A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

REVELATION 21:1-27
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Text:

Revelation 21:1-27,

1. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more.
2. And I saw the holy city—the new Jerusalem—descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband.
3. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: “Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them.
4. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist any more—or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the former things have ceased to exist.”
5. And the one seated on the throne said: “Look! I am making all things new!” Then he said to me, “Write it down, because these words are reliable and true.”
6. He also said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who is thirsty I will give water free of charge from the spring of the water of life.
7. The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be my son.
8. But as for the cowards, unbelievers, detestable persons, murderers, the sexually immoral, and those who practice magic spells, idol worshipers, and all those who
lie, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur. That is the second death.”

9. Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven final plagues came and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb!”

10. So he took me away in the Spirit to a huge, majestic mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

11. The city possesses the glory of God; its brilliance is like a precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper.

12. It has a massive, high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels at the gates, and the names of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel are written on the gates.

13. There are three gates on the east side, three gates on the north side, three gates on the south side and three gates on the west side.

14. The wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15. The angel who spoke to me had a golden measuring rod with which to measure the city and its foundation stones and wall.

16. Now the city is laid out as a square, its length and width the same. He measured the city with the measuring rod at fourteen hundred miles (its length and width and height are equal).

17. He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits according to human measurement, which is also the angel’s.

18. The city’s wall is made of jasper and the city is pure gold, like transparent glass.
19. The foundations of the city’s wall are decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,
20. the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.
21. And the twelve gates are twelve pearls—each one of the gates is made from just one pearl! The main street of the city is pure gold, like transparent glass.
22. Now I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God—the All-Powerful—and the Lamb are its temple.
23. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God lights it up, and its lamp is the Lamb.
24. The nations will walk by its light and the kings of the earth will bring their grandeur into it.
25. Its gates will never be closed during the day (and there will be no night there).
26. They will bring the grandeur and the wealth of the nations into it,
27. but nothing ritually unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or practices falsehood, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. (NET)

Introduction:

Revelation 21 begins with the encouraging statement, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no
more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 21:1-2) The “new heaven and new earth” was a picture of victory for the saints of God.

2 Peter 3:13 also speaks of “new heavens and a new earth.” Peter wrote, “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (AKJV) The most glorious characteristic of this new heaven and new earth is that it is a place in which righteousness dwells. Isaiah 44-46 likewise deals with the theme of a new heaven and a new earth. Isaiah 44:1-28, “Now, listen, Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen!” This is what the Lord, the one who made you, says—the one who formed you in the womb and helps you: “Don’t be afraid, my servant Jacob, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen! For I will pour water on the parched ground and cause streams to flow on the dry land. I will pour my spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your children. They will sprout up like a tree in the grass, like poplars beside channels of water. One will say, ‘I belong to the Lord,’ and another will use the name ‘Jacob.’ One will write on his hand, ‘The Lord’s,’ and use the name ‘Israel.’”

