

*Second Baptist Church of Doylestown*

*Wed. Eve. Bible Study - 1/4/17*

## **Bible Prophecies**

### **A New Heaven & Earth**

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A New Heaven and a New Earth is revealed in Revelation 21 verse one as the old ones were passed away. And there was no more sea as this new heaven and new earth is more like the original Garden of Eden. Chapter 21 introduces the eternal future planned by God, the ultimate purpose of God for the human race. Not much space in Scripture is given to this eternal state, but enough is revealed to assure every believer's heart about the future. Rev. 21-22 provides more details of this state than can be found anywhere else in the Bible.

**Seven New Things** - There are seven new things revealed in these two chapters that form a fitting introduction to the eternal future God has prepared for those who love him.

- A new heaven (21 v.1)
- A new earth (21 v.1)
- New Jerusalem (21 v.2)
- New things (21 v.5)
- A new paradise (22 v.1-5)
- A new place for God's throne (22 v.3)
- A new source of light (22 v.5)

When this city comes to the earth, it will be a people filled city - people in their resurrected bodies after the Millennium, prepared to dwell with Christ for eternity. That is why this city, which surpasses the splendor of anything we can comprehend, is called the Bride, the Lamb's wife. "It shone with the glory of God" (Rev. 21 v.11). This city is the crowning feature of the creation of God, the unique habitation of the redeemed for eternity.

To emphasize the glory of God, the verse pictures a dazzling light "like a jasper, clear as crystal." Certainly it will reflect the glory of God.

**The City is Foursquare** - "It had a great, high wall". (Rev. 21 v.12) The great wall around this city suggests that it will be an exclusive city. It will not be built for protection, of course, since no enemies will threaten in the eternal order, but it will stand as a visual reminder that all do not have access to God. " With twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel". (Rev. 21 v.12)

Obviously the number twelve takes on great significance in this city. Since the Bible is inspired by God, we can expect, in spite of the various authors and the length of time engaged in its writing, that there will be an unusual, even supernatural continuity in the use of numbers.

The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with a rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. This is 1500 square miles. (Rev. 15 -16)

Most Bible scholars agree that the root meaning of the Greek word for "furlong" in the KJV or "stadia" in the NIV indicates that each side of this city is approximately 1500 miles long. Thus the city itself would stretch from about the eastern seaboard of the US to the Mississippi River on one side and from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico on the other. In addition to the length and breath, the city will be the same in height.

**God is the Light of the City** - The bible teaches us that "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1 v.5). Therefore the sun and the moon will no longer be needed in the eternal order. God Himself will provide sufficient light by His very presence. Several times Rev. 21 v.22-24 declares that God will be the light of this city. One of the most beautiful statements I have ever read on this subject came from the pen of Dr. Lehman Strauss:

In that city which Christ has prepared for His own there will be no created light, simply because Christ Himself, who is the uncreated light (John 8 v.12), will be there. The created lights of God and of men are as darkness when compared with our Blessed Lord. The light He defuses throughout eternity is the unclouded, undimmed glory of His own Holy presence. In consequence of the fullness of that light, there shall be no night. Think of it! No darkness forever!

**Only Believers Have Access to the Holy City** - The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. (Rev. 21 v.24-26)

Some have suggested that because "nations" and "kings" are referred to here, during the eternal order God will continue to separate the people by nations.

This may well be His intent and meaning, fully in accord with His planned purpose for the human race since Genesis 10. However, hundreds of years transpired before the Flood, when He apparently did not interject difference of nationalities. The word "nations" comes from the root word "Gentiles" and is so translated in many places in the Bible. Thus, this reference could be to Gentiles who have received Christ. The "kings" would be saved men who were kings or world leaders, men of renown, who during the eternal order will come into the Holy City and give their glory to Christ.

**Those Excluded From the Holy City** - "Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21 v.27).

**Heaven on Earth** - The last chapter of Revelation contains a final description of that heaven like earth that God has prepared for those who love Him. It also contains a final challenge of a loving Savior who came into this world to die for the sins of the human race and has consistently sent His Spirit through His servants to convey His loving gospel message to them. It is a fitting way to end not only this greatest of all books on prophecy, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, but also the library of God's word.

The Bible opens and closes with basically the same type of setting. In the first 2 chapters of Genesis we encounter God's description of creation and the Heaven like conditions on the earth prepared for humankind. The last two chapters of Revelation describe the eternal heaven that God will reestablish for them. All the chapters between contain the great conflict of the ages as human beings turn their backs on God and as He seeks to draw them to Himself. In all these books the human race is consistently presented with the opportunity to worship God freely by faith or reject Him by rebellion of will.