

“The Celestial Bride”
Revelation 21

Question: What did John see? V. 1

Answer: ^{NIV} **Revelation 21:1** Then I saw a _____ heaven and a _____ earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. (Rev. 21:1 NIV)

Note: The Old Testament reference for this [which is why some translations have the phrase “new heaven and a new earth in quotes] comes from Isaiah 65:17; 66:22.

Question: What does it mean when the text says, “new?” and “passed away”?

Answer: Two positions

1. _____ position = The heavens and earth are completely destroyed. They are a completely new creation as in Genesis 1:1.

Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth.” *Bara* is the Hebrew word and is always used in connection with “creating something,” especially *ex nihilo* [_____], by God. Man makes, *asah*, or forms, *yatsar*. He does not create.

Isaiah 65:17, “Behold I will _____ [*bara*] new heavens and a new earth.”

2 Peter 3:10b, “The heavens will _____ with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.” [Lit. = will not be discovered or found]

Matthew 5:18, ¹⁸ “For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth _____ [*parerchomai*] = to perish or come to an end], not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.” (Matt. 5:18 NIV)

Psalm 102:25-26, ²⁵ In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ²⁶ They will _____, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. (Ps. 102:25-26 NIV)

2. Renewal/_____ position = The heavens and earth will be renewed or transformed.

Romans 8: 19-22, ¹⁹ "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be _____ from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time." (Rom. 8:19-22 NIV)

Acts 3:21, ²¹ "Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore _____, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets."

Note: The word "_____" in English comes in two Greek forms: *kainos* and *neos*. *Neos* describes something new in _____, e.g. a new house, something that did not exist in the past but exists now. *Kainos* describes something qualitatively new or _____. It has its creation in the past but has undergone a renewal or transformation.

The Apostle Paul uses the same language in 2 Corinthians 5:17 to describe a new believer, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a _____ [kainos] creation. The old has gone, the new has come!"

The argument is that when we received Jesus as our Savior, we are not obliterated or _____. Rather, the Holy Spirit, brings a renewed spirit to that which was in existence but dead. He brought life.

Paul also tells us in Philippians 3:21 that when Jesus comes, he will _____ [metaschismatzo = to change the external form of something] our lowly bodies so that they will be like his, i.e., recognizable in form but different in properties.

Kairos speaks of transformation but also _____, i.e., moving from one state of existence or being to another. For example, I once was dead in spirit but now I am alive to the things of God because of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Question: What does it mean for there to be “no more sea”?

Answer:

1. _____, 71 percent of the earth’s surface is water; 97 percent is salt water – ocean/sea. This means that the square surface for *tera firma* (hard ground) is 71 percent larger in nature than the former earth.
2. _____/mythologically, the seas represent “chaos,” e.g. Revelation 13:1. This means that the former chaotic nature of this world no longer exists.

Summation:

Question: What did John see next? Verse 2

Answer: ² I saw the _____, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a _____ beautifully dressed for her husband. (Rev. 21:2 NIV)

The New Jerusalem is a _____ city with dimensions and building material (as we shall see).

It is the _____ Jerusalem in the historical narrative.

1. The original city was known as _____ (Genesis 14:18; Melchizedek was king and priest); conquered by Joshua (Joshua 10:1; was an Amorite city); became a pagan city called _____ (Judges 19:10); conquered, rebuilt, and renamed by David (2 Samuel 5:6).
2. The second Jerusalem will be the one rebuilt by _____ in the Millennial Kingdom (Zechariah 14).

3. The third Jerusalem is the _____ Jerusalem. It is the place prepared for us by Jesus (John 14:1-2) that will come down to earth.

The city is called "holy" because it is not of this earth. It is not _____ by anything sinful nor will it be inhabited by anything sinful or unholy.

It is a _____ – it has people, activity, responsibility, organization, administration (some would argue – arts, music, libraries, etc...)

It is a city that currently _____, that all believers go to when they die. A city built by the hands of the living God (Hebrews 12:22-23).

It contains the _____ of Christ, the redeemed, and is itself called the Bride because it is intimately connected to the groom, Jesus.

Remember that in this world, God does not inhabit a place but a people. We are the _____ of God (1 Cor. 3 and 6) and eventually join the material Temple of God so that both speak to the same thing: the place where God dwells.

