

# LESSON 11

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## A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

Revelation 21:1—22:5 tells of the place we call heaven. From time to time, before these chapters were written, inspired writers gave men glimpses of heaven, but people's hearts longed for more.

1. Why do we believe that Revelation 21:1—22:5 depicts heaven?
2. What is the relationship between the church and heaven in Scripture?

### **GOD'S DWELLING AMONG MEN (21:1–4)**

The emphasis in the first eight verses is on the *newness* of heaven. Inspired by the Spirit, John stretched the limits of human language to emphasize how wonderful heaven will be.

3. What were the first heaven and earth that passed away (21:1)?
4. If the physical universe will be destroyed, why did John use the term "new earth" (21:1)?
5. What does the statement "there is no longer any sea" at the end of verse 1 mean?
6. Does the new Jerusalem literally come "down out of heaven" (21:2)? Explain.
7. Why does verse 4 describe heaven in negative terms instead of positive?

### **ALL THINGS MADE NEW (21:5–8)**

How marvelous is the central promise of the text: And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” The promise is in the present tense. God has already made so much new. Someday, though, *everything* will be made new.

8. Of what does God’s statement about Himself in verse 6 make Christians confident?
9. What was so special about God’s promise of “water . . . without cost” (21:6) for first-century Christians?
10. How is the promise “I will be his God and he will be My son” (21:7) a blessing enjoyed now but perfected in heaven?
11. What was sinful about being “cowardly” (21:8)?

### **JERUSALEM, THE BRIDE (21:9–14)**

As wonderful as earthly homes are, many of us still have a longing for the home above. We want to experience what Paul referred to as being “at home with the Lord” (2 Cor 5:8)—to be in that place which the wise man spoke of as the “eternal home” (Eccles. 12:5). The emphasis of this section and the next will be on how beautiful our eternal home is.

12. What is ironic about the angel chosen to show John the bride in verse 9?
13. What was the role of the angels at the twelve gates of the new Jerusalem (21:12)?
14. What idea is suggested by the number of gates in the city?
15. What do the “names of the twelve apostles” indicate (verse 14)?

### **THE HEAVENLY CITY MEASURED (21:15–21)**

Earlier, John had been given a rod to measure the temple. That measuring was done with a *stick* and was for the purpose of protection (see comments on 11:1). In chapter 21 the measuring is done with a *golden* instrument, for the purpose of impressing the reader with the grandeur of heaven.

16. How big is a city that is “fifteen hundred miles” (21:16) in every direction?
17. What number does the original text use to describe the size of the city, and what does that number suggest about it?
18. What does the original text use in verse 17 for “seventy-two yards,” and what is the significance of that number?
19. How rare and precious would gates made by a single pearl have been?

### **GOD IS THE LIGHT (21:22–27)**

Verse 21 had much to say about precious gems and costly metals, but jewels and gold are not what make heaven truly heaven; rather, the presence of God makes it heaven.

20. What false doctrine has arisen because of the word “nations” in verse 24?