

A New Heaven & a New Earth

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[0 : 00] Let's turn again for a little to Revelation chapter 21, and particularly verse 4.

And really the beginning of verse 4, although it's all tied up together. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. This book, the book of Revelation, as we know, is a fascinating book. And one of the things that we love about this book, although there are many mysteries in that are many things that are certainly difficult for us to understand, is that there's no question whatever, but that in Revelation it holds out some of what lies ahead for us.

And that's something that always excites us and builds anticipation in us, because we want to know what the future holds.

And this is one of the great things for the believer, that we are able to understand some, some of what lies ahead.

[1 : 30] But we can only understand to a certain extent, because this book talks about dimensions and experiences that it is impossible for us to understand, because we have never, we ourselves have never been free of sin.

We ourselves live in a world that is still sort of, well, it's a world that knows and experiences all the pains and sorrows and difficulties of life.

So we really and truly cannot imagine, we cannot begin to understand what it would be like to live free of every pain, every disability, every disappointment, every sorrow, to live in a world that is complete harmony and peace and joy and happiness.

It's really very, very hard for our minds to grapple with that, because it goes beyond our experience. We're told here that there's going to be things, for instance, that tells us there's going to be a new heaven and a new earth. And again, that's something that excites us, something that causes us to wonder.

[2 : 48] And naturally, I wonder what it's going to be like. And I'm sure we often discuss these sort of things and try to get our mind around it and play it with these ideas. And he says, I wonder what this new heaven and new earth will be like.

We're told that there will be no more sea. And again, that's a concept that we just cannot understand, because we say to ourselves, the world that we live in is governed by sea, so are we in this island are surrounded by sea.

But again, in these sort of things, some of these images that are given to us certainly would be images and pictures that are given in order for us to try to understand certain truths.

Because in chapter 22, it tells us that there will be water, the river of the water of life, bright as crystal flowing through the middle of the city, of the street, and so on.

We're also told that the dwelling place of God is with man. And again, that's a wonderful concept. That forever and ever, there will be unbroken, unhindered fellowship with God.

[4 : 06] And again, we can't enter into that. We have enjoyed fellowship with the Lord in this world. There have been times where we have really experienced fellowship with the Lord.

We are conscious of his presence, of his love. We have known, just as it were, in the very depth of our being, the touch of God upon our soul.

And we've enjoyed it. And often that fellowship, while sometimes on our own with the Lord, it has often been with other people. Sometimes it's in God's house. Sometimes it's in company with two, three, with a group.

But we have known, whether it's by ourselves or in a large group, we've known something of that. But it never lasts. Because sin is always there, and sin mars and spoils and breaks and disrupts

and all these things.

But here there is unbroken, unhindered fellowship, where we will dwell with God and God dwells with us. There's a kind of a picture of that in the Old Testament, both in the tabernacle and in the temple, and in the most holy place, and God-centered there.

[5 : 21] But here it is an actual discovery, where it will be known, seen, understood, partaken of forever and ever and ever. And so we find there are these amazing things held out before us.

And then verse 4 tells us that God will wipe away every tear. Every tear. And that means every tear that has come about through all the different situations that have ever been part and partial of your life and every believer's life.

All the sorrows and sadnesses and pains, all the things from birth to death, from the cradle to the grave, all these experiences that have brought hurt and sorrow and mourning and crying and tears. All of them will be wiped away. And again, these are amazing thoughts. And when we look at this, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more.

Again, can't understand that. All the time in this world, we're facing death. We're hearing of death. Loved ones are taken away. The psalm says, the place which once knew will know us no more.

[6 : 45] And how true. That's part of what makes life so difficult. Loved ones who are part of your life, they're gone. But death will be no more. In glory, nobody will ever be seen.

Did you hear that so-and-so died? Where is so-and-so? He died. No, you'll never hear that again. Death will be no more.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more, for the former things are passed away.

And you see really what God is doing here. He is reversing the process of the curse. He's reversing the curse. All that took place when man fell.

Where sin entered this world. Where the curse came upon this world. Where the fall took place. Here, heaven is showing.

[7 : 42] It's a state where everything has been reversed. In a sense, it's the restoration of what God made. In fact, we would say it's enhanced.

