

4. What special type of persecution and death had those in John's vision of vs. 4 gone through?
5. Discuss the characteristics of the martyrs - vs. 6?
6. What three things does the 1000 years reign involve - vs. 6?
7. Where can we find the names Gog and Magog in the O.T. - vs. 8?
8. How is Faith and Works related according to vs. 12?
9. What does vs. 15 have to say about the cultic and denominational doctrines of foul sleeping, annihilationism, second chancism?

### *Special Study*

#### A Sketch of the History of Millennial Theories With Chart and Bibliography

If we were attempting to provide a comprehensive survey of Millennial theories, it would be necessary to give extended attention to Old Testament and Intertestamental literature, and their doctrine of Last Things. The following works will provide a good basis for such a study. The old, but still very valuable work of Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Scribner's and Son, New York, chapter 29 of volume two - *The Messianic Hope*, pp. 126-189; George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the Age of the Tannaim* (New Testament Period) volume two, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1950, part 7, *The Hereafter*, pp. 279-395. This is the standard work in English; W. O. E. Oesterley, *An Introduction to the Books of The Apocrypha*, London, SPCK, 1953 printing, chapter 7 - *The Doctrinal Teaching of the Apocrypha*, pp. 74-110; and the now seriously dated, but valuable work for an initial encounter with the issues involved see D. F. Salmond, *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, 4th edition, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1901, Books 2 through 5 for biblical Eschatology.

### Chronological Method of Interpretation

Before we launch out into our brief survey we believe that it is important to point out that the chronological method of interpreting *The Revelation* must not be confused with the Millennial Theories under examination. There are four basic chronological interpretations, which are—(1) *The Historicist Perspective*; (2) *The Preterist Perspective*; (3) *The Futurist*

*Perspective*; and *The Idealist Viewpoint*. The first view maintains that *The Revelation* is a symbolic presentation of the entire history of The Church, from Pentecost to the consummation of The Kingdom of God. The second view asserts that *The Revelation* covers only the first century. This view repudiates predictive prophecy. This view is simply impossible, if we take the actual declarations of John seriously. The third view claims that Revelation 4:1 through the conclusion will be fulfilled sometime before and following the coming again of Jesus. The fourth view affirms that the symbolic imagery of *The Revelation* has no particular social or political milieu in mind. Each one of these chronological schemas fail to do justice to *The Revelation* in that their over emphasis on given issues does not enable them to consider features that are just as clear exegetically as the ones they arbitrarily choose to emphasize.

#### Eschatological Interpretations of the Revelation

The English word Millennium (1000 years) comes from two Latin words - *Mille* - a thousand - and *annum* - a year. Millennialism was derived from Jewish belief in the temporal kingdom of the Messiah. The New Testament is very clear that Jesus repudiated this crast, materialistic view of The Kingdom. (All *The Revelation*, chapter 20:1ff. This serious error found extensive dissemination in the early centuries of The Church. Augustine was largely responsible for destroying the impact of this form of Millennialism, when he interpreted Revelation 20 spiritually - in *The City of God*, Book 20.

A CHART showing the relationship of *Millennial Theories* (our English comes directly from the Latin word which means one thousand. The Greek word found in Revelation 20:3 is *chilia* or thousand) - and is related to the coming again of Christ. The three general theories are: (1) *Postmillennialism*, which holds that Christ will come again at the close of the millennium. (2) *Premillennialism* holds that chapter 19 reveals the end of the present age, when Christ returns to overcome *The Anti-Christ*. The saints are supposed to reign with Christ for one thousand years on the earth (chapter 20:1-8). (3) *Amillennialism* maintains that Revelation 20:1-8 does not teach a literal thousand year period either *before* or *after* Christ's coming again.

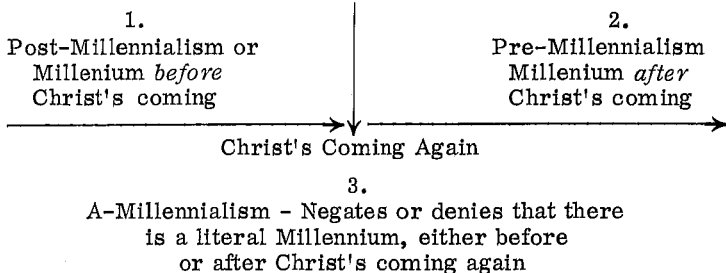
Each of the eschatological schemes mentioned above are

*post, pre, or a - millennial* with respect to the coming again of Christ.

