

15) The New Heaven & Earth

Since humans have only lived in and experienced a fallen, sin laden world, it is difficult for us to understand what the new earth or heaven will be like. The effects of sin dim our imagination and thought. Fortunately, we will not sit on clouds all day playing harps; that is far removed from the actual reality, joys, and experiences God has planned for us.

Lets discover what the Bible teaches about the new heaven and earth. ...

Jeremiah 31:3. God is love and He loves with a love that is pure and everlasting. He seeks to draw people to Him with His love. The final home of the redeemed, the new heaven and earth, is simply a result and reflection of His love for His children!

Matthew 20:1-15. Salvation cannot be earned; it is a gift from God. When we “work” for the Lord it is simply a response or out-working of love from our heart to God and His love and an appreciation for His gift of eternal life. Regardless of how long or short a person lives a genuinely repentant and surrendered life to God on this old earth, everyone who gives their heart to Him will receive the same “reward”. The gift of eternal life, a perfect life with God in the new heaven and earth.

Matthew 5:5,12. It is important to remember that this present world is temporary, it will pass away. We do receive many blessings from God here, but our real reward is eternal life in the new heaven and earth. Please don't trade eternity for what is only temporary.

1 Corinthians 2:9. No matter how good our imagination might be, we can't fully contemplate how good life will be in the new heaven and earth that God is planning for us.

John 14:1-3. Jesus told His disciples that He would return to heaven, and that part of His work there was to prepare places for all His followers to live.

Hebrews 11:10,16. This present world with its sin, sickness, sorrow and death is not our ultimate home. The heroes of faith mentioned in this chapter knew that. Abraham left his home to follow God, knowing that the true promised home and country were quite literally “out of this world”. God is preparing homes/mansions in a city called the New Jerusalem that He also built.

2 Peter 3:10-13. This sin stained earth and heaven will eventually be destroyed, fully and completely, by hell fire (this will be studied more in a future lesson). This fire will be so hot that even the very elements will melt/dissolve! But after they are destroyed, God will create a new and perfect heaven and earth.

Revelation 21:1-22:5. Yes, this old sin scarred heaven and earth will someday be burnt up completely. But after it is, God will create a new heaven and earth, with no seas. Seas/oceans tend to divide people and create divisions. There will only be one nation, one kingdom, in the new heaven and earth, God's kingdom. And there will be no division or

disunity in it. I like to think of heaven as the place where God dwells, where His throne literally sits. The new earth will become heaven, since God will make the new earth His home and dwell there forever with His saints.

Nothing is too difficult for God. He spoke this world, and others, into perfect existence. He must have had fun designing and creating everything. And He must have fun designing the holy city He builds for His redeemed. It is going to be stunning! There are 12 gates each made from a single pearl, The 12 foundations are each made from a different precious gem stone. The redeemed will travel on golden streets that are made of gold refined so pure that it looks transparent!

The New Jerusalem will be laid out in the shape of a square. If we convert the measurement of a furlong to miles, the city will either be about 1,400 miles in circumference (350 miles per side) or each city wall will be approximately 1,400 miles per side - the Greek language used here is not specific as to whether the measurement refers to a single wall, or the overall circumference. And the city is as tall as it is in length/breadth! God is building this holy city so there will be plenty of room for all who want and chose to be there.

I like to think of "heaven" as the place where God lives and sits on His throne. Scripture tells us that the Godhead will make this new earth their home. God will dwell there with His people forever! And there will no longer be any trace of sin, Satan, or sinners because they have all been destroyed.

There is a river of life that flows from God's throne, and the trunk of a tree, the tree of life that bears 12 different kinds of fruit, grows from each bank and joins together over the river.

Scripture does not say that we will not have a sun or moon, rather it says that we won't need them for light, because the light emanating from God is sufficient, and there will be no night there.

Isaiah 35:1-7. After this world is destroyed by fire, it will look like a wasteland. But God says he will cause it to bloom like the desert after a rain. Since God's people are given new perfect bodies at Christ's return, there will be no blindness, or deafness, lameness, or muteness in heaven or the new earth. The redeemed will never grow tired, or weak. God's people will have perfect health.

