

WORSHIP SERVICE - 4.24.2022

ALL THINGS NEW

I. INTRODUCTION

MAIN POINT: As faithful followers of Christ we must set our hope on the glories of the world to come when God will make all things new.

REVELATION 21:1-8

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I 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 the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

II. A RENEWED CREATION

1. NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

- v1b first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.
- The first thing John sees in this vision is a new heaven and a new earth.
- Fulfillment of Isaiah 65:17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.
- What is made new?
- Everything in the cosmos is made new.

- With the final judgment scene, John wrote that he saw, "From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them." (Rev. 20:11b)

- There is a destruction of the present world order that must happen to make way for the new. It is a de-creation.
 - What exactly does that look like?
 - Three common views:
 - Continuity—The cosmos will continue in its present form but no longer subject to decay and death.
 - Complete annihilation—the cosmos will be entirely obliterated and God starts again from nothing. A totally new creation comes in its place.
 - 2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.
 - Other NT passages declare that heaven and earth will pass away or that they will perish and wear out (Hebrews 1:10-12).
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- We must consider the pattern of Scripture which is redemption and renewal.
 - A brand new creation is not what is in view but a re-creation of the existing world.
 - 'new' (Greek - 'kainos') used here considers an aspect of the quality of the newness of something, not that it has just recently come into being.
 - So a third way of considering this is something in between the other two views
 - Complete transformation of the physical creation.
 - The renewed creation will not be how God first created, 'ex nihilo', out of nothing.
 - The physical will follow the pattern of the spiritual.
 - 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
 - The old world will pass away and will experience a new birth.
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- Everything about the new will be recognizable to us.
 - It will be a real, physical world, that it is what God created in the first place for mankind to inhabit.
 - The destiny of God's people is to inhabit this newly transformed physical environment, the new earth and heavens, in their resurrected physical bodies.
 - Heaven is a place on earth!

2. NO MORE SEA

- v21c and the sea was no more.
 - We've referenced this a few times in our series, the sea has a symbolic and metaphorical representation in Scripture.
 - It's representative of the place from where evil comes from.
 - It stands for all of the unbelieving, rebellious nations who persecute the people of God.
 - The beast rises up out of the sea in ch13. The sea gave up its dead, referring to unbelievers, in ch20.
 - Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt.
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- What is it then that John sees?
 - He sees that in this renewed realm, evil, chaos, and death have been vanquished.
 - Augustine in City of God, wrote, "For then, this world of ours, made restless and stormy by the lives of men (and, hence, figuratively called the sea), will have passed away." (20.16)
 - In ch4, John sees a sea of glass before the throne. God has calmed the seas.

- There is nothing in the new heaven and the new earth, there is no evil that could threaten the peace and tranquility of the saints of God.
- Everything about the new is completely characterized by peace.
- The world will be exactly as God intended for it to be.

3. A NEW JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY

- 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- John's vision of the new Jerusalem is amplified in the next passage.
- What John sees is the triumphant, glorified Church of Jesus Christ.
- She is represented both as a city and as a bride.
- "Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"; fulfillment of Isaiah 62.
- The Church will look her best because God has made her ready.
- This is what God has been doing throughout history; shaping and forming his people to be His bride so that she will reflect his glory in the ages to come.
- The new heavens and the new earth will be characterized by the complete, intimate union between God and his people.

III. LIFE IN THE RENEWED CREATION

- What will we do in heaven? Whatever we will do will be more glorious than we can imagine.
- What John is more concerned with is showing us what life will be like in the new, not what we're going to do.

There are two profound realities that will shape our life in the renewed creation.

1. GOD DWELLS WITH US

- 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.
- John hears a declaration from the throne that expands the city and marriage metaphors of the previous verse.
- It is the fulfillment of the covenant promise God made to his people in the covenant of grace.
- Abram in Gen. 12, then reconfirmed in Gen. 17.
- Exodus 6:7 God promised to deliver his people out of Egypt and declared, "I will redeem you, I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God."
- Lev. 26, "I will make my dwelling place among you, and I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people."
- Jeremiah and Ezekiel repeat the covenant promise multiple times. (Jer. 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:33; 31:1,33; 32:38; Ezek 11:20; 34:24; 36:28; 37:23, 27)
- From cover to cover, the covenant promise that was repeatedly stated finds its complete fulfillment in Revelation.
- The word 'dwell' is the Greek word 'skēnē'. Which is also translated as tabernacle.
- The tabernacle was where God met with his people. It's where his presence was. First in Eden, which was a temple, then the tabernacle and later the temple in Jerusalem.
- The preliminary fulfillment of the promise was in Christ.
- John 1:14, The word became flesh and dwelt among us, tabernacled among us.

