

# **Note**

## **Revelation – Part 14 of 15**

### **Summary**

Chapter 21 is the chapter about the New Heaven and New Earth following the ultimate vanquishment of evil. This has been God's plan since the Garden of Eden where He dwelt with man till sin came between Him and His children. John's visions bring the message of hope to God's children even today. Jesus has triumphed and He will return in power to gather His people and dwell with them in the New Heaven and Earth in perfect harmony. This is the perfect ending to the perfect love story of God and His love for us

# Transcript

## Revelation – Part 14 of 15

### Revelation Part 14

Today, we come to Revelation Chapter 21 which describes the new heaven and the new earth. There is very little description of this perfect, eternal place that we all want to go to. You don't need to describe much because we know what we would like in this place. It's like a love story, and the ending of the love story is...And they lived happily ever after.

You and I already have this idea of heaven. But it's been damaged by the Greek thinking that it's just going to be spiritual. So this demolishes that, shows very physical things, talks about the resurrection body, talks about the city, talks about walls. It demolishes what is a misconception. It doesn't have to teach you the conception, it just gets rid of the misconception of marriage. For example, you say a marriage should not have too many wives, more than one wife. But you remove that misconception, the rest I can figure out, you don't need to tell me what a husband and wife should be like, what we want out of a marriage. We need to remove the misconception that you can change wives anytime. When you remove that misconception, the rest falls in place.

So there's not much to describe, it's almost like the ending of this long love story. It is a love story of God and us. God choosing a bride for His Son, and the ending of the story.... and they lived happily ever after. The Millennial Kingdom is quite complicated, some in resurrected bodies, some in natural bodies. The new heaven and new earth is one big happy family and we are all there.

So let's look at Revelation Chapter 21, and since it's a short chapter, we can go verse by verse.

Revelation Chapter 21 verse 1:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Revelation Chapter 21 verse 1 sounds like Genesis Chapter 1 verse 1 where it says, In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. Here....then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. So the ending and the beginning is very similar. So God said I made that world, Satan thought he had a better one up on me. Ha! Ha! No way, I make now a new one, a better one.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth - what is this word 'new'? Does it mean it is totally different? You can't recognize it as the earth? You can't recognize it as heaven? I don't think so. Because we have been given new bodies, resurrected bodies, we can recognize one another. In other words, we don't go to heaven and I am going to be totally different, it's not Paul Choo anymore. You can't call it earth if it's not like earth anymore. So the word new here simply means perfectly renovated, without all the bad things in it, the corrupted things in it, the degenerated and deformed mutations in it.

So it's a new heaven and a new earth. It is something similar and yet not similar. It's the same and different, so to speak. What happened to the old one, the old first heaven and the first earth? They have passed away. 2 Peter Chapter 3:10 describes heaven and earth gone. And the sea was no more. Why did God take away the sea? More than half of the world is the sea. Water makes up a lot of this earth. Now, we must understand the biological purpose of the sea. The sea is the sewage plant of the earth. The sewage that men discharge goes into the sea. All rivers are polluted beyond recognition. The sea because of its salinity cleans up all the dirt we put into the waters, and purifies it. We don't need a sewage plant in the new heaven and the new earth. Does that mean there'll be no more water on earth? I don't think so. It says the sea is no more, it never said the lake is no more. In fact, there will be a river. So that's probably the reason why there's no more sea if you understand a bit of biology.

Verse 2:

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

So the new city called new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven to earth. This new city will be the capital of the new universe, the unified heaven and

earth. There are lots of capitals in the world, they all compete with one another for power, but at the end, there will be one capital.

Hebrews Chapter 11 verse 10 said, Abraham looked for a city, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. That is the new Jerusalem he saw long ago. Now, is the new Jerusalem a city or a bride? Is it a place or a people? That's very interesting. It says I saw the holy city come down but it is prepared as a bride. Now, which is it? Is it a place or people? City is a place, bride is people. It's both. You see, God chose the people of Israel to be His people and give them a place called Israel. So it's both, the city is a place, a community, and a bride speaks of intimacy. So we, the people of God are the bride, very close. We are also a city, a community. That's how I would look at it. And if you understand the word Israel, you will understand what this means - it's both, not either/or.

