

God's Planned Future

(11) Final Judgement to Eternity

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Satan's final rebellion and doom

The 1000 year Millennial Kingdom shall be a spectacular reign on earth by the Lord Jesus Christ. Every remaining and unfulfilled prophecy shall be fulfilled, and Israel shall have her place of prominence as always intended by her Lord (Isaiah 11:10-12).

However, in the wisdom of God, Revelation 20:7-8 tells us that *when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be*

released from his prison ⁸ *and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle.* It's difficult to imagine, but during the 1000 year millennial Kingdom, there is going to be many people who will restrain their rebellion against King Jesus. It's almost unbelievable, while living in the most wonderful world imaginable, sin will still live in the hearts of some. At the end of the 1000 years, upon his release, Satan alone, without any demonic assistance, will travel the world recruiting people into his army. People who had previously been secretly rebellious against Jesus, will align themselves with Satan for one final revolt against the King of kings.

This army will be enormous, *like the sand of the sea.* And they shall march on foot *over the broad plain of the earth and surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city...* (Revelation 20:8-9). This huge army, led by obstinate Satan, will surround Jerusalem with the intent to destroy both King Jesus and God's people, Israel. Revelation 20:9-10, *but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,* ¹⁰ *and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

As with the battle of Armageddon, there is no battle (Rev 19:11-21). Satan and his army are completely wiped out by the fire God sends down upon them. This time, by divine power, the devil is thrown into the lake of fire, which will be his eternal home. All opportunities for roaming free are permanently removed. Now, the unholy trinity of Satan, antichrist, and the false prophet, shall spend every moment of eternity future, suffering torment without even the slightest relief. This ends all satanic influence; all demonically inspired beliefs, and all wicked behaviour abruptly stops on this day. Never again will there be sin, idolatry, unbelief, rebellion, or even temptation, it all stops on this day. Never again will Satan have an opportunity to deceive mankind with his lies. All his freedoms and liberties are permanently revoked. The earth will no longer be the roaming ground for the devil. The father of lies (Jn 8:44), who was a murderer from the beginning, is eternally locked in hell with no possibility of release or escape.

The Great White Throne Judgement

As the vision continues, the apostle John *saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.*¹² *And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the*

throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ *And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.* ¹⁴ *Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.* ¹⁵ *And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire* (Revelation 20:11-15).

Following Satan's incarceration, the highest court in God's Kingdom is set in session. The Judge, who is God Almighty, takes His seat upon the great white throne ready to dispense divine justice. The accused are all the nonbelievers down through all of human history. Every lost person stands in the dock of God's court. This is the saddest of all prophetic scenes, when only the guilty are called up before their Creator to receive final justice for their sin in the final court that God Almighty will ever hold.

God calls every unrepentant sinner who entered death without faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ, from their graves. No matter what the cause of death, and no matter

how completely their physical bodies have been destroyed, every unbelieving soul shall stand in the dock of God's court.

The books containing God's meticulous records of individual history are opened and the evidence is presented. Each person shall be judged according to their lives without comparison to anyone else. Their hearts affections, their attitudes and motives, their actions and speech shall all be exposed before Holy God. Every time they have thought of God and rejected Him shall be replayed. The judge shall only base His verdict upon what each person has done. No assumptions or speculations will be made. The facts will speak for themselves.

The accused will stand speechless as they realise that all their foolish imaginations of what God is like is proven false. Their rejection of God's self-revelation will be proven to be of no value. All their past boasting of how they plan to correct God, or make some kind of a deal with God, shall evaporate in the horror of this final court with the overwhelming evidence speaking against them.

The Book of Life shall also be opened in this court. This is the record of all who are registered as citizens of heaven (Php

3:20), all of God's chosen people (Mal 3:16; Luk 10:20; Php 4:3; Heb 12:23). And, it shall be precisely as John says in Revelation 20:15, *if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Every prisoner appearing in this court will have come from *Death and Hades*. And the inescapable destiny for them is to be *thrown into the lake of fire* (Revelation 20:14). Jesus words of warning will be fulfilled, *whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God* (John 3:18). All those who have been determined to reject God's mercy in favour of independence and sin, shall finally reap their reward of hell. The tragedy is great, but it is avoidable through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. *But to all who did receive him* (Jesus), *who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God* (John 1:12-13). Romans 8:1 makes it plain, that *there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*. There will not be a single person present in this court who has repented of sin and put faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness – Praise God!

