when god makes all things new

(Revelation 21:1-8)

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, 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 heaven saying, “﻿Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.﻿” 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “﻿Write, for these words are true and faithful.﻿” 6 And He said to me, “﻿It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.﻿”

**Intro:** In 2002, Dallas Cowboy Emmitt Smith broke Walter Payton’s all-time rushing yardage record. Still stands today---18,355. TV showed him pulling back a cloth that covered a car his wife bought him for the occasion---a brand new Lamborghini--- costing upwards of $275,000. It has a 571hp engine and can hit 60 mph in 4 seconds. And, if you are in a hurry, it can take you down the Geo. Bush turnpike at the rate of 3 miles a minute or 180 mph!

If you have ever been given something that was brand new (whether it was a Christmas present, a birthday present, or some kind of special gift) you understand how exciting that is and what a wonderful experience it is to be given something that is **brand new**.

That is true in the spiritual realm as well. One of the greatest days of my life was the day that I understood that God was offering me the gift of eternal life and I received that gift through faith in Christ. I will never forget the joy that I had as a new believer in Christ. The old things had passed away in a moment of time and **all things were made new**. I was made a new creation in Christ. There is nothing to compare it to.

This morning, I would like to talk to you about a day that every person who is saved has to look forward to---the day in which God will give to us something that is **brand new**---our eternal home---the new earth. In verse 5, the Lord Jesus says, “Behold, I make **all things** new.” Folks, this gift from God will make Emmitt’s Lamborghini look like a ‘76 Ford Pinto. And it is because we will one day live forever in a place that is **totally and completely new**.

**Title:** “When God Makes All Things New” (Prayer)

As we turn to our text in Rev 21:1, once again, we see John’s trademark expression: “**I saw.”**  Actually, John sees four things here in vv. 1-9 in his vision concerning our eternal home. Notice vv. 1-2:

Now I saw **[1]** a new heaven [or, sky] and a new earth, **[2]** for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. **[3]** Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw **[4]** the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Then just three verse later in v. 5, God the Father says:

“Behold, I make **all things new**.”

Lesson #1. When God makes all things new, we will forever enjoy…

**1. A gloriously beautiful place to live** (21:1-2, 5)

Every believer will live on a beautiful and completely new earth that God has created with Jerusalem as the capital city of the entire earth.

After the Great White Throne Judgment—which we spoke of last week—in which God deals with all of the unsaved people who have ever walked the earth, He will deal with a universe polluted by evil. Jesus Himself told us that the present universe in which we live won’t last forever:

**Heaven and earth will pass away**, but My words will by no means pass away (Mark 13:31).

The Apostle Peter tells us that God will destroy the present universe with an intensely, fervent heat:

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens[stellar heavens]will **pass away** [BDAG: “disappear”] with a great noise, and the elements will **melt** **with fervent heat**; both the earth and the works that are in it will be **burned up.** 11 Therefore, since all these things will be **dissolved**, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be **dissolved**, **being on fire**, and the elements will **melt** **with fervent heat**? (2 Peter 3:10-12).

Chuck Swindoll has noted that this will not be a ***renovation*** of the old universe but ***a totally new creation***.

(When Kelly and I sold our old house in 2000, we didn’t get a renovated house in its place, we got a ***brand-new*** house!!!)

And once God dissolves the present universe, He will create a new universe, in which, according to 2 Peter 3:13, righteousness dwells. It will be completely and totally free from sin and sinful people. Isaiah and David both spoke of this new creation as well:

**Isaiah 65:17**-----17 “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And **the former shall not be remembered or come to mind**.

**Psalm 102:25–26**-----25 Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands. 26 They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; **Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed**.

In eternity, we will live in a brand-new place—the new earth—so beautiful, that we won’t even remember or think about this earth.

*What a day that will be!*

Verse 1 also tells us that “…there will be **no more sea**.”

This is strange to us today because most people would love to have ocean-front property, but people in the Bible days were terrified of the sea---it was frightening and dangerous to them and it could sweep you away and kill you at a moment’s notice. When they were on a ship in that day, they didn’t have the Weather Channel or radar and they never knew if they were going to get swallowed up by a storm or hit a shallow spot with rocks.

So when John told believers in the first century that there would be no more sea, it was a huge plus to them. The chaos and destruction of the sea will be gone on the new earth (as will all evil people which the OT compared to the sea).

