

THE REVELATION

A New Heaven & A New Earth

Revelation 20:7—21:8

As we come to John's vision of the end of the thousand year reign of Christ and His followers upon the earth, we are told of the final judgment and the appearance of a new heaven and a new earth. In this judgment, those whose names are written in the Book of Life are exempt from scrutiny—coming under the grace of God, while those whose names are not found in the Book of Life are examined on the basis of their deeds—both good and bad. In the end, death and hades are cast into the Lake of Fire along with the devil and his angels while the followers of God and of the Lamb are ushered into a new heaven and a new earth.

I. The Last Rebellion and the Final Judgment—The Great White Throne

- A. Satan is released for a short period in order to give those who have been under the rule of Christ against their true desire a chance to express their genuine preference. (20:7-8)
- B. As before, the focus of their hatred is Jerusalem, the capitol city of the reign of Christ, but before they can even fire the first salvo, fire comes from heaven and devours them all. (Rev. 20:9)
- C. Now the devil is thrown into the Lake of Fire, never to rise again. (Rev. 20:10)
- D. The judgment of the Great White Throne examines the lives of all humanity of all ages from Adam to the present. Those whose names are not found in the Book of Life were judged on the basis of their deeds. Because no one can pass this test, all whose names were not found in the Book of Life were thrown into the Lake of Fire with the devil and his angels. (Rev. 20:11-15)

COMMENTS: the Lake of Fire is a literal place of conscious torment which lasts for ever. There are no second chances and there is no end. It was not intended for humanity at all, but for the devil and his rebellious angels (Matthew 25:41); however, those who persist in following him must likewise share his destiny. It is with great sadness that God exiles human beings to this awful place of eternal torment. (Ezekiel 18:23; I Timothy 2:3-4; II Peter 3:9)

II. The New Heaven and the New Earth

- A. There will come a new heaven and a new earth. (Rev. 21:1)
 - 1. The first earth has passed away (II Peter 3:10)
 - 2. God does not do away with heaven and earth, but creates a new heaven and a new earth for the habitation of redeemed humanity.
 - Our destiny has never been purely spiritual and ethereal in nature: redeemed humanity is restored to physical and spiritual wholeness to live as intended on a redeemed earth
- B. The focal center of the new heaven and earth will be a New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2)
- C. God will dwell upon the new earth with us and He will always be physically present in the Person of Jesus Christ.

COMMENTS: We were never intended to be like God or to become like God, as some teach. We were created to be human, and we will always be human. Redeemed and restored humanity is a return to the humans we were created to be in the ultimate sense.

III. A Final Place of Peace, Safety, and Complete Sufficiency

- A. There will be no more tears (Rev. 21:4)
- B. Everything will be new and fresh—eternally (Rev. 21:5)
- C. Our deepest needs and longings will be met (Rev. 21:6)
- D. Our relationship and fellowship with God will be unbroken forever (Rev. 21:7)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Write down the questions you may have for the purpose of discussing them in your small group this week:

NOTES

⁷ When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.

⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

¹⁵ If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

⁶ He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

⁷ He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

(Rev 20:7-21:8 NIV)

Paul R. Martin
Lead Pastor

Alliance Bible Church of McHenry, IL