- Paul, quoting Lev. 26, indicates that the fulfillment in some preliminary form of God tabernacling with his people is already present in the church. (2Cor 6:16)
- Now John sees the complete fulfillment of that covenant promise in the new creation.
- The presence of God will not be limited by geographical boundaries of location.
- That's why in Rev. **21:22**, John says he doesn't see a temple because the temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.
- God is with us, he will dwell with us, for all time, for all eternity, with no barrier between Him and us.
- Do you long for the unhindered presence and glory of Christ?
- Heaven is not heaven because our loved ones will be there.
- Heaven is heaven because of Jesus. He is the glory of heaven and there is no heaven without him.

2. GOD HAS PREPARED A SORROW-FREE WORLD FOR US

- 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
- Because ‘the sea is no more’, because all sin and evil are removed and not part of the new creation, suffering, sickness and all things that bring us sorrow no longer mark our existence.
- The only way to describe this world is with negative statements because we don't know what the positive is truly like.
- You won't even know what those things are anymore.
- ‘The former things have passed away.’
- We have moments of joy in this world and in this life, but as hard as we try, we cannot eradicate those things from our present experience.
- But in the glories of the new heaven and earth, these things won't even come to mind.

IV. DIVINE PRONOUNCEMENTS

Three divine pronouncements:

1. FIRST PRONOUNCEMENT

- V5a “Behold, I am making all things new.”
- This statement speaks of the certainty of what God will do.
- All things will be made new. Nothing of the old creation, nothing of the old order will persist.

2. SECOND PRONOUNCEMENT

- V5b Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”
- He tells John to write all of this down. Everything here depicts the fulfillment of everything that God promised in the OT.
- God is faithful, his words are true. These things will come to pass. God always keeps his word.
- V6-8 And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. “It is done!”

- God emphatically declares that all things will be made new before they are made new.
- “I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.”
- God identifies himself by stressing his eternity. He is the first and the last. Alpha the first letter of the Greek alphabet, and Omega the last.
- This is a way of saying that God is first, last, and everything in between.
- This phrase identifying God’s eternity is something that God is quoted as saying in the beginning of Revelation, (1:8), and now here at the end and in 22:13.
- All of the events contained in Revelation, written down by John, lie under God’s absolute sovereignty over all events in history.
- So we can have assurance that just as God brought the first creation into being, he will bring it to an end and usher in the new.

3. THIRD PRONOUNCEMENT

- The last part of this third pronouncement speaks to who will be part of this new and who will be excluded.

Who is included

- To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.
- Who will be part of the new creation and taste of the realities of that life? Those who thirst for God and come to him for the waters of life.
- This is a fulfillment of the call in Isaiah 55:1 “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!
- Those who thirst for God are invited to come drink from him, he is the fountain of life.
- To thirst for God means you don’t thirst for the things of this world.
- This call is echoed in 22:17 The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” Let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.
- 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.
- The ones who will inherit everything promised are those who have conquered and are God’s sons.
- The only ones who live in this renewed creation in which God dwells with man and all sorrows and suffering are excluded are those who are united with Christ by true and persevering faith.
- It is for those who do not compromise their faith and hold fast to the end, even if it costs them their lives.
- This is here to encourage us to persevere through hardship because if we do, we will inherit the fullness of God’s blessings.
- Every promise made to the churches in ch2-3 are fulfilled here as the eternal rewards of the believer.

Who is excluded

- 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”
- We have another glimpse of judgment and punishment.
- Those who do not thirst for God, those who do not trust Christ, those who have refused to come to God who is the source of life, for them, everlasting punishment in the lake of fire is reserved for them.

- The lake of fire persists even in the new heaven and the new earth though it is somehow outside of it.
- If you are not an overcomer you will be overcome at the final judgment.
- 21:8 is one of two summary lists here at the end of Revelation. A catalog of damning sins.
- Doug VanDorn describes them as, “...violations of God’s eternal transcendent law, They are breaches of the covenant of works that binds all creation together. They are defilements against nature, ruptures against the supernatural world, abuses against our fellow man, and most of all treachery against the Creator himself. Some we think of as big. Some we think of as little. All are a falling short of God’s glory.”
- For these who do such things, there is no renewal.

CONCLUSION

- The transformed world will be a place of infinite glory and infinite joy.
 - But it is only for those who love God.
 - Do you love him? Do you long for him? Do you thirst for him?
 - If you don’t, accept the invitation to come to Jesus, the fountain of living water.
 - Your thirst cannot be satiated by anything else.
 - Turn from your sin and trust in him alone for your salvation.
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- CS Lewis closes out his fantasy novel series, The Chronicles of Narnia, with the final book, titled, The Last Battle.
 - Here are the final words of that book.
 - *“And as He spoke He no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at least they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”*