

“Heaven on Earth”

(Rev. 21:1-8)

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I. Introduction

A. The Glory of Heaven

1. Marco Polo’s Half Not Yet Told (#2191)

Marco Polo, the famous Venetian traveler of the thirteenth century, when he lay dying, was urged by his attendants to recant—to withdraw the stories he had told about China and the lands of the Far East. But he said, “I have not told half what I saw.”

2. The mystery of Heaven.....I Cor. 2

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” (I Cor. 2:9)

3. Not only have we not seen or heard about heaven...

- a. ...our minds cannot even conceive what heaven will be like

4. But...we have some clues

“...but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (I Cor. 2:10)

B. Today—what we DO know about Heaven

II. Review

A. The Tribulation.....Done!

B. The Millennium.....Done!

C. The Judgment.....Done!

D. Now It’s *GLORY TIME!*

1. What will your life be like after you die?

- a. Next couple of weeks
- 2. Misconceptions to be cleared up
- 3. A detailed description of your future home and life

III. Text

A. The Destruction of the Old (v.1)

(1) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

- 1. A new heaven and a new earth

a. New Heaven

- 1. Bible speaks of three heavens
 - a. The atmosphere
 - b. The stars, etc.
 - c. The abode of God

Paul called it the “third heaven”

- 2. Here he speaks of at least the first and probably also the second

b. A New Earth

- 1. The earth is where we dwell
- 2. The third rock from the sun

- 2. *“for the first heaven and first earth had passed away”*

- a. “first” can also mean “old”
 - 1. “protos”
 - 2. The “proto-type”
- b. Will this old earth be annihilated?

- c. I don't think so
 - 1. I believe God is saying He will re-model this old earth
- 3. They won't disappear...rather they will "pass away"
 - a. Greek— "*parerchomai*"
 - b. "*a change in condition or location*"
 - c. A vast renovation
- 4. The earth has "passed away" before
 - a. *The old earth passed away after the fall of the angels***
 - 1. The gap of Gen. 1:1 and 1:2
 - a. "The earth had become formless and void"
 - 2. The earth covered with water
 - b. *The old earth passed away after the Flood of Noah's time***
 - 1. (II Peter 3:6)—"by which the world that then existed perished (passed away), being flooded with water."
 - c. *The old earth will pass away after the Tribulation***
 - 1. Melted down
 - 2. The new Kingdom
 - d. *The old earth will pass away after the Millennium***
 - 1. The old earth will pass away
- 5. The earth has always been the focal point of creation
 - a. This is where it began and this is where it will end up
 - b. But God will make it totally new and sinless
- 6. "*New*"

a. Two words for new

1. “na os”
 - a. Brand new
 - b. New baby
2. “kain os” (kahee-nos)
 - a. Used here
 - b. New in quality
 - c. “better”
 - d. A “new” man

b. A New Earth

1. “a better earth”

7. God has promised that we will someday inherit the earth

- a. (Ps. 37:9)—“...Those who wait on the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.”
- b. (Mt. 5:5)—“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”
- c. (Ps. 37:29)—“The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell in it forever.”

1. Has to be “heaven”

8. The new earth will be the dwelling place of—

- a. God
- b. The saved
- c. The angelic host
 1. Currently with God in Heaven
 2. Will come to earth with him

9. Earth is where both man and angels began

a. Get a CD from last week

10. *“and there was no longer any sea”* (v.1)

a. Odd statement

1. Every surfer’s nightmare

b. I believe it means a lot more than what most suppose

c. Referring back to the very dawn of creation

1. Very complicated study of Hebrew and Greek

2. Genesis 1:2 (before the 6 days of creation)

“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

3. Genesis 1:6-8 (the second day of creation)

(6) And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” (7) So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. (8) God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

4. Water above the sky?

5. The vapor cloud prior to the flood?

d. Someday we’ll understand what God meant when he said *“and there was no longer any sea”*

B. The Descending of the New (v.2)

(2) I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

1. The Holy City descends

a. John is excited *“I saw the Holy City”*

- b. Literally *“And I John saw the Holy City!!”*
- 2. It’s the new Jerusalem
- 3. The crown jewel of the New Earth
 - a. The palace of the King
 - b. The center of Heaven
- 4. *“coming down out of heaven”*
 - a. Down from the sky above?
 - b. Where was it during the Millennium?
 - 1. Hovering over earth?
 - c. The chandelier theory
- 5. The city’s beauty
 - a. *“prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband”*
 - b. Probably because it was the scene of the Marriage of the Lamb
- 6. The home of resurrected saints during the millennium?
- 7. Current home of the angels
- 8. The importance of angels

C. Mankind and Angels

- 1. *Both will return to earth with Christ at end of Tribulation*
- 2. *Both will be residents of the New Jerusalem*
- 3. *Both appear to be similar in size and appearance*
 - a. Rev. 21:17

“He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man’s measurement, which the angel was using.

