

Our Final Home

TEXT: Rev. 20-22

Introduction: One thing the hurricane has done for most of us is to rekindle the joy in our heart that this world is not our final home.

Karen and I really enjoy living in Panama City. Unlike many people, before we moved here, we really did not know what a lovely place on God's green earth it was. We had never vacationed on the beaches here or enjoyed the view of the gorgeous blue green water and sugar like sand. All of this we discovered after the church called us to come and serve the Lord with you.

Often over these last twelve years, as Karen and I would cross the Hathaway Bridge and look out on St. Andrew Bay, we would say to each other, I can't believe we get to live here. People come from all over to stay in this place a few days or a week, but God lets us live here. By the way, have you noticed that when you cross the bridge these days, the Lord gives you a few extra minutes to appreciate the grandeur?

Well, if we were ever tempted to say, "Let me just live here forever," the Lord has certainly reminded us of the frailty of earthly beauty. Folks, this place is still a mess! It's getting better but it's still a mess. But, it will get better, and if the Lord tarries in His coming to take His children home, there will come a day when the beauty once again triumphs over the ugly. It will be a while in coming, but it will come.

But no matter when the places around us become a pleasure to behold, there is no place on this sin filled planet that even begins to rival the final home God has for us.

And this is the most glorious part of the final book of God's precious Word. Revelation can be a book that is quite a challenge to study and thoroughly understand. And it depicts scenes of horrific things that will happen to the people on this planet who steadfastly refuse to repent of sin and call out for the mercy of God the Father offered through faith in God's Dear Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Yet for all of this, the final three chapters of this book have long been held as a special treasure by those of us who believe, for far more clearly than any other single place in all the pages of Holy Scripture, the Lord tells us of our final home where we shall live with Him forever and forever.

And it is my blessed privilege today, and one that brings more joy to my heart than my words could ever describe, to remind you of what God says it is going to be like when we who have been forgiven of our sins through faith in Christ live with God in our final home.

This morning we begin in chapter 20 which tells us what will happen over the next 1000 years following the seven terrible years of Tribulation which culminates in the Battle of

Armageddon, when the antichrist and false prophet who deceived and plagued the people of the earth become the first people to ever be cast into the Lake of Fire and Satan himself is chained and cast into the abyss, also called the bottomless pit

This prelude to eternity lasts

I. FOR ONE THOUSAND YEARS – THE MILLENNIUM (Rev. 20)

A. The Millennium begins with resurrection as the Tribulation Believers join all the rest of the saved in their resurrection, glorified bodies. (20:4-6)

Rev. 20:4-6 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ... 6 Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

The details of these wonderful thousand years we shall enjoy with the Lord are offered to us in many places in Scripture. Time will not allow me to read every one of these references to you. Nor will you be able to write all of these things down as I mention them. Therefore, I suggest you just listen and enjoy the description of what God has prepared for those who love Him. Later this week, if you want to research the details, you can go to our church website **sabc.org** and look at my sermon notes, where you will find the references in Scripture that tell us what I am going to share with you.

So now let me tell you about this first thousand years of our living with Christ in

B. The Millennial Kingdom

1. ITS POPULATION

- a. The remnant of Israel that was saved (Zech. 12:10, 13:1)
- b. The righteous ones from the Judgment of the Gentiles (Mt. 25:31-46)
- c. People born in the millennium (Like the children of Isa. 11:8)
- d. Longevity of life will return as in the early years on the earth (Isa. 65:20)

2. ITS GOVERNMENT

- a. Christ will rule from His throne in Jerusalem as King of the Earth (Isa. 9:6-7)

- b. **Resurrected David shall rule over Israel, the prince of the nations (Ezek. 37:24)**
 - c. **Apostles shall be Judges of the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt. 19:28)**
 - d. **Christians shall rule and reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4-6)**
- 3. ITS ACTIVITY**
- a. **Peace replaces war (Micah 4:3)**
 - b. **Swift and righteous justice (Isa. 11:4)**
 - c. **Industry and development**
 - 1) After terrible tribulation and Armageddon, much rebuilding will need to be done. Youth think this looks bad? Here, more trash has been picked up since the storm than in 12 years and we are not half through.
 - 2) There will be time to do the things you have wanted: other careers, exploring, developing relationships.
- 4. The fulfillment of every covenant promise to Israel and to believers will take place during these days.** Israel's borders will be enlarged to the size promised by the Lord to Abraham, from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates.
- 5. There will be topological changes to the earth.**
- a. Just prior to Christ's coming at Armageddon, a worldwide earthquake will level every city and mountain on the face of the earth. (Rev. 16:18-20)
 - b. **The earth will be renewed, and it will more than adequately provide for the population.**
 - c. **Deserts will be transformed into gardens; the territory of Israel will be transformed into a place of remarkable beauty reflecting the glory of the residence of the Lord.**

Isaiah 35:1-6 1 The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; 2 ... They shall see the glory of the Lord, The excellency of our God. ... 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.
- 6. There will be changes to the animal kingdom. (Isa. 11:6-9)**
- a. The enmity between animals and between animals and man will be removed.

