

Revelation 21:1 **The New Heaven and the New Earth**

Well let's turn in our Bibles please to the book of Revelation, chapter 21. We're going to be preaching together today on verse 1; however, I want to read verses 1 through 8, in order to pick up the context of our passage. Revelation chapter 21, verses 1 through 8:

“¹ 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.”

Now one of the most important verses in all of the Bible, is First John 3 and verse 8, which says, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” The whole Bible, from start to finish, is a revelation and a record of the Son of God destroying the works of the Devil.

In the beginning, God created a perfect and glorious heaven and earth, and populated it with every kind of living creature. The pinnacle of God's creation was making man in His own image and after His own likeness. God looked upon everything He had made, and “Behold, it was very good.” It was pure and pristine, it was holy and righteous, and it was perfect and beautiful. There was no death, there was no sorrow, there was no pain.

But this paradise God made was invaded by Satan. He lied to Adam and Eve, and he led them into committing sin against God, and as a result, paradise was ruined. Mankind became subject to death and sorrow and pain, and was condemned to eternal wrath and punishment. The works of the Devil ruined and wrecked and defiled the original creation of God, and brought depravity and death upon humanity, and a curse upon the natural creation. But God was not about to surrender to Satan, and He was not about to allow his work to stand. God was not going to allow Satan's triumph in the Garden of Eden to prevail.

And so in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15, God declared war against Satan, and promised that the seed of the woman would come and crush the head of the serpent. Jesus Christ, who is that promised seed of the woman, was going to come and was going to destroy the work of Satan. He was going to reverse the curse brought upon mankind and upon creation. He was going to restore the ruined paradise and redeem mankind from his sin and all of its consequences. In a word, everything that Satan had done, Jesus was going to undo; and all that Satan had achieved, Jesus was going to dismantle. Satan's work would be like it had never been done, so great was the ruin that was going to be brought upon it, and so great was the restoration that was going to be made from it by Jesus Christ.

Now as history has unfolded over the last 6,000 years, we have seen the seed of the woman come in the person of Jesus Christ. Through His coming and His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus defeated the Devil, robbed him of his power and his people, and invaded and ruined his kingdom. For the last 2,000 years, Jesus has been systematically dismantling Satan's kingdom, and has been systematically building the kingdom of God.

Now we have seen this victory of Christ over Satan progressively described to us in the book of Revelation, and in our studies in the book of Revelation chapter 20, we have now come to the description of the climax and the conclusion of Christ's work in destroying the work of the Devil. In chapter 20, we have seen Satan and all of his helpers—anti-Christian government, anti-Christian religion, anti-Christian society, and the anti-Christian populace—all cast into the lake of fire.

We have seen Christ triumphantly sitting upon His great white throne of judgment. We have seen the vindication and the deliverance of all of Christ's people who are written in the Lamb's book of life. And now, in chapter 21 and 22, we see the complete ruin and the full reversal of the work of Satan, as the curse is fully removed, and paradise is fully restored. And God, once again, dwells with men in the new heavens and in the new earth. The Garden of Eden is restored, the way to the tree of life is opened, and mankind's dominion over the earth is returned back to him. Perfect purity and permanent righteousness is now the possession of every person, and never again can sin ever enter into the human experience. In the new heavens and the new earth, nothing is left of Satan's work. It is completely destroyed. And in the new heavens and the new earth, everything is the work of God alone. Satan's work has been obliterated. God's work has been permanently and forever established.

And so what we see in the new heavens and in the new earth, is the perfection of redemption and the completion of redemption, and the permanent holiness and happiness of the people of God, for all eternity. The triumph of Christ over Satan is perfect, and the triumph of Christ over Satan is permanent, and because of that triumph, we will have peace and joy forever and ever without end.

Well this, then, is what is set before us in these last two chapters, as we begin our study of them together. And what we want to do today is focus on the dwelling place of the people of God, as

it is described in verse 1. In the first place then this morning, let's consider together the renewal of the heavens and the earth.