So God creates a brand new earth and sky, but He is not finished with all He wants to do. Verse 2 speaks of a **New Jerusalem**. Earlier in Revelation, we saw that the present Jerusalem was called Sodom because of the way it has continually rebelled against God, but the **New Jerusalem** is not compared to Sodom but to a bride on her wedding day:

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The **New Jerusalem** will be as beautiful as a bride on her wedding day (in fact, we will spend the entire message next Sunday looking at the beauty and wonder of the New Jerusalem).

Some scholars have supposed that this city will hover over the new earth because of the phrase in verse 2 describing it as “…coming down out of heaven from God …” But as you study the rest of chapter 21, it becomes clear that the New Jerusalem will rest solidly on the new earth. It is **coming down** from God out of heaven because God has been **preparing** it for humanity.

Jesus said, “I go to **prepare** a place for you.” A bride does not prepare for her wedding day for ten minutes. There is a lot of preparation that is made that results in the glorious appearing of the bride before her husband. In the same way, God is preparing the New Jerusalem right now because Hebrews speaks of the **Heavenly Jerusalem** in chapter 12---and one day, God will bring the Heavenly Jerusalem down to earth.

When God makes all things new, we will forever enjoy…

**1. A gloriously beautiful place to live**

But we will also enjoy:

**2. A harmoniously wonderful relationship with God** (21:3)

Every believer will live in perfect harmony with God Himself who will dwell among them **in person.**

He will make His home with us **personally**! V. 3:

And I heard a loud voice from heaven [probably an angel?] saying, “Behold, the tabernacle [or, *dwelling place*] of God is with men, and **He will dwell with them**, and they shall be His people. **God Himself will be with them** and be their God.

1 Timothy 6:16 tells us that God dwells in unapproachable light and that no human **has** seen Him or **can** see Him. Exodus tells us that no one can look at God and live. But in that future day, those barriers will be gone. We shall see Him as He is! This will be **Paradise regained**! God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the garden in perfect harmony---and every one of us who are saved will enjoy that union with Him forever!

Now, the question that all of us should be asking ourselves is if we have a good relationship with God **now**? (comments).

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When God makes all things new, we will forever enjoy…

**a gloriously beautiful place to live,**

**a harmoniously wonderful relationship with God,**

and lastly,

3. A tremendously joyful experience of life itself

Every believer will be wonderfully happy because they will never
again be touched by the miseries of life on this present earth.

Notice v. 4:

And God will wipe away **every tear** from their eyes; there shall be no more **death**, nor **sorrow**, nor **crying**. There shall be no more **pain**, for the former things have passed away.”

There is nothing wrong with having a “bucket list” of things you want to do or places you want to see before you die, but many people don’t realize that our eternal dwelling place will be far, far more, beautiful, exciting, and satisfying than anything life on this present earth can offer us. And it was the truth of eternity with God that led Mercy Me founder Bart Millard to write the song, *“I can only imagine!”*

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**APPLICATION**

Now that we have learned about the beauty of this eternal dwelling place where God lives among us personally, He turns to all humanity now alive on this earth and makes three rock-solid promises:

In verse 6, He says:

I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

So His promise here is this:

**I will give eternal life freely to all believe**

(Comments---only one way---by faith alone in Christ alone).

That is the first promise here, but there is another (it’s in verse 7):

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

God’s next promise is this:

# I will give eternal riches to those who pay the price

(Promise 1 requires only belief; promise 2 requires belief **and** obedience).

There is a third promise---and this is a very serious one:

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

# I will give eternal misery to those who those who refuse to believe

Unbelieving people (like those described in verse 8) will get something from God that will last forever, but it is not glorious and beautiful. It will be a terrible and miserable existence of continued sinfulness and separation from God forever. People will exist in their sinful condition forever!

(**Invitation**---Christmas---the best gift of all!!!!)

Bible Study Helps

**Does Major Sin Prove a Person Is Unsaved? Revelation 21:8**

by Bob Wilkin

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Recently I received a letter from a pastor who wondered about the meaning of this verse. The following is an expansion of my response.

**Current Behavior of the Unsaved Is in View**

Many pastors and commentators suggest that this verse is teaching something about the present behavior of the unsaved. It is viewed as being given to help us determine if we or others are headed toward hell or not.

One group holding this view (Reformed pastors and commentators) suggests that the verse concerns those who have never been saved. Anyone who is guilty of major sins shows he is unregenerate. Of course, they usually qualify this by saying that the verse concerns people habitually caught up in sins like immorality and lying. And what does habitually mean? That's hard to pin down, they say. They suggest that the more a person sins, the more likely it is that he or she is unsaved.

