

All Things Will Be Made New

by Mark Jarvinen

A man was asking another younger man about his plans for the future. The younger man responded, ***“I plan on graduating from college and getting a good job.”*** The first guy said, ***“And then what?”*** The younger man said, ***“I’ll probably find a wife, settle down and get married.”*** ***“And then what?”*** the first guy asked. This line of questioning went back and forth, projecting forward through every stage of life, until the first man asked the younger man about his ***retirement***, and finally, his ***death***. The younger man was perturbed about the retirement question and downright upset when asked about what would happen after his death. Obviously, the younger man hadn’t thought THAT far ahead, but even if he had, he didn’t want to talk about it. **(adapted from Curt Cizek, Sermon Central)**. According to pollster, **George Barna**, 71% of Americans believe there is a heaven, but hardly anybody spends much time thinking or talking about it. Heaven can be and ought to be a topic that brings great hope and joy to believers in Jesus Christ.

The Apostle John, the author of **Revelation**, had been exiled by the Roman government to the small, rocky, 50 square-mile island of **Patmos**, in the Aegean Sea, because as an eyewitness of Christ’s ministry, he had preached and taught continuously about his Savior and Lord. It was there, while isolated and far away from contact with other Christians, that the Holy Spirit came to him with a series of seven visions, the final one of which contains our text today, speaking of **“a new heaven and a new earth”** to be ushered in after Judgment

Day. This vision was intended as an encouragement to John, to remind him that the desolate little island of Patmos was not his permanent home. He had something to look forward to as a child of God. We, too, are children of God who are passing through this life, with this world as our temporary home. The good news is that, like John, we also have something far better to look forward to - our eternal home. This temporal world, filled with destruction and evil, is passing away. The Lord says to us today, through John's vision, ***"Look, I am making everything new!" (Rev. 21:5).***

Let's consider the impact of this statement together this morning. What are the elements of the new order mentioned in our text?

I. HEAVEN IS A NEW ADDRESS.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone.² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. (21:1-2).

On the coming Day of the Lord (Judgment Day) after the resurrection of believers to life (those who had previously died and those alive at the 2nd coming of Christ); and after the final judgment of all those who have rejected God's grace of forgiveness, God will accomplish another transformation, i.e. a transformation of the universe, in which the earth and the universe as we know it will be destroyed. The Apostle Peter tells us exactly what will happen:

⁷ And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed....¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the

heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment....

¹²... On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames (II Peter 3:7,10,12).

As author **Douglas Connelly** describes it:

“When Christ has conquered every enemy, this present visible universe will evaporate with a thunderous roar. The energy held in the atomic structure of the elements will be released, and the old creation will melt away” (The After Life, p. 96).

But when the old world is gone, God will step in and create a new habitation for his people, as we read in **II Peter 3:13** –

“But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God’s righteousness.”

Yes, the earth will be transformed at the Day of the Lord, but so will heaven. What we think of as heaven today, which is where the spirits of believers who have died go to dwell in the presence of the Lord, that place which Jesus called **“Paradise”** when He spoke to the thief on the cross, will also undergo a transformation. **What will this new, transformed, and permanent heaven be like?** John begins describing heaven in terms of **“the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... (v.1)**. John offers more detail through a symbolic description of heaven in **Revelation 21:9-21**, but his vision of it is so unlike anything we are familiar with that it’s hard to fathom with absolute clarity. He speaks of a magnificent city about the size of the eastern half of the United States, with high walls and imposing gates adorned with jewels, and streets paved with gold. But the most important fact we learn about the New Jerusalem is in **v. 2** - that it came down from heaven from God **“like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.”** The old

Jerusalem had been the center of worship for God's chosen people, Israel; but in the end, it had been the place of Christ's rejection. Now God had set things right. The New Jerusalem is compared to a bride beautifully dressed in holiness, prepared and expectant, eager to meet her husband and to unite with him, without a trace of rejection. With the coming of the New Jerusalem, it's as though there's been a **"neighborhood redevelopment,"** both physically and spiritually. God's people will live in **"new digs"** for all eternity when Christ takes his rightful place as Lord, in the eyes of all nations, on that great and final day. God is making all things new!

