancient near east? How were the gates named and what is the significance?

What is the significance of the city's foundation? How did Jesus teach his disciples to build (Matthew 7.24-27)? What does Paul teach about the church's one foundation (Ephesians 2.19-21)?



When you join together the twelve gates with the twelve foundations what point besides massive size do these structures make together?

Where else in scripture are beautiful stones mentioned? In those places, what is being communicated that helps us interpret the meaning here?

How does John communicate the perfection of the city? How can the Bride of Christ (the people) today reflect what the Bride of Christ (the place) be on that day?

READ REVELATION 21.22-22.5 | John saw a glorious presence in our heavenly home.

What is the meaning of the lack of a sun and moon in the holy city? (Isa 60.19-20)

What are the concrete images present in these verses?

In what ways does this city look like the garden of Eden? How is it different? What does the garden imagery in the passage tell us about the mission of God in the whole Bible?

Do you think the Tree of Life in Revelation represents something larger than a tree in a garden? What would it symbolize? How does its fruit bring healing to the nations?

What is the greatest blessing of eternity? What is the essence of eternal life (John 17.3)?

In what ways would having God's name permanently affixed be reassuring, appropriate, and a delight? How would your life be different if you now bore a mark identifying you as God's child?

Why does John emphasize the nations in Revelation 21-22?

Based upon Revelation 21-22, what will not be present and not missed in eternity?

Application

1. What stuck out to you or challenged you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text? How did the Spirit move you to respond?
2. Based on what you've read in Revelation 21 and 22, what are some truths about heaven you can confidently declare?
3. How can we cultivate intimacy with God in a society so devoted to pleasure, superficiality, and over-activity? How will communion with God in eternity be similar and different?
4. How has God made all things new for you personally?
5. How can the promise of the return of paradise with God help us make it through each day? How can this future reward help motivate us to share the good news about Jesus with those who are suffering?
6. Which of the promises of God in Revelation 21-22 do you most long for? Why?
7. How does the doctrine of the new heavens and the new earth contradict popular conceptions about heaven among Christians or the wider culture?

Prayer

1. Pray for patient-endurance for those serving on the frontline of the pandemic.
2. Pray that church leaders would follow the Lord's will in regathering the church for worship.
3. Pray that local businesses in our community will thrive once again.
4. Pray for believers to boldly proclaim good news in our sin sick world.
5. Pray that the good news will unleash us to live well on earth. Pray that scripture gives us a foretaste of what heaven will be to patiently endure today.

Afterword & Response

- **ABOUT GOD** | What does this passage specifically teach about God?

- **ABOUT MYSELF** | What does this passage teach about myself?


- **NEXT STEPS** | What does this passage lead me to do next in response?



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