

(5)

I SEE A DAY

Revelation 21:1-8

A few minutes ago I read Revelation 21:1-8. This passage tells us what Heaven will be like. It's talking about eternity. At this point, Christ has finished his 1,000 year reign on earth. Satan and all his wicked followers have been cast into the Lake of Fire.

~~From the King James Version~~ ^{John says}
Revelation 21:1-8, Verse 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."

This is not some fanciful, ideal distant paradise. It is a real restoration. God originally created the earth and Heaven to be man's permanent home. But sin and death entered the world and it has been crumbling ever since. But God is going to renew it and make it new again.

Verse 2: ^{John says} "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

This is the hope of all ages. Hebrews 11:10 tells us that Abraham was promised this at the dawn of history, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Verse 3: ^{John says} "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."

The city won't have any streetlights and it won't have any churches. It won't have any streetlights because there won't be any darkness. God Himself will shine as the light of the city. And there won't be any churches because God Himself will be right there with us.

Verse 4: ^{John says} "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

How marvelous! How wonderful! The day is coming. No more suffering; no more anguish. Eternal joy in the presence of our Lord!

Verse 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."

In the first four verses, the apostle John has been

describing what he has seen and what he has been told. But here in verse 5, God Himself interjects with the affirmation that these words are true and faithful. These words are a tremendous promise to be proclaimed to all believers!

Verse 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."

God declares that He really is in full control of the entire world and of all creation. Do you thirst? Do you feel the need of God in your life. Do you seek an escape from the apparent meaninglessness of this existence. Rejoice! God offers you salvation that you don't have to pay for. Jesus paid it all! ~~an Overcomer!~~

Verse 7: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." ~~What a promise!~~

Who are these Overcomers?
Those who truly accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior are the overcomers. John 1:12 echoes the promise of this verse, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

Verse 8: "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

Those who don't accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior are doomed to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire; eternally separated from God; eternally dead. John 3:18 says, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

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From Revelation 21:1-8, we learn what Heaven and eternity will be like for those of us who believe in Jesus Christ. But, we don't have to wait that long to see our Lord and Savior. We will be with Him immediately when we die. Death is like a door, opening into Glory!

At the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of his Disciples. Then He sent Judas away to perform his treacherous betrayal. And then He began to tell His Disciples that He was going

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away and that they would not be able to follow where He was going.

Peter couldn't believe it! He swore that he was ready to lay down his life for Jesus' sake at that very moment. And then Jesus answered him with those awful words that chill my heart every time I hear them: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

But Jesus was quick to follow this stinging rebuke with a beautiful promise; ^{— ONE OR} perhaps the most beautiful promise in the entire Bible. John 14, 1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

In Old Testament times, when Godly Jews died, the angels met them at the point of death and carried them into the bosom of Abraham. Remember the story of Lazarus and the rich man. The story begins in Luke 16:19-22: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom..." The angels carried Lazarus into the bosom of Abraham.

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But there will be no angels to meet us when we die. No angels to carry us into the bosom of Abraham. Why not? Because Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." There will be no angels to meet us because Jesus himself will be there to meet us and take us home to be with Him!

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I have visited you here a few times before this, and I've led the singing a few times, but this is the first opportunity I've had to speak formally. Most of you have seen a lot more of life than I have. And most of you have suffered more pain and loss in your lives than I have.

And, so, I can't pretend that I fully understand what you've been through or the needs that you have. But I can begin to understand a little. We do have some common ground.

~~AND ON THE BASIS OF THAT COMMON GROUND, I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE DAY THAT IS COMING.~~
I haven't suffered all the losses that you have suffered, but I have suffered some losses. My grandfather, who was the light of my life as a child, was taken after a long and horrible battle with cancer; a battle that left me deeply shaken. My father was taken by a sudden massive stroke at the early age of 56. That loss was crushing! I can't understand your suffering fully, but I can begin to understand a little.

~~A FEW~~ I also haven't suffered all the pain and infirmity that you have to live with each day. But I have suffered some. ~~Two~~ years ago, I was laid up for a month and a half with pneumonia and I had to stay in bed for the whole time. The forced inactivity was very frustrating. And I have a degenerating lower back syndrome. Every morning, before I get out of bed, I have to do a series of stretching exercises. If I don't, I'll tear a muscle in my back, be in bed for two days, and walk humped-over like this for two weeks. I can't understand your pain fully, but I can begin to understand a little.

And I can't fully understand the fears you face every day. But I can begin to understand a little. This back of mine is not getting any better; it's getting worse. Not very fast. But slowly, I can feel the infirmity growing worse just a little bit with each passing month and year. I can see a Day coming when I may be where you are now. I can see a Day coming when I too will be confined to a wheel chair in a Nursing Home. And that Day scares me! I don't want to see that Day! I don't look forward to that Day at all!

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But there is another Day coming that I am looking forward to!

I see a Day coming!

I see a Day when God will wipe away all our tears!

I see a Day when God will comfort us from all our sorrows and from all our losses!

I see a Day when God will relieve all our pain and all our infirmities!

I see a Day coming when God will fill us with Joy and with His own presence forever!

Oh, how I long to see that Day!

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus himself will be there to meet us when we die and to take us home to be with Him!

Hallelujah! Amen!

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Rim B. 1/5/71

BUT, YOU KNOW, WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT EVEN THAT LONG TO HAVE JESUS WITH US. HE IS WITH US FROM THE MOMENT THAT WE ACCEPT HIM AS LORD AND SAVIOR. AND NO ONE CAN SNATCH US OUT OF HIS HANDS.