CHART

Revelation 20:1-8 is the only place in the New Testament where the term "tachila" or "the thousand years" appears

*The Three Theories Compared*



Note: The following reasons are generally offered for claiming that the Millennium mentioned in verse four is literally a physical kingdom on earth through which God rules the world.

(1) The O.T. Kingdom promises cannot be fulfilled in *The Church*. Why not? If the Millennialists (and especially The Dispensationalists would study the N.T. interpretation of many of these O.T. kingdom prophecies, they would notice immediately that inspired N.T. authors do not interpret the O.T. prophecies in the literal manner in which they interpret them. (See the readable account of James Bales', a non-instrumental brother, listed in our bibliography.

(2) The O.T. teaches a period of universal peace (Isaiah 2:4) and universal righteousness (Isaiah 11:45). These inspired truths hardly prove the thesis of a literal Millennium. The ultimate fulfillment of the prophecies about peace and righteousness will become a reality only in the *City of God*.

(3) The early Church was pre-millennial. Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Papias all held some form of a materialistic interpretation of the millennium. The fact that these early Church fathers held a pre-millennial theology in no wise proves that this is the N.T. doctrine. In these same patristic fathers we find the clear departure from N.T. teaching concerning the nature of grace, the nature of the ministry, etc.

We are most grateful to The William B. Eerdmann Publishing Company of Grand Rapids, Michigan for granting us permission (free of all cost to us) to print chapter 22, pp. 267-279, Kromminga's work *The Millennium in The Church*, 1945. This is the best survey of millennial theories readily available in English today.

## A HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Having now completed our more detailed historical sketch of the course of Christian chiliasm, we are in a position to bring the more important phenomena and representatives together in a birdseye view of the whole field. This will also afford us an opportunity to stress some of the more serious defects which have marred the course of Christian chiliasm. Reserving the critical remarks for the next chapter, we shall devote the present one to a catalogue of representative men and groups. We begin with a list of the chiliastic writers of the *Ancient Church* and some opponents.

1. Barnabas is the oldest Amillennialist, though he worked with the idea of a world-sabbath and with Daniel's ten kings. His antijudaism went to the length of denying the Covenant to the Jews ever since Sinai; a feature which puts him in touch with so modern a Premillenarian as Scofield. But Barnabas applies the promises to Israel unhesitatingly to the Christian Church.
2. Justin Martyr is the first definitely premillenarian writer. He posits a restoration of Jerusalem and a thousand year reign of Christ with both the Old and New Testament believers on earth with that city as the capital; all on the basis of the chiliastic proof text of Rev. 20 and some other biblical material.
3. Ireneus was both premillenarian and covenantal. To him, antichrist was the beast of the Apocalypse. His antignostic polemics threw the emphasis on the beginning of the millennium and neglected its close. He introduced extracanonical proof in the tradition of Papias concerning a future wonderful productivity of the earth. He tried to give rationality to the idea of the millennium, but found it in its significance for the resurrected saints rather than for continuing earthly society.
4. Montanus combined with the idea of a future earthly reign of Christ the novel idea of a preparatory age of the Holy Spirit. This was a slighting of Pentecost and an exaltation of Montanist prophecy to the level of canonicity. His

expectation of the New Jerusalem in Phrygia marks him as nonjudaistic and as confused on the relation between the millennium and the eternal state.

5. Tertullian became an adherent of Montanism in spite of the fact that events had disproved the new prophecy. He reverted, however, to the traditional connection of the millennial Jerusalem with Palestine, saw a fulfilment of Montanist prediction in a natural phenomenon, and developed a theory of successive educational dispensations. In him and Montanus both a kind of trinitarian division of history appears.
6. Nepos, an Egyptian opponent of Origen, was premillenarian, emphasized the physical to the obscuration of the spiritual, and was esteemed by his followers as practically on a level with, if not superior to, Scripture as to authoritativeness.
7. Commodianus was a Premillenarian who held that Nero would return as antichrist and that the seven years of tribulation would be divided between him and Elias. He spoke of the whore Babylon and of a Latin conqueror who would pose as the Christ, and of a liberation of Jerusalem by Christ in His return. The New Jerusalem he placed before the thousand years, and the judgment after them. In the millennium the saints were to have offspring and to be served by the resurrected nobler pagans.
8. Hippolytus, whether an Amillenarian or a Premillenarian, was explicit on the precursory signs of Christ's second advent. The toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image and the horns of Daniel's fourth beast he identified with ten kings of the end-time belonging to the Roman Empire and with ten democracies. Antichrist he expected from the tribe of Dan, and the number 666 he found in the name Lateinos.
9. Methodius, the opponent of Origen, spoke of two resurrections and of the resurrection of the righteous at the beginning of the 'Feast of the Ten Virgins.' To him, the thousand years were at the same time the day of judgment; first of all, of professing Christians. Due to our lack of sources, his chiliasm remains somewhat obscure.
10. Victorinus of Petau was premillenarian, seeing the true Sabbath in the millennium, when Christ and His saints shall reign. However, a commentary on the Apocalypse which