Question: John once again hears a loud voice. What does it say? Verse 3.

Answer: ³ "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's _____ place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God." (Rev. 21:3 NIV)

This is reminiscent of John 1:14.

¹⁴ "The Word became flesh and made his _____ among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jn. 1:14 NIV)

It is also the common _____ language formula found in Exodus 6:7, Jeremiah 7:23, 30:22, and Ezekiel 36:28 but now eternally fulfilled.

Question: Life in this new city will be unimaginably unique. How is it described? Verse 4.

Answer: ⁴ 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more _____ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.' (Rev. 21:4; cp Heb. 9:8-10 NIV)

Note: "Old order" is literally, "_____."

The internal quote is an allusion to Isaiah 25:7-8 and Isaiah 35:8-10.

⁷ "On this mountain he will _____ the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; ⁸ he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken." (Isa. 25:7-8 NIV)

⁸ "And a highway will be there; it will be called the _____ of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. ⁹ No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰ and those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." (Isa. 35:8-10 NIV)

Question: What did John see and hear next? V. 5.

Answer: ⁵ "He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making _____ new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'" (Rev. 21:5 NIV)

Note: On the connection of "trustworthy" see 1st Cor. 7:25; 1st Tim. 1:12, 15; 3:1, 11; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 1:9; 3:8.

Question: What did John to write down? Vv. 6-8.

Answer: ⁶ "He said to me: 'It is _____. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.

⁷ Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-- they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.'” (Rev. 21:6-8 NIV)

God first affirms this new action, this _____ heavens and new earth. It is called a “_____ present.” It is something so certain to happen in the future that one can describe it as being fulfilled in the present. We might say that it's a “done deal.”

Second, God _____ it by identifying Himself as the One who is the First and the Last.

Note: There is a play on words here. The first things have passed away; the last things have come. God is first. He is the first _____ or primary Cause of everything. He was in the beginning, before the beginning of anything created and He is now the Last, the End, the Completer of all things.

This is also a classic *merism* in which two _____ are mentioned in order to emphasize the totality of something. God is sovereign over all things.

Third, God _____ that He is the source of eternal life.

Note: The _____ to the thirsty – to come and drink from water that is freely given – is once again an illusion to the words of Isaiah (Is. 55:1-3)

"_____, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.

³ Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.” (Isa. 55:1-3 NIV)

This also describes the _____ of the new city. V. 7

1. Those who are _____, i.e. who thirst after/for righteousness (Matt. 5:6)

2. Those who are _____. Cf. 1 John 5:3-5; Cp. Rev. 2/3, "to the one who is victorious..."

³ "In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the _____ that has overcome the world, even our faith.

⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." (1 Jn. 5:3-5 NIV)

The result is the _____ of the relational covenant. "He will be our God and we will be His children."

This is not the unilateral, unconditional, blood covenant, although it does apply. This is the covenant language of Exodus 6; a _____ - _____ covenant of "if...then." If...you obey me. If... you exercise righteous faith in my promises. If...you believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Then...you will be a child of God and He, your father.

But it also describes who will _____be in the city. V. 8

1. _____ – Those who lack _____ in the face of persecution, which ultimately displays their allegiance. The word can be translated, "fearful." It describes the apostles in the middle of the storm (Matt. 8:26). They are the ones (fake Christians) who turn back to the world (apostates).

³⁵ "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.

³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?

³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

³⁸ If anyone is _____ of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels." (Mk. 8:35-38 NIV)

2. The _____ – This is an individual who is unfaithful or untrustworthy. It is in contrast to the "Faithful One" who is Jesus. It is a person who has been _____ to the God and His commands.

3. The _____ – This can be translated “abominable” or “detestable.” It speaks to someone who is _____ by the world and who worships the beast.
4. The _____ – These are individuals who participated in the _____ of Christians.
5. The _____ _____ (*pornos*) – Those involved in any type of sexual activity outside of the prescribed divine plan of one man and one woman in _____ with each other. Cp. Romans 1:22-24.