Isaiah 51:3. The new earth will resemble the garden of Eden in all its splendor before sin entered this world. The new earth will be, in essence, a restoration of the perfect earth that was lost through sin.

Isaiah 11:6-9. In the new earth the animals that are now carnivores will be restored to the original plant based diets. They will not hurt other animals or humans. They will be so tame and friendly that even a child will be able to lead them about.

Zechariah 8:5. The streets of the New Jerusalem will be so safe that they will be areas of play for the children who will grow up in it.

1 John 3:2. The greatest joy of heaven for me is that we will see God face to face. And while we will be God's children and not gods ourselves, we will be like Him in certain ways – every one there will have a perfect character of love that only desires and chooses to do good.

Philippians 3:20-21. Paul writes that God's children will be given new, perfect, and glorious bodies, like Christ had after His resurrection.

Luke 24:36-39. Christ was not a ghost after His resurrection. Though fully God, He had forever tied Himself to humanity and still had a real, albeit perfect, human body. It would have been a body that had perfect health and cognitive skills, much like God had given Adam and Eve before sin.

Luke 12:37. And like Adam, Eve, and the resurrected Christ, the redeemed will still eat, and enjoy all the pure and holy pleasures of the heaven and earth. Since there is no hurting or animal death, the food the redeemed will eat in the new heaven and earth will also be plant food, like that of Adam and Eve in the garden, before sin. It will be wonderful in taste, smell, appeal, and nutrition.

1 Corinthians 13:12. Even with new perfect bodies, the redeemed will still be able to recognize one another. There will still be individual personality.

John 20:29. I once heard a pastor say that he would be content to dwell in a pup-tent on the lawn of heaven just to be with Jesus. I agree! Thomas and the rest of the disciples saw the resurrected Savior and that helped them believe. Those who didn't have that opportunity to see a risen Jesus Christ "in the flesh" but still believe in Him are truly blessed as they will also get to spend eternity with Him!

Isaiah 33:24. Sin will be destroyed forever, and there will never again be any sin, sickness, or death, in the new heaven and earth.

Isaiah 65:17,21-23,25. The joys of the new heaven and earth will cause the memories of this old earth, and its trials and sorrows, to fade from memory. With perfect bodies and minds, the redeemed will be very active in the new heaven and earth. Think of the limitless opportunities for learning and exploring. In addition to their homes in the holy city, New Jerusalem, the redeemed will also be able to build homes in the country. Imagine how much fun God will have custom designing each city home to specifically suit and please

the redeemed that will live there. Think how much fun the redeemed will have building their county homes. No banks or mortgages, no time limits, everything we need will be available. I think the redeemed will need to learn many new things, including new building skills and methods as they will use new building materials when building their country homes. But they will have an eternity to learn and build and enjoy their homes. They will plant orchards and vineyards and enjoy the fruit from them.

Isaiah 66:23,23. God's law is as eternal and unchanging as God is. It's the foundation of His government. In the new heaven and earth we will continue to keep God's seventh day (Saturday) Sabbath holy. Each Sabbath, as well as other special times, God's children will come together to worship Him.

Revelation 3:21. By grace, the redeemed have overcome self, Satan, and sin, and they receive the privilege of sitting with Jesus, their Redeemer, on His throne.

Friends, please consider all the incredible blessings Christ gives the redeemed, and what awaits in the new heaven and earth. And no matter how good you think it will be, it will be even better!

Revelation 22:14. The overcomers, those saved by grace, are those who also, as a response of love, keep all God's commandments. That is not legalism, that is love and grace in action.

Revelation 22:20. Jesus said He is returning quickly. And when He returns He will gather His followers, the redeemed, and take them home to heaven; then later to a new heaven and earth.

My friend, are you ready?

Our minds, so accustomed to this world of sin, can't fully comprehend the complete and pure joy, majesty, and perfectness of this new earth and heaven. But you can choose to experience it firsthand by surrendering your heart and your life to Jesus Christ. If you haven't already, will you make that decision?

If so, let's plan to meet and get acquainted under that tree of life whose leaves are for healing. That must include healing from the memories of this old earth and its trials and sorrows.