The renewal of the heavens and the earth is spoken of in verse 1a. Notice chapter 21 and verse 1, the first half of the verse: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Now you recall last week as we studied chapter 20 and verse 11, we saw the heaven and the earth fleeing from the face of Christ as He sat on the great white throne of judgment. And this fleeing of the earth and the heaven away from Christ was the result of the corruption and the curse that had fallen on that earth and on that heaven, as a result of Adam's fall. A corrupt creation would never be a suitable dwelling place for a perfect people, and were it left in its corruption, the victory of Christ over the work of Satan would be incomplete. Therefore, Christ purifies the heavens and the earth with fire and reduces them back to their smallest elements, from which He rebuilds them into a new heaven and a new earth, in which dwells purity and righteousness.

Now when it says that there is going to be a new heaven and a new earth, it does not mean that they will be brand new, as though God created them out of nothing, like He did the first time in Genesis 1. The Greek word used here that is translated "new" in verse 1, means "new in kind" or "new in quality." It does not mean "new" in the sense that it never existed before; it means that it now has a new quality about it.

This new earth and heavens will be the old earth and heavens, reduced to their fundamental elements and then remade with new qualities. It will be similar to the resurrection of our bodies. Our bodies are corrupted by sin, and they are reduced to their fundamental elements in the grave. But then they are resurrected with new qualities and with freedom from all the effects of sin. But it is still the same body that we had before. It is just resurrected and imbued with new qualities. God does not make a completely brand new body for us; rather, He takes our old body, reduces it to its fundamental elements, and then remakes it in the resurrection with new qualities.

And so it is with the new heavens and the new earth. They have been corrupted by sin, and they will be reduced to their fundamental elements with a fervent heat. But then God will reshape those elements into the new heavens and the new earth, with new qualities and with freedom from the curse that sin brought upon it, and all that the curse involves. So the new heavens and the new earth will be the present heaven and the present earth, cleansed and purified and remade in glorious perfection, and free from all corruption. So the old creation will not be annihilated, rather, it will be regenerated.

I want you to notice two passages in the Bible that make this point. Turn first of all in your Bibles, please, to Hebrews chapter 1. We're going to be looking at a number of passages today, so prepared to turn in your Bibles a great deal. In Hebrews chapter 1, I want you to notice verses 10 to 12. It says, "¹⁰ And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. That's talking about Genesis chapter 1. Verse 11: "they shall perish;"—that original creation is going to perish. "But thou remainest; and they all

shall wax old as doth a garment;¹² and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

So what’s being said here is that the earth is being used up, the earth is being worn out, and just like a worn-out garment, when it’s finally too worn out to wear, you fold it up and you put it away. But it doesn’t remain in that situation. It says that the worn out creation shall be changed, and the word there in the original means to be transformed. And so notice that this original creation is going to wax old like a garment, and then it’s going to be transformed. It’s not going to be annihilated. It’s going to be changed, not eliminated.

The second passage I want you to look at is Matthew chapter 19. In Matthew 19, beginning at verse 27, it says, “²⁷ Then answered Peter and said unto him,” that is, to Jesus, “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? ²⁸ And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me,”—now notice—“in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.”

And so what Jesus calls the end of the world, when He sits on the throne and He gives rewards to His faithful servant—He calls that “the regeneration,” and it means to restore to its pristine state; it means to renovate, or to renew. And so this transformation of the old heaven and earth to the new heaven and earth is here called a “regeneration,” - a renovation and a renewal.

Now having looked at those two passages that speak of the fact that there’s going to be this transformative, regenerative, process that’s going to occur to the heaven and the earth, I want us to notice how this process is described in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament. So let’s look at two passages in the Old Testament, and then two passages in the New Testament.

