

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #94

8/06/2008

The Eternal Heaven: Part 4

“The Holy City, New Jerusalem”

Revelation 21:4-5

Isaiah 53:3-5 describes further what Jesus did to redeem us from our guilt and reconcile us into a harmonious relationship with God: *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”*

The last few words of this passage, “...*with his stripes we are healed.*” have been badly misinterpreted by some to mean that Jesus suffered His stripes to bring physical healing to us here in this world. That is an incorrect view of what He did. Such a view limits His healing work to a temporary fix or solution to the problems man suffers as a result of the curse discussed above. **Jesus did not die to simply deal with the temporary results of man’s sin. Jesus suffered and died to deal with the cause of man’s problems — to solve his sin-problem.**

“We are healed with His stripes” because Jesus paid the necessary and required price for our sin to redeem us back into a harmonious, peaceful, personal relationship with God through Jesus. It is a spiritual, permanent, eternal, healing, not a temporary physical healing. Because of His healing work, we can establish that personal relationship with Him here in this life (John 1:12) and it will continue into eternity where we will experience the harmonious relationship with God which is described in verse three.

As a result of the establishment of that personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ while we are here, we reap the results, the benefits described in verse four. Since we must be cleansed of all of our sin by the blood of Christ before we can enter heaven, there will be no sin there.

Since sin causes all of these things, **“tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain,”** and there is no sin present in heaven, none of these things will be there. When God says that none of these things will be in heaven, He also means that He does not allow the cause of these things to enter heaven. As a result, we will enjoy a totally unrestricted, intimate, personal relationship with God and all of the blessings that flow from that relationship.

If a person desires to experience the blessings listed in Revelation 21:4, then that person must establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his Lord, Savior and God while he is here on this earth. Only then will he be allowed into heaven to receive these blessings.

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world God had created. They did not exist in the Garden of Eden because nothing happened there that could produce these results. Joy, fulfillment, peace, which is a result of harmonious relationships, all characterized Adam and Eve’s experience in the Garden.

Since sin is an act of rebellion against God, an act of breaking and destroying the harmonious relationship between the Creator and the creature, it always produces disharmony, conflict, chaos, deterioration and destruction, and destroys the one who breaks his dependent relationship upon his Creator. Thus, the curse found in Genesis 3:17-19 describes the normal result of the breaking of that relationship of dependence of the creature upon the Creator. If the creature, man, would not live in submission to, and in dependence upon, his Creator, then he prevented the Creator from blessing him with His kindness, direction, fellowship, and provision. Adam, and each of his descendants, chose to become a rebel, a sinner, against his God, his Creator. Adam, and each of his descendants, then chose to be cursed with the curse described in Genesis, but one from which the guilty sinner could find no relief and over which the sinner could attain no victory. The curse can well be described as conforming to the **“law of cause and effect,”** in which every effect or action can be traced back to a cause. Not only can every effect be traced back to a cause, but it is also known that every action will produce an effect or result.

The curse is the effect or result of the action known as sin. Centuries after Adam, God codified the same law into simple statements and gave them to Moses. It is commonly known as the Mosaic Law. The sin broke the relationship of harmony which had existed between Creator and the creature. The application of the law resulted in the curse, but was powerless to restore the relationship of harmony and peace.

On the cross of calvary Jesus did for man what man could not do for himself to restore the relationship of harmony. Jesus paid the price to redeem each and every sinner so that He might overcome the curse and restore the relationship. In Romans 8:1-3 says: ***“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”*** Even more specifically Galatians 3:13 tells us: ***“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”***

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3) We saw where **Relationship** is the key thought expressed in verse three. Whereas, in the first two verses our focus is on the nature of heaven and its location, verse three turns our attention to the matter of relationships. In a sense, this is helpful to our understanding. While we have absolutely no ability to comprehend eternity or the things thereof because we are earth-bound and earthly creatures and have been negatively affected by our sin nature, we, who are going to be allowed into God’s eternal heaven, already know something about a relationship with God.

Last week we pursued this critically important matter of **Relationships**, specifically the basic need that a person, while he is here in this life on this earth, establish personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

This relationship, established here in this life with Jesus Christ, not only continues in an unrestricted manner in heaven, it is also that which makes it possible for a resurrected saint to have a relationship with God in heaven. It also is that from which flows all of the benefits a saint experiences in heaven.

This relationship with God is what results in the wonderful, marvelous benefits described in verse four:

“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.”

God lists five specific benefits which result from this relationship, and, only from this relationship. Though, of course, there are many, many more, God tells us about these at this point in the passage:

- 1) **“...God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”**
- 2) **“...there shall be no more death.”**
- 3) **“...neither sorrow.”**
- 4) **“...nor crying.”**
- 5) **“...neither shall there be any more pain.”**

While, as noted above, there are numerous other marvellous benefits and blessings for the saints to experience in heaven, these are notable because the very presence of them has flowed directly from the curse that God put upon sinful man as a result of Adam’s sin. When Adam sinned, not only did he rebel against God, but he also brought chaos, disharmony and atrophy to all that is in this created world, particularly to, but not limited to, the sinner. These five factors are common to every man because every man is a sinner and each of these is a result of sin.

Each of these, tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain, is something Satan introduced into this world. Prior to Adam’s sin, none of these existed in the

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Revelation 21:1-2

1 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.

3 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.

4 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.

From verses one through three we have learned some important things about heaven:

1) **John saw a totally new heaven and earth.** These entities were not “*new in time or sequence,*” which would have been indicated by an entirely different word in Greek (neos), but were “*new in their very nature*” as if God newly created them. They were not reconstitutions of the old heaven (atmosphere) and earth as some have claimed. To recognize what God is telling us about this “new heaven and earth” is critical to grasping the reminder of what we read in both chapter twenty-one and twenty-two. This “new heaven and new earth” is so different from anything we have ever known that our ability to comprehend what God tells us about these eternal things is greatly limited. All that we have ever been able to comprehend has related to this time-material-space entity in which we live. Other than our own personal experience of being created “new creatures in Christ Jesus” we have no first-hand knowledge of eternal things.

2) In verse two we read where “**...John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**” God thus presents a picture to John of heaven, where the resurrected saints are with Jesus, in a way he can somewhat comprehend. From this verse we learn the following about heaven: **1.** It had already been in existence when John saw it. **2.** It is described as a city, a place where people live. **3.** It is “**holy,**” or other than anything earthly or that which is tainted by sin. **4.** It comes down “**from God**” because it is apparently where God dwells. **5.** It is the most beautiful thing John can grasp and is described as: “**...prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**” The saints of God, specifically “**the church,**” but also including the saints of all ages, are described in the Bible as “**a bride.**”