Greater than what it was in the beginning. But in a sense, for us to, I suppose, understand what it means for us to say he will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

I suppose we must see where we are now. And kind of see what we're being delivered from. In order to see where we're going. So, we have to see where are we now.

Now, obviously, we know we're here in this world. And while this world is a place of great blessings. And many, many wonderful experiences.

And I think one of the great ways that we are made is that we tend, by and large, to remember the good things rather than the bad things.

[8 : 44] And that's a good thing. Now, I'm sure everybody in here at different levels, different degrees, have experienced many traumatic, many sore, many difficult things.

Some of you have great burdens in your heart. Great pains. And yet, you still have to admit and say, well, while my heart might be sore, yet as I look at life and as I reflect over life and reflect over my life, there have been so, so many good things.

Many things that have made me laugh. Many things that have given me satisfaction and joy. In fact, it's been so, many things that have been so, many things that have been so, many things that have been so, many times, and I reflect upon the way that my life has gone.

And I cannot help but look back with gratitude at many of the wonderful things I have known and experienced. And yet, despite all that, it is still a world of tears and of crying.

We cannot escape it. There are people who might be looking and they're trying to, some way to get to a world within this world, where they will live, as it were, like almost in an earthly paradise.

[10 : 01] But, you know, it doesn't matter how much wealth, how much influence, how much prestige or power a passion has. It doesn't matter where in this world a passion may go.

We can never be free from troubles, from sorrows, from pains. You could be the richest person in the world who could buy up the most beautiful, idyllic islands and spots.

And you say to yourself, it's sort of the thing, you would see a brochure, it would be the dream place to go to. And you say, I'm going there. And I can treat myself, I can eat whatever I want, I can drink whatever I want, I can have whoever I want, I'm going to live there in absolute luxury.

And a person may go there with all the money in the world and become ill. And their life can change. They might be ravaged by all of a sudden, by terrible pain and some incurable disease. You see, it doesn't matter where we go, what we do, we cannot achieve what people are often looking for. But people are always looking for this sort of, to regain, in a sense, a paradise that has been lost.

[11:16] People are trying to regain it. And they're so often trying to regain it without God. They're trying somehow to get paradise here on this earth. People go down all kinds of different roads.

It can't be, it can't be achieved. It's impossible. Now, as we know, this world, when God made it, he made it a perfect world.

He made it a beautiful world. We've always got to go back to that. People often say, you know, how is that? How come there is so much sorrow and sadness in this world?

How come there are all these accidents? How come there are all these terrible disasters? How come there are all these things?

Because Adam and Eve, they defied God, they disobeyed God, and they ate. And the moment they ate, the moment they defied God and disobeyed God, everything changed.

[12:42] This moment of disobedience, we could say, it was the ultimate betrayal of every hope, the crashing of every dream.

Because you remember how Satan had come up to Adam and Eve, particularly to Eve, and said, look, you need an enlightening experience.

God is holding you back from fulfillment. At the moment you only know good. You're missing out. You want to become like God so that you will know both good and evil.

You need to stretch out. You need to develop. And as we know, Eve believed the lie. Eve gave in, and she took and gave to Adam, and we know what happened.

It was the ultimate anticlimax. Everything that they thought this door would open for them crashed. And I'm sure almost, it doesn't tell us, it's not right for us even to speculate, but I could almost imagine just the beauty, if we were to have a visual presentation of what we're seeing, you could almost imagine a blackness coming over.

[14:03] All the greenery and all the beauty of the radiant sun shining. You could almost picture a blackness coming over. Because that moment, that moment changed the world forever.

God had said to them, you are on a period, as it were, of probation. They were made in perfection. They had the ability to obey. God is saying, this is what I want you to do.

You are, everything is yours. Everything except the one thing. One thing, this was their one test. And they failed. And that changed everything.

Because through that disobedience, it brought the curse down upon them and upon the world. So that the whole world has been affected.

Not just, it wasn't just Adam and Eve. It wasn't just at that moment the process of death begun. Every death that takes place, we can trace all the way back to Eden. And every natural calamity that takes place, we can trace all the way back to Eden.

[15:11] Because we're told that the whole creation is groaning. The curse, remember how God said, even the earth, you were a gardener, Adam.

Now weeds and thistles and thorns are going to grow up there. It's going to be through the sweat of your brow.

