



IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
SERIES: NEW
TITLE: ALL THINGS NEW
SCRIPTURE: REVELATION 21:1-8
DATE: SEPT 7, 2025

INTRODUCTION

This morning we conclude our *New* series with a big finish. So far, we've looked at the event of Pentecost, where believers received new power to live lives of faith and obedience to God. Once enslaved to sin, we are now empowered by the Holy Spirit for inner transformation.

Second, we looked at the concept of new wine, noting how Jesus introduced a new way to relate to God. No longer do we approach God through sacrifices, cleanliness laws, Sabbath observances, and the like. Instead, we relate to God directly through Christ.

Last week, we explored how we are given new clothes, meaning we can put off sin and put on righteousness. As God's chosen and beloved people, we are called to love one another with humility, gentleness, meekness, and forgiveness.

Today, we turn our attention to how God is going to make all things new.

We often hear questions like: *If God is real, why does He allow bad things to happen? Or, how can a good God allow suffering?* These are difficult questions. While our goal today isn't to answer every angle of those questions, it is important to point out one essential truth: God is preparing a place where there will be no more suffering.

Maybe the deep discomfort we feel about the brokenness of this life is exactly what God intends. Things are *not* right here. But what we truly need is not for this world to be fixed—we need a new world entirely. We need a Savior and a God who can make all things new. Not just our circumstances or surroundings—but we ourselves must be made completely new. Our text today offers one of the clearest and most beautiful pictures of heaven in all of Scripture.

Text

Revelation 21:1–8

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.

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place 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.

4 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, for the former things have passed away.”

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.”

6 And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

Explanation:

New Heaven and New Earth

While many parts of Revelation are difficult to interpret, Revelation 21:1–8 is remarkably clear. It offers one of the most vivid and complete depictions of heaven in the Bible.

John writes that he saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first had passed away. This may surprise some readers—many may not realize that the current heaven and earth will be replaced.

But this is not a new teaching only found in Revelation. Isaiah 65:17 prophesied: “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.” Similarly, 2 Peter 3:10–13 speaks of the current heavens and earth being destroyed and replaced:

“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.”

Romans 8:19–21 also reveals that creation longs for this redemption, groaning under the weight of sin and awaiting freedom:

“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

God is making all things new—including the very fabric of creation.

No More Sea

One feature of the new heaven and new earth that John describes is the absence of the sea. At first glance, this may seem odd—what’s wrong with the sea?

In Revelation, the sea is often portrayed negatively. For example, Revelation 13:1 tells us that a beast rose *out of the sea* with “ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.”

Revelation 20:13 describes the sea as a place that stored the dead as they await the final judgement. So, when John says there is “no more sea,” it suggests that the new creation will be free from death, chaos, and evil.

The New City Jerusalem

John continues, saying he saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. What a powerful image—a city descending from heaven, radiant and beautiful like a bride on her wedding day.

This New Jerusalem fulfills many Old Testament prophecies about God’s holy city. In the Old Testament, King David established Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and the center of worship. His son Solomon built the temple there—the place where God’s presence dwelled.

However, due to Israel’s rebellion, the temple was destroyed and God’s presence departed. Later, prophets foretold that Jerusalem would be restored—but their words seemed to point beyond a physical restoration to something eternal.

Notices these verses below:

- Isaiah 65:18–20: “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. ²⁰ No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.”
- Isaiah 2:3–4: “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

The prophets spoke of a perfect Jerusalem—and John sees it in this vision.

In the New Testament, the heavenly city is also described:

- Galatians 4:26: "But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother."
- Hebrews 11:10: "For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God."
- Hebrews 12:22: "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem..."
- Hebrews 13:14: "For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come."

This heavenly Jerusalem, prepared like a bride, contrasts starkly with another city in Revelation—Babylon (Revelation 18), a place of sin and corruption. Jerusalem, by contrast, is pure, radiant, and ready for union with Christ. It's beautiful to remember that Jesus said to His disciples, "*I go to prepare a place for you*" (John 14:3). Now John sees that the place has been prepared.

