

God's Plan for the Future

Study Sheet

(Content herein based on the work of David Jeremiah, *The Book of Signs*; and from personal study notes)

The New Heaven and the New Earth

Selected Scriptures

Summarizing *God's Plan for the Future* thus far... the Rapture will occur.

"After the Rapture of the church, after the seven years of Tribulation, after the Battle of Armageddon, after the return of Christ, after the Millennium, and after the Great White Throne Judgment, God will draw the curtains on human history, and the entire universe will undergo a purifying inferno. All evidence of disease will be burned up. All evidence of disobedience will melt away. All the remnants and results of sin, sorrow, and suffering will be destroyed. Out of the smoldering ruins, God will re-create physical reality, and a fresh universe—a new heaven and a new earth." —David Jeremiah

_____ = Coined from a book by Sir Thomas More in 1516, the word comes from two Greek words: **ou** [not] and **topos** [place] which translates as *no-place*; literal meaning, any non-existent society.

2 Peter 3:13 – *According to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

The Bible is filled with prophecies and predictions about God's true utopia—the new heaven and the new earth, *in which righteousness dwells.*

The _____ of the new

Isaiah 65:17-19 – *For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. (18) But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. (19) I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.*

Isaiah 66:22-23 – *For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. (23) From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD.*

2 Peter 3:7,10-13 – *But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly ... (10) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (11) Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, (12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! (13) But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

Hebrews 1:10-12 – *You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; (11) they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, (12) like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end."* [replay of **Psalms 102:25-27**]

Revelation 21:1-2 – *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. (2) And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

We cannot fully imagine what all this will be like. But picture it if you can...the current age is drawing to a close; the universe is collapsing like an old house in flames; a new earth is emerging from the carnage; and a new city is glistening and descending and ready to lead us into eternity-future with Jesus in His rightful place on...

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the throne. That's similar to utopia!! But the word is hopelessly insufficient to describe the heavenly home God is preparing for us (see **John 14:2-3**).

The _____ of the new

Two common questions:

Q1: _____ will the new heaven and new earth arrive on the scene?

Rev 6 – 18 = the Tribulation period (with its 7 seals, 7 trumpets and 7 bowls of God's wrath) followed by history's final battle—Armageddon.

Rev 19 = the return of Christ to earth; He defeats the forces of Antichrist and rescues His own.

Rev 20 = gives us a short glimpse into the Millennial kingdom to be established by Christ.

Rev 20 = describes the G. W. T. J. where all Christ-rejecters will be forever condemned.

Rev 21 = Now, we read about the creation of the new heaven and the new earth.

Chronologically, this event will occur after the Rapture, after the Tribulation, after the Battle of Armageddon, after the second coming of Christ, after the millennial kingdom and after the Great White Throne Judgment.

After these events have concluded, *time* (as we know it) will cease. Eternity will begin.

Peter vividly describes this moment; It's probably when the new heaven and new earth appear.

2 Peter 3:10-12 – *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (11) Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, (12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!*

Q2: _____ will the new heaven and the new earth come into being?

Two basic schools of thought are involved in this answer.

1) _____ and re-created

Our earth and universe will be totally annihilated and completely destroyed. The Lord will thoroughly wipe out every trace of the old universe and start from scratch.

2) _____ and refurbished

The Lord will create the new heaven and new earth by renovating, overhauling, and refurbishing the old heaven and earth. Rather than totally annihilated, the present heaven and earth will be cleansed, glorified, and equipped for our eternal use.

The following phrases and insights point to Thought #2 as being the right one:

1. " _____ up" [see **2 Peter 3:10 & 12** above]

2 Peter 3 records, not the annihilation of the cosmos, but its _____ !

W.A. Criswell – "God someday shall purge this earth and this universe of all of its sin and unrighteousness and darkness and death. It will be dissolved in a fervent heat. The elements shall return to their original form, and that whole creation of God shall be burned with fire (2 Peter 3:10,12). It shall be cleansed. It shall be purged. Everything that is wrong and everything that is sinful shall be taken out of it. Then shall come to pass this ultimate and final revelation (Revelation 21:1-5). Out of this purged mass of God's creative work, He will reshape, He will remake, He will re-create all of the heavens and the earth. There will be no destruction of what God has made. It is a renewal. It is a renaissance. It is a regeneration. It is a re-creation."

"The New Creation," Criswell Sermon Library, 9/16/84, www.wacriswell.com/sermons/1984/the-new-creation1.

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2. " _____ "

Revelation 21:5 – *And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*

Two Greek words; both are significant.

"*Neos*" = recently coming into existence, relating to _____. (Ex: new day)

"*Kainos*" = changed from the old, relating to _____. (unused, not worn out.)

In Rev 21:5, new = complete *transformation*.

3. " _____ away"

Revelation 21:1 – *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...*

The Greek word means to change form, to pass from one state to another.