Another group (Arminian pastors and commentators) suggests that this verse is teaching that anyone who is guilty of major sins loses his or her salvation. According to this view only those who regularly confess and repent of their sins can enter God's kingdom. A failure to confess and repent results in loss of eternal salvation.

Neither of these views, however, is consistent with Scripture.

All believers sin and sin repeatedly (e.g., 1 John 1:8, 10). Some believers actually wallow in sin (1 Cor 3:1-3; 6:18-20; 11:30; Gal 6:1; James 5:19-20; 2 Pet 2:18-22; 3:14-18). So the view that this verse is teaching that habitual sinners must never have been saved in the first place is untenable.

And, the Bible also teaches that believers can't lose their salvation (cf. John 4:14; 6:35; 10:28-29; Rom 8:38-39). Once a person is born again, they can never be un-born. Thus the Arminian loss-of-salvation view is also unscriptural.

**Eternal Sinfulness Is in View**

It is a mistake to think that this verse is describing the way the unsaved behave here and now. The verse says nothing about the current behavior of believers or unbelievers. Rather, it concerns the eternal sinfulness of unbelievers.

A parallel passage is John 8:24: "If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Unbelievers die in a state of sinfulness. Forever they remain sinners. Believers, however, do not remain in a state of sinfulness because they are justified by faith: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin" (Rom 4:8; see also vv 1-7 and Rom 8:33-34).

Revelation 21:8 says nothing about whether believers actually sin prior to death or not. Of course we know that they do. However, that is not in view in Rev 21:8. What is actually in view is the continued unregenerate and unjustified state of the lost. Because unbelievers upon death are sealed permanently as those who are unjustified, they remain sinners in God's sight forever.

There will be no sinners and no sin in the new heavens and the new earth. According to 1 John 3:2, "when He is revealed, we shall be like Him."

It is interesting to note that this basic message is found three times in Revelation 21-22 (Rev 21:8, 27; and 22:15), the section of the book dealing with the eternal kingdom. A comparison of these three passages, and particularly the first and last, supports the conclusion that the sinful state of those in hell is what is in view. Space restrictions will not allow this here so I will address Rev 22:14-17 in the next issue.

If we look closely at Rev 21:6-8, we will discover that three groups of people are in view: (1) all who have received the free gift of eternal life, (2) those who have received the free gift and who also overcame the world in their Christian experience, and (3) all who did not receive the free gift of eternal life. The text can be laid out as follows:

**All believers:**

"I will give...freely..." (v 6b)

**Overcoming believers:**

"He who overcomes shall inherit..." (v 7)

**All unbelievers:**

"But the cowardly...murderers...shall have their part in the lake which burns..." (v 8)

It is naive both biblically and practically to conclude that all believers live victorious overcoming lives. Certainly nothing in Rev 21:6-8 gives that impression (cf. Rev 2:13:22; 22:14-17).

**Conclusion**

If the kingdom contained those still in a sinful state, it would not be as glorious as God intends.That would put an eternal damper on the joy the Lord Himself and we, His subjects, could experience.

Revelation 21:8 should be a joyous verse for us. Those who interpret it to mean that we need to examine our behavior to see if we are saved (or if we are still saved) have robbed it of its joy and replaced it with works-salvation gloom.

The kingdom will be truly joyful because everyone in it will be holy and sinless.

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**Who Are The Outsiders?**

Revelation 22:14-17

by Bob Wilkin

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This article is a follow-up to my article in the last issue on Rev 21:8. Some pastors and theologians use Rev 21:8 and 22:15 to try and prove that all "true" Christians persevere in the faith. In my previous article I showed that Rev 21:8 does not support that view. In this article I will show the same things regarding Rev 22:15.

**Rewards for Faithful Believers (v 14)**

Verse 14 of Revelation 22 reads, "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city."

In light of the context, it is obvious that believers are in view here. However, it is a mistake to conclude that all believers are meant. Not all believers can be described as "those who do His commandments." Jesus did not take it for granted that even the Apostles would obey Him! He said to them, "If you love Me, keep my commandments" John 14:15), and, "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14). Similarly, in Revelation chapters 2-3 the Lord makes it clear that being a victorious overcoming believer is not guaranteed (see, for example, 2:2-7, 10, 25-28; 3:11-12).