goes by his name is Augustinian in its understanding of the millennium-passage and thus presents a puzzle.

11. Lactantius was premillenarian. He accepted the creation-week-history-periods theory, expected two resurrections, and expected procreation to continue in the millennium, in which Christ will rule from Jerusalem and the living nations will be slave-laborers. The transition to it will be made when ten militaristic kings rule; three of them in Asia, whom the eleventh, the antichrist, will overthrow. The millennium will see some glorification of nature, and at its end the devil will be permitted to make war on the saints. The sixth millennium he expected to end in the near future.
12. Apollinaris, who tried his hand at constructing a doctrine of the two natures of Christ, was a Premillenarian, according to the testimony of Jerome.
13. Origen had opposed some crass chiliasm, but had explained the physical away from the eschatological hope. In his anti-materialism he was not followed by Augustine, but in his opposition to a carnal millennialism he was.
14. Augustine changed from Premillennialism to Amillennialism, repulsed by the carnality of the premillenarian expectations that were then current. He would, however, not condemn a spiritual understanding of the millennium, which would see its joys in the fellowship with God. He became the father, at least in general thought, of the amillenarian exegesis of the millennium-passage of Rev. 20. The reign of the saints with Christ he distributed over the saints in heaven, the believers' victory over lusts, and the rule of the millennium, the end of which he deemed to be near. Then would come the resurrection of the body, the first resurrection of Rev. 20 being the spiritual resurrection which consists in regeneration by the water of baptism.

Thus we see, that the Ancient Church witnessed the emergency of Amillennialism, of starters for Postmillenarianism, and of practically all the material with which historical Premillenarians work to this day. The fact that Premillenarianism subsided instead of winning out is connected with the three names of Origen, the father of Christian Gnosticism; Constantine, who changed the social and political status of the Christian religion; and Augustine, who furnished the interpretation of Rev.

20 which eliminates from it the conception of a distinct millennial period at the close of earthly history. This was the eschatological heritage which the Middle Ages took over; and we have to review next, what the *Medieval Church* made of it.

1. While the continuing dominance of the Church in Western Europe assured the continued prevalence of the amillenarian position, the passing of the year 1000 A.D., made Augustine's expectations as to the nearness of the end of history untenable. The date for the return of Christ was therefore shifted by some from the year 1000 after the birth of Christ to the year 1000 after His passion and, as a last possibility of thus stretching the period, to the year 1065, in which year Good Friday and the Day of the Annunciation coincided.
2. Thereafter modifications of the Augustinian scheme became necessary for taking care of the years beyond the end of the first Christian millennium. This need stimulated the re-editing of the Sibylline Oracles, which Lactantius had already quoted to Constantine the Great in support of his pre-millenarian views. The new visions of those oracles predicted in various forms a universal Christian rule of some duration before the end. They manifest a tendency to transpose Gog and Magog from the end of the millennium to the place where antichrist appears before its beginning.
3. A third step in this process of altering the Augustinian tradition was taken when such predictions lost their apocryphal character and came forward as undisguised contemporary prophecy in such persons as Hildegard of St. Rupert's near Bingen. In her they concentrated on the need of a reform of the Church in criticism of existing ecclesiastical conditions; and thenceforth the hope of a perfection of the Church overshadows the missionary and political hopes in the complex of Christian ideals for the earthly future.
4. Joachim of Floris became the great formulator of this new millennial ideal of the Pure Church. The scriptural basis on which the hope rested was shifted from the millennium-passage to Christ's promise of the Comforter after Montanist example, and Joachim constructed a scheme of periods in the history of redemption and revelation which utilized scriptural elements to arrive at the year 1260, A.D., as the

date for the initiation of the Age of the Spirit, which Age was expected to bring a deeper understanding of Holy Writ under monastic guidance.