II. HEAVEN IS A NEW ASSOCIATION.

³I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever" (21:3-4).

We're still referring to the New Jerusalem here with reference to God's home being among his people. In the **OT**, God's home was the Temple in Jerusalem. But in the New Jerusalem God will dwell not in a building made with human hands, but **"among his people!"** Something greater is coming for the people of God! This speaks to me about the quality of worship that will be experienced in the New Jerusalem. The sense of God's presence will be palpable and unhindered – like nothing we've known before. I don't think anyone there will be asking, **"What will people think if I raise my hands in worship?"** No one will be asking, **"So what denomination of Christian are you?"** In fact, our focus will be riveted on Christ, and

not the person standing next to us. With worship that intense, bowing before Him will likely be our first instinct.

Living in the direct presence of the Lord will bring newness to other dimensions of life as well. Notice what v. 4 says,

“He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

Think about the implications of this! No more funerals to attend. No more diseases to overcome. Depression? What’s that? No more gruesome scenes like the carnage of war or acts of terrorism. All this will become reality because of the new level of communion with our Lord.

III. HEAVEN IS A NEW ASSURANCE.

⁶And he also said, “It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. ⁷All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children (21:6-7).

It is supremely interesting and worthy of note that the words Jesus spoke from the cross ***“It is finished,”*** signifying that atonement for human sin had been accomplished through His shed blood, are now recorded again in v. 6 of our text, as if to say ***“My saving work is complete in the ultimate sense, since my own now have their place with me for all eternity.”*** What a great assurance! I’m reminded of **John 14:2-3 (NLT)**, which says,

“There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a

place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.”

By declaring that he is ***“the Alpha and the Omega – the Beginning and the End,”*** our Lord reminds us that he is able to accomplish what he promises. Moreover, think about the satisfying resources that will be present in heaven, put there by God’s own hand. Every need will be supplied and every desire fulfilled by our Lord as **v. 6b** suggests – ***“To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life.”*** Notice it says, that the Lord ***“will give freely.”*** All of this is God’s gift. No one can earn a place in heaven. We don’t merit our place there. It’s all by the free and boundless grace of God! Paul wrote to Titus and said,

“God our Savior saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

Finally, look at **v. 7** of our text, which says, ***“All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.”***

Having received salvation as a free gift of grace, notice there is an expectation of obedience from those who have been saved, where it says, ***“All who are victorious will inherit these blessings,”*** The **NIV** says, ***“He who overcomes will inherit all this”*** In other words, the new and sorrowless world described in our text belongs to those whose true and living faith in Christ leads them away from self-destructive compromise with the world’s values and toward dependence on the Holy Spirit’s power instead of one’s own strength in order to persevere in holiness and stand in the face of persecution. Notice, God’s reaffirmation of his covenant in the language of **v. 7b** –

“and I will be their God, and they will be my children.” God belongs to us and we belong to him. What an assurance!

CONCLUSION

“I will make all things new” says the Lord. He’s going to change everything on that Final Day. No more earth as we know it, with all its corruption and decay, but a new heaven and a new earth, a holy city in which to worship for all eternity. We’ll finally take permanent residence in the place that Jesus has been preparing for us since His ascension. We’ll have new bodies no longer susceptible to pain and suffering. These are great reasons to rejoice. On those days when we don’t feel like rejoicing - when we’re sad, lonely, or depressed – cling to the hope of heaven and all that is to come. Let’s not be among the 71% who believe in heaven but don’t usually think or talk about it.

Like the Apostle John, Peter also endured hardships for the sake of the Gospel. He knew the difficulties of maintaining hope in the midst of suffering. Do you give up? Do you complain and lose heart? Peter says,

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you” (I Peter 1:3-4).

Our Lord says, ***“I will make everything new – a heavenly home where you will live forever.”*** That’s our inheritance. Take heart and rejoice. ***A-men.***