Verse 3:

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

Now, this is the most amazing part of these whole two chapters. The most amazing part is we don't go to heaven. Rather, God comes to us, heaven comes to us. In a sense, what is heaven? Heaven is a place where God is. If there's no God in heaven, it's not heaven. So I say, heaven is a realm. As I said earlier, it's not a place, the place is not significant. If you ask me where's my home? My home is where my heart is, where my family is. You take away my family, that's not my home; I don't care about the place. So it's the same thing. In other words, we don't go somewhere, rather, God comes to be with us. And that's the amazing part. People always think God just sits there and waits for us, passive God. No, no, our God is not one of those gods up there.

This is Emmanuel. This is God who told us in the Garden of Eden, he wanted to be on earth with Adam. But because of sin, and the sin-cursed earth, he is separated from the earth. Now he's coming right back to Genesis Chapter 1 where he walked among man. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, called Emmanuel, God with us. Then he sent the Holy Spirit to live in our heart. Can you see God, the Father in the Garden of Eden, Jesus Christ walking among men, and then the Holy Spirit walking in men, and one day all three will be on earth with us? That is called unity, that's called reconciliation, that is called perfection. That's heaven when our Creator is

with us forever and ever. So we will see from Revelation 21 verse 3 to verse 8 the description of heaven. I want you to just watch carefully as I read on the description about heaven is much more about a person than a place. He, He, He... it's always about the Creator, Jesus.

People say the world will come to an end. That's true. What is this end? The world will come to an end, what's the end? The end is to be with the person, that's the end of the story to be with a person. What is this world coming to? It's a back way question...Who is this world coming to is a better question, it's coming back to its Creator, who was separated.

So this is a love story of God who loves us, separated from us by sin, allowing all these events to take place and then coming right back, conquering the enemy and coming right back. The question should be rephrased- Who is the world coming to? What is the end of the world? The end of the world is the beginning of eternal time with a person, my Creator, my lover, my God, Jesus Christ.

Verse 4:

He will wipe away every tear from the eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

It's easier to describe the new heaven and new earth by saying things that will not be there. Because things that will not be there like crying, pain, death, mourning, we understand those things. So we can say, in heaven, there won't be any of that. At least I can understand that. It's like a tribal man from a stone age tribe going to a city going back to report to his people. They ask him, "what's the city like?" He's not going to say that in the city these people have cell phones they can talk to, and they can see each other on it. And they have these laptops where they can do amazing things. He's not going to tell all those things because these guys in the village will say, What are you talking about? What is this thing that they're holding in their hands? What is this thing they can connect to the whole world, and do all their work? You mean they don't farm? And he will say, Oh! no, there's no more farming in this place that I went to. There are no more people who have to toil from morning to night, with backache. It's easier to describe what they will not have there, rather than what he sees, because those things he's seen in the city cannot be described to the people. So you'll find in verse 4 the 'Not' that makes it easier for us to grasp. The Yes, Yes, Yes is harder, and those are usually described more in symbolic terms because

there's no word for it in the present vocabulary we have. So he talks about the NOTS here.

Verse 5:

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Again, the word new, like new heaven, new earth is not totally new. There will be new and I would say the same but new version of it, same but different. For example, there'll be bodies but new bodies. There will be an environment, water but new water. Maybe sea but new sea, freshwater perfect, pristine you can drink from it. There will be relationships, but new. He makes all things new. Our relationships are not fraught with problems and difficulties but beautiful. Even past relationships, people who repent openly, hey, do you remember what I did to you? I'm so sorry. Then I said, don't worry, Christ forgives me, I forgive you. Perfect! Not like now, people say sorry, still not quite there. Work will be new in the sense it's enjoyable, satisfying. It's not weariness, it's joyfulness. So, Behold, I make all things new. And he also said, Write this down, these words are trustworthy and true. Basically, he is saying, I can't describe to you what is new, just trust me. Its like this man going back to his stone age tribe and saying, I can't tell you everything there, but trust me, it's a great place, it's much better than here. So that's what Revelation is about. Why does God not describe heaven more? Because I can't understand, I don't have the experience of those kinds of things.

Verse 6:

And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

So here we see Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end, the Genesis and the Revelation. We read the Bible without Alpha or Omega, we don't understand the beginning. He is the completor of everything. When he starts, he finishes beautifully better than ever. Alpha and Omega, complete, end to end.