5. Amalrich of Bena was a contemporary of Joachim, but his teachings fell under the suspicion of pantheism. Pantheistic chiliasm was further developed by David of Dinant, who taught a trinity of God, spirit, and matter; and by William the Goldsmith. The coming of the Spirit was interpreted in an antinomian sense as releasing believers from the obligations imposed by the New Testament. This dangerous heresy was quickly condemned by the hierarchy and was driven underground.
6. Meanwhile, the Franciscan Spirituals came on the scene and in their conflict with the papacy they laid hold on Joachim's chiliastic teachings in the person of Gerardino di Borgo San Donnino, who gave them a heretical twist by seeing the fulfilment of Joachim's predictions in the Mendicant Orders, his own Order especially, and by elevating Joachim's writings, as they promised Eternal Gospel of Rev. 14: 6, to a rank equal with and superseding the Bible.
7. This new heresy was attacked by William of St. Amour in an attempt to bar the Mendicants from teaching positions in the university of Paris and in general. He adopted, nevertheless, the idea of a final period of peace before the end. The defender of the Dominicans and the lax Franciscans was Thomas Aquinas, who expected a universal dominance of the Roman Catholic Church before the end.
8. The Franciscan Spiritual understanding of Joachim was continued, in the face of its disproof by the events and of its condemnation by the Church, by Peter John Olivi, who identified the hierarchical Church with the apocalyptic Babylon, and by Ubertino de Casale, who identified the papacy with the apocalyptic Beast. Also Segarelli and Dolcino are related to this tradition, who expected the reform of the Church to come about through the medium of some Perfect Pope.
9. Roger Bacon shared in these postmillenarian expectations of a reform of the Church; but in him all the definiteness of the Franciscan Spiritual interpretation of the Joachite views and of these views themselves was stripped off.



10. Arnaldus of Villanova, like Bacon interested in nature study and, as medic, in a study of the human body, expanded the chiliastic speculations so as to include social and physical changes. He saw the hoped-for reform predicted in the Apocalypse under the sixth seal, expected the reform to be accomplished by an angelic pope, and paved the way for the combination of chiliasm with theosophy. He also developed the suggestion of communism, which lies in the community of goods practiced at first by the Jerusalem Church, and the medieval ideal of apostolic poverty, in the communistic di-reaction. John Pupper of Goch later echoed these notes.
11. Peter Aureoli, a theologian, thought his age was the sixth age, the time of the first resurrection, of which he conceived as a renovation of the whole world, freeing it from error and atrocities, and which age had begun with the labors of Dominic and Francis.
12. Milicz of Kremsier viewed heretics, Beghards, etc., as Gog and Magog, from whom the Church must and will be purged before the consummation. He also had a suspicion that the emperor might be antichrist.

While virtually all these medieval chiliasts were of the Pure Church and the postmillennial type, they expected or saw the appearance and overthrow of antichrist before the initiation of the millennium, and in so far they kept the millennium in its proper place as indicated in the order of John's visions. It is only in modern Postmillennialism, as it seems, that the figure of antichrist is either toned down or else transposed from its position preceding the millennium to a position at its end. As in the case of Premillennialism and the Ancient Church, so in the case of Postmillennialism and the Medieval Church, the development of the central idea and ideal was rather complete, and the *Modern Church* fell heir to both, the ancient political ideal and the medieval ecclesiastical ideal. A brief review of what it did with these two ideals completes our short historical survey. Naturally the picture becomes far more complex than it ever was before. We follow the chronological order in listing the more prominent names.

1. The early Anabaptists combined both premillenarian and postmillenarian elements. Hans Hut and Melchior Hoffmann were premillenarian, expecting the initiation of the

millennial reign by Christ in His return. But at Muenster the revolutionary activism of Jan Mathijs and Jan Buckelsen, trying to establish the kingdom by force, implied post-millenarian assumptions. Their revolutionism goes back to Thomas Muenzer. The Huterian Brethren, who practiced community of goods, never shared it. The Muenster anti-nomianism was continued by David Joris and Henry Nicholas in a pantheistic sense. The early Anabaptists cherished both the Pure Church and the Kingdom ideal, since they viewed themselves as the former and tried to establish the latter by force.