Righteous justice shall prevail at the Great White Throne Judgement. There shall be no bail, no temporary holding cells, no purgatory, no defence, and no right of reply. Likewise, there shall be no challenges, no complaints of injustice, no appeals for retrial, and no pleas for mercy. All who find themselves in this court shall be found guilty. The sentence is severe, it is irreversible, and it is eternal. This brings to an end the history of rebellion and sin. The age of unbelief is shut down, never to be reopened. Satan's time as *the prince of the power of the air* (Eph 2:2) is finished, never to be repeated. Suffering and death has come to an end without the possibility of ever returning.

A new era dawns, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 tells how Christ sovereignly closes this chapter on evil to open a new and eternal realm under the rule of God the Father. *Then comes the end, when he* (Christ) *delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.* ²⁵ *For he* (Christ) *must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.* ²⁶ *The last enemy to be destroyed is death.* ²⁷ *For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him.* ²⁸ *When all things are subjected to him* (Christ),

then the Son himself will also be subjected to him (God the Father) *who put all things in subjection under him* (Christ), *that God may be all in all.*

Christ's earthly mission is accomplished, all sin, all idolatry, all enemies have been brought under the ultimate Lordship of Jesus Christ. All creation, good and evil, has come before King Jesus, and all have bowed down on their knees *in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Philippians 2:10-11). At this time Christ takes all that He has accomplished on behalf of His Father and surrenders it all, along with Himself, to the glorious sovereign Father. So that in all things, and through all things, God the Father is glorified.

New Heaven and Earth

The Day of God (2Pe 3:7-13; Rev 21:1-22:5)

The apostle John, quoting from Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 gives expression to what he now sees in his ongoing vision. Nothing old remains. No remnant of the past will survive this event. 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.* John does not see a rebuilt,

or refurbished heaven and earth. There will be no cleaning of the old creation. John sees a first time created heaven and earth, a new heaven and earth. Nothing is carried over from the previous corrupted creation.

With sin totally erased, and every last one of God's enemies gone, all that remains is the sin contaminated creation of the universe and planet earth. So, God deletes everything of the old created universe, including planet earth. Job 15:15 tells us that *the heavens are not pure in his sight*. Isaiah 24:5 says *the earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant*. And speaking of the old heavens and earth, Psalm 102:26 explains that *they will perish, but you (God) will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away*. Jesus affirmed this truth in Luke 21:33, *heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away*.

Once again, we see the unlimited power of God on display, when, in an instant, everything old is gone and an entirely fresh heaven and earth materialises. Whereas in Genesis chapters 1-2 we saw God create the heavens and earth over a period of six days, but not this time, it's instantaneous. We

saw that the heavens and earth were dramatically changed during the 7 year tribulation period under God's judgement in preparation for the 1000 year Kingdom period (Rev 16-17), but not this time, it will all get totally replaced.

In a single act God shall destroy the old and create the new. Peter gives insight to this event, saying that *the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved...* (2 Peter 3:10). When God unleashes His power, everything material will be vapourised in an instant. The Lord does not use any natural phenomena, and no angelic assistance will be involved as it was during the tribulation. This disintegration and creation of the new is totally the result of God's infinite power.

Heaven Looks Like

Revelation 21:1 introduces us to the heaven of eternity future, it's *a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away*. This marks the beginning of a new era, a new chapter in God's eternal reign. Heaven is an actual place, it is not simply a state of mind or a state of spiritual consciousness, but a place. And in this place God has created a new planet earth. Here we see for the first

time ever, that the new heaven and new earth shall co-exist as one.

The first this John notices about the new earth is that it has no sea, no oceans. At present, the earth is approximately 70% covered by salt water. It may seem strange to us, but an earth without oceans points to an entirely new planet structure and operation. The new earth will no longer depend upon the hydrological cycle where there is a continuous movement of water on, above, and below the surface of the earth. The effects of rivers flowing into the ocean, and the evaporation of the ocean which feeds the clouds with water vapour, will all be gone. The new creation will look and operate very different from the corrupted present earth.

