

## No More Tears

General Topic: The Great Hope of the Saints

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### Lesson Text: Revelation 21:1-9

Background Scripture: Revelation 21

*Rev 21:1-9 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. (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) 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. (4) 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. (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. (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. (7) He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (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. Rev 21:9*

*And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

#### Lesson Objectives:

- To provide an understanding of the Eternal State of Heaven, which follows Christ's Millennial Reign.

#### Questions to Ponder:

1. What is the name of the 'new heaven and new earth'?
2. Why?
3. Explain the church as the Bride of Christ.
4. Why does Christ say 'It is done'?
5. What is important about the absence of the Temple?
6. Why does Christ say He is 'Alpha and Omega'?
7. What is an overcomer?
8. Who cannot enter the Eternal State?

#### The Lesson:

This month we begin a discussion of portions of the Revelation in which we read about the end of the world after the Millennial Reign of Christ. This week we are witnessing 'a new heaven and a new earth' according to John's testimony, while in the Spirit. As John begins, he writes that he saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first were passed away. If you've read Revelation, chapters 4 – 19, you will see the destruction that will take place on this present earth. Several years ago, a preacher touted that the end of the world would occur in May, 2011. He based his theory on the number of floods that had occurred in various states during the tornado season that year; he assumed God would bring a flood to destroy earth. First of all, Christ attested to the fact that He did not know when the end would be; only the Father has that information. Secondly, God promised during Noah's time that He would no longer destroy the world with water, but with fire. Thirdly, if you've read the Revelation, you will see that the destruction is with fire. Therefore, this preacher was wrong on all accounts. Now, there may have been some who followed this kind of foolishness and used it as a scare tactic to get people to come to Christ; however, what happened to those people when this situation did not come to pass? We cannot scare people into Christ; once the time of fear passes, those very folk may leave, as well; or worse, retreat into former behavior, denouncing the presence of our Holy God.

John also wrote that there was no sea. When I read this text, this particular statement struck me as odd and I wondered why he felt it important to state this fact. As I continued to study, I learned and concur, that in the New Jerusalem, God will get rid of everything that is unnecessary. The sea, which will be destroyed during the Great Tribulation, makes up about 85% of the earth's land and it causes separation of people. Without the sea, all land will be inhabitable. In my spiritual imagination, I can see, literally, gads of people living in this new earth. There will be no overcrowding and plenty of room for all of us to dwell comfortably. The other issue is that in John 7:37-38, Christ declares that He is the Living Water. Those who drink of Him will never thirst. We also see several times in Revelation that God's people will never hunger or be thirsty, which makes sense because we will dwell with Christ who is the Living Water! He will provide all the spiritual nourishment that we will need for all eternity.

John also named the city Jerusalem which also piqued my interest. I was curious why the city was not given another name. Returning to my knowledge of Old Testament scripture, it came to me that Jerusalem was the city from which David reigned as king of Israel. Furthermore, it stands first and supreme among all the cities of the world in its influence upon the hopes and

destinies of mankind (Peloubet's Bible Dictionary). It was in Jerusalem that the Temple was erected. The Temple was extremely important to the Jews because it represented the presence of God. Christ was born in Bethlehem, about 10 miles from Jerusalem. The land was very productive and yielded much vegetation for the people to be able to sustain themselves. Jerusalem was the Holy City to which all Jews went to celebrate the Feasts of the Tabernacle, Ingathering, and Passover once a year. It was and has always been a very celebrated city. It is also the place where Christ reigned for a thousand years.

John stated that Jerusalem came out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. In Old Testament scripture, there are many renderings of God as the husband of Israel. As a matter of fact, one of His Names, *Ish*, means 'husband' in the Hebrew language (Hosea 2:16). A man who is truly devoted to his wife will protect and provide for her. He is committed to the union and will do everything he can to ensure that difficulties can be faced without ending the marriage. Divorce is not even a part of his vocabulary. By the same token, God protected and provided for Israel like a husband. Whatever needs she had, He sufficiently addressed and regardless to how she treated Him, He remained faithful. He continues to do so now with all His people, Jew and Gentile, alike. The church is referred to as the Bride of Christ. I remember hearing a preacher relate the coming of a new convert and he talked about how the angels in heaven rejoice over one. He described it as a husband and wife conceiving a baby and the joy they feel when the child is born. I thought it was a pretty neat analogy, as heaven is ecstatic when one lost soul comes to Christ, resulting in a born again Christian.

John writes there is no tabernacle present in the New Jerusalem. Due to the presence of God dwelling with His people, the tabernacle is no longer necessary. We won't need a building that signifies the presence of God because we'll be in His presence.

Jerusalem means the habitation or city of peace. God promises that we will live free from tears, disease, destruction, confusion, sorrow, death, pain—all those ills that haunted us in the past will be over. We will live in paradise as God intended when He placed Adam and Eve in Eden. Sin will not be present; total harmony and bliss will take its place. I so look forward to living in a world of godly perfection! All things will be new!

John wrote "It is done" which reminds me of Christ on the Cross saying "It is finished." When He made that declaration on the Cross, He was saying that His mission on earth was accomplished with His death. Christ came to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).

By the same token, Christ said to John to write 'It is done' because His purpose for the world had been accomplished. The redeemed are gathered; the wicked are cut off; truth is triumphant, and all is now complete—prepared for the eternal state of things (Albert Barnes Commentary). John declares Christ as Alpha and Omega (the eternity of God), the beginning and the end. Essentially, God created/designed the world and it ended with Him fully in charge. He is the water from which all may quench their thirst and He gives of this water (salvation) freely.

In this text, Christ instructs John to write that the redeemed are overcomers. An overcomer is one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God (I John 5:5). Overcomers shall inherit all things. All the promises of God will be granted to those who are overcomers. Additionally, we shall be called God's sons, granted full rights and privileges as Christ.

The last image John leaves us with is that of those who will not be permitted into this eternal state. because they practiced the sins of the unbelievers.

1. Fearful-timid (cowards)
2. Unbelief-without trust in God
3. Abominable-detestable
4. Murderers-sane people who take the lives of other individuals, either physically or metaphorically
5. Whoremongers-a man/woman who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse; fornicator
6. Sorcerers-one who prepares and uses magical remedies
7. Idolaters-those who worship false gods
8. ALL liars-those who purposely attempt to deceive and whose lives are based on untruths.

They will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone which is the final (second) death for those who *practice* sin and follow after satan.

God promised that everything will be made new. In order for that to occur, former things must be done away with. The peace offered to those in Christ will last for eternity.

We have much to look forward to and it is important that we remain diligent To God and His Word. It is unfortunate that some who began this journey with us will not endure to the end, but we must remain steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord (I Corinthians 15:58).

***Be Salt! Be Light! Be Blessed!***