The Absurdity of Idolatry This is what the Lord, Israel’s king, says, their protector, the Lord who commands armies: “I am the first and I am the last, there is no God but me. Who is like me? Let him make his claim! Let him announce it and explain it to me—since I established an ancient people—let them announce future events! Don’t panic! Don’t be afraid! Did I not tell you beforehand and decree it? You are my witnesses! Is there any God but
me? There is no other sheltering rock; I know of none. All who form idols are nothing; the things in which they delight are worthless. Their witnesses cannot see; they recognize nothing, so they are put to shame. Who forms a god and casts an idol that will prove worthless? Look, all his associates will be put to shame; the craftsmen are mere humans. Let them all assemble and take their stand! They will panic and be put to shame. A blacksmith works with his tool and forges metal over the coals. He forms it with hammers; he makes it with his strong arm. He gets hungry and loses his energy; he drinks no water and gets tired. A carpenter takes measurements; he marks out an outline of its form; he scrapes it with chisels, and marks it with a compass. He patterns it after the human form, like a well-built human being, and puts it in a shrine. He cuts down cedars and acquires a cypress or an oak. He gets trees from the forest; he plants a cedar and the rain makes it grow. A man uses it to make a fire; he takes some of it and warms himself. Yes, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Then he makes a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it. Half of it he burns in the fire—over that half he cooks meat; he roasts a meal and fills himself. Yes, he warms himself and says, ‘Ah! I am warm as I look at the fire.’ With the rest of it he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships it. He prays to it, saying, ‘Rescue me, for you are my god!’ They do not comprehend or understand, for their eyes are blind and cannot see; their minds do not discern. No one thinks to himself, nor do they comprehend or understand and say to themselves: ‘I burned half of it in the fire—yes, I baked bread over the coals; I roasted meat and ate it. With the rest of it should I make a disgusting idol? Should
I bow down to dry wood? He feeds on ashes; his deceived mind misleads him. He cannot rescue himself, nor does he say, ‘Is this not a false god I hold in my right hand?’ Remember these things, O Jacob, O Israel, for you are my servant. I formed you to be my servant; O Israel, I will not forget you! I remove the guilt of your rebellious deeds as if they were a cloud, the guilt of your sins as if they were a cloud. Come back to me, for I protect you.”

Shout for joy, O sky, for the Lord intervenes; shout out, you subterranean regions of the earth. O mountains, give a joyful shout; you too, O forest and all your trees! For the Lord protects Jacob; he reveals his splendor through Israel. This is what the Lord, your protector, says, the one who formed you in the womb: “I am the Lord, who made everything, who alone stretched out the sky, who fashioned the earth all by myself, who frustrates the omens of the empty talkers and humiliates the omen readers, who overturns the counsel of the wise men and makes their advice seem foolish, who fulfills the oracles of his prophetic servants and brings to pass the announcements of his messengers, who says about Jerusalem, ‘She will be inhabited,’ and about the towns of Judah, ‘They will be rebuilt, her ruins I will raise up,’ who says to the deep sea, ‘Be dry! I will dry up your sea currents,’ who commissions Cyrus, the one I appointed as shepherd to carry out all my wishes and to decree concerning Jerusalem, ‘She will be rebuilt,’ and concerning the temple, ‘It will be reconstructed.’” (NET)

Isaiah 45:1-25, This is what the Lord says to his chosen one, to Cyrus, whose right hand I hold in order to subdue nations before him, and disarm kings, to open doors before him, so gates remain unclosed: “I will go before
you and level mountains. Bronze doors I will shatter and iron bars I will hack through. I will give you hidden treasures, riches stashed away in secret places, so you may recognize that I am the Lord, the one who calls you by name, the God of Israel. For the sake of my servant Jacob, Israel, my chosen one, I call you by name and give you a title of respect, even though you do not recognize me. I am the Lord, I have no peer, there is no God but me. I arm you for battle, even though you do not recognize me. I do this so people will recognize from east to west that there is no God but me; I am the Lord, I have no peer. I am the one who forms light and creates darkness; the one who brings about peace and creates calamity. I am the Lord, who accomplishes all these things. O sky, rain down from above! Let the clouds send down showers of deliverance! Let the earth absorb it so salvation may grow, and deliverance may sprout up along with it. I, the Lord, create it. One who argues with his Creator is in grave danger, one who is like a mere shard among the other shards on the ground! The clay should not say to the potter, “What in the world are you doing? Your work lacks skill!” Danger awaits one who says to his father, “What in the world are you fathering?” and to his mother, “What in the world are you bringing forth?” This is what the Lord says, the Holy One of Israel, the one who formed him, concerning things to come: “How dare you question me about my children! How dare you tell me what to do with the work of my own hands! I made the earth, I created the people who live on it. It was me—my hands stretched out the sky, I give orders to all the heavenly lights. It is me—I stir him up and commission him; I will make all his ways level. He will rebuild my city; he will
send my exiled people home, but not for a price or a bribe,” says the Lord who commands armies. This is what the Lord says: “The profit of Egypt and the revenue of Ethiopia, along with the Sabeans, those tall men, will be brought to you and become yours. They will walk behind you, coming along in chains. They will bow down to you and pray to you: ‘Truly God is with you; he has no peer; there is no other God!’” Yes, you are a God who keeps hidden, O God of Israel, deliverer! They will all be ashamed and embarrassed; those who fashion idols will all be humiliated. Israel will be delivered once and for all by the Lord; you will never again be ashamed or humiliated. For this is what the Lord says, the one who created the sky—he is the true God, the one who formed the earth and made it; he established it, he did not create it without order, he formed it to be inhabited—“I am the Lord, I have no peer. I have not spoken in secret, in some hidden place. I did not tell Jacob’s descendants, ‘Seek me in vain!’ I am the Lord, the one who speaks honestly, who makes reliable announcements. Gather together and come! Approach together, you refugees from the nations! Those who carry wooden idols know nothing, those who pray to a god that cannot deliver. Tell me! Present the evidence! Let them consult with one another! Who predicted this in the past? Who announced it beforehand? Was it not I, the Lord? I have no peer, there is no God but me, a God who vindicates and delivers; there is none but me. Turn to me so you can be delivered, all you who live in the earth’s remote regions! For I am God, and I have no peer. I solemnly make this oath—what I say is true and reliable: ‘Surely every knee will bow to me, every tongue will solemnly affirm; they will say about me, “Yes,
the Lord is a powerful deliverer."

