

Revelation 21:1-7 ESV

The Coming Blessings (and Curses)!

Sunday, April 24 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, April 25 at 7 PM

Fifth Sunday of Easter – 2016

Join us on Ascension, Thursday, May 5: Meal at 6, Service at 7

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: We live in time, *but eternity is coming!*

According to the Bible, *God the Father* worked through *God the Son* (about 6,000 years ago) to create a perfect world. Unfortunately the people fell into sin, *which brought down all of creation and all future people, but* God promised to save us and *eventually* make all things new!

Now, *through Jesus' finished work and our God-given relationship with Him*, we are saved and look forward to many wonderful things when Jesus returns!

Today, *as we focus on Revelation 21*, we will hear good news of ♦reunion, ♦removal, and ♦blessings 😊, *but also the bad news of curses for all who continue in unrepentance* 😞.

1. **Finally Together Again:**

- a. ¹ **[And] I saw a new heaven [thus, a new sky]¹ and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea [is] no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, [having been] prepared as a bride [having been] adorned for her husband.**

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens – plural. Remember, the **first** heaven is the sky we see during the day, the **second** is what we see at night, and the **third** is paradise – the dwelling place of God (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:3; Rev. 2:7).

- i. The sky and earth we know today will be different; *God will do a radical remodeling project!*
 - ii. The sea will also be gone; think about John—the *writer of Revelation, forced to live on the Island of Patmos off the coast of Ephesus*: That water *separated him* from his forever family, yet all separation will be gone when Jesus comes!
 - iii. So *what* or *who* will be coming down out of heaven? The Church, *the bride of Christ!* When people die in Jesus, *they are immediately taken to paradise*; then, as described in [1 Thessalonians 4:14](#), “*God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep*” (ESV).
- b. ³ **And I heard a [great] voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place [tent, tabernacle] of God is with [men], [and] He will dwell [tabernacle] with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God, ⁴ [and] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, [because] the [first] things ~~have~~ passed away.**
- i. Sin separates: The Bible says that “*your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God*” (Isaiah 59:2 ESV). God has brought us back together through Jesus, but we still await the fullness of our reunion *when Jesus’ returns!*
 - ii. Furthermore, death, mourning, crying, and pain – *all the temporal consequences of sin* – will be removed! We have so much to look forward to through Jesus!
- c. ⁵ **And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I [make] all things new.”//** Right now we are new

people in Jesus, *and growing up in Him as Savior and Lord*, but, *when He comes*, all will be complete!

2. **Undeserved Blessings:** Also he said, **“Write this down, [because] these words are trustworthy and true [no guessing or hoping, but certainty].”** ⁶ And he said to me, **“It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”** // Jesus is the first and the last, the A and Z; ✦ as the Son of God He created all things, ✦ as the God-Man He purchased us with His precious blood, and, *when the time is right*, ✦ He will bring this world *as we know it* to an end!
- a. **“To the thirsty [one] I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment [without cost].”** // Are you thirsty, not for the water we need for our current bodies *but for God’s great blessings of ✦ forgiveness, ✦ spiritual life, and ✦ eternal salvation?* As God makes us thirsty, *by His Spirit through His Word*, so He also gives us to drink *through Word and Sacrament!*
- b. ⁷ **“The one [overcoming] ~~who conquers will have this heritage~~ [will inherit these things] and I will be his God and he will be my son.”** // “Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” (1 John 5:5 ESV)? We not only believe that fact, *but, by God’s grace, we also know Him as our Savior and our Lord!*
3. **Earned Curses:** ⁸ **“But ~~as~~ for the cowardly [and] faithless [and] detestable [and] murderers [and] sexually immoral [and] sorcerers [and] idolaters and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”** //
- a. The cowardly and unbelieving – persecuted people who abandoned their faith in Jesus 😞.

- b. People who commit significant sins, but do not repent 😞.
- c. And even people who don't seem so bad, who trust in their jobs, their families, or their money – *over Jesus*, and those who lie – which is so common in today's world: “...liars and lying abound.... marketers lie about what products can do. ...movies feature liars of many different stripes. The media and the public have caught prominent government figures...lying about important issues. ...college kids lie to their moms in 50% of conversations. Dating couples lie to each other a third of the time... 76% of [top high school students] admit having cheated. Two-thirds of [those students] believe it is ‘no big deal’ to cheat...—and 65% of their parents agree!”² For all such people who continue without repentance – *without a God-given sorrow for sin and trust in Jesus as Savior* – they will also be thrown into the lake of fire 😞!

Conclusion: Dr. Becker wrote this sobering summary of the blessings and curses: “*Side by side with the most glorious gospel promises, God also proclaims the most severe threats of the law [WHY?], so that the new man [in Christ] may be encouraged by the promises and the old man [of sin] may be terrified by the threats” (335).*

Let us pray: Dear Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Your current and coming blessings are so wonderful! So ever-enable us to continue in repentance until we are together forever! Amen!

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 Podcast: Benefit from the Bible | Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma
 Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

²<http://www.theborean.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Home.showBerean/BereanID/922/Exodus-20-16.htm>