

## The New Jerusalem.

Text: Rev 21:1-8

Suggested Hymns:

478, 496, 494, 283, 497

1) Its coming

2) Its bliss

3) Its Inhabitants

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Revelation 21:1-8, *<sup>1</sup> Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

*<sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

*<sup>5</sup> Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." <sup>6</sup> And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. <sup>7</sup> "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

*<sup>8</sup> "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

In the Revelation God gave John remarkable visions, depicting in broad outlines the fate of the Church in this world. Its afflictions,

temptation, persecutions, the abominations of the scarlet woman, sorrow, and death.

But the visions also reveal the Lamb who was slain in His glory and the deliverance of the saints. The warfare goes on until the end. But at the end John has another glorious vision describing the final triumph.

He sees the bliss and happiness of the faithful Church and the crown of glory that awaits her at the end of time after battles, persecutions and bitter warfare.

The church-year, which is drawing to its close, also reminds us of these things. The end of all things is at hand, and to all who remain faithful there is held out the promise of The New Jerusalem. May the Lord bless our meditation.

## **1. The New Jerusalem**

### **Its coming**

The New Jerusalem is coming, but when will it come? It will come at the end of the world. Our text says, *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

This whole world shall pass away, the heavens, earth, and sea. Then will appear a new heaven and a new earth. It will not appear before that time. So beware of those who teach otherwise, such as the Millennialists, who false doctrine and strong delusion, arouses false hopes, fosters sinful security, and turns our eyes from our real hope and bliss.

After the old has passed away then a new heaven and a new earth will appear, prepared from eternity. We read in Matthew 25:34 <sup>34</sup> *“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”*

Then it will come to the children of God, who shall enter into it according to body and soul. This is heaven, everlasting life, eternal bliss and glory, the hope of all children of God.

How it will come? It will come as the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Remember that the old Jerusalem and its Temple, was the place where God’s glory dwelt. But after all, that was an earthly Jerusalem, often defiled, whose inhabitants finally rejected Jesus Christ. Therefore this Jerusalem falls.

But now comes a new Jerusalem, not earthly but entirely heavenly in character; a holy city, whose inhabitants are truly holy, washed by the blood of the Lamb. We read in Revelation 7:14, <sup>14</sup> *And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

The New Jerusalem comes from heaven, from above, with all the saints who have gone before to meet those who are then still alive. Recall part of our Epistle lesson, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, <sup>15</sup> *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.*

<sup>16</sup> *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

Our text continues, <sup>2</sup> *Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* The New Jerusalem comes as a bride. This New Jerusalem with its inhabitants is the bride of Christ. She is prepared, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* Her garments are white because she *washed [her] robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Then will be celebrated the heavenly wedding, with all the joys of heaven, the inseparable and complete union with Jesus Christ, our heavenly Bridegroom.

What a glorious day to look forward to after our weary pilgrimage, the battle with sin, and the ills and woes of this life! What a glorious day that will be!

## **2. The New Jerusalem**

### **Its bliss**

Firstly, we will have the bliss of joyful and undisturbed communion with God.

Through faith in the Gospel we have communion with God on earth. That is blissful. But it is often disturbed and its happiness obscured. Now God Himself comes to draw us into complete and perfect communion. Our text says, <sup>3</sup> *And I*

*heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

The tabernacle of heaven, of which the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem were but types, illustrations or examples. But now the tabernacle of God is set up in its fullest sense in the midst of men.

In the New Jerusalem, God will not only appear, not only manifest His glory at times, but He will dwell permanently with men in this tabernacle. We shall be with Him as His people, and God will forever remain with us in the most intimate communion.

Note the emphasis on the dwelling together in one place and the permanence of this communion in verse 3. — To be with God, that is heaven. That is the hope of all Christians. We have a foretaste of it here on earth, especially when the Lord comes to us in His holy temple with His Word and His Sacraments. Yet not perfect now; but this perfect communion shall be ours in the bliss of heaven.

Secondly, there will be deliverance from all ills. <sup>4</sup> *“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”*

How we long to be delivered from the ills of this world, sin and its consequences, suffering and woe! Remember the Seventh Petition of the Lord’s Prayer *But deliver us from evil.*

Remember also Paul’s confident prayer in 2 Timothy 4:18, <sup>18</sup> *And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever.*

In the New Jerusalem we shall have the fulfilment of our prayer for deliverance. All former things and ills shall pass away with this present world of sin and pain. God Himself shall wipe away all tears, *there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain.*

There we shall have heavenly rest, peace, and happiness. — Do not doubt in your sorrow and affliction but believe; for all this is sure. Our text says <sup>5</sup> *Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”* It is founded on God’s

Word. There seek Christ, your gracious Comforter, and believe His promises for only he *who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

### 3. The New Jerusalem Its inhabitants

The faithful will inhabit the New Jerusalem. We have a solemn introduction, *‘And He said to me, “It is done!”* “It is done.” Salvation has come in Christ. He who speaks is Alpha and Omega, God complete in Himself, in whom is all fullness and who supplies all blessings as an inexhaustible fountain.

God will give the water of life freely and without price as we read in Isaiah 55:1, *‘Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.*

It is given to those who thirst, which means to the repentant, who by His grace thirsts for the refreshing Water of Life in the Gospel of Christ. True repentance is thirst for grace and forgiveness. We seek it in Christ and His atonement, and we receive it in true faith.

Our text continues, *‘He who overcomes shall inherit all things.* The word “overcomes” presupposes a battle with sin, Satan, the world, the Old Adam, unbelief, doubt, and fear. This daily battle must be fought in the strength of God unto the end.

We read in Ephesians 6:10-12 *‘Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ‘Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ‘For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

The battle is hard and bitter; but the reward will be glorious, *inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

This admonition is also expressed by the hymnist<sup>1</sup>

Who will not bear the battle’s strain  
The crown of life shall ne’er obtain.

For those who do not take heed, observe the warnings, and fight the battle, there is no bliss in the New Jerusalem for the ***cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars*** will spend eternity in hell. These include the fearful, those who deny out of fear, those who persecute the children of God, those who live in wickedness and crimes, and all who deny the truth and believe the lie.

In brief, it means all worshipers of the devil. Their fate will be terrible, eternal death which our text describes this way, they ***shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.***

All of this is written in Scripture for our warning. Look at those mentioned in verse 8, ***the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars.*** We are all in that list because we are all sinners. We have all sinned in thought, word and deed.

So let us turn in terror from the ways of our old Adam and seek salvation in Jesus Christ, fight the good fight, and so receive the crown of glory.

In summary our text is a beautiful description of the Church Triumphant and its entry into glory. It has been permanently recorded as the true and faithful Word of God to create and keep alive in us a constant desire to be with Christ, to comfort us in our trials and battles, and to keep us faithful unto the end and until that glorious day when we also shall be taken up into the New Jerusalem. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Hymn 336