

Apocalypse Now (Revelation Revisited)

Session 15 / Wednesday, June 1, 2016

THE NEW JERUSALEM

1 When God promised to make all things “new” He was not kidding. In Revelation 21 and
2 22 we see God destroy totally all things as we know them (at least in this solar system)
3 and start altogether fresh and new. As indicated in our notes last week, there will be:

- 4 • a new heaven (Revelation 21:1)
- 5 • a new earth (21:1)
- 6 • a new Jerusalem (21:2)
- 7 • new things (21:5)
- 8 • a new paradise (22:1-5)
- 9 • a new place for God’s throne (22:3)
- 10 • a new source of light (22:5)

11 Here is how John described what he saw in the Revelation (Apocalypse):

12
13 Rev. 21:1-5

14 **And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth**
15 **were passed away; and there was no more sea. [2] And I John saw the holy city, new**
16 **Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for**
17 **her husband. [3] And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the**
18 **tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his**
19 **people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. [4] And God shall**
20 **wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither**
21 **sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are**
22 **passed away. [5] And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things**
23 **new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.**

24
25 It is worthwhile to note that not until verse 4 does God wipe away all tears from our eyes.
26 Until that time, which is still a long way down the road - following the rapture, the vile
27 work of Antichrist in the Tribulation, and the Millennium - there will be times of sorrow
28 and hurt among humans. But on that occasion when God “makes all things new” tears
29 will be forever wiped away by our Heavenly Father.

30
31 The Bible teaches very clearly that this present order of creation is to pass away in order
32 to make room for a new heaven and a new earth. Jesus said it would happen: Matthew
33 24:35 **Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.** The
34 Apostle Peter knew what was coming and he wrote: 2 Peter 3:13 **Nevertheless we,**

1 according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth
2 righteousness. In the Old Testament, the great prophet Isaiah foretold the same thing:
3 Isaiah 65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former
4 shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

5
6 **DO WE GO TO HEAVEN? OR DOES HEAVEN COME TO US?**

7
8 In the final two chapters of the Bible, the Holy Spirit reveals to us that everything that we
9 know is transitory and a new creation is coming, which will include a new HOLY CITY
10 descending from God which will be the center the headquarters, if you will, of eternity.
11 What John describes here is so other-worldly, so totally different from anything we know,
12 that it boggles our minds. As Dr. J. Vernon McGee summarizes it:

- 13
14 *1. There will be a total absence of sin and temptation and testing.*
15 *2. The New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, does not mean another*
16 *satellite for the earth but rather the earth and all of the new creation with all of the*
17 *galactic systems will revolve about the New Jerusalem because it is the dwelling place of*
18 *God and of Christ.*
19 *3. The law of gravity, as we know it, will be radically revised. There will be traffic*
20 *between the New Jerusalem and the earth. The church will have already left the earth*
21 *and its dwelling place is the New Jerusalem.*
22 *4. There will be no need of the sun to give light, for God Himself will supply it. There*
23 *will be no night.*
24 *5. There will no longer be any sea on the earth. The sea occupies most of the earth's*
25 *surface today; approximately three-fourths of the total surface is water.*
26 *6. The presence of Christ and God, together with the throne of God made visible, ushers*
27 *in a new day for man - the new creation.*

28 THRU THE BIBLE / REVELATION / J. VERNON MCGEE / VOLUME 4 / NELSON PUBL. / P. 1062

29
30 On that last night Jesus spent with His disciples before His crucifixion the next day, He
31 promised them in John 14, **"I go to prepare a place for you."** (14:2) They could not
32 imagine, nor can we, those "things God has prepared for us."

33
34 It is interesting to note that nothing in Scripture limits the size of the new earth to our
35 present world which is 25,000 miles around and about 8,000 miles in diameter. And
36 remember this – the earth will not be the headquarters for the raptured, redeemed saints of
37 God. The New Jerusalem will be the headquarters. And the brief description we find
38 of it in scripture is breathtaking:

39
40 **Rev. 21:9-27 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven**

1 vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will
2 shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. [10] And he carried me away in the spirit to a
3 great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem,
4 descending out of heaven from God, [11] Having the glory of God: and her light was
5 like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; [12] And
6 had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and
7 names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of
8 Israel: [13] On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three
9 gates; and on the west three gates. [14] And the wall of the city had twelve
10 foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. [15] And he
11 that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and
12 the wall thereof. [16] And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the
13 breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The
14 length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. [17] And he measured the wall
15 thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man,
16 that is, of the angel. [18] And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city
17 was pure gold, like unto clear glass. [19] And the foundations of the wall of the city
18 were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper;
19 the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; [20] The fifth,
20 sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a
21 topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.
22 [21] And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl:
23 and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. [22] And I saw
24 no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
25 [23] And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the
26 glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. [24] And the nations of
27 them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring
28 their glory and honour into it. [25] And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day:
29 for there shall be no night there. [26] And they shall bring the glory and honour of
30 the nations into it. [27] And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that
31 defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which
32 are written in the Lamb's book of life.

