

Overview of the New Creation

Revelation 21:1-8

The End Times

In my last post, we reviewed the **Summary of Revelation 20** and an **Introduction to Chapters 21 and 22**. In this post, we begin to explore **Revelation 21:1-8 ~ Overview of the New Creation**.

As with the rest of **Revelation**, there is no consensus among expositors regarding the closing chapters of the book. However, as with Chapter 20, the disagreement among scholars does not divide along the lines of the **Four Views** we have been studying. Consequently, my comments, by and large, will reflect the literal, premillennialist viewpoint.

"¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had passed away, and the sea was no longer there. ² Also, I saw the holy city, New Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for Her husband. ³ I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "See! God's Sh'khinah is with mankind, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and He himself, God-with-them, will be their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will no longer be any death; and there will no longer be any mourning, crying or pain; because the old order has passed away."⁵ Then the One sitting on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new!" Also, He said, "Write, 'These words are true and trustworthy!'"⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the 'A' and the 'Z,' the Beginning and the End. To anyone who is thirsty, I myself will give water free of charge from the Fountain of Life. ⁷ He who wins the victory will receive these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowardly, the untrustworthy, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those involved with the occult and with drugs, idol-worshippers, and all liars — their destiny is the lake burning with fire and sulfur, the second death." ~ Revelation 21:1-8 (CJB)

The New Heaven and New Earth: Revelation 21:1

This chapter does not refer to a new social order in this present world, but to the eternal home of the redeemed, in the **"Father's house are many places to live"** Yochanan 14:2 (CJB). It is one of the most beautiful, comforting, and precious chapters in the whole Bible.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had passed away, and the sea was no longer there. The first heaven and earth have passed away, as Kefa had said (2 Kefa 3:10), the heaven with a roar (an explosion?) and the earth and its works burned up. What amount of change in the physical universe is involved, we do not know. Nor do we know whether it will be this earth made over and renewed by fire, or an entirely different earth. Nor to what extent, with our glorified, incorruptible, spiritual bodies, we may be confined to any real planet or star, or be free to roam in the limitless spheres of space and eternity. How we would love to know! Someday we shall.

The sea was no longer there, but there is a river (Revelation 22:1). So we wonder if it is to be taken literally. The vast amounts of **seawater** on the present earth is to function as a filtering system. Ray Stedman explains: ¹

Over 70 percent of the surface of our world is covered with salt water. The average depth of the ocean is 2.3 miles. Why does our planet need such a massive covering of salt water? Answer: To cleanse the earth and make life possible. The earth is bathed in God's great antiseptic solution composed of about 96 percent water, 3.5 percent salt, and about .5 percent trace constituents—chlorine, magnesium, calcium, and the like. The salty brine of the ocean purges, cleanses, and preserves our planet, making it fit to live in. Many of the pollutants and wastes we produce get washed out of the soil and into our

¹ Material in this post is taken from "Revelation: Four Views, Revised & Updated" by Steve Gregg. Notations in brackets, if any, are my comments.

streams and rivers; others we deliberately dump into the rivers. The rivers wash these materials to the sea. The antiseptic salinity of the sea absorbs, scrubs, and breaks down these pollutants and wastes. The sun heats the sea, causing only pure, clean water vapor to float up into the sky, forming clouds which bring refreshing rain back to the land—a continuous cycle of cleansing and renewal. But in the new heaven and new earth there will be no more pollution, no more decay, no more need for cleansing, and thus no more need for a salty sea.

The New Yerushalayim: Revelation 21:2

Also, I saw the holy city, New Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. Just before **Yeshua** ascended back into heaven, He told His disciples that He was going to make a place for them (Yochanan 14:3); it is believed that this, the **New Jerusalem** is that place. The good news is that God is now taking reservations for that city. If you have never committed your life to Yeshua by faith, you can do so now, and that commitment will constitute your passport to heaven. The description of this city will be covered in detail later in this chapter.

We'll examine the imagery of the ***bride beautifully dressed for her husband*** later in Chapter 21 and also in Chapter 3.

The Citizens of That City: Revelation 21:3-8

I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "See! God's Sh'khinah is with mankind, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and He Himself, God-with-them, will be their God. This important verse tells the final fulfillment of one of the most frequently repeated covenant promises in the **Tanakh** that God will dwell with His people and be their God, with full fellowship restored as in the Garden of Eden. See Genesis 17:7; Exodus 6:7, 29:45; Leviticus 26:11-12 (which is particularly related to this verse); Numbers 15:41; Deuteronomy 29:12(13); 2 Samuel 7:24; Jeremiah 7:23, 11:4, 24:7, 30:22, 31:33(34), 32:38; Ezekiel 11:20, 34:24, 36:28, 37:23, 27; Zechariah 8:8; and Messianic Jews 8:10; and v. 7 below.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will no longer be any death; and there will no longer be any mourning, crying or pain; because the old order has passed away."⁵ ***Then the One sitting on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new!" Also, He said, "Write, 'These words are true and trustworthy!'"*** One of the best ways that **Yochanan** found to describe all that was so positive about heaven was to approach it from the negative! No more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying, and no more pain! Then, just in case there is difficulty in imagining a world without these things that are so common in the world today, things that have brought so much grief, he adds a postscript: ***These words are true and trustworthy!*** **Yochanan** quotes the Lord saying, ***Look! I am making everything new*** then continues in Chapters Twenty-one and Twenty-two to astound us with the further revelation of this promise.

And He said to me, "It is done! I am the 'A' and the 'Z,' the Beginning and the End. To anyone who is thirsty, I myself will give water free of charge from the Fountain of Life. ⁷ He who wins the victory will receive these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowardly, the untrustworthy, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those involved with the occult and with drugs, idol-worshippers, and all liars — their destiny is the lake burning with fire and sulfur, the second death. The one speaking must be **Yeshua**, as He identifies Himself as ***the Beginning and the End*** (here and in Revelation 22:13). Once again **Yeshua** calls attention to His deity; He wants us to understand that He and He alone is all that's necessary to make all of this a reality. Once again, we find the Lord extending an invitation before it is eternally too late; also, read the invitations of Revelation 22:17.

In my next post, we'll examine **Revelation 21:9-21 ~ The New Jerusalem.**