While there will be no ocean, John saw that there shall be a single river, but not a river flowing with water made up of hydrogen and oxygen. No, heaven's river will flow with the water of "life" (Rev 22:1). Instead of supplying liquid to sustain the new environment, God's new river will flow with the essence of life to sustain all that exists.

The New Jerusalem of Heaven

The unmistakable centrepiece of the entire new heaven and new earth shall be the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:2, *and I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

In the new creation, God delivers an actual city that is both prebuilt and complete, without any need for further construction. The city is named the “New Jerusalem,” and it is lowered from God’s existing dwelling place to His new dwelling place. John provides us with a great deal of information about this spectacular city, of which he says above all else, *the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God* (Rev 21:3). And because God dwells there, it is *“the holy city.”* Temptation, sin, error, and falsehood shall never be experienced here. Holiness that perfectly expresses God’s holiness shall be the character of this city. As such, this city shall be the capital city of all the new creation from which God’s holy life shall radiate out.

Therefore, God presented the new Jerusalem *as a bride adorned for her husband.* John MacArthur comments on this

in His MacArthur New Testament Commentary for Revelation 21:1.

QUOTE

Further describing heaven's capital city, John notes that it was made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. The city is pictured as a bride because it contains the bride and takes on her character. The imagery is drawn from a Jewish wedding, which typically had three parts. First was the betrothal, which was like a modern engagement, but more legally binding. The betrothal of the Lord's bride took place in eternity past when God pledged to His Son a redeemed people. The next stage was the presentation, a time of celebration and feasting leading up to the actual wedding ceremony. The presentation of the bride took place following the Rapture of the church, when believers are taken to heaven. The third stage was the ceremony, which for the Lord's bride began at the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:7-9) and stretched through the millennial kingdom. The final stage was the consummation, which corresponds to the eternal

state. John saw the bride adorned for her husband because it was time for the consummation.

END QUOTE

With God literally existing in the same location as mankind, the place will have no resemblance of the old creation. Revelation 21:4 explains that God will remove the sorrow of tears, the pain of death shall never be experienced again, and the grief of having lost those we love to death shall never be part of this creation. Likewise, pain of all kinds will be no more, sadness causing tears will not exist, as they all belonged to the old and disintegrated former things which shall never return. In every way possible, God's testimony to John is, *"Behold, I am making all things new"* (Rev 21:5).

In this new creation, in the new heaven and earth, *the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars*, will never be seen or heard. That's because sinful people like that will have already been removed through God's judgement (Rev 20:11-15). *Their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death* (Rev 21:8). Here, they are outside of God's new creation, in a totally different and separate place, a dimension where sinners will exist under

continuous and eternal punishment. They will never be able to enter or influence God's new creation. There will be no interaction between hell and the new creation.

In John 14:1-3, we read Jesus' comforting words to the disciples the night before His crucifixion. *"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me."*² *In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?*³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.* The new Jerusalem shall be the place Jesus' was speaking of.

An amazing thing happens to the apostle John, *one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues* approached John *saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.* (Rev 21:9), which is the new Jerusalem. John gets a panoramic angelic guided tour of the new Jerusalem by this mighty angel. Below is a summary list with some of the features John sees:

- ~ Because of God's presence in the city, it possesses the glory of God, radiating out just as a jewel shines out light. Plus, it's translucent, clear as crystal, which means it will magnify and fire out the multicoloured beams of light

created from God's glory in all directions and at all levels (Rev 21:11). The city, and its roads, are constructed of pure transparent gold (Rev 21:18, 21), which means that as the brilliant light of God's glory radiates out, it will shine through all the dimensions of this city in all directions as a magnificent multicoloured light show.

- ~ The city is a giant cube in shape, 4 square, it's as high as it is wide, as it is also in depth. The city measures 12,000 stadia in each direction, that's about 1500 miles, or 2414 Kilometres (Rev 21:16).



