

Revelation Class #9
New Jerusalem

We made it to heaven! We always talk about making it to heaven. Well we've done it. We got through 20 chapters of Revelation with scrolls, seals, horsemen, trumpets, beasts, bowls, the Millennium, Judgment Day and now we've made it to Chapter 21 - which is all about heaven. Everyone take a deep breath and sigh! Next week we will close out Chapter 22 and have a question and answer session. So bring your questions and Alan and I will try to answer them. Alan set everything up for Chapter 21 so wonderfully last week. All the enemies of the church have been destroyed. The beasts in Chapter 19. Satan and death itself in Chapter 20. There is nothing left to do except enjoy the reward God has prepared for His people. Let's pray.

Many songs have been sung about heaven... All kinds of art, painting & sculpture have been made to give up a picture of heaven... Much literature and poetry has been written to describe heaven... I could fill up my power point with all kinds of stuff. But it all comes back to Rev 21. A few other scriptures in the NT tell us about heaven. Some OT prophesy refers to heaven. But the clearest and best depiction of heaven ever given to us is right here – the vision that the Holy Spirit gave to John the Apostle in 95 AD and that he wrote down and sent to the 7 churches and which has been preserved through the centuries for us to read today. Amen.

I am going to read through the entire description from 21:1 through 22:5 (skipping a few verses). I want everyone to close their eyes and just listen. We will go back through it a 2nd time with our eyes opened so you can read and take some notes the 2nd time if you want. But I want everyone to close their eyes the 1st time and just listen to the words. Imagine the scene in your mind and heart. What it must look like. What it must feel like. What it will be like to be there one day! The reading is rather long and I will pause a few times, but please don't open your eyes until I say so. Close your eyes.

Read slowly and clearly 21:1-7. [Be loud for v.3] [skip v. 8]

Continue reading v.9-14. [skip :15-17].

Continue reading :18-26.

Continue reading 22:1-5.

Amen! You may open your eyes. What an incredible place the New Jerusalem must be! How much joy we will experience! All the troubles of this life will fade away and we will reign with Christ forever and ever. Brothers and sisters, this is what God promises us. This is the salvation He has prepared for us. This is what Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to give us. This is what we have to look forward to. Amen.

Let's go back through it with eyes opened and I want to share a few observations. 21:1-4. A new heaven and a new earth. This old heaven and earth corrupted by sin and the stain of Satan will be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth. A bride adorned for

her husband. Some of us attended the wedding of Andy Ayers and Beth Ann Sample last Saturday. Beth was wonderfully adorned in a modest yet beautiful wedding dress. That's what the New Jerusalem will be like. Beautifully adorned and prepared for us.

God will dwell with us. He will no longer be up there. He will be right here with us. Not Jesus in human form like the 1st Century, but God the Father – the Almighty – (and Jesus the Lamb) right here with us in New Jerusalem. We shall be His people and He will be our God. He will wipe away every tear. No death. No mourning. No crying. No pain. No funerals will ever take place in New Jerusalem. No loved ones will die in New Jerusalem. They will live with you there forever. No one will get sick in New Jerusalem. No hospitals. No ambulances. No disease or injury. No reason to cry. No suffering. Nothing but joy and peace and love and praise to God.

:5-7. All things will be made new. Rom 8:19 says the creation itself longs for this day. Imagine everything new and fresh and sparkling. Like late Spring when everything has turned green and all the flowers are blooming. It will like that but better than that. These words are trustworthy and true – we can rely on them. We who are thirsty for righteousness – for eternal life free of sin – we will be given water from the spring of life for free without any payment required since Jesus already paid the price in full. {Cruise ship unlimited beverages.}

:8 is a warning. Not everyone goes to heaven. Not everyone makes it to the New Jerusalem. All paths do not lead to the same place. Sin will be punished in the end. Don't forget Chapter 20, Judgment Day and the lake of fire. God does not want us to fall away. To not make it. To miss out on the New Jerusalem.

:9-14 The Bride – the wife of the Lamb. Both the church and the New Jerusalem are the bride of Christ – perhaps the church living in the New Jerusalem is his Bride. The city will be all decked out for the wedding supper of the Lamb - festive and decorated. Radiant with the glory of God like a rare jewel. With a great wall and gates and foundation. All built on the OT and the NT – the 12 tribes and the 12 apostles. Adorned with jewels. Gates made of a single pearl. A street of pure gold – clear as crystal. Brothers and sisters, we shall walk that street one day. We shall walk the street of gold. Let's say it together: **“We shall walk the street of gold.”**

22-27. No temple is needed in New Jerusalem. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. No lights are needed. The glory of God provides light and the Lamb is the lamp. The kings of earth will bring their glory into it – the honor of the nations. I don't know exactly what that means but I want to see it. Perhaps the most precious and honorable things from every culture will be brought into the New Jerusalem and enjoyed there. The Constitution of the United States with the Bill of Rights, along with the Statue of Liberty. The Magna Carta and the first folio of Shakespeare. The Mona Lisa and the Eiffel Tower. The Taj Mahal. The Great Wall of China. Angkor Wat with the jungle growing all around. Nothing or no one unclean, detestable or false. There will be no crime in New Jerusalem. No bad parts of town to avoid. Only those written in the Lamb's book of life will enter the New Jerusalem. Only fellow disciples and angels and the Lamb and God Almighty.

22:1-5. The water of life will flow down the center of the main street. The tree of life will grow on either side of the river producing 12 kinds of fruit and yielding fruit

every month. There will be great abundance in the New Jerusalem. All we need. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. This life has caused many scars and wounds. They will somehow all be healed in the New Jerusalem. As it says in v.4, the former things – the things of this life – will all pass away. The curse of sin will be gone. As it says in 1 Cor 15:54ff, when we put on immortality in the New Jerusalem, death will be swallowed up in victory. The sting of death – which is sin – has been defeated by Jesus Christ on the cross. 1 Cor 15:57: *Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!*

We will worship God and we will see His face. Even Moses could not see His face, but one day in the New Jerusalem we will be able to see the face of God. The face of the Almighty Creator shining with holiness, but also the face of grace and kindness and love. A face that will make us feel safe and secure and protected against all harm. A face that makes us rejoice and praise Him because of His mercy and goodness and love showered on us. His name will be on our foreheads. We will be His people. His treasured possession. We will reign forever and ever. Amen.

I would like to close with a song. The tune is familiar and we all know it. *“Peace, peace, peace, peace. The gospel in a word is peace...”* However, I have written a new verse that I would like us to sing. My daughter Allison will come up here with her guitar and we will all sing it together to close out the class. The new verse is on the screen.

*Hope, hope, hope, hope,
The gospel in a word is hope,
We shall walk the street of gold,
Hope, hope, hope.*

Let's sing the verse 3 times and then I will pray.

Please pick up your kids.