

Lesson 13 - 24 January 2010

The Eternal State of the Righteous

Lesson Scope: [Revelation 21 and 22](#)

Lesson Focus

The eternal state of the wicked is the lake of fire. Few details are given, and more are not needed. Suffice it to say that we do not want to go there. In contrast, there are vivid descriptions of the eternal state of the righteous. Chapter 21 describes the New Jerusalem. It is beautiful! Chapter 22 elaborates upon the river of life that flows out of the throne of God. These descriptions serve as an incentive for faithfulness. This is God's day of triumph, and the eternal day of rest for His children. All are invited to drink freely of the water of life. And the tree of life is again within man's reach.

Let us not overlook the evangelistic overtones in this lesson. In 21:6 and 22:17 the water of life is available for thirsty souls. In 22:17 the word *come* is used three times. The first two are the appeal of the Spirit and the redeemed for Christ to come. The third is an invitation to "take the water of life freely." During His earthly ministry, Jesus "cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

Verses 7 and 8 of chapter 21 contrast the end of the wicked with the end of the righteous. The better choice is obvious.

Also notice the connection between 22:14 and the Great Commission in Matthew 28:20. The church is responsible to teach the commands of Christ, and the doing of His commands is the key of access to the city. As you fit details of these chapters together, keep in mind that the all-important thing is to be ready for Christ's return.

"I go to prepare a place for you." Only those who have obeyed Christ's will enter this wondrous abode.

Lesson Aim: To learn about the place of eternal abode for the righteous.

Theme Verse

[2 Peter 3:13](#). Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Lesson Text

"I Make All Things New"

[Rev. 21:1-7](#)

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. ²And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. ⁴And 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. ⁵And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. ⁶And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. ⁷He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

"I Will Shew Thee the Bride"

[Rev. 21:9-12](#)

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. ¹⁰And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; ¹²And 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:

[Rev. 21:14](#)

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

[Rev. 21:16](#)

And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

[Rev. 21:27](#)

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 Lamb's book of life.

"They Shall See His Face"

[Rev. 22:1-4](#)

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. ²In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. ³And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: ⁴And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

Questions for Study

"I Make All Things New"

1. Why is it so important that all things are made new?
2. What blessing's accompany the eternal state of the righteous?

"I Will Shew Thee the Bride"

3. What is the significance of the names that are written in the gates and foundations of the holy city?
4. What are the implications of the New Jerusalem's vast size?
5. What comfort is found in 21:27? What challenge?

"They Shall See His Face"

6. In what respects is the throne central in New Jerusalem?
7. What perfections of the eternal state are mentioned in 22:3-5?
8. What are the conditions for entering the holy city?

Analyzing the Passage

The declaration "Behold, I make all things new" is a comprehensive statement. It must all be new because the old was cursed. In 22:3 it is specifically stated, "And there shall be no more curse." The old was characterized by sorrow, crying, pain and death. But "the former things are passed away."

The most wonderful fact of the new is that God will dwell with men! That is God's great desire. There will be no need for a tabernacle or temple, because all things are new. The new is reserved for the overcomer.

A detailed description of the New Jerusalem follows. It is referred to as the

Lamb's wife. It is the eternal abode of the church, where she will live and reign with Christ. *Like* and *as it were* indicate that human language is unable to fully describe the beauty and grandeur of the city.

It is of interest that gates are named after the twelve tribes of Israel and that the foundations are named after the twelve apostles. It was though Israel that Christ came, but the apostles laid the groundwork for the church. Everything is glorious and beautiful.

The glory of God and the presence of the Lamb are the source of light; God's glory no longer needs to be veiled. The only occupants of the city are those who are listed in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Chapter 22 opens with a description of the new paradise. The river flows from the throne, giving life. Of special interest is the tree of life that yields fruit every month. Twelve is the number of final completeness. All may eat and live. And there will be no night just one eternal day. That will be new!

Principles and Applications

"I Make All Things New"

1. *When God makes all things new, the effects of sin will be no more (21:1, 4-5).*

This truth is far-reaching. There will be no more curse with all of the toil that it brought. There will be no more death with all of its pain and tears. There will be renewed access to the tree of life and the water of life. Man will have free access to the presence of God. It will be wonderful!

2. *When God makes all things new, His desire to dwell with man will be realized (21:3).*

Within man is a strong desire to see God and to be with Him. But God's desire to dwell with man is stronger. God's desire to dwell among His people was realized in part when He dwelt among Israel in the tabernacle and later the temple. Jesus came and dwelt among men as a man. In this age the Holy Spirit dwells in men's hearts. But in eternity this desire will be fully satisfied. God will personally and visibly dwell with men!

3. *Only those who overcome can claim the right to sonship and the eternal inheritance (21:7).*

Victorious living marks the true sons of God (1 John 3:9). By God's grace this has always been a possibility. The prospect of our eternal inheritance should motivate us to steadfast faithfulness in the time of testing.