First of all, then, two passages in the Old Testament. I’d like you to turn, please, to Isaiah chapter 65. Now this whole idea of there being a new heaven and the new earth is not something unique to the book of Revelation. It was spoken of back in the Old Testament, in the book of Isaiah. And in Isaiah chapter 65, I want you to notice verses 17 to 19. God says:

“¹⁷ For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ¹⁸ But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. ¹⁹ And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”

So here back in Isaiah, God says to the children of Israel—At some point in the future, I’m going to make a new heaven and a new earth. And the thing that’s going to characterize that new heaven and that new earth is that there will be joy and gladness, and there will not be any sorrow or crying. And you can see how John borrowed that exact language and used it in Revelation

chapter 21 to describe the new heavens and the new earth. And so here in Isaiah 65, the emphasis is on the joy and the gladness that is going to be in the new heavens and the new earth, rather than in the sorrow and crying that are in the present heaven and the present earth.

Now you're in Isaiah 65—please turn to Isaiah 66, the very next chapter. Notice if you will Isaiah 66 and verse 22. It says, “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.” Now here, the emphasis is on the permanence of the new heaven and the new earth, as opposed to the temporary nature of the present heaven and the present earth, which are going to wax old and be folded up like a garment, and be changed.

So the earth you're living on now and the heavens that are above us now have a limited lifespan. They are temporary. When Jesus Christ returns, they are going to be transformed into a new heaven and into a new earth. And Isaiah 65 tells us that new heaven and that new earth will be characterized by joy and gladness, rather than by sorrow and crying; and Isaiah 66:22 tells us that that new heavens and that new earth is going to be characterized by permanence, as opposed to temporariness, which the present earth and heaven have as their characteristic.

Now let's notice two passages in the New Testament. Turn please to Romans chapter 8. We'll start reading together in verse 18. Now in verse 18 it says, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” So there's the present time, and there's the future time. And the present time is, what? A time of suffering. And the future time is a time of, what? It's a time of glory.

Now notice verse 19: “For the earnest expectation of the creature”—now the King James translates the Greek word for “creation” with this word “creature.” And so each time you see the word “creature,” I'm going to read it as “creation,” because that's what the original Greek word means. That exact same Greek word is used four times in this passage. The first three times, they translate it “creature,” “creature,” and “creature,” and the fourth time they translate it “creation.” And why they did that, I'm not sure. But you'll notice in all other translations and the New King James, it's translated consistently as “creation” all four times, because it's the same Greek word. So that's what I'm going to do when I read it. I'm going to substitute the word “creation” for “creature,” because that's what the original Greek word means, all right?

Okay, Romans 8, verse 19: “For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” That is, the natural creation is waiting for something. What's it waiting for? For there to be a public declaration of who the true sons of God are. There will come a day when it will be manifest who the sons of God are. And the creation is waiting for that day, all right?

Verse 20: “For the creation was made subject to vanity,” that is, the creation was brought into a state of futility. Why? Because the creation chose to be brought into that state? No. It says, “not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.” In other words, God

put the curse on the first creation and made it subject to futility, not because the creation chose that, but because God chose to impose that on it as a result of Adam's fall.

But at the same time, in the promise of the coming Redeemer, He also subjected that creation to the hope that it, too, would be redeemed. So we need to understand that when Christ died on the cross, He didn't just die to redeem the elect from sin, He also died to redeem the natural creation from the curse brought on it by Adam's sin. And that's why the creation has hope. He has "subjected the same in hope."

Verse 21: "because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." What do we know about the creation right now? It's in bondage to corruption. This world is corrupt. The heavens are corrupt. They are corrupt as a result of being under the curse, as a result of Adam's sin. But it shall be delivered from that corruption, it shall be delivered from that curse, and it shall be delivered into the same liberty that the children of God have, and that is freedom from the curse and from the corruption of sin.

Now notice verse 22: "For we know that the whole creation"—now that's the same Greek word that was translated "creature" the last three times—"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." This world and this universe is groaning and travailing in pain because it's under the curse. Why do you think we have earthquakes? Why do you think we have volcanoes? Why do you think we have diseases? Why do you think we have all the natural disasters that occur, not only on the earth, but in the universe as well? It's because it's under the curse of God. The universe isn't functioning the way God originally designed it to function. It is broken, it is corrupted, it is defective, and as a result, it is waiting to be delivered from that brokenness and the corruption and that defect, as well as we are waiting to be delivered from our brokenness and our corruptions and our defect.