There's going to be, even in the ground, it's going to trouble you and make life difficult for you. And the whole creation was affected by the fall. That's why there are earthquakes.

That's why there are volcanoes. That's why there are these natural disasters. That's why there are tsunamis. All these things came in with a fall.

And that's why the Bible is so relevant to the day that we're living in. I wish people would come to the Bible and see, because out with this, it's impossible for us to trace where we are.

[16:10] Because people are always asking, how is it like that? Well, the Bible tells us. The only way that we can begin, as it were, to regain the paradise is by coming to God through Christ.

Because God sent his Son into this world in order for us to regain. In fact, not just to regain, but to bring us into an even more wealthy place eventually.

Now, of course, in this world, in Christ, we begin to experience the peace, the renewal, the fellowship, the joy, the love.

But again, as we said, not in its fullness. Because of sin, sin hampers, sin hinders, sin spoils. But one day, it won't one day, we will be freed from all that.

But at the moment, we're in our world, as we see, where there is crying and so. When you go through the Bible, you read there are lots of people who were crying.

[17 : 18] We read of, for instance, Hagar was crying about her son Ishmael, who she thought was dying. We read about Abraham mourning for his wife Sarah.

We read about David weeping profusely for his son Absalom who was killed. We read about the terrible lamentation in Bethlehem as Herod killed all the babies under the age of two, as he is determined to get and kill the baby Jesus.

The Bible is full of descriptions of crying and tears. Often you read this, they lifted up their voices and wept. How often you read about that in the Bible?

We even read of Jesus weeping. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus. And when it says, he wept, I believe it means just what it says, he wept.

We see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. Why is Jesus weeping over Jerusalem? Because he sees them rejecting himself.

[18 : 30] And Jesus' heart is breaking. Because he knows what is going to happen to them in the rejection of him. Because Jesus knows.

And this is part of the solemn truth and teaching of Scripture. Jesus knows that rejection of him is fatal.

Continued, ultimate rejection of Jesus is fatal. Because if our soul continues to death rejecting Jesus, there is only one course of action.

They will receive what they've chosen. What did they choose? Rejection. And God will say, I will give you what you chose.

I will give you eternally the place of rejection. Depart from me. For I never knew you. That's what the Bible says.

[19 : 37] People say it's unfair. God says no. I am only giving you what you chose. I am only giving you the choice that you made in this world is being fulfilled throughout eternity.

Jesus weeps when he sees the choice they're making. Why? Because Jesus knows that making that choice, they are going to go to a destination of eternal weeping.

This world has weeping. But it's not forever. But that's one of the awful pictures that Jesus gives us of hell.

It's a place of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. When we gnash or grind our teeth, why do we grind our teeth? We grind our teeth maybe out of frustration, out of anger, out of pain.

You know, you clench your teeth. And Jesus is saying. And remember, this is the word of Jesus. The one who says, I am the way, the truth and the life.

[20 : 53] Jesus never spoke anything other than truth. Hell is an awful place. It's a place where the restraints are removed. It's a place of lovelessness.

And a place of lawlessness. It's an angry place. A frustrating place. A place of bitterness. That's why Jesus warns us against it.

That's why Jesus wept over the city as he saw him rejecting. A savior whose heart is full of love. And it's this Jesus tonight who is urging us to flee from the wrath to come and to accept himself.

And my friend, if we accept Jesus and the provision.

God's provision. And just giving our life, saying, Lord Jesus, please take over my life. Lord, be the captain of my salvation.

[21 : 56] Be my teacher. Be my lord. Be my master. And we are told in scripture very clearly of the future that awaits us. And we're told here that God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

When the soul enters heaven. It's as if the Lord will take that soul that comes in. Just in the way that a parent would take a child who's come in from some trauma or some accident.

And the little child comes in and is crying. But it's okay. Everything's going to be all right. And that's what the father or the mother is saying. Look, it's all right.

It's all over. And I'm sure many a father and a mother has done that. Has wiped away the tears. The sobbing child. But you know when we enter glory we won't be sobbing. You know sometimes when a little one, they keep on for quite a while after.

Well there won't be any of that. It's a picture that I think is really saying to us, look, it's all over. The former things that passed away.

[23 : 04] All these things that caused you so much hurt and pain and sorrow in this world. It's all over. No more tears, sorrow, pain, sickness.