"I Will Shew Thee the Bride"

4. *The New Jerusalem will be glorious (21:10-11).*

Faith will give way to sight. It will be built of pure gold and precious stones. Everything will be perfectly glorious. It is the handiwork of God, and He will dwell there. Even now God is perfecting our lives so that we may dwell there (Ephesians 4:13).

5. *The New Jerusalem is a memorial to God's glorious work of redemption (21:11-12, 14).*

The names inscribed on the gates and foundations represent both the Old and New Testaments. None of God's works are lost and forgotten. The very name of the city is reminiscent of God's faithfulness in the keeping of His covenants.

6. *The heavenly city is spacious enough to accommodate whosoever will (21:16).*

Christ died for all mankind and He is preparing a place that is adequate. Let us sound forth the Gospel so that many more may enjoy this eternal abode.

7. *The New Jerusalem will be exclusive (21:27).*

Nothing will be allowed to mar its beauty and purity. Genesis 3 will not be repeated. There will be perfect company and perfect bliss. The righteous will dwell in the presence of the Lord, beholding His face forever and ever! Praise God!

"They Shall See His Face"

8. *The throne of God and the Lamb is central in the eternal kingdom (22:1-3).*

Flowing from the throne is the river of life and on its banks is the tree of life. He who sits on the throne is the source of all light, the focus of all praise, the source of all life, and the center of all service. God Himself will supersede all the unspeakable beauties of heaven.

9. *Obedience to Christ is the condition for experiencing this matchless glory (22:14).*

Those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life are obedient to His commandments (Matthew 7:21-23). Those who claim Christ as their Saviour but live in disobedience are liars and shall be found outside the city (1 John 2:4). Eternal life is reserved for those who do God's will.

Important Teachings

1. When God makes all things new, the effects of sin will be no more

(21:1, 4-5).

2. When God makes all things new, His desire to dwell with man will be realized (21:3).

3. Only those who overcome can claim the right to sonship and the eternal inheritance (21:7).

4. The New Jerusalem will be glorious (21:10-11).

5. The New Jerusalem is a memorial to God's glorious work of redemption (21:11-12, 14).

6. The heavenly city is spacious enough to accommodate whosoever will (21:16).

7. The New Jerusalem will be exclusive (21:27).

8. The throne of God and the Lamb is central in the eternal kingdom (22:1-3).

9. Obedience to Christ is the condition for experiencing this matchless glory (22:14).

Answers to Questions

1. *Why is it so important that all things are made new?*

The old was spoiled because of sin. The curse was upon the earth. Death reigned, and man came to know sorrow and tears. Jesus taught that "no man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment," and "neither do men put new wine into old bottles" (Matthew 9:16-17). "Behold, I make all things new."

2. *What blessings accompany the eternal state of the righteous?*

God will dwell with men. He will be with us, and we will be with Him. There will be no more death, sorrow, tears, or toil. There will be access to the water of life and the tree of life. The saints will inherit the earth and be the sons of God in the final sense. These are mentioned in the text; the answer can be broadened.

3. *What is the significance of the names that are written on the gates and foundations of the holy city?*

The names of the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles are there as a memorial to God's glorious work of redemption. They represent both the Old and New Testaments. None of God's works are lost or forgotten. In the Scriptures twelve is the number of final completeness. Hence, there are twelve months, twelve tribes of Israel, twelve apostles, twelve stars in the crown of the woman, twelve gates, and the twelve fruits of the tree of life.

4. *What are the implications of New Jerusalem's vast size?*

The New Jerusalem provides adequate room for all who are saved. The evangelistic efforts of the church need not be curtailed because of a shortage of room. The vast size reflects the foreknowledge and greatness of God; we can trust Him for the future.

5. *What comfort is found in 21:27? What challenge?*

It is comforting to know that nothing will be allowed to mar the beauty and purity of the holy city. There will be perfect bliss and perfect company. There will be no more temptation or opportunity to sin.

The searching question is; Will the exclusiveness of the New Jerusalem exclude me?

6. *In what respects is the throne central in New Jerusalem?*

It is the source of life and light. It is the focus of all praise and the center of all service. God is there, and He is the center of everything.

7. *What perfections of the eternal state are mentioned in 22:3-5?*

There will be a perfect earth. There will be perfect management and perfect service. There is perfect identity and perfect opportunity to serve. There will be no night.

8. *What are the conditions for entering the holy city?*

The obedience of faith is the primary condition. We must be identified with God and serve Him now if we will be among those who do so then. Faith and works are inseparable. Therefore, we will be judged by our works. Our names must be in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Summarizing the Lesson

Christ's message to us is, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.-

Jesus declares, "Surely I come quickly. Amen."

We respond, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Research Guide

1. For the sake of comparison read the account of the Creation in Genesis 1 and 2.
2. Read Isaiah 65:17-25 for the sake of comparison. However, it is not parallel in all senses.