All who are angry at him will cower before him. All the descendants of Israel will be vindicated by the Lord and will boast in him. (NET)

Isaiah 46:1-13, Bel kneels down, Nebo bends low. Their images weigh down animals and beasts. Your heavy images are burdensome to tired animals. Together they bend low and kneel down; they are unable to rescue the images; they themselves head off into captivity. "Listen to me, O family of Jacob, all you who are left from the family of Israel, you who have been carried from birth, you who have been supported from the time you left the womb. Even when you are old, I will take care of you, even when you have gray hair, I will carry you. I made you and I will support you; I will carry you and rescue you. To whom can you compare and liken me? Tell me whom you think I resemble, so we can be compared! Those who empty out gold from a purse and weigh out silver on the scale hire a metalsmith, who makes it into a god. They then bow down and worship it. They put it on their shoulder and carry it; they put it in its place and it just stands there; it does not move from its place. Even when someone cries out to it, it does not reply; it does not deliver him from his distress. Remember this, so you can be brave! Think about it, you rebels! Remember what I accomplished in antiquity! Truly I am God, I have no peer; I am God, and there is none like me, who announces the end from the beginning and reveals beforehand what has not yet occurred, who says, 'My plan will be realized, I will accomplish what I desire,' who summons an eagle from the east, from a distant land, one who carries out my plan. Yes, I have decreed, yes, I will bring it to pass; I have formulated a plan, yes, I will carry it out. Listen to
me, you stubborn people, you who distance yourself from doing what is right. I am bringing my deliverance near, it is not far away; I am bringing my salvation near, it does not wait. I will save Zion; I will adorn Israel with my splendor.” (NET)

Isaiah, Peter and John all had in mind the same thing as they wrote of the new heaven and new earth. They are writing about the time when persecution will be over and the saints of God will be victorious. The “new heaven and the new earth” means a new order of things. God’s faithful people will be victorious!

Revelation 21 gives us a look at the wonderful fellowship with God that will be enjoyed by those that die faithful. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” (Revelation 21:4) (AKJV) We are also provided a glimpse into the beauty and protection enjoyed by those that die faithful.