Now verse 23: "And not only they," that is, not only the creation, "but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body." Now when are our bodies going to be redeemed? At the resurrection, right? That's when the sons of God are going to be manifest, and that's the same time in which the creation is delivered from the bondage of corruption, as well. That's the same time when the creation shall realize the hope *it* has of being delivered from the effects of the curse and the Fall. And so we see here that the creation is not annihilated; it is delivered from corruption into glorious liberty. And when does that happen? When the true sons of God are made manifest on the day of judgment. So our resurrection and the earth's renovation will occur at the same time.

Therefore, the rapture, when we are resurrected, occurs at the same time the earth and heavens are renovated. The rapture and the appearance of the new heavens and the new earth are not separated by a thousand and seven years, like the Dispensationalists would have us believe. They say the rapture occurs, and that's when we're resurrected, right? Then there's a seven-year

tribulation, then Jesus comes back, then there's a thousand-year Millennium, and at the end of the thousand-year Millennium, you have the new heavens and the new earth, right?

Well Romans chapter 8 makes it clear that the new heavens and the new earth, which is the renovation of the world and its deliverance from corruption, come at the same time the believers experiences their deliverance from corruption in the resurrection, and manifested to be the sons of God. And so there's just one final event at the end of this age, in which Jesus returns, we are raptured up to be with Him, and return back to earth with Him. There is the great white throne judgment, there's the renovations of the new heavens and the new earth, and we go into eternity.

There is this age, and there is the age to come, and they are divided by the second and the final judgment and the resurrection and the renovation of the new heavens and the new earth. And that is biblical eschatology. And this scheme the Dispensationalists have come up with, that there's three separate events—one at the rapture, one seven years later at the second coming, and one a thousand years later at the end of the Millennium—is completely unbiblical. Those three events all occur at the same time.

Now notice Second Peter chapter 3, verses 3 to 14. He says, “³ knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” So clearly, the topic under discussion here in Second Peter chapter 3 is the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Verse 5: “For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: ⁶ whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” So he's saying, They're talking about the fact that it's been so long, that Jesus hasn't come back, and therefore, He's not going to come back. And Peter's saying, Well, look. It was a long time between the creation and the Flood, and yet in the Flood, God wiped out the entire world. And if He wiped it once, that sets a precedent for Him wiping it out the second time.

But of course, He's not going to wipe it out the second time by water, like He did the first time, because He promised He would never do that again. So verse 7 says, “but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store,”—here it is—“reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” And so the world's going to be destroyed the second time by fire.

Verse 8: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” In other words, what's delaying the second coming of Christ is that we are living in this symbolic thousand-year period, in which God is saving His

elect. And when the last elect person is saved, then the end comes. And that's why the delay has gone on for 2,000 years now—because God has a lot of people to save.

But when it's all finished, and when all that should not perish, have come to repentance, verse 10: "the day of the Lord will come." How will it come? "as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹² looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

And so here we see in detail the process of the renovation of the earth and the heaven described. In verse 7, it says that this earth is reserved unto fire. In verse 10, it says it's going to be subject to a fervent heat, and it's going to be burned up. And in verse 12, it says it's going to be on fire, and there's going to be a fervent heat. So everything's going to be melted back to its basic elements. And out of this molten mass of elements, verse 13 says, a new earth and a new heaven is forged. So when verse 1 of Revelation 20 says that the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, it means that they passed away in their present form, not that they ceased to exist.

Please turn back to Revelation 21, verse 1. Notice Revelation 21:1: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth:"—now here's the phrase I want you to focus on—"for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." So when verse 1 of Revelation 21 says "the first heaven and the first earth were passed away," it just means they were passed away in their present form. We say of someone who died that they "passed away." We do not mean by that phrase that they were annihilated; we mean that they are gone as to their past form, but we do expect to see them in a new form at the resurrection, don't we?