2. The English Congregationalists adopted and incorporated a postmillenarian article in their modification of the Westminster Confession, the Savoy Declaration, in 1658.
3. At about the same time the Fifth Monarchy Men appeared in England, who were laboring for the establishment of the reign of Christ or the Fifth Monarchy of Daniel. A trifle later their insurrection under Venner compromised Independency with Charles II.
4. Meanwhile, Valentine Weigel had made the combination of chiliasm with theosophy in continental Lutheranism. He conceived of the Age of the Spirit, which is Christ's rule in us, as imminent and as bringing the end of commerce and of procreation.
5. Jacob Boehme continued the combination of chiliasm with theosophy. On the one hand he extended salvation beyond the sphere of the knowledge of the Gospel to that of the Inner Light, but on the other his theosophy was dualistic, holding no hope for the final restitution of all creatures. The nature of the saved he expected to be androgynous.
6. The Behmenists of England were monistic, teaching the restitution of all things, the devil included. Jane Leade and John Pordage were leaders among them. Pantheism and mysticism outweighed their Christianity. Jane Leade had visions of the divine virgin Sophia. They were contemporaries of the Fifth Monarchy Men.
7. In the Netherlands, Jodocus van Lodensteyn thought of a monastic reform of the National Church, and Jean de Labadie took such a reform in hand, trying to establish the Pure Church of the Regenerate only.

8. Johannes Cocceius became the father of dispensationalism, cutting the difference between the Mosaic and the New Testament dispensation so deep as to impair the unity of the Covenant of Grace, though he expected the reign of Christ and the conversion of Jews and Gentiles to come about swiftly at the end without a millennium.
9. Philip Jacob Spener, the father of Lutheran Pietism, was chiliastic, expecting a period of the Pure Church, toward the end of which period there will be a lack of faith.
10. J. W. Petersen, Lutheran superintendent, and his wife, E. von Merlau, passed from Pietism to chiliasm and from that to theosophy, receiving verification of the doctrine of the restitution of all things by direct revelation. He began the list of dispensations with a first one at the creation of the angels and closed the list with a last one for the salvation of the devil.
11. Wm. A. Brakel placed a millennium between the antichrist and Gog and Magog, but expected no physical return of Christ for its initiation. He taught three New Testament periods preceding it: one of the apocalyptic seals, covering the period of the early persecutions of the Church by the pagan Roman Empire; one of the apocalyptic trumpets, covering the period from Constantine the Great till the close of the Reformation about 1560, during which time the antichrist became dominant; and one of the apocalyptic vials, covering the period after 1560 and bringing the judgment on antichrist and the gradual destruction of his rule. To Brakel the beast was antichrist in his political aspect and the false prophet was antichrist in his ecclesiastical aspect, and antichrist was the pope. Brakel's millennium was of the Pure Church type but had also Reign-of-Christ elements.
12. The sufferings of the Huguenots under Louis XIV gave rise to the French Prophets, who appeared first among the Camisards in the Cevennes, but spread to other countries in the flood of refugees. In England they made rather a stir for a short season, and in Germany they communicated prophetism indirectly to groups in the Wetterau.
13. F. A. Lampe was postmillenarian and expected the destruction of the pope and the Turk at the beginning of the millennium and the final judgment at its end. He gave a great impulse to experientialism.

14. Among the Reformed of Germany chiliasm became premillenarian in the person of Jung-Stilling, whose millennial expectations embraced both the Pure Church and the Reign of Christ.
15. J. A. Bengel was the first Lutheran chiliast who succeeded in giving chiliasm scholarly dignity. On the basis of intricate calculations he expected the second advent of Christ to come in 1836.
16. Among the followers of Bengel. F. C. Oetinger combined chiliasm with Swedenborgian speculations. He believed in communication with the dead; that is, spiritism; as did Swedenborg.
17. Swedenborg himself interpreted the second coming of Christ as an inward experience which to his mind constituted the establishment of the Church of the New Jerusalem. He identified angels with dead men in hapiness and devils with such in despair.
18. F. Flattich, among continental Lutherans, identified the religiously indifferent civil governments of the time of the enlightenment with Babel.
19. The Holy Alliance, entered into by Alexander I of Russia, Francis I of Austria, and Frederick William III of Prussia, had a post-millennarian coloring traceable to the influence of Madame de Kruedener, a pietistic friend of the Tzar. Its hollowness contributed to the antipathy of political liberals to Christianity.
20. Among chiliastic organizations the Catholic Apostolic Church is prominent. It became fully organized with twelve modern apostles in 1835. It enjoyed, according to the brief of its members, the revival of the charismatic gifts of prophetism and the speaking in tongues. Its apostolate it conceived of as a restoration of Christ's second apostolate, originally represented only by Paul and serving the conversion of the gentiles, and postponed because of corruption. But the corrupt Church, Babylon, is now ripe for judgment. The great tribulation will intervene between the resurrection and rapture of the saints and the overthrow of Satan. Then the millennial reign of Christ and His saints will come. For the escape of believers from the great tribulation they invented a ceremony of sealing.