Doesn't mean *cease to exist*. It'll be the same heaven and earth—but rejuvenated!

2 Corinthians 5:17 – *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Matthew 24:35 – *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.*

2 Peter 3:10 – *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar...*

4. The _____ of Noah's day

2 Peter 3:5-7 – *The heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, (6) and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. (7) But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.*

The Flood was certainly destructive, but it did not obliterate the world.

5. The _____ of the body

1 Corinthians 15:51-54 – *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. (53) For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. (54) When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory [Isaiah 25:8]."*

"Our bodies may decay to dust, but God knows where every molecule has landed; and somehow in His omnipotent energy, the physical bodies we have now will be resurrected and instantly glorified and equipped for eternal life." –David Jeremiah

We will have new bodies, not in terms of time, but in terms of quality.

6. God denied Satan any _____

Genesis 1:31 – *And God saw everything He had made, and behold, it was very good.*

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"If God would have to annihilate the present cosmos, Satan would have won a great victory. For then Satan would have succeeded in so corrupting the present cosmos and the present earth that God (would have) ... blot[ted] it totally out of existence. But Satan did not win such a victory. On the contrary, Satan has been decisively defeated. God will reveal the full dimensions of that defeat when he shall renew this very earth on which Satan deceived mankind. (God will) finally banish...all the results of Satan's evil maneuverings." —Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, 1979

The _____ of the new

The _____ of the sea

Revelation 21:1 – *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.*

"Sea" = (Gr. *thalassa*) water as different from land.

There are many opinions as to the meaning of this biblical phrase.

Some = "sea" is symbolic for chaos and calamity.

Others = "sea" means water that's free of salt.

Still others = *no* sea at all.

Albert Barnes: "The whole world will be inhabitable, and no part will be given up to the (wasted space of) oceans."

J. Vernon McGee: "There will no longer be any sea on the earth. The sea occupies most of the earth's surface today; approximately three-fourths of the total surface is water... Just think of the parking space we will be able to have! There will be no fish to eat. Apparently man will be a vegetarian during the Millennium and throughout eternity, as he was in the Garden of Eden. Fruit is the only diet of eternal man (**Revelation 22:2**)."

John Gill: "Since, at the end of the thousand years, *the sea will give up the dead which are in it*, it must be (still in existence), unless it can be interpreted as the place where the sea was."

John MacArthur: "The new environment will no longer be water-based."

David Jeremiah: "Many of us who love the oceans cock a troubled eyebrow when we read the last phrase (of Revelation 21:1) ... Give God a little bit of credit here, for if He made the seas so beautiful and pleasant in the first place, He will certainly design the new world with even greater levels of marvel and magnificence."

Adam Clarke: "To pretend to know what is meant by this new heaven and new earth, and what are their ornaments and qualities, is in my opinion the greatest of all presumptions."

The _____ of the curse

Revelation 22:3 (KJV) – *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:*

Genesis 3:17-19 (ESV) – *And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; (18) thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. (19) By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

The reason things often go wrong. The reason life is such an uphill battle. The reason humanity has to struggle most of the time..... One word: *curse*.

Consider the impact of Revelation 22:3 – *there shall be no more curse*. The sin-curse will dissolve into nothing and be dispelled forever. What a reversal! Fatigue will be forgotten; weather will be wonderful; Only good things will grow. Death will die.

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The _____ of all things

Revelation 21:4-5 – *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. (5) 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.*

"Heaven is God's home. Earth is our home. Jesus Christ, as the God-man, forever links God and mankind, and thereby forever links Heaven and Earth. As **Ephesians 1:9-10** demonstrates, this idea of Earth and Heaven becoming one is explicitly biblical. [Eph 1:9-10 – (God the Father) *making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ (10) as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*] Christ will make Earth into Heaven and Heaven into Earth. Just as the wall that separates God and mankind is torn down in Jesus, so too the wall that separates Heaven and Earth will be forever demolished. There will be one universe, with all things in Heaven and on Earth together under one head, Jesus Christ... God's plan is that there will be no more gulf between the spiritual and physical worlds. There will be no divided loyalties or divided realms. There will be one cosmos, one universe united under one Lord—forever. This is the unstoppable plan of God. This is where history is headed." —Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, p. 101

Revelation 21:3 – *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place [tabernacle] of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.*

"The beauties of our world—the hills, the plains, the mountains, the oceans, the spangling vault of heaven—are like appetizers that whet our appetites for the main course, for God's new creation." —David Jeremiah

We know nothing of these realities other than what the Bible tells us. When the Bible doesn't tell us all we want to know, the Bible refers to that as a *mystery*.

Mystery/ mysteries = **9x** in Daniel; **7x** in Ephesians; **2x** in Romans and 1 Timothy;

1x in 1 Corinthians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians and Revelation = _____ total.

Deuteronomy 29:29 – *The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever....*

Next up...the Holy City!