Commentary:

WONDERFUL FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

Revelation 21:1-7, Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. And I saw the holy city—the new Jerusalem—descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: “Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live
among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist any more—or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the former things have ceased to exist.” And the one seated on the throne said: “Look! I am making all things new!” Then he said to me, “Write it down, because these words are reliable and true.” He also said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who is thirsty I will give water free of charge from the spring of the water of life. The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (NET)

God’s faithful people do not die without hope. The sea that had prevented intimate fellowship in the presence of God is no more. (Revelation 21:1, Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. (NET)) The New Jerusalem is the church. “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:2) Those that die faithful in the church enjoy heavenly hope.

The amazing fellowship that saints enjoy with God is beyond anything they could have hoped for. This is a picture of the final state of the redeemed. In this state: (1) God dwells among His people (Revelation 21:3), (2) God is their God and they are His people (Revelation 21:3), (3) There will be no more tears (Revelation 21:4), (4) There will be no more death (Revelation 21:4), (5) There will be no more sorrow (Revelation 21:4), (6) There will be no more crying.
(Revelation 21:4), (7) There will be no more pain (Revelation 21:4), (8) All things are made new (Revelation 21:5), (9) God will give unto him that is a thirst of the fountain of the water of life freely (Revelation 21:6), (10) He that overcomes shall inherit all things (Revelation 21:7), (11) They shall be God’s son. (Revelation 21:7) It is a wonderful thing to overcome!

**THE WRETCHED STATE OF THE UNGODLY**

Revelation 21:8, But as for the cowards, unbelievers, detestable persons, murderers, the sexually immoral, and those who practice magic spells, idol worshipers, and all those who lie, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur. That is the second death.” (NET)

In sharp contrast to the state of the righteous John wrote of the state of the ungodly. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8) This is the final description of those that do not overcome.

Observe these sins: (1) the fearful are those that in cowardice choose self and safety before Christ. God’s faithful people must do the right thing and to hold fast to the faith. (2) Unbelief is the result of spiritual wickedness. (3) The abominable likely were participants in the rites of paganism and the unmentionable perversions of that day. (4) Murderers do not respect God and, therefore, have no respect for human life. (5) Fornicators violate the eternal law of God by their sexual behavior. (6) Sorcerers practice an especially despicable sin because they try to
substitute some other power for that of God. (7) Idolaters give the glory that should belong to the Creator to the creation. (8) Liars can never be pleasing to God. God cannot allow any place in heaven for those that practice these things. They “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (AKJV)

JOHN IS SHOWN THE NEW JERUSALEM

Revelation 21:9-17, Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven final plagues came and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb!” So he took me away in the Spirit to a huge, majestic mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. The city possesses the glory of God; its brilliance is like a precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper. It has a massive, high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels at the gates, and the names of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel are written on the gates. There are three gates on the east side, three gates on the north side, three gates on the south side and three gates on the west side. The wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The angel who spoke to me had a golden measuring rod with which to measure the city and its foundation stones and wall. Now the city is laid out as a square, its length and width the same. He measured the city with the measuring rod at fourteen hundred miles (its length and width and height are equal). He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits according to human measurement, which is also the angel’s. (NET)
The description of the New Jerusalem had to do with the glory of God. There was security because of the gates and the walls that were great and high. There was hope because of the size of the city. It was 1,400 miles in each direction. The city “had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” (Revelation 21:12) (AKJV)

God provided perfect protection. The wall around the city stood 216 feet high. “And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.” (Revelation 21:17) “We are to conceive of the city itself as towering immensely above the walls. Its glory, therefore, would not be obscured by the wall that was thrown around it for defense.”

