

Rev. 21:1-8 "The New Universe"

For the Children: Have you ever made something out of plasticine, then decided to change it? You make a few changes, so that your work of art looks a lot like it did when you first made it, only there are some significant changes as well. This world is like plasticine to God. He made it as easily as a child models plasticine. He can end it or change it just as easily. When His Son returns, He will remove all that is bad and painful. The world will be like it was before sin came in, only even better – because of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Questions:** In what ways will the world change when the Lord Jesus returns? What will be the same in God's new creation? Why is it so bad to turn away from believing in God?

Introduction:

First Point: The Final World

- 1) The Same But Different: The present heaven and earth (cosmos) will pass away (20:11, 21:1,4). This will affect all things (v. 5). There will be a new universe – new in quality. But there is continuity with this world. God has been in the process of renewing and restoring *this* world (Is. 65:17-18. As Christ's human body was raised and glorified, so will ours be; and as ours is, so will creation be redeemed (Rom. 8:18f). We're not told a lot of detail – but the new creation will be permanent, without sin or misery or decay, without night (22:5) or sea (31:1) – though the last may not be literal. The "sea" is a symbol of either the barrier between heaven and earth, or the hostility against God and His people
- 2) The New City: Part of the newness will also involve the coming down of the New Jerusalem, the victorious and glorified church. See Is. 52:1, 61:10, 62:1-5. This church will be "new" because she takes on Christ's Name (character) even more than before. At the end, it will be seen to be God who rules over all creation - not the devil or his agents. His church will therefore triumph

Second Point: The Final Wedding

- 1) The Bride Made Ready: Again we are shown the church's perfection at the end in terms of a wedding, where the bride (church) takes Christ's Name. He makes her ready by adorning her with salvation and righteousness. See 19:7-9; Is. 61:10, 62:5. The main point of the analogy is the intimate fellowship between Christ and His church
- 2) Other Indications of Intimacy: The vision piles up references from the OT showing this same intimacy (v. 3). God will "tabernacle" in the midst of His people – we are His "temple." We will also be His "sons" – in fact, we will be like a son from David's line. The "Davidic covenant" of 2 Sam. 7:14, God's mercy to David's line, will be shown to us all for Christ's sake (Is. 55:3; Ezk. 37:24-28). This same intimacy is in view in the basic covenant-promise, that God would be our God and we His people. This family-like intimacy leads to the promise that God will wipe away our tears (v. 4), and provide the "water of life" free to us (v. 6). See Is. 49:10, 55:1-3. The dragon's threat to take everything from us is far from the truth!

Third Point: The Final Separation

- 1) Two Groups: As in Genesis there was a godly line and an ungodly line, so at the end these two groups will be separated. The godly line thirsts for the water of life (v. 6) and "overcomes" (v. 7). They desire salvation and resist the pressures of persecution and temptation. The ungodly fall into the habitual, unrepented sins of v.8. Note that "cowards" and "liars" suggests those who do give into the pressures from fear, and go back on their vows to serve the Lord. See 21:27, 22:15
- 2) A Serious Matter: Turning away from the faith, as with the other sins listed, is a serious matter. It results in removal from the New Creation, to the isolation of hell; and in agony – the lake of burning fire. Both outcomes – the glory of the new universe and the agony of hell – are certain. For God is the "first and the last," sovereign Lord over time and history. He is always "faithful and true" to His Word

Conclusion:

