

God Will Do Something New!

Scripture Text: Revelation 21:1-8

Introduction

Now that Christmas is over and a new year has come, we should focus on something new. People are fascinated with new things. For instance, each year I am interested in what new technological wonders will be released. I like new gadgets. People are fascinated with the *newness* of each year in the month of January. They believe it is a chance for a new beginning, a chance to make a change. It is a chance to make some resolutions that will most likely not last for more than a month. According to one statistic, only about eight percent (8%) of people will achieve their New Year's goals. How will you do with yours? What if you could have something new that actually lasts, though? What if you could have a "resolution" that actually resolves something? Would you want that? If so, I have some good news for you. God is in the business of doing new things. God has a plan to create something new that is far better than anything before.

God Will Make A New World

In the future, there will be a final judgement of God. This judgement has two sides to it. On the one side, there will be the judgement of those who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior. These are those who have rejected God's forgiveness and fellowship. On the other side, there will be the reward of the faithful followers of Jesus Christ, who have received Jesus as their Lord and Savior and have received God's forgiveness of sin. After God pronounces His judgment from His great white throne, after Satan is defeated and he, Death and Hell are all cast into the lake of fire along with all of the wicked people, then God will create something new. Look at the following verses.

Revelation 21:1–2 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. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

This chapter is a chapter about newness. John mentioned the word "new" four times in this chapter. There will be a new heaven! There will be a new earth! There will be a new city! And, there will be a new reality (all things)! Along with the new things, God announced to John the descent of a new, holy city, the New Jerusalem, against the backdrop of a *total renovation* of His creation. The new, holy city will come out of heaven from God as a bride dressed in white who walks down the aisle on her wedding day to be presented to her husband. As with a wedding where two people are presented as a new, joined, life, God will pronounce a new creation. God's restoration of His creation will be thorough. It will be comprehensive. *Everything will be made new.*

Revelation 21:5 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."

God, the Great Renovator, will give His creation a total makeover. God will bring about a complete renewal of His entire created order. Scholars differ as to whether the “new earth” will be a completely new creation. Some believe the new earth will be transformed into something *newer*, similar to Jesus’ transformed body after His resurrection *and* our own resurrected bodies that will be “renewed”. Although there will be some kind of continuity between the old and the new, our resurrected bodies will be *qualitatively* different than our former bodies. This is similar to what Paul wrote, they will be as different as a kernel or a seed is from a full-grown wheat plant (1 Corinthians 15:35–39). However God accomplishes His new world order, the future will be new, something that is very different from the former things. We know this is true because God does not lie. So, if you have been longing for something different, something good, something new, then just wait. God is going to do a new thing and it will be wonderful!

God Will Remove The Former Things

Where will God be in this new heaven and earth? Where will God’s people be? In the Old Testament, God dwelled with His people in the tabernacle and in the Temple later. After Jesus went back to His Father and sent the Holy Spirit to be with us, God dwelled *within* His people. Our bodies are now *living temples* of God where God resides. Where will God dwell in His new future order? Later in this chapter, John mentioned that he saw no temple in the new city of God. God dwelled within the whole city (Revelation 21:22). Verse three tells us about God’s dwelling place. Look at the following verse.

Revelation 21:3 *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.”*

God will dwell with His people. The newly created order will be the perfect home where Jesus will live forever with His bride, the people whom He has redeemed out of all world. The greatest blessing of heaven will be unhindered fellowship with God Himself. The goal of God’s covenant, “God with us”, will finally be realized in this new order. God will not only do something new, He will also do away with the old. Some people like new things, but they also want to keep the old things. It is like having rows and rows of old shoes in one’s closet. There are new ones, right along with all of the old ones that will probably never be worn anymore. When God brings about His new order, He will do away with the old one. The prophet Isaiah foretold this almost eight hundred years before John wrote about it in Revelation, where he wrote about not remembering the former things (Isaiah 43:18-19). John also mentioned this. Look at the following verse.

Revelation 21:4 *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.*

John wrote that the “former things have passed away”. What are these things? They are things that *cause* mourning, pain, and death! All of the curses found in Genesis chapter three, all of the evils present in the current created order, will be abolished in God’s new

order. These things have enslaved mankind and have kept us from enjoying the peace and joy God desires for us. God will wipe away all of the tears that were a result of pain, death, persecution, and other hardships that we have suffered. When John wrote earlier that there would be “no more sea” in the new heaven and earth, many believe he was referring to the chaos and disorder that the sea represented. This would be similar to what Daniel mentioned in one of his visions (Daniel 7:3). Maybe John was saying that there would be nothing to harm God’s people or to cause them to fear in God’s new world. There will be no pain. There will be no sickness. There will be no death. All of these things will be things of the past, and all of these things are worth letting go!

