

## **A Study of Heaven – Week 6**

### **The Heavenly City**

*2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

Last week we learned that we will have a resurrected body. We will have a new and improved body. Just as our body will be made new so will the earth be made new. It will be better than ever, more like Eden. In Genesis 1 and 2, Adam and Eve were created and placed in Eden.

Eden was what God considered to be perfection. In Genesis 3, we all know the story of Adam and Eve's fall. Everything on earth was impacted by the fall. God's relationship with Adam and Eve was perfect before the fall.

Genesis 3:17-18 tells us that even the earth was affected by man's fall. *"17 . . . Cursed is the ground because of you; with hard labor you shall eat from it all the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; "*

I believe that the New Earth and our relationship with God will be made perfect again.

There is very little information about the New Earth except Revelation 21:1-5 and Isaiah 65:17-19. God says that He will create a New Earth. If Eden was perfect. Below is a table from Chip Ingram which is an overview of heaven.

### A Biblical overview of Heaven

PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
Genesis 1-2	Genesis 3-Revelation 19	Revelation 20-22
Original Mankind	Fallen mankind; Some believe and are transformed	Resurrected mankind
Original Earth	Fallen Earth with glimmers of original	New Earth, Resurrected on mankind's coattails
God delegates Earth's reign to Mankind	Disputed reign with, and mankind. God, Satan and fallen	God delegates Earth's reign to Righteous Mankind
Creation and mankind are perfect	Creation and mankind tainted by sin	Creation and mankind restored to perfection
Mankind is in Ideal place	Mankind banished, struggles and wanders, and in fallen places	Mankind restored to ideal place, but much improved
God's Plan for mankind and Earth revealed	God's plan for mankind and earth delayed and enriched	God's plan for mankind and Earth realized

Reprinted from "The Real Heaven" Chip Ingram

Chip Ingram says, “  
As Man was, so was the Earth,  
As Man went, so went the Earth,  
As Man will be, so will be the Earth.

Chip also says that there are 3 facts about the new earth.  
“New earth will be a lot like the new me.” 1 Corinthians 15:40-53  
“New earth will be a lot like the original one.”  
“New earth will be a lot different and infinitely better.”

“As human beings, whom God made to be both physical and spiritual, we are not designed to live in a non-physical realm—indeed, we are incapable of even imagining such a place.” (Alcorn)

There is significantly more information in the Bible regarding the New Jerusalem.

Read Hebrews 11:10-16.

*“9 By faith he lived as a stranger in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. 11 By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore even from one man, and one who was as good as dead at that, there were born descendants who were just as the stars of heaven in number, and as the innumerable grains of sand along the seashore.*

*13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen and welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that*

*they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. 15 And indeed if they had been thinking of that country which they left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.”*

These verses tell us that Abraham was looking for a city with foundations whose architect and builder was God. If the city has a foundation, then it is a physical city.

In verse 16, the writer of Hebrews is speaking about Abraham and Sarah. Since they lived as nomads in tents, God would give them a *“better country, that is, a heavenly one. God has prepared a city for them.”*

In chapter 12, the writer of Hebrews writes about all believers that claim Jesus as the Savior. He says that we will go to a heavenly Jerusalem and see everyone that is living there. There will be angels, general assembly (NASB) or assembly of God’s firstborn children (NLT), God, spirits of the righteous made perfect and Jesus.

Hebrews 12:22-24 – *“22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,*

Revelation 21:2 tells us that John saw new Jerusalem coming down from God. It was for believers by God.

Revelation 21:1-2 *“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.”*

David Jeremiah calls the new Jerusalem the capital city of heaven. Every city currently on earth or that has ever been on earth pales in comparison to the New Jerusalem described by John. Revelation 21:16 tells us the dimensions of new Jerusalem. It will be a square that is 12,000 furlongs or stadia on each side. The NLT says that it is approximately 1500 miles, or 1 furlong = approx 220 yards) which is an area of about 2 million square miles. Since it is as high as it is wide, then it is a cube. This new city is about half the size of the United States. Based on these dimensions, one theologians speculates using the population of London that the new Jerusalem could house 70 x population of world today.

David Jeremiah believes that since this cube design is like the (2 Chronicles 3:8) Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and again in the Temple, new Jerusalem will be like an immense Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies was where God lived when He was on earth. Revelation 21:3 says *“And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.”*

John does his best to describe this city. He gives us seven (7) features of New Jerusalem.

1. Revelation 21:2 – Holy City (Other references include Revelation 21:10 Revelation 22:19)
2. Revelation 21:17-21 – It has 12 Gates, each made of a gigantic single pearl
3. Revelation 21-19-20 – It has a foundation of Precious Stones Jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, amethyst.
4. Revelation 21:18 and 21 – The streets are made of Gold and these streets are like clear glass.
5. Revelation 21:11, 23, 24, and 22:5 – The Lamb that is the light ( also prophecied by Isaiah 60:19)
  - a. Revelation 22:2 - We will see the Tree of Life. Since the tree was on both sides, it sounds like multiple trees, fruit each month, sounds like Eden.
  - b. These trees will be for healing leaves – heaven’s therapy for improved well-being.
6. Revelation 22:1-2 & Psalm 46:4 – River of Life, it will be clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God.

Read Revelation 21:7-8, 25-27 22:14-15 – What do these verses say about entrance into the city. It will be controlled. Some will be denied entry into the city. I struggle with these verses because I don’t understand where these “*cowardly, and unbelieving, . . .*” souls come from? I am guessing these verses are pointing out that New Jerusalem is only for those that claim Jesus as their Messiah and confess their sins.

Revelation 21:7 *The one who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8 But for the cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and sexually*

*immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

*9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”*

*Revelation 21:25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.*

*Revelation 22:14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by the gates. 15 Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral persons, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.*