

Better Times For the Saints
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INTRODUCTION Rev. 21:1-3

Rev. 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

- The first earth and its associated heaven are gone - **Ch. 20:9** tells us that in the last great confrontation between Christ and Satan and his hordes, "...fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Verse 11 states that the earth and the heaven fled away from the face of the Lord, and no place was found for them. Peter tells us that when the day of the Lord comes (**2Peter 3:10**) "...the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
- These scriptural statements bring us to the place (following the Great White Throne Judgment) of God's creation of a new heaven and a new earth; which is what true believers look for: **2Peter 3:13** "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."
- This sets the stage for the next great and eternal event, the marriage of Christ with His bride, the church

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

- The new Jerusalem precisely identified: **Rev. 21:9-10** And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God..." (12,000 furlongs = 375 miles cubed; size: TN/AL/MS; population of these 3 = 13.5 million on one flat surface; if New Jerusalem tiered at 1 mile intervals and populated according to density of TN/AL/MS, would provide living space for more than 5 billion people; another fact: The outer layer of the earth's atmosphere (mesosphere) ends at an average altitude of about 375 miles)
- The bride and wife status of the Lord's church precisely identified: In **Ephesians 5**, Paul writes extensively about husbands and wives, their relationship, their bond of marriage then in **v.32** he writes this about that entire discourse: "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."
- Which brings us to this act of God as it relates to the church, God's place of habitation (tabernacle):
- **Rev. 21:3** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.
- Let us remember that at this time, the Great White Throne Judgment has taken place (**Ch. 20:11-15**). So, those present with God are the entire remnant of redeemed mankind - the elect of God - those that God saved for Himself; thus "...the tabernacle of God is with

men....”

- This brings us to the heart of our message: Better Times For the Saints of God

MESSAGE - Rev. 21:4-6; 22:1-5

- **Rev. 21:4** And God shall:
 - wipe away all tears from their eyes;
 - and there shall be no more death,
 - neither sorrow,
 - nor crying, (this is an outcry like a shouted notification we sometimes hear when someone is overcome with bad news and they yell it out)
 - neither shall there be any more pain:
 - for the former things are passed away.
- **Rev. 21:5** And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
- **Rev. 21:6** And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.
 - ▶ Here it is on the new earth: **Rev. 22:1** And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.
- **Rev. 22:2** In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.
 - ▶ Tree of life growing everywhere
 - ▶ Every desirable fruit
 - ▶ All year round
 - ▶ Leaves for the healing of the nations (the Greek phraseology here implies medicine to cure or medicine to keep healthy)
 - ▶ A possible explanation for why the Lord has provided this:
 - We are still created beings in the new earth; angels who are created beings are charged with folly by the Lord (**Job 4:18**). While we are glorified, the beings that we are will still not be divine...that is we will not be equal with God, nor of the same pure essence as God; so we will apparently need some kind of spiritual balm or medicine. It is not about physical sickness, nor even about spiritual illness; it is about preventative medicine. The leaves provide that.
 - Illustrate: The use of preventive steps
 - ✓ I take warfarin - preventive for blood clots
 - ✓ Some of you take flu shots; although you don't have the flu-to keep from catching flu
 - ✓ All of you eat, although you do not suffer from malnutrition-prevents malnutrition
 - ✓ If the spiritual growth, health, and survival depends on our feeding on Christ

now, will that change just because we move into an eternal state? Answer: no. He is Savior or Preserver now, and will be Preserver then.

- **Rev. 22:3** And there shall be no more curse:
 - Are you tired of weeds, mosquitos, flies, termites, poison ivy, briars, drought, floods, grass that dies on your lawn, gardens that won't produce, wrinkles?
- but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; - this is about who will be in full ruling power there.
 - Are you sick of corrupt governments wrecking the planet, the peace and prosperity of the people, the peace among nations?
 - Are you fed up with government officials that lie to stay in office; that run for office so that they can line their pockets and get set for life?
 - Are you tired of watching good, honest, ethical politicians beat down, criticized, and marginalized by the crooks who have power; defeated and driven from positions of influence, or kept from making any righteous progress in the world of government?
- and his servants shall serve him: This is about fidelity; Every creature there will be a willing and ardent servant - no lying, cheating, deceptive, disloyal slackers here; not traitors who have taken a servants position and then turned it into a position of tyranny against those they serve.
- **Rev. 22:4** And they shall see his face; - No boss or ruler hiding behind a mask of deception and hidden agendas
- and his name *shall be* in their foreheads - no mistaking who the inhabitants of the new earth belong to.
- **Eze. 9:4-6** And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. 5 And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite... 6 but come not near any man upon whom *is* the mark....”
- **Rev. 22:5** And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light:
 - Rev. 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.
- and they shall reign for ever and ever.