Letting go of the former things is sometimes hard for us to do. Sometimes, we want to receive the new thing, but also keep the old, like the closet full of shoes. Sometimes, Christians want the benefit of forgiveness and salvation through Jesus Christ, but they want to hold on to their “old stuff”, their sin, and the ways of the world. What things are you holding onto that keeps you from experiencing joy right now? Are you holding onto anything from the past that is keeping you from experiencing the fullness of life that God desires for you to have? Or, are there things that might have been good at one time in the past but are worth letting go now? We can celebrate the past, but we should never live there. We can honor the people of former days and the good that has been done in the “good ole days”, but to experience the new things God has for us, we need to let go of the past. God is doing a new thing and He wants us to embrace it.

God Will Give An Inheritance to His Children

If God will create a new world and remove the former one, then what will we have in this new world? What will replace the former things? God will not only create something new but He will also provide an inheritance to His children. Look at the following verses.

***Revelation 21:6-7** 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. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”*

God makes a statement here that affirms His absolute sovereignty over everything. He is sovereign over all of history. He is sovereign from the beginning of everything to the end of all things. God is the Alpha, the first letter of the Greek alphabet, and He is also the Omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet. God is the Beginner of the beginning, and He is the Ender of the end. Not only will God make all things new and remove all former things, God will also give all good things to His people, to His children. The spring of the water of life is the throne of God and the Lamb (Revelation 22:1), a throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16) where the thirsty drink by God’s free gift. It is not because the water of life is of little value; it is the only remedy for our spiritual thirst. The price for our greatest need has already been paid with the death of the Lamb. The water of life is now free to those who thirst for it. God’s children will never go without for God will provide for them for all eternity. God is the provider and sustainer of all things. But not everyone will receive these good things. Some will receive a “second death”.

Revelation 21:8 *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.*

While the above is not an exhaustive list of sinful people, it represents the fate of anyone who fails to respond to God's call of repentance. I do take note, however, of one class of people in the list - *idolaters!* Idolatry is the *most basic sin* (i.e., substituting God for something that is either man-made or man himself). John's vision of the new heaven and new earth emphasizes the importance of having one's name in the Lamb's Book of Life. Those who remain in their sin, who reject the Gospel message, and who turn away from Jesus Christ and refuse to confess Him as Lord and Savior, they will be forever lost and cast into an unthinkable eternity of torment. But the promise of God is that if you call upon Jesus and confess Him as Lord, you will be saved. If you have not turned to Jesus as your Lord and Savior, then turn to Him today and receive your inheritance! Receive the assurance of having your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

God Is Doing Something New Now!

Do we have to wait for the end times to see God do something new? Not at all. God is in the business of doing new things today. However, people do not always want to do something new. In fact, most people resist change. Why is that? We can get stuck in the past. We sometimes like it the way things used to be. We can also get stuck in the present. We like it the way it is. We can be like like a truck that is stuck in the mud, unable to move. We can be satisfied living in the mire of our current situation that we fail to experience something new and better. People say things like, "We have *never* done it that way", or "We have *always* done it this way". People resist change because they believe change is not good. The history of the world is replete with change. The history of God's people is that they also change. Some people will not want things to change. They may say, "Don't change my situation. Don't change me. Don't change my church." But, God is in the changing business. God is in the business of doing new things, and that is a good thing. God has a bigger vision than keeping us the same. God has a bigger plan than allowing us to do the same old thing, or the same old way. We need a God vision. We need a kingdom focus. We need an eternal perspective.

Conclusion

So, let us embrace the *newness* God has planned for us. Revelation 21:1-8 tells us that God is planning something new where He is going to change everything. He is going to make all things new. All of the evil and the curses of this present world will be destroyed and God will re-create a new world where sin, evil, pain, suffering, and even death are things of the past. That is something new to be excited about! Let us embrace change and be willing to change. Let us look forward to the new things God has planned for all of His children - a new world where none of the evil and corrupt things of this world will exist. Let us focus on the new beginning God has planned. God has something new. In everything we do, may we surrender to God's will and embrace the new things He may have for us now. This is good news. Thanks be to God. Amen!