Two things are promised to the one who obeys the Lord as a characteristic pattern of life (no one obeys perfectly, cf. 1 John 1:8, 10): (1) the right to the tree of life and (2) the right to enter into the New Jerusalem through its gates. At first reading these may seem to be things which are true of all believers. However, that is not the case.

What is "the right to the tree of life"? It is the right to eat its fruits. Compare Rev 2:7, "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life."

Keep in mind that nothing is required for an eternally-secure person to remain saved. It is ridiculous to think that believers will need to eat fruit from the tree of life to retain their spiritual life.

What then is to be gained by eating this fruit? On the one hand, this fruit will be a wonderful delicacy which will be a delight to eat. On the other hand, the tree is called "the tree of life" for a reason. It will evidently grant to the believer who eats of it a special abundance of life. Today when we eat foods that are good for us we feel especially energized and encouraged. This will certainly be true of the food from the tree of life!

It is true, of course, that the tree of life was in the Garden of Eden as well. However, its fruit would not have had the same effect on fallen people with ungloried bodies as it will have in eternity on saints with glorified bodies. The tree of life will only grant abundant life to those with glorified bodies. According to Gen 3:22 the reason God removed Adam from the garden was "lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life and live forever." Had he eaten that fruit Adam would have lived forever in a state of separation from God (spiritual death). of course, since the tree of life was never intended for that terrible purpose, God took it away from man until the eternal kingdom.

The second reward to the obedient believer is the right to enter the New Jerusalem by its gates. Several things must be born in mind here. For one thing, most likely all believers will be going in and out of the New Jerusalem from time to time. Some believers in eternity will have their primary dwelling in the New Jerusalem. Surely those people will sometimes venture outside its walls, visit the rest of the new earth, and return. And, many saints will not live in the New Jerusalem! According to Rev 21:24 the new earth will contain many nations and the kings of those nations will travel to the New Jerusalem to take tribute to the King of kings. It is likely that all who live in these nations will make trips to the New Jerusalem.

For another thing, the gates will not be the only way by which someone could enter the city. For example, people might travel by air, flying over the walls. Or, they might come in on a subway, going under the walls. It is even conceivable in light of John 20 that people might travel right through the walls!

Finally, we know from the OT that the gates of ancient cities were places of honor. The respected elders of the community were allowed to sit in the gates and it was from there that they rendered judgments in legal matters (cf. Gen 19:1; 22:17; Deut 22:15; 25:7; Ruth 4:1-12).

Thus being able to eat of the tree of life and to enter the New Jerusalem by its gates will be rewards reserved solely for believers who were victorious in their experience in this life.

**Exclusion for All Unbelievers (v 15)**

Verse 15 says, "But outside are the dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie."

While the word outside might sound like it refers to those outside the New Jerusalem but yet still on the new earth, that is clearly not the case. The Lord is speaking of those who are entirely outside the kingdom.

Three lines of evidence suggest this interpretation. First, there will be no sinners in the eternal kingdom. None. Verse 15 is describing the condition of people at that time, not their experience in this life. No believer with a glorified body could be described as being a dog, a sorcerer, a sexually immoral person, a murderer, an idolater, or a liar. While those things were true of giants of the faith like David (2 Samuel) and Solomon (1 Kings 11) in their experiences prior to death, they could never be true of saints with glorified bodies.

Second, Rev 21:27 says that only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life will enter "it." The word it there most naturally refers to the kingdom since there will be no one anywhere on the New Earth whose name is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. All such people will be in the lake of fire (cf. Rev 20:15).

Third, Rev 21:8 refers to many of the same sins as mentioned in Rev 22:15 (i.e., murderers, sexually immoral, idolaters, and liars) and it clearly assigns the fate of people so designated as "the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Unbelievers will forever remain unjustified sinners who are forever excluded from God's kingdom.

**Inclusion for All Who Believe (v 17)**

Verse 17 reads, "And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who thirst come. And whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

Here once again is the free offer of eternal life. In the closing verses of the NT we find another free offer of the water of life. No strings are attached.

Not only is there no reason to interpret v. 15 as teaching that all "true" believers will persevere, but such an interpretation is directly contradicted by v. 17. Eternal life is free!

**Conclusion**

Revelation 22:15 in no way proves that all Christians live obedient, victorious lives. Neither does it prove that no Christian will be a murderer or a liar or an adulterer. It doesn't have anything to do with those issues at all. What it is saying is that the kingdom will contain no sinners. As John says, "When He is revealed, [then] we shall be like Him" (1 John 3:2). Amen! "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20).

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