Literally...“the measure of a man, that is of an angel”

- b. A cubit equal to distance from elbow to finger tips
- c. The same for angels and people
 - 1. Our glorified bodies will be similar in some ways to what we look like now
 - a. Lazarus and the rich man
 - b. Elijah and Moses on Mt. of Transfiguration

4. *The “holy angels” always appear with bodies like ours*

- a. In Sodom and Gomorrah
- b. The angels always looked like men

5. *You may have mistaken an angel for a man*

- a. We have entertained angels unaware
 - 1. Looked like people
- b. Hebrews 13:2

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”

6. *We will be like the angels when we get to heaven*

- a. Mark 12:25

“When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.”

- b. Luke 20:34-36

(34) Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. (35) But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; (36) nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

b. Don't know all that is implied

7. *Angels may have once had sex with women*

a. Angels are called the "Sons of God"

a. Job 38:4-7

(4) Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. (5) Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? (6) On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone (7) while the morning stars sang together and all the angels (sons of God) shouted for joy.

b. The Hebrew calls them the "sons of God"

c. We know them as "angels"

b. Prior to the Flood

1. Genesis 6:1-2

(1) When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, (2) the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful and they married any of them they chose (3) Then the Lord said, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years." (4) The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown. (5) The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. (6) The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. (7) So the Lord said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them." (8) But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

2. Those angels were given a special punishment

I Peter 3:18-22 "But Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, (19) by whom also He

went and preached to the spirits in prison, (20) who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water.”

II Peter 2:4-5 ”For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; (5) and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;”

Jude 6 “And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”

8. Only the “fallen angels” were disembodied

- a. A consequence of their sin
- b Always described as “spirits”
- c Always trying to possess a human body
 - 1. Or something else if no human available
- b. Awaiting their final judgment
 - 1. Hell was prepared for Satan and his angels

9. We underestimate the impact of angels in our world

- a. It used to belong to them
- b. The fallen angels want dominion over it again
- c. May explain some of the unexplainable phenomena
 - 1. UFO’s
 - 2. Ghosts
- d. Have great power
- e. Guardian angels (Matt. 18:10)

- f. Jacob saw angels ascending to and descending from heaven

D. The Dwelling Place of God (v.3)

(3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

1. Key thought—God will dwell with us
 - a. The greatest thing about Heaven
 - b. The Throne of God
2. The Tabernacle
 - a. “skene” = dwelling place
 - b. It is with men
3. He will live (dwell) with them
 - a. “skenuo”
 - b. Will “tabernacle” with them

E. The Drying of all Tears (v. 4-6)

(4) He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (5) He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” (6) He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

1. Tears wiped from every eye
 - a. By God
 - b. Implies that tears are present in Heaven up to this point
 - c. Gives an idea of the type of bodies we’ll have
2. Things missing in the Eternal State

- a. No tears
- b. No death--
 - 1. No babies die
 - 2. No elderly die
- c. No sorrow—
 - 1. No pain
 - 2. No discouragement
 - 3. No depression
- d. No crying—
 - 1. No more war
 - 2. No more broken hearted lovers
- e. No more pain
 - 1. No heart disease
 - 2. No cancer

3. ***“for the old order of things has passed away.”***

- a. Curse-related things
- b. For example: (Gen. 3:16-19)

¹⁶ To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” ¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’; cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”

- c. We have not seen God’s best

1. We see it in its cursed state
2. But that will pass away
4. ***“And behold, I make all things new”***
 - a. You haven’t seen anything yet
 - b. Better than the garden
5. John was overwhelmed
 - a. “Keep writing, John”
 - b. “This is TRUE and faithful”
6. God reminds John of His credentials
 - a. “The Alpha and Omega”
 - b. “The Beginning and the End”

F. The Destiny of the Sinners (v.7-8)

(7) He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (8) But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

1. The 2nd death
 - a. Lake of Fire
2. Reminds us one last time of the infinite contrast
3. But—haven’t we all lied?
 - a. Probably
 - b. I know we have all sinned
4. Referring to people who are typified by such a life-style

- a. Don't tell lies
 - b. Rather are liars
5. A final warning!

G. The Destiny of the Saints (v. 7)

(7) He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

1. *"He who overcomes"*
 - a. A phrase used to describe Christians
 - b. Have overcome through Jesus
2. *"will inherit all this"*
 - a. Claim your inheritance
 - b. Same is described in next section
3. Why?
 - a. Because you are a son of God

IV. Summary

A. My new home

1. The description of your new home
 - a. Next week
2. (John 14:2 & 3)— *"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."*