So the fact that the earth and the heavens have passed away does not mean that they were annihilated, it simply means that they are gone as to their past form, but they will assume a new form in the future. In the future, paradise will be restored in the new earth and heaven. The curse will be gone. The dragon, and the beast, and the false prophet, and Babylon, and those who have the mark of the beast, will be absent. The beauty and perfection of creation and nature will be restored.

I want us to turn back again now to the Old Testament, to Isaiah chapter 11. It talks about the coming of Jesus in chapter 11 and verse 1: "¹ And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: ² and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; ³ and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: ⁴ but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the

wicked.” So we see this second coming of Jesus Christ, in which He exercises final judgment in smiting the wicked with the rod of His mouth and slaying the wicked of the earth . “⁵ And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” He will judge in righteousness and faithfulness.

Having described Christ and His second coming in judgment, when He smites the earth with a rod of His wrath and gives justice to the oppressed, that is, to the believers, notice verses 6 to 9 of Isaiah 11. Here is the description of the new heavens and the new earth: “⁶ The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. ⁷ And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. ⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” So here we have this beautiful description of the physical nature of the new earth, in which there is no more curse and no more conflict between mankind and creation, or between creation and itself.

Now turn please to Isaiah 65. In verse 16, it says: “¹⁶ that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because”—notice—“the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes. ¹⁷ For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ¹⁸ But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. ¹⁹ And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. ²⁰ There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. ²¹ And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. ²² They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. ²³ They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. ²⁴ And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. ²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”

Now New Covenant blessings are often symbolically described in Old Covenant terminology and language and imagery. But the overall thrust of this section is that this is what the new earth is going to be like. Now clearly, there’s not going to be any reproduction, but the Jews didn’t understand that. And there’s not going to be any death, but the Jews didn’t understand that. And so He describes eternal longevity in these earthly and Old Covenant material terms.

But you can see shining through this description that was adapted to the people of the day, the glory and the nature of the new earth. So the beauty and perfection of creation and nature will be

restored, physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually, spiritually—everything will be perfect, everything will be peaceful, and everything will be pure. That, then, is the description of the renewal of the heavens and the earth in the Old Testament.

So having seen in the first place the renewal of the heavens and the earth in verse 1a of Revelation 21, we'll turn back to Revelation 21 and notice verse 1b. Our second major point has to do with the absence of the sea. We've seen the renewal of the heavens and the earth, and now secondly, let's notice the absence of the sea.

Now Revelation 21 says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;"—now here's our second point—"and there was no more sea." So verse 1 tells us that in the new earth that Christ will make, there will be no more sea. Now some take this literally, and say that the new earth will have no oceans of water upon it. And it is possible that this is what it means, and it's possible that this could be the case.

However, I think it's unlikely that that is the meaning of this phrase, "and there was no more sea." When we look at the original creation, an entire day—the third day of creation—was devoted to the creation of the oceans, the dry land, and the plants. And then another whole day, the fifth day of creation, was devoted to filling those oceans with life and the air with birds. And so the oceans were a big deal in the original creation and a big part of it, occupying two large parts of two days in the original six days of creation. And when God looked upon it, He pronounced it all "very good," and there was nothing intrinsically bad about anything He made in the oceans or the oceans themselves.

The sea is a large part of the revelation of the glory of God in creation. Scientists estimate that 25% of all species on the earth dwell under the ocean, and they haven't even begun to catalogue a fraction of the species that are in the oceans. One has only to observe the intense beauty and the stunning variety and the tremendous complexity of the life under the oceans to be powerfully moved to worship the wisdom and the glory of God, and one has only to see the vast expanse of the oceans to be moved to worship the majesty and magnificence and the greatness of God. It seems unlikely that such a tremendous revelation of the glory of God in the original creation would be done away with in the new creation. The oceans were part of the original unfallen earth, and it would seem that they would be part of the new unfallen earth as well, and that God would not abandon an entire category of His creative work in re-creating the heavens and the earth.

