

“Practical Eschatology: What Will Heaven Be Like?”

For the week of May 2, 2021

The New Jerusalem is literally heaven on earth. It is referred to in the Bible in several places (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 11:10, 12:22-24, and 13:14), but it is most fully described in Revelation 21. So, what has happened to bring us to this chapter?

- The recorded history of man is at its end. All of the ages have come and gone.
- Christ has gathered His church in the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).
- The Tribulation has passed (Revelation 6-18).
- The battle of Armageddon has been fought and won by our Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:17-21).
- Satan has been chained for the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth (Revelation 20:1-3).
- A new temple has been established in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40-48).
- The final rebellion against God has been defeated, and Satan has received his punishment, an eternity in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:7-10).
- The Great White Throne Judgment has taken place, and mankind has been judged (Revelation 20:11-15).

The New Heaven and the New Earth

Read Revelation 21:1-8. When you think about eternity does it usually include a new earth or just heaven? Describe some of your thoughts about what eternity will be like.

No More...

The new heavens and new earth are notable for seven things that will no longer be there. Read the following verses and describe what will be absent:

1. Revelation 21:1 no more _____
2. Revelation 21:4 no more _____
3. Revelation 21:4 no more _____
4. Revelation 21:4 no more _____
5. Revelation 21:4 no more _____
6. Revelation 22:3 no more _____
7. Revelation 22:5 no more _____

What would a world look like without these things?

The New Jerusalem

Read Revelation 21:9-14. Describe what you read. What are some of the amazing characteristics of the New Jerusalem?

God's Glory

The most distinguishing characteristic of the New Jerusalem is that it is the throne of God, and therefore has the glory of God. The glory of God is simply the sum total of His characteristics. What are some of those characteristics?

Read Isaiah 43:7. It says that God created us for His glory. What does that mean? How is this shown through man?

Since God is the one from whom glory comes, He will not let stand when others try to claim glory comes from man or from the idols of man or from nature. Read Isaiah 42:8 for an example. Now read Romans 1:21-25 and describe why God is so displeased.

Size and Contents of the New Jerusalem

Read Revelation 21:15-21. Describe the contents of the walls, foundations, and the gates.

The length and width and height are the same: About 1,380 miles in each direction. Comment on what Christian author Henry M. Morris says about this cube-shaped city:

"It should also be remembered that the new bodies of the resurrected saints will be like those of angels, no longer limited by gravitational or electromagnetic forces as at present. This it will be as easy for the inhabitants to travel vertically as horizontally, in the new Jerusalem. Consequently, the "streets" of the city (verse 21) may well include vertical passageways as well as horizontal avenues, and the "blocks" could be real cubical blocks, instead of square areas between streets as in a present-day earthly city" (The Revelation Record, 451).

Read Revelation 21:22-27. Why is there no temple or need for light?

The River of Life

Read Revelation 22:1-5. What similarities do you find between the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem? Specifically, what ways will the consequences of the Fall in the Garden of Eden be reversed in God's New Jerusalem?

Read John 4:13-14 and 7:37-38. What do these words of Jesus have to do with the "water of life" mentioned in 22:1?

Jesus is Coming

Read Revelation 22:6-21. Jesus said, "*Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.*" How does your life reflect a belief in that promise? How would our church be different if each member took this verse to heart?

A Final Thought: The Path for everyone leads either to Heaven or Hell

The current death rate is 100%. Unless Christ returns soon, we're all going to die. Worldwide, 3 people die every second, 180 every minute, and almost 11,000 every hour. That means over 250,000 people every day go either to heaven or hell. Jesus said the following about heaven and hell in Matthew 7:13-14:

¹³ "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Why is the path "to life" so narrow (hint: Read John 14:6)? Do people unknowingly make a decision that "leads to destruction," or are they fully aware of the path they take in life? Explain your answer.

Every one of us have prayers for family, friends, or others to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior. During your group prayer time, spend time praying for their salvation.