Now he's going to describe and basically he is saying you cannot stop me. When I start I perfect it, whatever work I begin, I will bring it to perfection. To the thirsty I'll give from the spring. I've talked about that in the

introduction. To thirst is always the picture of that. You know, every now and then we need to drink because there is a level of dissatisfaction, endless cycles. You do something you are dissatisfied. But in the new heaven and new earth, there is endless satisfaction. The spring of water just keeps coming up, we don't need to look for water. It's a spring that is coming up all the time. So that's the picture in verse 6.

Verses 7 to 8:

The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

All those who are described here will go to hell. Now, but it says in verse 7 those who conquer, conquer what? Conquer sins? How do you conquer all these sins? Very simple- by trusting Christ, Christ paid for our sins. How do you conquer all your sins, all these lies, and adultery, etc which we all have committed before? Who has not lied? Have you not been all those? Of course, you have been. But how do we conquer those things? Through the conqueror , through Christ who said, “It is finished!” And how did He conquer? He rose from the dead, to conquer death for you and me. So, he conquers by being united with the Conqueror. In fact, you'll find 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 is very similar. It tells us you were all like this, but now you've trusted Christ, now you're justified by faith.

So we have to conquer our fear of being mocked by people, conquer our laziness, our pride thinking that I can reach heaven on my own. These are some things we have to conquer. That's why you bring people to church to hear, you need to make that little effort to go to hear the Word of God. Then there is laziness, then fear you might go to church where people would laugh at me, my parents would scold me, my wife would think I am some idiot, going to trust God, why need God? My pride is saying I'm not that bad. Conquer all these things. But the real conqueror is Christ who conquered all these on the cross but he took our sins.

From verse 9 onwards, we see an angel takes John on a tour of new Jerusalem.

Verses 9 to 11:

Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

Now John is taken on a tour, he is brought up to the high mountain. Instead of looking down, he looks up and he sees the city of Jerusalem coming down. It's like a jasper brilliant in the light. You're going to see a lot of description and you have to struggle and ask yourself, is it literal or is it symbolic? Can I answer you? It's both. It's literal but it also describes something. Every time we take the Lord's Supper, is it literal? Yes, it's literal, it's a piece of bread and a cup. Is it symbolic? Yes, it's also symbolic. It signifies the death of Christ, the blood of Christ. It's both.

Is baptism literal? It is both. You enter the water, but is it symbolic? Yes, also. So when you read this, try to figure out that God's trying to show you something from something that you experience, but it brings you on to something bigger than that. I don't know what jasper looks like but I think its white brilliant light. The word is, like a jasper, clear as crystal. So the city is like a beautiful crystal, clear, the city coming down, unlike brick walls that block things out. You can see through like a crystal, there are no barriers.

Then it says in verse 12,

Verses 12 to 13:

It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed – on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

So we see a great high wall. So this city comes down, later you realize it's a cube, and yet there is a high wall around it. What do walls signify? Walls signify possession. If I have a piece of land, I build a wall to say this is mine. So a wall signifies things inside belong to me. People inside feel intimate because we all belong here. Is there a real wall? I believe so. What does it signify? Exactly what I said.



There are twelve angels at the twelve gates. Again, God reminds us that we are made in His image. Angels are made to serve us as found in Hebrews - Are they not ministering Spirits? In this new heaven and new earth, we see the angels. Most Christians don't believe that there are angels so God is going to telling us that they are real. You're reminded that all your life you've been served by these wonderful, faithful servants whom God has given to us.

And then the name of the twelve tribes of Israel are written on the gates. What is that to remind us of? Our salvation came through the Jewish race. Remember that! Never forget that! Let me tell you, Jesus was a Jew. How can we hate Jews? It's through the Jews that we have our salvation. And yet today the replacement theory throws the Jews out. Our Old Testament is Jewish, the entire Bible was written by Jews except Luke. Christ was born a full-blooded Jew. Remember that!

Then in verse 14:

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The twelve apostles, Judas removed, and replaced by Matthias. Why are they the foundations? That's where we got our truth, this wonderful truth that allowed us to go to heaven. The gospel was clearly written by them.

Verse 15:

And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls.

Measuring just speaks of ownership. When you own something, you measure it. When you buy a new house, you get a surveyor to check the boundaries. That is simply a picture of clear ownership.

Verse 16:

The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal.

