

Revelation Step by Step 16

The New Heavens and the new Earth

Two words in the New Testament are translated 'new'. One means brand new, newly created, the other is something that has previously existed but is re-made with a new aspect, adapted to a new end. This is the word employed here. Revelation 21:1, 'Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.'

God had actually used the words before, of the Great White Throne Judgement, in Isaiah 65:17-25, where the people are still physical, but a great change had taken place from a people fully educated in **God's way** to a largely new, resurrected population, few of whom knew much of God's way, if anything at all! But the preparations had been made during the Millennium for this huge resurrection and a whole new 'ball game' begins.

These people then have a lifetime to learn and practice God's way, or reject it. Those who choose to live by God's Laws repent, are baptised, receive God's Holy Spirit, and at the close of the 100 years become Spirit beings.

So *then*, it is change again. Only righteous spirit beings can survive the re-making of the earth, 2 Peter 3:10-11, 'But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, **the elements will be destroyed by fire**, and the earth and its works will be laid bare. **Since everything will be destroyed** in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to conduct yourselves in holiness and godliness.'

The New Heavens and the new Earth meant the re-creation of the old, and everything physical would be consumed by fire, purified! That includes those who refused to repent from the Great White Throne judgement period as well as the incorrigible sinners from *this* physical age and from the Millennium, few though they may be, who will be resurrected like the rich man, only to face the flames, in Luke 16:19-31, "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores....."

In this re-created world, there will be no more sea. Revelation 21:1, 'Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.' I have wondered about this scripture, because it seems out of place, for logically it would seem more appropriate *before* the Second Resurrection, as the earth was prepared for all those who had *ever lived*. Now, let me say *this* is purely my speculation, but there *is* indication of a *possibility* that the sea

had indeed been gradually removed, as the Millennium progressed. Isaiah 60:5, 'Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall **fear**, and be enlarged; because the **abundance** of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.' Interestingly, the King James margin suggests, instead of abundance, the "noise" of the sea because the word in Strong's, 1995, is defined as "a sound, murmur, roar", and only finally, "abundance". "Fear", Strong's 6342, is defined "to dread or in awe", so this verse could also read, "For then (it is discussing the Millennium) you shall look and be radiant, and your heart will be awed because the sound of the sea shall be overthrown, then to you shall come the wealth of the nations." That would not contradict Revelation 21:1! Just my speculation!

Continuing, at the moment only 29% of the earth's surface is land, so 71% more land will then be added, and of course, all who inhabit it will then be Spirit Beings, all of which is part of God's ongoing plan for the earth to be the administrative headquarters of the universe. Beyond that we must await God's elucidation!

Verses 1-8 in chapter 21 are the consequent conclusion to the period Rev.19:1-20:15, and summarise the end of sin's rule. Now, those written in the Book of Life live on into eternity and some will inhabit this ideal "New Jerusalem" which typifies the glorified Saints, v2, 'I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.'

v3. Now, with all sin removed, along with Satan, his demons and Adam's curse (Genesis 3:17) both God the Father and Jesus Christ will dwell with their family. '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.'

v4. This verse is very similar to Revelation 7:15,17,23, for here is the fulfilment of the rewards promised to the repentant Saints of Revelation 7. "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Killed during the Great Tribulation, resurrected during the Second Resurrection, where they served in a physical Temple (Ezekiel 41:1....) they now serve God in a new way, of which we know.... Nothing!

v5. "And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Verses 6-8. It is Christ who describes Himself in these terms, Rev.1:8,11;22:13, 'And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment." He will give the water of eternal life to all the repentant, that they may be sons and daughters within His family, while the *unrepentant* fearful (rather cowardly or craven) etc..... are consumed in the fiery re-creation of the earth.

v8. "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake

that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death.” These are those who by their practices dishonour God’s creation (see Romans chapter one).

Verses 9-22. The Apostle John now reverts to his vision of the heavenly city as though wed to the Lamb, for its inhabitants, apart from God, are the glorified saints of the Old Testament and the New, as well as the angels. The old Jerusalem is no more, along with the old earth. One of those angels takes John to view the city.

V9-10, ‘Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.”

It’s dimensions are staggering! Verse 16, ‘The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal.’ I can only think that it could not be a cube, but rather a pyramidal form, with a height of 1500 miles, less it’s mass should disturb the very equilibrium of the planet! The height of the walls is also huge, suggesting safety for its inhabitants, and even its streets are pure gold, v 21.

Verse 22. John saw no Temple there, because God the Father and Christ are its Temple, with no need of an altar, rather direct access for all whose names are written in Christ’s Book of life.

Verse 23. The same thought is found in Isaiah 60:19, “The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory.” But the last 5 words are changed “....and the Lamb is the light there,” as in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world.”

How often in God’s word are we warned to pattern ourselves after Jesus Christ, to walk in his footsteps, by studying how He lived, for what He did, we must emulate. What He did not do we must avoid. 1 Peter 2:21, ‘For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.’ Do YOU do that? Are you a Christian? Or are you a pretend Christian, who does not even keep the 4th Commandment?

Verse 24. In those days the nations will all honour God, and Jerusalem as the capital of the world, from which all news, knowledge and blessings will flow, as God reveals His further Plan for mankind.

Verse 25, 26. The gates remain open continually, signifying perfect tranquillity and safety, as the nations bring their treasure to beautify their capital. Even darkness is done away, for Spirit Beings have no need to sleep!

Verse 27. It does not follow that John anticipates these evils will exist on the new earth, but rather their total absence among those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of Life.

There are those who would spiritualise away what we have read, denying it is a picture of the future, but it is clear that this takes place after the Millennium, after the First and Second Resurrections, and **after the Judgement**. It is a new creation, far removed from anything God's people have ever experienced, and the Lamb is central. It provides the ideal towards which, even in this life, we continue to strive!

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