Furthermore, the physical oceans are presented as a good thing in the book of Revelation, out of which the worship of God arises. Notice Revelation chapter 5, beginning at verse 11. Here we have a picture of heaven, and God the Father sitting on the throne, and the Son with the Father. And then the praise arises. Revelation 5:11: "¹¹ And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; ¹² saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and

glory, and blessing. ¹³ And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, ⁹—now notice—“and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Verse 13 says the sea, and all that is in it, is a source of the worship of God. And so, not only does the sea, that is, the physical ocean, not have a negative connotation in the book of Revelation, but it is seen as a place out of which the praise of God arises.

Furthermore, notice Revelation chapter 14, verses 6 and 7: “⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, ⁷ saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him”—now notice—“that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

Now verse 7 says we’re to worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Here the sea is said to be a provocation to worship God, just as the other three elements of creation are a provocation to worship God. Now we are explicitly told in the last two chapters of the book of Revelation, chapters 21 and 22, that in the eternal state, there will be a new heaven and a new earth, and there will be fountains of water, chapter 22, verse 1.

Therefore, it stands to reason that there would be a new sea as well. If three of the elements listed here in verse 7 are explicitly declared to be part of the new creation, it would seem that the fourth would be part of the new creation as well. If God is going to give us a new heaven, and if God is going to give us a new earth, and if God is going to give us a new fountain of water, then why would He not give us a new sea as well?

Now if all of this is true, as I have asserted, and the new earth will in fact have oceans, just like the first earth did, then why does verse 1 of Revelation 21 say that in the new heavens and the new earth that there was no more sea? Well, the reason why it says that, is that the word “sea” has a symbolic meaning as well as a literal meaning. And when the word “sea” is used symbolically, it represents the churning mass of godless humanity.

Isaiah 57 and verse 20 says, “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” Sin always produces turmoil, whether in the life of an individual, or in the life of a family, or in the life of a society, or in the life of a nation.

You remember when we preached through Revelation chapter 11, we took an excursus into Daniel. We preached on Daniel chapter 2, and we preached on Daniel chapter 7. Turn please to Daniel chapter 7. We’re going to read together verses 1 to 3: “¹ In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. ² Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.” So the sea’s whipped up into this maelstrom of turbulence by these winds. Verse 3: “³ And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.”

Now here the sea is pictured as being whipped into a maelstrom by powerful winds so that the ocean is in tremendous turmoil, like it would be in a hurricane. And out of this tumultuous mass of humanity pictured here symbolically as a troubled sea, the kings and the empires of the earth arise, symbolized by these four vicious beasts—the lion, and the bear, and the leopard, and then the beast with great iron teeth. And so we see here that the kingdoms of the world don't arise out of the literal ocean, right? The nations of the earth don't arise out of the literal ocean, they arise out of the masses of humanity, which are here pictured as an ocean.

We see the same symbolic usage of the sea in Revelation 13. Turn there please now. Revelation 13 and verses 1 and 2: “¹ And I stood upon the sand of the sea,”—same language that Daniel has, the beast rising up out of the sea—“having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. ² And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.”

Now here in Revelation 13:1 and 2, just like in Daniel, this composite beast represents the anti-Christian governments of this present age, and it shares the characteristics of the anti-Christian governments that Daniel spoke of, because the same vicious beasts are used to describe this beast in Revelation 13, as are used to describe the kingdoms in Daniel's vision in Daniel chapter 7.

So here, once again, the sea out of which this beast of anti-Christian government arises represents the churning mass of unsaved humanity, casting up its mire and dirt, creating anti-Christian governments that then viciously oppress and attack the kingdom of God and the people of God. Out of the wicked populations of the earth, anti-Christian governments arise.

Finally, notice the explicit declaration of the symbolic meaning of the sea in Revelation 17. Revelation 17 and verse 1 says, “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore”—now notice—“that sitteth upon many waters.” The question is, What are those waters? Well, they're symbolic oceans. Now notice, if you will, verse 15 gives the explanation: “And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” So in verse 1, Babylon the harlot that represents anti-Christian society is said to sit upon, or have her support and foundation from, many waters, which is a reference to the oceans of the earth, and the oceans that are around the earth.

