

The Birth of Heaven on Earth

Revelation 21:1-8; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 6-4-2023

Introduction

The coming of heaven to earth is like giving birth!

But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs. – Matthew 24:8

1. **The Lion and Lamb:** The Lord Jesus rose from the dead to rule over all and to be an able and willing Savior for sinners.

Revelation pictures the Lord Jesus in His true glory. The primary focus of the book of Revelation is the Lord Jesus and His reign and return. (Revelation 1:1; 5:5-6; 21:6; 22:12-13, 16) The 'Lion' image is the picture of a King who defends his people and judges his enemies. (Genesis 49:9-10) The 'Lamb' image is the picture of a Savior who rescues his people from death and destruction through substitution. (John 1:29) Jesus reigns as the Lion-Lamb: the perfect combination of reigning strength and sacrificial humility. The unveiling of Jesus Christ shows us 'the Man behind the curtain of history' in all His glory and goodness.

2. **7 Churches:** The Good Shepherd will faithfully and perfectly care for and discipline His Church.

Revelation pictures church history. Even though Jesus has ascended to heaven, He is intimately involved in the lives of all those who call themselves Christians for the sake of His name and for their good. (Revelation 1:10-13, 16, 20; 21:2) Jesus rules over His church: the reign of protection and provision and purity – *the reign of relationship*. The theme of the 7 letters is 'waiting well' or 'overcoming'! (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21)

3. **7 Seals:** The Good Ruler will faithfully and perfectly oversee the consequences of the rebellion of sinners and the persecution of His people.

Revelation pictures world history. The Lord Jesus rules over all the world and over all those in authority in this world and they can do nothing without His permission and all that happens in the world between His 1st and 2nd comings is under His sovereign authority in order to fulfill His good purposes and His good promises to His people. (Revelation 6:1; 21:1) The consummation of all things after the finished work of Christ is pictured as the process of a woman giving birth. (Matthew 24:8) Jesus rules over history: the reign of providence and purpose and promises – *the reign of reason*.

4. **7 Trumpets:** There will be clear events that announce to God's people that the return of Christ is near and the final generation has begun.

Revelation pictures the warnings God will send during the Great Tribulation before the End. No one will be able to predict the day and hour of Christ's return, but the Lord Jesus has told us to look for certain events in the world that indicate that His return is near just like the leaves on a fig tree indicate that summer is near. (Revelation 8:1-6; 21:4)

5. **7 Bowls:** The Lord Jesus will be revealed and come to publicly rescue His people from God's wrath on a rebellious world and to execute divine judgment.

Revelation pictures the last temporal judgments and call to repentance and the return of Christ in judgment. (Revelation 19:11; 21:7)

6. **Great White Throne:** The Lord Jesus will judge every person and all those who have refused mercy will receive justice.

Revelation pictures the final judgment of all men. (Revelation 20:11-12; 21:8)

7. **New Heaven and Earth:** All those who have received mercy from God through Jesus will enjoy heaven on earth forever.

Revelation pictures heaven on earth. (Revelation 21:3-5)

Conclusion

What are we to expect and do before Jesus comes?

- Keep your eyes on Jesus who rules the world and loves His people.
- Fight to overcome the varied and unrelenting opposition to Christ in your life.
- Expect trials of all kinds, including persecution.
- Expect things to get worse as God is about to bring judgment.
- Understand what is really happening in the world from God's perspective.
- Trust God's justice and love people as you wait for Christ to return.
- Fix your hope on the kingdom to come, knowing that our present suffering is nothing compared to the glory to come.

Our lives are to be fueled by good news, not fear!

- Jesus came to save and satisfy.
- Jesus lived the life we could never live.
- Jesus died the death we deserve to die.
- Jesus rose from the dead as King of kings.
- Jesus is an able and willing Savior for all, so *turn* from sin and *trust* in Him.
- Jesus reigns over all for the good of His people, so *trust* His promises and *love* as He commands.
- Jesus will return one day to establish heaven on earth.