21. Of about the same time dates the other important chiliastic church organization, the Plymouth Brethren. They have no apostolate, but have the guidance of the Spirit. They distinguish an initial second coming of Christ to reward His people according to their conduct and a further coming of Christ with His people for the judgment of the living nations. While the Irvingians believed sealing was necessary for escape from the great tribulation, the Darbyites held that no Christian shall pass through it. The teachings of the Catholic Apostolic group and the Plymouth Brethren have greatly influenced recent Premillennialism.
22. In America, Wm. Miller became the father of Second Adventism from 1831 onward. His date-setting failed and was abandoned, but his followers organized in several groups, including the Seventh-day Adventists.
23. Sabbatarian were also the followers of Johanna Southcote.
24. A number of chiliastic organizations arose which practised communism, and the United States became their refuge. In themselves too small to count for much, their oddities attract much attention and thus give occasion for much indirect influence of some of their ideas.
25. Joseph Smith, the father of Mormonism, incorporated in his parody of Christianity chiliastic elements, as appears in the name of the Latter Day Saints.
26. Christian Science is akin to theosophy, and the question may be asked, in how far modern theosophy has been fed by the theosophic strains which have appeared again and again in modern chiliasm.
27. The followers of Charles Taze Russell and his successor, 'Judge' Rutherford, recently posing as Jehovah's Witnesses, must be mentioned. Mathematical calculations connected with the measurements of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh are combined with superficial and misleading scriptural exegesis in support of views which include such heresies as the denial of the deity of our Lord.
28. The Princeton theologian Dr. Charles Hodge must be mentioned as a Calvinistic Postmillenarian who expected the universal preaching of the Gospel to result in the conversion of Jews and gentiles and a final period of great prosperity

of Christianity before the appearance of antichrist and his overthrow by the Lord.

This diversity and complexity of the modern chiliastic chart reflects the diversity and complexity of modern Christianity, from which all outward controls have effectually disappeared. This situation makes it difficult to put into a few words any further brief characterization of these views. It is, however, possible to disentangle certain definite strands from the web; such as communistic chiliasm, sectarian chiliasm, political chiliasm, theosophical chiliasm, and dispensational chiliasm. These strains run parallel to the old distinct types of premillenarian and postmillenarian chiliasm and combine with either the one or the other in varying measure, and they embody in a greater or lesser degree either one or both of the old ideals of the Pure Church and of the Reign of Christ. At the same time they furnish the categories into which our criticisms of the historical course of Christian chiliasm must fall.

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## SECTION 69

Text 21:1-27

And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: 4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, they are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is a thirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorveres, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

9 And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, and were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountaingreat and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God her light was like unto a stone most precious as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: 12 having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. 16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve

thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. 17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18 And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. 23 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. 24 And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. 25 And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): 26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: 27 and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

#### Initial Questions 21:1-27

1. What did John see - vs. 1?
2. What is the source of the new Jerusalem according to vs. 2?
3. What does vs. 3 tell us about God's ultimate relationship to man?
4. Discuss the things that God will take away - vs. 4? Is this a vital part of the Christian's hope?
5. What is the source of newness in the universe - God or man - vs. 5?
6. Read John 7:37f, and then discuss the last part of vs. 6.
7. To whom does God promise Eternal Life according to vs. 7?
8. Does vs. 8 imply that there are going to be people that are lost?
9. What did the angel show John according to vs. 10?
10. Why is there no Temple in the City of God - vs. 22?



The Vision of the New Heaven and a New Earth  
Chapter 21:1-8

After the overthrow of the last enemy of righteousness, Satan, we are provided with a vision of the heavenly city of God. Here we have vouched safe to us the eternal and glorified state of God's elect. The language comes from the glorified imagery of Isaiah 65:17, etc. John's basic source throughout *The Revelation* is the O.T. He uses the prophetic concepts of restoration as a new creation, a new Palestine, a new Jerusalem, a new Temple, and a new earth. But John is never describing a materialistic kingdom; he always has in view "the Jerusalem above, our mother" (Gal. 4:26). The persecuted Church is now the glorified bride of Christ! John has already received three basic visions: "(1) The Seven Churches (1:9-3:22); (2) Process of world judgment (4:1-16:21). (3) Climax of Judgment 17:1-21 8." and now the last one (4) "The Eternal City (21:9-22:5)." The obstinately sinful have all been cast into hell. Jerusalem the city of the great King is the symbol of the translated Church. The kingdom of God is complete.

*Verse 1*

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth." All old things are gone. In the new earth dwell only new men in Christ. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things are passed away; behold they are become new." (II Cor. 5:17). Paul and John are in agreement about new creatures and the passing away of the old order.

*Verse 2*

"The holy city, new Jerusalem" was descending from its heavenly origin. Men did not design nor build this city whose foundations were not laid by human hands. We have heard the call to the marriage supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19:9. The new Jerusalem "coming down out of heaven from God, having been prepared as (*hōs* - like - a bride) a bride having been adorned for her husband." Jerusalem is compared to the bride of Christ in this verse (see Ephesians 5:32; Isaiah 54:1).

*Verse 3*

John had previously stated that "the Word tabernacled among us" (John 1:14) now, "the tabernacle of God is with men." In the city where God dwells, there are the redeemed inhabitants, fellowship with God and man, security, peace, safety, and the beauty of paradise. Sin, death, and tears of pain are forever barred from the new Jerusalem.

*Verse 4*

"God will wipe off every tear out of their eyes." Why? Because death, (*penthos* - means outwardly expressed grief) grief and pain are no longer threats to man. He and all creation has been redeemed and "the first things are passed away."

*Verse 5*

God alone can make things new! The united nations, human legislation, disarmament conferences, International law, one-world government will all fail to bring about the desired end of a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness. This message is a hard blow to proud, humanistic, naturalistic man who believes that he is capable of building a better tomorrow through research, applied technology and subliminal research, etc.

God created the church of Jesus Christ to fulfill "the ministry of reconciliation" by proclaiming the "word of reconciliation" as ambassadors of Christ (II Cor. 5:17-21). ("The unwanted walls"—the present author is presently preparing a volume, with this title, dealing with the problem of the nature of the Church and its implications for contemporary Ecumenical and Roman Catholic discussions about the unity of the Church). Paul's Ephesian Epistle speaks of the "constituency of the church," "the construction of the Church," "the purpose of the Church," "the unity of the Church," and "the practical implications of its God given unity." Mankind is divided as never before! The purpose of the Church is to unify mankind through the word and ministry of reconciliation. How effective have we been?

*Verse 6*

The great heavenly voice said to John "It has occurred." What has occurred? The purpose of God has been fulfilled! The true and faithful words mentioned in vs. 5 have now come to pass. Our Lord said "he that hungereth and thirsteth after

righteousness - shall be filled." In the city where there is no night, either physical or spiritual, "the fountain of the water of life" has been opened. God invited all inhabitants to partake.

#### *Verse 7*

Here we learn of God's demand for victorious Christian living. Can a man once saved ever be lost? The exhortation found in this verse would have no relevance whatsoever if it is impossible for a Christian pilgrim to become lost in his journey to new Jerusalem. Who shall inherit all things according to John? "The overcoming one (the one who continually overcomes) shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

#### *Verse 8*

What are some of the characteristics of those who shall not inherit sonship and citizenship in the heavenly city?—The cowardly and unbelieving and having become foul, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars" shall be cast into hell. Paul tells the Churches of Galatians the same thing in Gal. 5:16-26. Paul says, "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (vs. 21). These practices are in diametrical opposition to the spiritual conditions of the dwellers in the new Eden.

### The Vision of the New Jerusalem Chapter 21:9-27

#### *Verse 9*

The heavenly messenger who bore the seven bowls of anger appeared again. John was invited to see "the bride, the wife of the Lamb." Keep in mind that John saw "the new Jerusalem coming down—as a bride having been adorned for her husband." Now, John is commanded to "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

This verse through 22:5 gives us the description of the city.

#### *Verse 10*

What did the angel show John on "the great and high mountain?" Here we have a clear identification of the Church of