NOTHING THAT DEFILES WILL ENTER INTO IT

Revelation 21:18-27, The city’s wall is made of jasper and the city is pure gold, like transparent glass. The foundations of the city’s wall are decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates are twelve pearls—each one of the gates is made from just one pearl! The main street of the city is pure gold, like transparent glass. Now I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God—the All-Powerful—and the
Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God lights it up, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light and the kings of the earth will bring their grandeur into it. Its gates will never be closed during the day (and there will be no night there). They will bring the grandeur and the wealth of the nations into it, but nothing ritually unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or practices falsehood, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. (NET)

God takes the most precious things that we are familiar with and made the city of these. Imagine the worth of this wonderful place. It will be a place of great blessings because of the presence of God. “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it. And the Lamb is the light thereof.” (Revelation 21:22-23) (AKJV)

The inhabitants of heaven will all be pure and holy. Those that are unclean and practice abominations or falsehood will have no access into the heavenly city. “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lam’s book of life.” (Revelation 21:27) (AKJV) Nothing will be found in that blessed abode which is unholy or sinful. The gates of heaven have been opened wide for the righteous by the blood of Jesus. However, nothing that defiles will be there because they will all be cast into a lake of fire.
Conclusion:

The blessing awaiting those that die faithful to God should motivate us to obey the gospel and serve Him faithfully. Under any condition, we are always better off to serve God. Think of the blessings that can be yours!
Questions

on

Revelation 21:1-27

1. The “new heaven and new earth” of Revelation 21 was a picture of ___________ for the __________ of __________.

2. The most ___________ ___________ of the ______ ______ and _______________ _______________ is that it is a place in which _______________ _______________.

3. ___________, ___________ and ___________ all wrote of ___________ ___________ and a ___________ ___________ in which there would be no more ___________ and the ___________ of ____________ would be ____________, a ___________ ___________ of ____________.

4. Revelation 21 provides a view of the __________ __________ with _______________ that will be _______________ by those that _______________ ___________ and a ___________ of the ___________ and _______________ ____________ by those that _______________ ______________.

5. ___________ ___________ ___________ do not _______________ without ________________.

6. The ___________ ___________ is the ____________.
   Those that ___________ ___________ in the ___________ ___________ _____________. The ___________ ___________ that ___________ ___________ with ____________
is ______________ ___ _______________ that they could have _______________ for.

7. In the final state of the redeemed, _________________ _______________ among His _______________, _______________ is their _______________ and they are His _______________, there will be no more _______________, there will be no more _______________, there will be no more _______________, there will be no more _______________, there will be no more _______________, all things are made _______________, God will give unto him that is _______________ of the _______________ of the _______________ of _______________, _______________ shall _______________ _______________, _______________ will be his _______________, and he shall be _______________ _______________.

8. The ungodly are the _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________.

9. The unsaved shall have their part in the _______________ which _______________ with _______________ and _______________: which is the _______________ _______________.

10. The _______________ are those that in _______________ _______________ _______________ and _______________ before _______________.

11. _______________ is the result of _______________ _______________.

12. The ___________ likely were participants in the ___________ of ___________ and the ___________ ___________ ___________ of that _____________.

13. ___________ do not ___________ ___________ and have ___________ ___________ for ___________ ___________.

14. ___________ ___________ the ___________ ___________ of ___________ by their sexual behavior.

15. ___________ ___________ an especially ___________ ___________ because they try to ___________ some other ___________ for that of _____________.

16. ___________ give the ___________ that should belong to the ___________ to the ___________.

17. ___________ can never be ___________ to ____________.

18. The ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ and the ___________ ___________ are the ___________ ___________ of the ___________.

19. The ___________ of ___________ will all be ___________ and ___________. Those that are ___________ and ___________ ___________ ___________ or ___________ will have ___________ ___________ into the ___________.
20. The ______________ of ______________ have been ______________ ______________ for the ______________ by the ______________ of ______________.

21. The ______________ ______________ is made of ______________ and the ______________ is ______________ ______________, like ______________ ______________.

22. The ______________ of the ______________ ______________ are decorated with ______________ ______________ of ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________ and ______________.

23. The ______________ ______________ are ______________ ______________, each one of the ______________ is made from just ______________ ______________.

24. The ______________ ______________ of the ______________ is ______________ ______________.

25. The ______________ of ______________ lights up the ______________ so that there is no need for the ______________ or ______________. Its ______________ is the ______________. The ______________ ______________ and the ______________ are the ______________ ______________. No other temple is needed.