- b. Animals will all become herbivorous as they were at creation. Lions will eat grass like a cow.
- c. Even snakes will be harmless to man.

Isaiah 11:6-9 6 “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.

My friend, no matter where you have ever lived or visited, you have never seen a place as glorious as this earth is going to be during the thousand year reign of Christ over our world. And that thousand years will be but a fleeting second in comparison to the eternity yet to come.

But before the Eternal Kingdom is inaugurated, sin must be dealt with one final time. So Rev. 20 ends by describing

II. THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

After the thousand year Millennial Kingdom, the lost dead are resurrected out of hell to be judged.

- The Books which contain the record of their deeds and words will be opened.
- Another book will be opened: The Book of Life. If anyone’s name was not in this book, they are cast into the Lake of Fire.
- Whose names are recorded in the Book of Life? Those who have trusted Jesus (Phil. 4:3).

All who stand before this throne are proved to be sinners. The wages of sin is death. The Book of Life is checked and it is found that these have refused to accept the gift of eternal life offered to them by Jesus, who died upon the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. Therefore they must pay for their sin themselves, and they will pay for all eternity.

With sin thus forever ended, God initiates

III. THE NEW HEAVEN, THE NEW EARTH, AND THE NEW JERUSALEM (Rev. 21:1 – 22:5)

A. The New Heaven and the New Earth (21:1-8)

On the Day of Judgment, the earth will be renovated by fire. The word “new” means “new in character” and does not imply destruction but remaking. Peter says the elements will melt with fervent heat. The result will be a brand new world, the centerpiece of a universe freed from sin.

From 21:3-4 we see what is new about this earth:

Rev. 21:3-4 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

God dwells with men.

No death.

No mourning.

No crying.

No pain.

B. The New Jerusalem

Rev. 21:9 – 11 9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

Already in existence and filled with homes for believers. John 14:2 In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

2. Enormous in size - 1377 mi. X 1377 mi. X 1377 mi. This indicates the New Earth will be much, much larger.
 - a. Nearly 2 million sq. mi.
 - b. Half the size of United States!
 - c. If you sliced it in 6 mi. layers, it would cover the surface of the present earth.
3. Indescribable in Beauty
 - a. Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

- b. It shines with the glory of God.
- c. It has a wall, 216 feet high, all the way around it.
 - 1) Wall made of jasper, gold in color but clear like glass.
 - 2) 12 gates, each with name of one of tribes of Israel.
 - 3) Each gate made of single pearl.
 - 4) Each gate has its own angel.
- d. It is built on 12 layers of foundation.
 - 1) Each a layer of beautiful precious stone.
 - 2) Each with a name of one of 12 apostles.
- e. City itself of pure gold, even the streets.
- f. At peak of city, the throne of God the Father and His Son, the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1) From thence radiates the glory of God that lights the entire city.
 - 2) From the throne runs the river of the water of life, crystal clear and pure.
 - 3) To the throne runs the main street of the city.
 - 4) In the middle of the street and on either side of the river grows an orchard of the tree of life, bearing 12 kinds of delicious fruit, one kind growing each month.

C. LIFE IN THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

- 1. Life with the Believers of All the Ages
 - a. O.T. saints who trusted in the coming Messiah before He came.
 - 1) Talk with Adam and Eve about the Garden of Eden.
 - 2) Talk with Job about the dinosaurs he wrote about.
 - 3) Visit with Noah about life in the ark.
 - 4) Talk with Daniel about ancient Babylon.
- 2. N.T. saints

- a. John, Luke, Paul
 - b. also the less known: one of the shepherds who went to Bethlehem's manger, one of the magi, the Roman Centurion who believed
3. And the saints through history
- a. That small group of faithful Bible believing people who maintained true doctrine when the church at large was selling out to the pagan practices of the world around it.
 - b. Those who burned at the stake rather than renounce Christ.
4. And the saints you know who have gone on before you.
- a. Dear friends
 - b. Relatives
 - 1) My mom and dad are there as are many of yours.
 - 2) Some of you may have children there, some perhaps whom you never met for they died before they were born. They will be there, and you will know them, and they will know you.
5. But only those who trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior will be there.

D. We will live in the midst of the Pervading Presence of Almighty God.

Revelation 22:4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

1. We shall bask in His glory.
2. We shall live in the abundance of His provision.
 - a. No limit because of safety or health; we will be able to do and go.
 - b. No limit because of deception causing ignorance; we will be able to learn and understand and remember!
 - c. No limit because of time; we will have forever to pursue our interests and desires for the glory of God!
3. We shall worship.
 - a. We shall see God: Father, Son, Holy Spirit and we shall see Him as He is.

- b. We will bow.
- c. We will sing.
- d. We will praise.
- e. We will adore Him.

CONCLUSION: And all of this we will do FOR ALL ETERNITY.

Will you be in that place? Then bow in His presence now and thank Jesus for saving your sinful soul from an eternity in the Lake of Fire and instead by His love and grace giving you the unbreakable promise of such a wonderful, eternal home. He has promised you: **Revelation 21:7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.**