

Book of Revelation: Is The Best Yet To Come?

In today's episode, we will examine seven fearless reasons from revelation chapter 20, one that will bring relief and encouragement look about the world, we see wars and rumors of war on every continent in every nation.

We also see economic chaos and we read predictions in the news about pending a economic crisis, and then in addition to that, we have the uncertainty of truth. We hear in our culture a great deal about the uncertainty of truth.

There is no truth and so people looking for truth, wanting a solid foundation to encourage them and comfort them in these stressful times can't find it from our culture because they stress the uncertainty of truth is you'll recall from a previous presentation we talked about the book of Revelation and how it fits our day and age and correlates to the lives that you and I live in the world in which we live.

It is an inspired book written by God, presented to the last apostle John, sometime during the years age 66 and 90. We are uncertain of the exact date, but it's in that timeframe. We know that because of the contents at the beginning of the book of Revelation, it talks about seven bodies of believers, local congregations that existed in southwest Turkey at that time.

Rome was in charge of all things throughout the whole Mediterranean area and they had two emperors that lived during this time span. Both of them had God complexes. They called themselves Lord and God, and they demanded that their subjects worship them.

This put a great deal of stress upon the Christian believers and caused a great deal of persecution as well as false doctrine, false prophets and stressful times for all of those believers and especially the local congregations.

God inspired this letter through John to send to those believers in those seven cities in southwest Turkey to encourage them, to comfort them, and to give them hope for their hopeless times and circumstances.

We come now to the first chapter of Revelation that we will examine in any kind of detail. It's towards the end of the book, Revelation chapter 21. In this chapter, there are several visions. The book of Revelation has many visions as we discussed in our last episode, many troubling signs, many unusual events described throughout the book.

We find several of them in Revelation chapter 21. The first one described something called a new heavens and the new earth, and it's described by John this way. I will read it from Revelation 21 verse number one. It says,

"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 so we find here a description that he saw in a vision of a new heaven and a new earth coming down out of heaven."

Now there are many people who approach this vision in a variety of ways. They talk about "new," and that is the key word here, new heaven and new earth, and there's a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding as to the meaning of this phrase new.

It does not describe something newly created. It does not describe something new in time. It does not talk about a totally new creation of a brand new, original creation. Again, a new heavens and new earth.

The actual meaning of the word "new" here does not describe any of those kinds of creation, but it talks about instead a transformation of something that existed, something already in existence, a reformation, a transformation of something existing, making it new.

That describes the new heaven and the new earth. As we look at our present world

and all of its wickedness, all of its confusion, it's marred by sin and the evil effects of sin. We certainly need a new heaven and a new earth, don't we?

This description, this vision that John saw that he describes in Revelation 21, talks about this new heaven and new earth. Then we read on as we go and after that first phrase of him seeing a new heaven, a new earth, it says,

"for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away."

That's the earth we now inhabit. That's the one now in existence. It passed away. Many people have confusing thoughts as to what that means "to pass away." Some like to claim from Second Peter Chapter three, verse 10, where it talks about fire and heat melting elements, and they envision that this existing world disappears and is destroyed.

It exists no longer; it has gone, it disappears. But that's not what the word here in Revelation 21 described as "passed away" means, and even in the passage in Second Peter Chapter three, the same phrase appears.

This passing away talks about its transition from one place to another. It doesn't talk about something brand new as though something is destroyed and removed, and something replaces it.

No. Instead of talks about something that has transformed, something that is of new superior quality to what existed previously. We use a common example to describe this kind of condition and that's the refining of gold.

What refines gold? Fire, heat, fervent heat, and when you refine gold, does the gold disappear? No. What disappears? The dross, the impurities of the gold, so the gold is refined.

Now that is in many respects an inadequate explanation because God's refining work doesn't go only to 99 percent as we do with gold. God's reformation is complete and total. So the work that we see described here about the new heavens and the new earth and the passing away of the old heaven and the old earth, it was describing the reformation work that God does upon his original creation.

He makes it better than the original creation, which was new in all respects. We see here a description from John and this vision that he saw. He saw a new heaven and a new earth not replacing a destroyed or removed existing earth, but rather a refined, transformed, renewed earth, new in quality, superior to whatever existed previously.

Then we notice that another interesting aspect in his description here, we read as we look at it, it says,

"and the sea was no more..."

What happened to the seas that were removed, no seas anymore? The seas have an interesting role in Scripture oftentimes. In most occasions when it references to the sea, it talks about danger. It talks about distraction, talks about the instability of the seas and of the oceans.

It talks about them creating barriers between nations and peoples, that forces people into isolation and separation. We see some descriptions used in that fashion when we talk about Noah and the flood in Genesis chapter six, seven and eight.

We also read it in the book of Jonah, who, when he ran from God and God's call upon him to go to Nineveh, he found passage on a boat. A storm arose as frequently happens, and he said, he is the cause of the storm. Throw him overboard and the raging waves will cease.

We also read in the book of Daniel and also in the book of Revelation, about prophecies made of dangerous evil things coming from the seas. So, the seas as depicted in

the Scriptures have an ominous tone to them. Not really welcome, dangerous, and can cause damage, death, and destruction

That will have no place in God's eternal home for his children. In the eternity that he has prepared for those who love him and those whom he has saved, it will be a spotless place. No need for separation, no need for isolation. In fact, a place of great unity so the seas don't have a need anymore. No more need for the seas. They disappear.