God Dwelling With His People

John hears a loud voice from the throne, proclaiming: "Behold, the dwelling place 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." This is stunning.

From the beginning, God has desired to dwell with His people. In Eden, He walked with Adam and Eve. Later, He came through the tabernacle and temple. Ultimately, He came in the flesh as Jesus Christ—*Emmanuel*, God with us.

But in every age, people rejected His presence:

- Adam and Eve sinned and were cast out of the Garden.
- Israel repeatedly broke God's covenant and defiled the temple.
- When Jesus came, He was crucified.

Yet now—finally—God dwells with His people permanently. He has created a new heaven, a new earth, and a new people to enjoy His presence forever.

No More Death, Pain, or Tears

The voice continues with one of the most comforting promises in all of Scripture: "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, for the former things have passed away."

This fulfills many Old Testament prophecies:

- Isaiah 25:8: “He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.”
- Isaiah. 35:10: “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”
- Isaiah 30:19: “For a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you.”

John heard the voice from the throne declare what 1 Corinthians 15:54-55 hoped for: “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.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”

This is the comfort believers can hold onto in times of grief, loss, and suffering. In heaven, our mourning will turn to joy.

All Things New

John continues recording what he sees and hears. From the one seated on the throne, he hears: “Behold, I am making all things new.”

What a breathtaking declaration. All things—not just spiritually, not just morally, but cosmically—are made new. The entire created order, once marred by the curse, is re-created. No more sickness, storms, sin, or suffering. No more decay, mold, or disease. No more aging, death, or dying. All things begin again, made perfect in God’s presence.

Paul wrote to the Colossians that through Christ, God is reconciling all things to Himself whether on earth or in heaven (Col. 1:20). That reconciliation is now complete in John’s vision.

The voice from the throne emphasizes what comes next: “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” God wants to ensure there is no confusion, no doubt. Then comes a triumphant declaration: “It is done!” God's plan of redemption—initiated at the foundation of the world—is complete. The work of justification, sanctification, and now glorification is fulfilled. The long battle with sin, death, evil, and Satan is won.

The Alpha and the Omega

God explains why He can declare these things: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.” Using the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, God proclaims His eternality and sovereignty. Everything exists through Him and for Him. Nothing came before Him, and nothing will outlast Him. He rules over all history and all eternity.

An Invitation

From the throne, God extends an invitation: “To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.” What grace! Eternal life is offered freely—not earned, not bought, but received by those who recognize their need.

This image of thirst runs throughout Scripture:

- John 4:13-14: “Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”
- John 7:37: “On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”
- Isaiah 55:1: “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”
- Psalm 46:4: “There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.”

God’s offer is clear: Come. Drink. Live.

A Call to Conquer

But eternal life, though freely given, requires faithful perseverance: “The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.” To conquer means to remain faithful—to endure trials, resist sin, and stay true to Christ. This echoes the promises made earlier in Revelation:

- Revelation 2:7: “To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”

- Revelation 2:11: “The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.”
- Revelation 2:17: “...To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.”
- Revelation 2:26: “The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.”
- Revelation 3:5: “The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life.”
- Revelation 3:12: “The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.”

Revelation 12:11 explains how believers conquer: “They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.” Conquering doesn't mean perfection—it means faithfulness, even unto death.

God’s final words in this section are a sobering warning: “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

While God makes all things new for His faithful people, those who continue in unrepentant sin will face judgment. These are not occasional stumblers, but those whose lives are defined by rebellion and unbelief.

This second death is eternal separation from God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How many descriptions of God can you find in Revelation 21:1–8?
- What different ways does God describe His relationship with believers in these verses?
- Does John’s description of heaven change the way you view suffering in this life?
- Is there anything you are specifically looking forward to about heaven?
- What stands out to you about God in these verses?
- What details in John’s description of heaven stand out to you most?
- Is there anything in this passage that you find confusing or hard to picture?