Now what is this “sea” that Babylon has as her support and foundation? Verse 15 tells us that the water of the sea represent peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And so in a word, the sea represents the whole fallen mass of unsaved humanity that makes up the anti-Christian society that Babylon symbolically represents, and that anti-Christian governments arise out of.

So then, when Revelation 21:1 says that there is no more sea, *this* is the sea that it's talking about. In the new heavens and earth there will be no seething mass of unsaved humanity, casting up the mire and dirt of sin and rebellion against God. I mean, do you ever look out at our world today, you look at the news, you look at the news pictures on television, or on the Internet, and you see these seething masses of people demonstrating and rioting, and all this conflict in which this group is against that group, and these people are committing all sorts of nefarious crimes against this or that group of people, and this whole political morass is just a seething caldron of a troubled ocean of humanity, all fighting with each other, and all fighting against God. That's what's going to be gone.

All of the unrest and turmoil and conflict that arose from the wicked storming against God is going to be eliminated. All the raging violence against the dominion of God will be done away with, like it says in Psalm 2: “¹ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, ³ Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” Thus the sea of humanity, fighting against God—and it will be gone. All of that and all of those will be cast into the lake of fire.

It says of God in Psalm 65 and verse 7 that He “stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.” And so to still the sea, is to still the tumult of the people. When there is no more sea, there will be no more tumult of the people. The tumult of rebellion is gone. You will never find it in the new earth.

We read of the sovereign God subduing the wicked when He subdues the seas and their waves, pictured in Psalm 93, verses 1 to 4. It says, “¹ The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. ² Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.” Now listen to this: “³ The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. ⁴ The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.”

And so these floods are the oceans that have lifted up their voice against God, and what is being asserted in Psalm 93 is that God is mightier than all the massive resistance that is generated and lifted up against Him by the sea of wicked humanity, casting their waves of blasphemy and hatred against Him. He will take those waves and He will smash them. He will take those waters and He will remove them, because the Lord on high is mightier than the mighty waves of the sea. The sea of rebellious humanity has been eliminated from the new heavens and the new earth, because it is completely incompatible with the character of the new creation.

So then, this is what the new heavens and the new earth will be like. This is the dwelling place of the people of God. Verse 1 of Revelation 21 describes to us the Father's house, which has many mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for us, and will return to bring us to. And in this

place, there will be the presence of a perfect creation, and there will be the absence of any sinful people.

And the question I have to ask you this morning is, Will you be there? Will you be in the new heavens and the new earth, where there is no more sea of wicked humanity? Or will you be in the lake of fire, where the sea of wicked humanity is?

And the difference between being in the new heavens and the new earth, or being in the lake of fire, is the difference between whether you have repented of your sin and received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, or whether you continue to persist in your sin and reject the authority of Christ over your life, and the saving grace that He offers to everyone who calls upon Him. The Bible tells us: Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

So believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and *you* will be saved. Repent of your sins. Receive Christ as your Savior. Recognize Him as your Lord. Follow Him as your master. And find from Him salvation and deliverance from all judgment, and He will bring you into this new heaven and this new earth that is perfectly peaceful, and totally blessed, and entirely pure, where you will have eternal life, and where you will live forever. May God help us to be among those who are in the new heavens and the new earth, and not among those who are cast into the lake of fire. Shall we pray together.

Our Father, we thank you so much for this blessed book and for the foreview of the future that it gives to us. And Lord, we pray that you would help us to rightly understand the symbolic language of this book and the meaning that it conveys, and the message that it has. Father, how we need your Spirit to guide us into an understanding and an awareness of what it is you are conveying to us. Lord, we thank you that the meaning is plain when the spirit is humble and the Scriptures are the authority.

Father, we ask now that you would be pleased to save your people and cause the recognition of an impending day of judgment to make them flee from the wrath to come by fleeing to Jesus, and finding in Him forgiveness, reconciliation, and redemption from sin. Father, we ask it in Christ's name. Amen.