So John saw this vision of the new heavens and a new earth. The old earth and the old has passed away. God in his omnipotent power brought broad reformation, renewal, transformation to His creation.

And you know that's the way the pictures describe the work of Christ and the work of God is renewal. Talks about taking sinful creatures like you and like me, dead in our trespasses and sins, and He renews us through the mysterious work of His Holy Spirit in our lives and in the lives of those who trust Christ.

There is a renewal process that occurs. The old man disappears in. The new man comes into form and into expression. That's God's way in reformation and then renewal.

I mentioned earlier that this particular book of Revelation has as its main emphasis and main theme, the revelation of Jesus Christ. We read that in the very first verse of Chapter One of Revelation. This is a revelation of Jesus Christ.

We would stop here a moment and think, what does this verse tell us about the Lord Jesus? Well, interestingly enough, if you view it from that vantage point, that tells us a number of things about the Lord Jesus.

First of all, it describes for us His love for His people in the day when He inspired this book through the Apostle John. His followers faced very difficult, treacherous tests and times of tribulation, and as a comfort to them, as an encouragement to them He gave them hope.

He sent this book through the Apostle John, and it was sent to all of those seven local bodies of believers, and they found encouragement, correction, help further difficulties in troubling times.

They can do the same thing for you and me as well. They can provide for us an expression of the love of Christ for us because we can also find in this book comfort, encouragement, and hope.

We also find a display of God's grace because he didn't have to write the book for those early believers. He didn't have to do that. Nobody stood over Him with a whip and forced Him to send the revelation to the Apostle John.

It was as grace. It was a display, a display of His grace on behalf of His people, giving them something they did not deserve because He left them. It describes also for us His omnipotence, His ability, His power to take something evil and wicked and marred like the Scriptures describe our present earth.

We read in Romans chapter eight, verses 20 and 22, that the present world groans because of the effects of sin, looking for redemption, looking for that day when it will be redeemed by God's omnipotent power.

We also read about the early, early saints in the Scriptures, and the Old Testament talks about them looking for the city, looking for a country, a new country, but not talking about Israel. They're not talking about the promise land but talking about a new country, one far different from the world they inhabited whose builder and maker is God.

So we find in this simple little verse revelation of the Lord Jesus and His faithfulness to His people, His faithfulness to prophecy for the Scriptures prophesied that there would come a day when new heavens and new earth will come into view.

We read that in the Old Testament and Isaiah chapter 65. We read it in the book of Hebrews chapter Eleven. We read it also in the book of Revelation. We read it in Second

Peter Chapter three, that there's coming a day of new heavens and new earth, so we read about the faithfulness of Christ.

It also brings to us the consummation. Consummation begins with Revelation verse number one, chapter twenty-one throughout the rest of chapter 21 and the early part of chapter 22.

We read about the consummation of all things, the conclusion of the Lord Jesus Christ's eternal redemptive plan coming to completion. This begins the description, and it begins with the description of a new heaven and a new earth.

This verse simple as it is, has implications upon you and me as we've gone through the narrative of this vision and examined it. We've seen some things correlate to you and me today, our world, our present time, our era, the same kinds of tests that you and I face, though current to those believers back in Revelation at those times in the early first century believers.

One thing, we can pray that the Holy Spirit of God will open your eyes to see these truths, to understand them, to see how they describe for us and present to us some truths about the Lord Jesus and encourage our faith as believers and followers of Christ.

We can see His hand at work. We can understand His sovereignty because He will bring all things together. It says He will make all things new. It gives us hope.

I mentioned at the beginning of this broadcast that there would be seven things that I mentioned, more than seven as we progress through this narrative in this vision, all reasons for you and I as believers and followers of the Lord Jesus, to have hope in the midst of what gives a pair of hopelessness, brings confusion, brings fear, brings trouble, tribulation and trial.

We have hope. We read of the hope of one day partaking in new heavens and new earth as John saw in his vision. That should encourage us, should comfort us, should cause us to view our circumstances differently, should cause us to increase our love for the Lord Jesus, our Savior.

Now it is possible that you are watching this video and you know nothing about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for you. Perhaps He's been nothing more than a curse word. Perhaps you even deny anything good related to the Lord Jesus, and you view Him as a phony, as a false man, a liar, deceiver.

But perhaps today through the presentation of this study, the Holy Spirit of God has begun to speak to you, and He has opened your eyes to see your true condition. You are hopeless. You have no hope. Your greatest hope is in yourself, and my dear friend, if that is the source of your greatest hope, you are indeed in deep trouble.

I pray that the Holy Spirit of God will come to you today and open your eyes to see your hopeless condition, your sinful condition, your need of a Savior, your need of Someone Who can make your life all new, Who can transform your life into something new, something special, something that brings joy.

I pray that Spirit of God will enable you to turn from your hopeless life, denying your own self efforts, denying your very best, which in God's eyes will not satisfy Him, and turn instead to trust upon the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting Him as your Lord and Savior.

He came to provide salvation for sinners like you and like me. He lived a perfect sinless life. He did not have to do that, but he came out of love and out of grace to provide it for sinners like you and me by faith and trust upon Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

You can realize the beginning and the start of a new life, a transformed life, one in which the Spirit of God will come into your life, and He will renew you from the inside out, changing your desires, changing your hopes, removing your fears, and overcoming them, bringing joy and peace to your life.

I pray that the spirit of God will do that for you in your life today. Now our next episode, we'll continue on in Revelation chapter 21 and look at the next vision. There's at least five

visions in this chapter and we're looking at vision number two. See you next time.