Death can never end. Nobody will ever say in glory, you know, I'm not feeling well. Nobody will ever say that. No one will ever be anxious about themselves or about anyone else.

Can you imagine that? No more anxiety in any shape or form. There will be no disability of any kind. No restriction of movement. No heaviness of mind. No feeling of an inability to cope with any situation or anything that may confront.

There will be no jealousy. There will be no power struggles. There will be no criticisms. There will be no gossiping. No matter who's in the world.

[24 : 12] No matter who's in the world. No matter who's in the world. Everybody will live in perfect harmony with everybody else. It's an extraordinary picture. And at the very centre of it all, we will find Jesus Christ himself.

And we will see him as he is. And we will love him completely. Nobody there will be fearing anymore that they don't love him sufficiently.

That's one of the complaints of God's people here. I'm afraid I don't love the Lord enough. Many a Christian will be saying that very thing tonight.

But nobody in heaven is saying that. Because we will see him and we will be like him. We will be in an environment that is just the most wonderful place to be.

A new heaven and a new earth. Wherein dwells righteousness. I don't know what this new heaven and this new earth will be like. But I tend to think myself in the same way.

[25 : 21] We're told that at the end that the elements, this world, will burn up with a fervent heat. And the Lord is going to make a new heaven and a new earth.

But I think he will make it in a sense similar but different to this one. In the same way as a body. The body that is put into the grave will rise from the grave.

But it will be different. The same body, not somebody else's. There will be many similarities. But he's, and I think Paul describes it a wee bit for us in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

And he's saying it's like sowing, when you plant a seed into the ground. And you put that seed into the ground, it dies. And a plant grows up from the seed.

The plant that has grown is different to the seed. And yet you couldn't have the plant without the seed. And this plant comes from the seed.

[26 : 27] And he's saying, in a sense it's going to be something similar like that for us. And so as the Lord deals with the body and renews and restores and makes us a glorious body.

So it will be a new heaven and a new earth. Which will be altogether glorious. Living in complete and perfect harmony.

Forever and ever and ever. And you know it's not that far away. We tend to think, oh it's mine, it's way, way, way in the future. It's not that far away. Our days are flying by.

And it's not that far, not that long. Until we will arrive there. Do you think about, do you think about your future state?

Do you think about these things? Well I think it's important. If we were going to emigrate. Supposing you're going to Australia or Canada. You say, I'm going to live there. You would be reading up about where you're going.

[27 : 28] You would be looking at programs that were talking about Australia. You'd be getting brochures and magazines. And you'd be looking at programs that highlighted.

And particularly the place that you're going. Because you're saying, well you know I'm going there. That's where my future is going to be. I need to know as much as I can. Similarly, our future is, it's not in this world.

Yes, to a certain extent or tomorrow's and such like. As long as the Lord spares us. However, our eternal future is way coming. It's coming to us. Are we preparing for it?

Are we thinking about it? Are we excited about it? Someone who, a very bright Christian in this congregation.

Who died was saying as he was facing death. You know, he says I get little glimpses. You know, I'm excited. I'm excited.

[28 : 26] You know, if ever you can say here's a mark. A dividing mark. Here's the Christian.

Dying. I'm excited. I can't think of somebody who doesn't know Christ saying that. I'm excited. Only somebody who knows their Savior.

Who knows where they're going. Can say the like of that. Can you say that tonight? If you were told tonight.

That Jesus was to return. Would you say as it says at the end of Revelation. Even so. Come Lord Jesus. I'm excited.

Or would you be saying. Oh no. Not tonight. I'm not ready. Well my dear friend. If you're not ready. You can become ready. By looking to this Jesus.

[29 : 30] Accepting this Jesus. Who has offered to you in the gospel. Take him to a night as your Savior. Let's pray. Oh Lord oh God.

We pray. That we may not put any of these things away from us. But that we may realize. This is God's word. This is God's word. It's not man's word.

This is the word of the living God. May it spur us on. To believe. And to rest. And to trust. And to accept the Lord. And to follow him.

Oh help us Lord. To believe. And to know that. Thou art the God of heaven and earth. We pray to bless each one of us. And as we come to part now.

One from another. May we know the blessing of God. In us and upon us. Wash away from us. All our sin. In Jesus name we ask it. Amen. Thank you.