²² “Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. ²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to _____ for the degrading of their bodies with one another.” (Rom. 1:22-24 NIV)

6. Those who practice _____ – sorcery, witchcraft, necromancy, etc...

²⁴ “Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called _____, 'I will not impose any other burden on you, ²⁵ except to hold on to what you have until I come.'” (Rev. 2:24-25 NIV)

7. The _____ – Those who worship anything other than God.
8. And all _____ – They represent and align themselves with the one who was a liar from the very beginning – Satan. Cf. John 8:44

⁴⁴ “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the _____, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a _____ and the father of _____.” (Jn. 8:44 NIV)

Note Paul's list in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. ⁹ "Or do you not know that wrongdoers will _____ the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 6:9-10 NIV)

Question: What invitation did John receive? V. 9

Answer: ⁹ "One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, 'Come, I will show you the _____, the wife of the Lamb.'" (Rev. 21:9 NIV)

Question: What happened to John? V. 10

Answer: ¹⁰ "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, _____, coming down out of heaven from God." (Rev. 21:10 NIV)

Question: How did John describe the city? Vv. 11-27

Answer:

1. It was _____ - ¹¹ "It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal." (Rev. 21:11 NIV)

2. It has the element of an _____ city – walls and gates.

¹² It had a great, high wall with _____ gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.

¹⁴ The wall of the city had _____ foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵ The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.

¹⁶ The city was laid out like a _____, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long.

¹⁷ The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick.

¹⁸ The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

¹⁹ The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of _____ stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,

²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

²¹ The twelve gates were _____ pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass." (Rev. 21:12-21 NIV)

Note: The Old and New _____ are represented in the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles.

Note: The wall is not to help _____ the city because there are no enemies. It exists as a constant reminder of a believer's eternal security.

Note: Twelve thousand stadia is _____ miles and it is cubed. There is debate on whether this is a cube or pyramid.

Note: NASA awards "_____" status to individuals if they go higher than 50 miles into the atmosphere. SPACE is technically defined as anything past 60 miles. Navigation satellites are between 100 and 300 miles into the atmosphere. Global positioning satellites are between 6 and 12,000 miles into the atmosphere. Broadcast satellites can be found as high as 22,000 miles into the atmosphere.

Note: The stones in the foundation have a correspondence to eight of the stones in the breastplate of the high priest. The other four could also be but geologists are not certain what they are with certainty.

Question: What did John *not* see in the New Jerusalem?

Answer:

1. A _____ – a formal place of worship.

²² "I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." (Rev. 21:22 NIV)

Note: There is no physical, _____, place for worship because the person whom we worship is present.

2. _____ that need to light the sky – no sun or moon. There is no night and perhaps day (as we know it). We must think of light as in Genesis 1:3 – "And God said let there be light..." = aura/energy, except not created but emanating from the uncreated being of God. Cp. Isaiah 60:19.

²³ "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the _____ of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. (Rev. 21:24 NIV)" (Rev. 21:23 NIV)

Question: How do we understand:

- a. Nations
- b. Kings
- c. Splendor

Answer: There are _____ answers but the one that fits the best is that the nation and kings are those who are born during the Millennial reign of Jesus and remain faithful to Him. They are not part of the class of resurrected but are transformed into sinless beings. They retain their _____ and unique distinctions which equate to their splendor. Splendor could also be their unique type of worship. [Difficult passage]

3. No _____ access.

²⁵ "On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it." (Rev. 21:25-26 NIV)

4. Nothing _____ but only the sinless.

²⁷ 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. 21:27 NIV)

“The very things that make us shy away from people, the _____ things they can say, the regretful way they can act, the unfortunate way they often treat us, will no longer even be possible. Our own _____, which sabotage our deeper relationships here on earth, will also be gone forever from us. Heaven is not merely a perfection of place; it is a perfection of people.”

“Imagine upon arriving in heaven that you discovered, to your delight, that the first person you met _____ you so dearly and deeply that it fairly took your breath away and that this expression of love neither embarrassed you nor made you feel strange. You were able to receive this person’s love as easily as he or she was able to give it.

“Then imagine the next person you met loved you with an equivalent, but unique, perfect love. That’s the citizenry of heaven. No one will _____ or hide themselves from others. We will truly and genuinely find those relationships our souls have been longing for from every single citizen in heaven.”

Dan Schaeffer, *A Better Country: Preparing for Heaven*. Grand Rapids: Discovery House, p. 90