Jerusalem is a cube. Most cities we know are squares. We don't measure the height. This one is a perfect cube. 12,000 stadia-number twelve. We keep seeing twelve apostles, twelve angels. Twelve always speaks of God's people, God's government. 12,000 stadia - I just read the commentary that it is about 2000 kilometers. A cube 2000 kilometers, 2000

x 2000 x 2000 kilometers. I'm told it's about the size of Europe as a cube. Let's say the moon is hollow, the cube will just fit into this hollow moon sphere. So all of God's redeemed people can be in this city. Because we are not on the ground level alone as we can levitate, we can fly. We can take the whole cube, we can actually live multi-storey in this whole cube. It's like Singapore, now building higher and higher, but we can't build 2000 kilometers high. We can't even build 2000 floors. But that's how it will be, so there's a lot of space in this cube. A cube actually, is the perfect proportion. The Holy of the Holies in the Tabernacle, was a cube, a perfect proportion. So I think that's what it signifies.

Verse 17:

He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.

This is probably the thickness of the wall, about 70 meters thick. This just to say we all belong inside. I don't know how high the wall is but the whole city is like a crystal cube.

Verse 18:

The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Like clear glass.....so it's like the man in Stone Age who goes back and tries to describe a handphone to his countrymen. So the city is gold, glorious, glittering, and yet it's clear like glass.

Verse 19:

The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

12 precious stones. Now, interestingly, this just look like names to me, but a gemologist says this is a very strange list because all these twelve precious stones are isotropic gems. A gemologist divides stones into two major categories, isotropic gems, and anisotropic gems. Until people had a clear laser light to test the gems, they could not see which category they belong to. All the twelve are isotropic gems, so John was clearly inspired by God. Believe me or not, ( I read this in a commentary), but you can check it out if you want to.

Verse 21:

And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Again mentioned, this gold is a new kind of gold. You know there is purple gold, there is white gold, but this gold is like glass. So, here we have this amazing kind of material. The gate which is massive is made up of a pearl. What does a pearl signify? A pearl signifies something beauty out of pain. Pearls are made when a grit of sand enters into the oyster, and then it irritates the oyster so much that it produces layers of secretions which finally becomes a pearl. Cultured pearls are made by purposely putting a grit of sand or an irritant into the oyster to make a pearl. So a pearl always speaks of beauty out of pain and I think it reminds us that all this beauty came from the suffering of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The rest are gems, this is a pearl.

Verse 22:

And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

What's a temple? A temple is a place where God is. So there is no need for a temple here because God is everywhere. God's presence fills this whole place. For the Old Testament Jews, they saw the cloud signifying the presence of God over the Ark of the Covenant. Ah! God's presence is there. That's why it's called the temple. We are called the temple of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit dwells in us. But in this new heaven and new earth, God dwells there. There is no need for a special place. He is in every place.

Verse 23:

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

There is no need for sun or moon to give light because God is the light, Jesus is the light.

Verse 26:

They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

International city, we will still have our uniqueness. We all still have every tribe, every nation will be there and we will rule in different places. There will be amazing diversity and perfect unity, as God has always wanted. God is not boring. It's not uniformity and unity. So there are nations. They bring glory to this God in this new Jerusalem. Can you picture it? If you say yes, I say you are not honest. Can you have a hint of it? Yes. Is it amazing? Yes. What is it like? Don't know. I really cannot fully picture it. It's like the tribal man who has come back from the city and tells his stone age friends, and he said, Do you understand what I said, and they said, no. But do you want to go there? Yes. That's the answer. So that is the yearning of our heart for this perfection. It's so perfect, we've never seen and never experienced this kind of thing. It's so big, so massive, so bright, so glorious. We've never seen anything like that, but I want to. So, some international city with amazing diversity and yet amazing unity. My goodness, this is in language, in our love for one another - unity.

Verse 27:

But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

So it ends by saying, make sure your name is in the Lamb's book of life. And you will be there, that's all I need to know. I don't need to know too much, I need to know my name is there, inscribed on his heart in the book of life. It's not being erased by my sin, but it's there the day I trusted Christ, it was in permanent ink. So I hope that chapter 21 whets your appetite, but honestly, it cannot fill in the details. It's not possible. If I can understand what heaven is like, it's not heaven. It's just good place because my experiences are so limited. Heaven is beyond imagination. That's why it's only described in Revelation 21 and 22 and not much else.

May God bless you! May God say this into your heart that, Wow! I want to be with this amazing God in this amazing place for all eternity, where my heart will be filled with the river of water of life.

The Lord bless you, and you will be there if you trust in the one who conquered our sins on the cross.