

Prophecy 17

The New Heaven and New Earth

Revelation 21:2-21:8

Beginning Point in Time: At the End of the 1,000 Years

Ending Point in Time: When the Old Order Has Passed Away

Summary

This short prophecy introduces three interesting topics. First, a loud voice announces that God's throne will be relocated to this planet. The eternal and universal ramifications of this move are very interesting. Second, this prophecy indicates the saints will weep when they see their friends and loved ones destroyed in the fire. (I am sure the Godhead will weep as well.) However, Jesus will wipe away the tears of the saints. As strange as it may seem, the records of the wicked will remain forever in Heaven's library. They will be preserved as "case studies" of rebellion for new beings to examine and study. The memory of the wicked will not pass away, but the emotions and attachments (the source of the tears) will be eliminated. Finally, this prophecy indicates that overcoming our natural rebellion against God's authority and will is a prerequisite for eternal life.

The Sequence

{2} I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God in Heaven, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. {3} And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. {4} He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Rev. 21:2-4

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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. 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.

Rev. 21:5-8

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. 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. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 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.

{5} I saw Jesus seated on a great white throne. He said, "I am making everything new!" Then He said to me, "Write down my words, for they are trustworthy and true." {6} Again He spoke to me: "The plan of redemption is finished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty (for righteousness and joy) I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. {7} He who overcomes (the cravings of the carnal mind, the lust of the eyes and the boasting of what he has and does¹) will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. {8} But the cowardly (those who are unwilling to do what is right), the unbelievers (those who defy the Word of God and blaspheme the Holy Spirit), the vile (those who glorify degenerate behavior), the murderers (those who are predators), the sexually immoral (those who are controlled by sexual passions), the sorcerers (those who practice magic arts, including divination and the paranormal), the idolaters (those who are greedy; loving and indulging self) and all liars (those who bear false witness); their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

Rules of Interpretation

Consider how the Rules of Interpretation (discussed in the Introduction of this book) are observed in this prophecy:

Rule One says an apocalyptic prophecy has a beginning point and ending point in time and the events within the prophecy occur in the order given. Chronological order is easy to see in this short prophecy:

1. Holy City descends
2. A loud voice declares God's throne is on Earth
3. (Implied) The world is destroyed by fire (this is the second death for the wicked)
4. God wipes away the tears
5. Jesus creates a new Heaven and Earth
6. The wicked have no part in the Earth made new

Rule Two says a fulfillment only occurs when all of the specifications are met, and this includes the order stated in the prophecy. Obviously, this prophecy awaits fulfillment.

Rule Three says that apocalyptic language can be literal, analogous, or symbolic. To reach the intended meaning of a prophecy, you must consider (a) the context, (b) the use of parallel language in the Bible, and (c) if an element is thought to be symbolic, the Bible must interpret the symbol with a *relevant* text. The language used in this prophecy is not symbolic. The phrase, “To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life” is considered parallel language. Consider these two passages:

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy, and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.”²

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”³

Rule Four is not used in this prophecy.

References

1. 1 John 2:16
2. Isaiah 55:1,2
3. Revelation 22:1,2