- ~ The city has *a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel...* (Rev 21:12-13). There will be 3 gates on each of the 4 sides of the city wall. These 12 gates were made of *twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl* (Rev 21:21) and shall permanently remain open (Rev 21:25).
- ~ This outer wall is 144 cubits, that's about 65 metres, but John does not tell us if that is it's height or thickness. However, John does say that the wall is made of jasper, which is a crystal material similar in nature to diamonds (Rev 21:17-18). This means the wall will be transparent also.

- ~ The huge wall sits on 12 foundations which have the names of the 12 apostles inscribed into them (Rev 21:14). These 12 foundations were decorated *with every kind of jewel* (Rev 21:19).
- ~ The new Jerusalem will have no temple, as *its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb* (Rev 21:22).
- ~ In this entire environment, there will be *no sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb* (Rev 21:23). The glorified Lord Jesus Christ will be the One emitting the glory of His Father to illuminate the city.
- ~ The light which shines from Christ will be so magnified as it beams out through the city, that the entire new heavens and earth will be illuminated by the Father's glory (Rev 21:23-24). The light will be so pervasive that there will never be a need for a sun or moon ever again. Night-time will no longer exist; it shall be one forever day in the glory of God throughout the new heavens and earth radiating from the new Jerusalem (Rev 22:5).
- ~ Within the city shall be *the throne of God and of the Lamb* (Rev 22:1). Flowing out from under the throne will be *the river of the water of life, bright as crystal*, and it shall flow *through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its*

twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month (Rev 22:2). As already noted, this river is not flowing with H₂O, but somehow by the power of God, it flows with life. Again, the river of life flows as clear and as bright as crystal as it radiates the glory of God flowing out through the city.

- As there is no sun or moon, and Gods glory enlightens the entire kingdom continuously, there will be no time as we presently know it. Therefore, John's choice of words describing the tree of life producing a crop every month is simply illustrative of this tree's never ending and regular production of fruit.
- The leaves of this tree shall provide nutrition or therapy which the nations will have access to. As there will be no sickness or disease of any kind, it is difficult for us to imagine the precise function of these leaves. Possibly, if a person is injured in some way, these leaves may provide super-enabled recovery properties for the person. John does not provide us with enough information to speculate further.

The Ultimate Glory of Heaven

As noted earlier, the most amazing thing about our heavenly future is that *the dwelling place of God is with man* (Rev 21:3). With *the throne of God and of the Lamb* (Rev 22:1) being located in the new Jerusalem, all occupants of the entire eternal kingdom, both human and angelic, will have access to God the Father and Son.

The theme of eternity future will be worship. No longer will there be distractions or limitations to worship. The scene of heaven is set, *no longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.* ⁴ *They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads* (Rev 22:3-4). Faith will have given way to sight, as everyone will be able to enjoy personal and intimate face to face worship. This will be the ultimate fulfillment of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:8, *blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*. The intimacy of relationship with God will be seen by all, as God imprints His name on the foreheads (Rev 22:4) of every redeemed human resident in His heavenly kingdom.

By the light of the glory of God *will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into* the new

Jerusalem.²⁶ *They will bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations* (Rev 21:24-26). The human nations will obviously be productive in various ways that we can only imagine. However, whatever these nations produce, their produce will be a sacrifice of worship to God.

The capital city of heaven, the new Jerusalem, will be a place where our present language cannot explain the full nature of worship that will fill it. For us, living in our present fleshly bodies and limited by our tiny minds, heavenly worship is unimaginable and indescribable, no matter how hard we try, we simply cannot express the fulness and wonder of it. However, with all sin removed, and being recreated in perfect likeness of Jesus Christ, we are confident that we will worship like never before. Our minds and our language will no longer suffer limitations. No longer will we have doubts or fears. We shall never pull back in shyness or nervousness. Unrestrained worship shall be as natural and as expected as breathing.

Eternity will echo with the worship expressed in Revelation 4:11, *"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."*

I close this lesson with the challenging words of the apostle Peter as He thought of God's planned future.

¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

¹¹ *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,*

¹² *waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!*

¹³ *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

(2 Peter 3:10-13)

So, we say in response, come Lord Jesus!