



Chapter 21

Verse 1- *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.*

new heaven and a new earth- This is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Isaiah 65:17, 66:22). The word used for “new” is *kainon* which refers to “new in quality” as opposed to *neos*, which is “new in time.” The first heaven and earth are temporary, and the second will be permanent and different.

Inclusio- Repetition of language at beginning and end of a section of literature (Genesis – Revelation) forming bookends.

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Verse 1- *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.*

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.



Revelation 21:1

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.

passed away- God will renovate the earth during the millennial kingdom and now will destroy and remake heaven and earth. The new earth has no sea, which is important to the present earth.

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Verse 2- *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

new Jerusalem- John introduces the new city here and describes it later in the chapter (vv. 9-12).

prepared as a bride- This city is not like cities on the earth today. It is very beautiful and carefully arranged, much like a bride on her wedding day. In chapter 19, the church is the “bride,” and her “husband” is Jesus. The wedding metaphor here changes to the new city as the bride because it is prepared for His bride.

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Verse 2- *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

prepared as a bride- Jesus promised that He would prepare a place for us in John 14:2-3:

*In My Father's house are many rooms; if that were not so, I would have told you, because **I am going there to prepare a place for you**. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will take you to Myself, so that where I am, there you also will be.*

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Verse 3- *And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,*

voice from the throne- This voice could be that of an angel or God Himself (Jews had a reverence for the name of God). Jesus dwelt among His people while on the earth and now will be among them for eternity.

John 1:14- *And the Word became flesh, **and dwelt** (eskēnōsen) **among us**; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

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Verse 4- *and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."*

wipe away every tear- This is the second time John uses this expression to denote God wiping our tears away:

Revelation 7:17- *for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and **God will wipe every tear from their eyes.**"*

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No More:

- *Tears- Rev. 7:17- A restatement of the Lamb's ministry*
- *Death- Gen. 2:17- destroyed and sent to the lake of fire*
- *Mourning- Rev. 18:8- Those who follow the prostitute will continue to mourn*
- *Crying-Rev. 18:24- A result of the persecution of believers*
- *Pain- Gen 3:16- One of the first results of the fall*

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Verse 5- *And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."*

all things new- This refers to what was just mentioned (tears, death, mourning, crying, pain).

He said- (legei) is a different verb from "He who sits on the throne" (*eipen*), which denotes a change in speaker. This is probably the angel.

Write- (Rev. 1:11; 14:13; 19:9) The angel commands John to write down words to be preserved.

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Verse 5- *And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."*

faithful and true- The words John wrote reflect the character of the Lord described in the Second Coming:

Rev. 19:11- *And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called **Faithful and True**, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.*

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Verse 6- *Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give water to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life, without cost.*

He said to me- The speaker in John's vision is once again Jesus (eipen).

It is done- (gegonan- 3rd person plural) Literally, "they are done." Speaks to all the actions that have led to this point. This reminds us of what the angel says when the final bowl judgment is poured out (16:17), but now the Lord affirms it. God said this previously at the end of Creation (Gen. 2:1-2) and on the cross (John 19:30).

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Alpha and the Omega- This reminds us of when the Lord used this title at the very beginning of the book (1:8) and when He will use it at the very end (22:13). This time, however, the title is explained. He is the source (*arche*) of creation (John 1:1) and the ultimate goal or purpose (*telos*) of creation (Romans 10:4).

give water- Those who recognize their need for water (the thirsty) have free access to water (salvation).

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give water- This reminds us of the prophecy of Isaiah 55:1 and Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well in John 4:14-

"You there! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."

"but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life."

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Verse 7- *The one who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.*

one who overcomes- This is another one of the repeated promises to those who endure, much like the one to believers in the seven churches of Asia Minor (2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21).

I will be his God- The ultimate reward of the thirsty is a quenched thirst, and those who overcome are children of God through the actions of the Son of God on the cross. This is the only time in Revelation heaven is compared to something believers will inherit, although it is used in the epistles (Eph, 1:14, 1 Peter 1:4).

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Verse 8- *But for the cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and sexually immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

But- These seven categories are in contrast to those who overcome. Overcomers inherit heaven, and those on this list inherit the lake of fire.

cowardly- These are at the top of the list because they are contrasted to the faithful who suffered persecution (1 John 2:19- *They went out from us, but they were not really of us...*).

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unbelieving- Similar to cowards (unfaithful to God), who are skeptical and agnostic. God's words are faithful and true (v. 5), but theirs are not trustworthy.

abominable- (*ebdelygmenoi*- polluted) They live a life in exact opposition to God's will. These are beast worshippers.

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murderers- These are also mentioned in 22:15. The followers of the beast are the enemies of God. They repeatedly murder believers throughout the book of Revelation (2:10, 13; 6:10; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2).

sexually immoral persons- Also mentioned in 22:15. Those who give themselves over to sexual immorality.

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sorcerers- Also mentioned in 9:21 and 18:23. Those who use drugs to cast spells for practicing witchcraft and deceiving the people.

idolaters- Mentioned in 9:20. Paul writes that idolatry and witchcraft are works of the flesh (Gal. 5:20), and John later condemns them to everlasting doom (22:15).

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all liars- Mentioned in 3:9, 21:27 and 22:15. The lives of these are in direct contradiction to the nature of God.

This list applies to those who never had faith or had false faith (apostates). They never fully committed themselves to the Lord.

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Verse 9- *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."*

one of the seven angels- One of the angels who poured out the bowl judgments will now lead John on a tour of the new Jerusalem, the capital city of the new Heaven. The angel's previous focus (17:1) was the prostitute (false religious and economic system) and her punishment. Here, he focuses on the bride of the Lamb and her reward.

the bride, the wife- The angel continues using the bride/wife/wedding metaphor, but now she is a city.

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Verse 10- *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,*

in the Spirit- John has been in this state before (1:10; 4:2; 17:3).

to a great and high mountain- This reminds us of 17:3 where an angel led John to the desert to see the great prostitute. Now he leads him to a mountain to see the bride of the Lamb. Ezekiel saw this same vision (Ezek. 40:2).

holy city- This city has been consecrated by God. There is no sin in the new city.

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Verse 10- *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,*

coming down out of heaven- This reminds us of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9), where God frustrated the efforts of people trying to reach up to God. Here, He there is a contrast as He brings heaven down to earth.

from God- This city and its inhabitants will be in the very presence of God.

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Verse 11- *having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very valuable stone, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper.*

the glory of God- The tabernacle and temple were the temporary structures where the glory of God resided. Now, the glory of God will be in the new Jerusalem.

crystal-clear jasper- John is trying to describe the indescribable. The names and colors of stones in Scripture have changed throughout the millennia. Jasper (*iaspidi*) has been described as purple, green, and red in color. Maybe this clear, brilliant stone has shades of all three.

Next week...

Chapter 21-

“The New Heaven, Earth, and the New Jerusalem, continued”