33
34 While the description of this place is glorious, the last verse is chilling! No one whose
35 name is not found in the Book of Life will be allowed access to it. Peter warned us
36 clearly: 2 Peter 3:10-14 **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in
37 the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt
38 with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
39 [11] Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons
40 ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, [12] Looking for and hasting**

1 unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be
2 dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? [13] Nevertheless we,
3 according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth
4 righteousness. [14] Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be
5 diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.
6

7 Nothing on this earth is worth missing Heaven! In 1911, a fellow named Charles B.
8 Widmeyer wrote a song we used to sing in church at least once a month - or so it seems to
9 me. I loved the lyric of it - WHEN THE TOILS OF LIFE ARE OVER:

10
11 *When the toils of life are over*
12 *And we lay our armor down,*
13 *And we bid farewell to earth with all its cares,*
14 *We shall meet and greet our loved ones,*
15 *And our Christ we then shall crown*
16 *In the NEW JERUSALEM.*

17
18 *(Chorus)*
19 *There'll be singing, there'll be shouting*
20 *When the saints come marching home*
21 *In Jerusalem, in Jerusalem,*
22 *Waving palms with loud hosannas*
23 *As the king shall take His throne,*
24 *In the new Jerusalem.*

25
26 *When the last goodbye is spoken*
27 *And the tear stains wiped away*
28 *And our eyes shall catch a glimpse of glory fair,*
29 *Then with bounding hearts we'll meet Him*
30 *Who hath washed our sins away*
31 *In the NEW JERUSALEM.*

32
33 *When we join the ransomed army*
34 *In the summer land above*
35 *And the face of our dear Savior we behold,*
36 *We will sing and shout forever*
37 *And we'll grow in perfect love*
38 *In the NEW JERUSALEM.*
39
40

1 In last week's session, we studied some of the descriptions of the New Jerusalem as
2 found in Revelation 21. Let's turn our attention now to the very last chapter of the Bible,
3 Revelation 22, and consider some of the other blessings of the city coming down from
4 God.

5
6 **Rev. 22:1-21 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal,**
7 **proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. [2] In the midst of the street of**
8 **it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve**
9 **manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were**
10 **for the healing of the nations. [3] And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of**
11 **God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: [4] And they**
12 **shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. [5] And there shall be no**
13 **night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God**
14 **giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.**

15 **[6] And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of**
16 **the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must**
17 **shortly be done. [7] Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of**
18 **the prophecy of this book. [8] And I John saw these things, and heard them. And**
19 **when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which**
20 **shewed me these things. [9] Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy**
21 **fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings**
22 **of this book: worship God. [10] And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the**
23 **prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. [11] He that is unjust, let him be**
24 **unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let**
25 **him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. [12] And, behold, I**
26 **come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work**
27 **shall be. [13] I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the**
28 **last. [14] Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to**
29 **the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. [15] For without are**
30 **dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and**
31 **whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.**

32 **[16] I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I**
33 **am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.**

34 **[17] And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.**
35 **And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life**
36 **freely.**

37 **[18] For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this**
38 **book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues**
39 **that are written in this book: [19] And if any man shall take away from the words of**
40 **the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and**

1 out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

2 [20] He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so,
3 come, Lord Jesus.

4 [21] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.
5

6 God's throne in the New Jerusalem is also the fountainhead of a pure river of water of
7 life. It apparently is the water source for the tree of life which bears fruit. A number of
8 commentators believe that while we will eat and drink in eternity the food will be
9 primarily fruit. Now, I love fruit and could almost live on oranges, bananas and grapes.
10 But I hope these commentators are not quite right and we have some great bread! And
11 grape jelly! We shall see.
12

13 Now while there will be food available, there will be no possibility of sin entering the
14 New Jerusalem. It might be interesting to note that sin entered the Garden of Eden
15 (Genesis 1 to 3) when God was not there (at least His walks with Adam and Eve were not
16 taking place at the time). But in the New Jerusalem, the presence of God and the entire
17 Trinity will be adequate to prevent any incursion of sin. Besides...the serpent, the
18 tempter, Satan is bound in Hell forever.
19

20 Revelation 22:3 indicates we will work during eternity. I believe we will have assigned
21 work. This is great, in my opinion, as having nothing to do "but roll around heaven all
22 day" (as an old pop song suggests) would get incredibly boring after a bit. Heaven will
23 be a place of ceaseless activity.
24

25 WE SHALL SEE GOD'S FACE

26
27 Rev. 22:4 **And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.**

28 What a pure, holy and delightful reason for pursuing God! We shall one day behold Him
29 with resurrected and glorified vision. Our finite vision now could not contain the vision.
30 We would doubtless die. But not then....not when we shall know as we are known!
31 Seeing God was the supreme desire spoken by Moses and Philip in the New Testament.
32

33 WHAT DOES JESUS MEAN WHEN HE PROMISES TO "COME QUICKLY" TO US?
34

35 Rev. 22:7

36 **Behold, I come quickly:** blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this
37 book.
38
39
40

1 He means “rapidly!” He did not mean “soon” or “immediately.” He meant that when
2 He returned it would happen faster than you can blink your eyes!

3
4 Note how God puts His own seal of approval on the prophecy in verse 7. “These words
5 are faithful and true!” Divine prophecy is not something with which to play or trifle. It
6 is a promise from God Himself that all of these events will come to pass.

7 8 THE NON-CHANGEABLE VERDICT

9
10 As a newsman, decades ago, I covered the first-degree armed robbery trial of a friend of
11 mine. He had been shot in the leg by the store operator and there was no question about
12 his guilt, yet he continued to plead innocent. As the jury left to deliberate, my friend
13 suddenly changed his mind and cried out to the judge that he was guilty and asked for
14 mercy. The judge informed him that he had waited too late, that once the jury was
15 released to deliberate built or innocence the plea could not be changed. When the jurors
16 returned - following a rather short deliberation - the verdict was “guilty” and the judge
17 threw the proverbial book at my friend. Maximum sentence!

18
19 As I watched the drama unfold, my mind raced to Rev. 22:11 : **He that is unjust, let**
20 **him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is**
21 **righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.**

22
23 The divine gavel hits the desk. The trial is over. The verdict is in. It is eternal! Life
24 with God in Heaven or forever in Hell with Satan and his minions. And the choice is up
25 to each of us.

26 27 WILL THERE BE DOGS (OR CATS) IN HEAVEN?

28
29 When our kids were growing up (four children over several decades of time) we almost
30 always had dogs. My favorite was a little white Spitz - the smartest dog I ever saw. My
31 least favorite was a poodle - without question the dumbest dog I ever saw. When he
32 barked it came out “Woof-duh....” In our empty next period of life now, we have not
33 had dogs. However, I had a fabulous hairless cat I named Shammy (because touching
34 him it felt like touching a car chamois. I loved that brilliant, loyal, faithful and
35 absolutely incredibly ugly animal. But....will there be pets in Heaven?

36
37 Notice Rev. 22:15 **For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and**
38 **murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.** I don’t think this
39 refers to the four-legged animals that grace our homes. In the ancient world of Bible
40 times, dogs were considered scavengers more than they were considered pets. Jewish

1 writers used the word “dogs” to describe Gentiles. **Matthew 15:21-28** Then Jesus
2 went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. [22] And, behold, a
3 woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have
4 mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a
5 devil. [23] But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought
6 him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. [24] But he answered and said, I
7 am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [25] Then came she and
8 worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. [26] But he answered and said, It is not
9 meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. [27] And she said, Truth,
10 Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. [28] Then
11 Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even
12 as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. Paul also
13 used the term to describe those Jewish religious leaders (Judaizers): **Philip. 3:2**
14 **Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.** (Those who taught
15 that following religious ceremony equated eternal life or salvation)

16
17 I believe there could be pets in Heaven. We know for sure that the dogs will not bark
18 during the night for there won't be any night.

20 GOD'S FINAL INVITATION

21
22 I often hear this (primarily from severely depressed persons): “I just don't think I can be
23 saved.” The Bible emphatically proclaims that anyone who comes to God honestly and
24 forthrightly, repenting of sins and asking for forgiveness, will be saved! **Rev. 22:17-18**
25 **And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let**
26 **him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**

27
28 How could the message be more clear than that? **WHOSOEVER WILL MAY COME!**
29 I love Isaiah's invitation: **Isaiah 55:1** **Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the**
30 **waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and**
31 **milk without money and without price.** And Jesus puts the emphatic final touch on
32 this invitation: **John 7:37** **In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood**
33 **and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**

35 THE WARNING: DON'T MESS WITH SCRIPTURE!

36
37 **Rev. 22:18-19** **For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy**
38 **of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the**
39 **plagues that are written in this book: [19] And if any man shall take away from the**
40 **words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of**

1 **life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**

2
3 Joseph Smith and Mohammed should be quaking in their boots with their Book of
4 Mormon and the Koran. But, by the same token, so should those preachers and churches
5 that remove scriptures they don't like.

6
7 And the final offer of God's grace s found in the very last verse of Scripture: Rev. 22:21
8 **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.**

9
10 The Old Testament concludes with a curse: Malachi 4:6 **And he shall turn the heart**
11 **of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I**
12 **come and smite the earth with a curse.** But the New Testament concludes with a
13 promise of blessing and grace. God's amazing grace is offered to everyone. But if that
14 offer is set aside, regardless of the reason, the man or woman will bear the judgements we
15 have just studied.

16
17
18 I will be in Springfield, Missouri, next week for Executive Presbytery meetings. I will
19 begin the new series, Lord willing, in two weeks:

20
21 **THE PURSUIT OF GOD**

22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39