

SALEM HEIGHTS

THRIVING

IN THE WORD . IN PRAYER . IN FELLOWSHIP

HOPE IS THE EAGER ANTICIPATION AND CONFIDENT EXPECTATION
OF A FUTURE GUARANTEED BY GOD.

“The message of hope answering the many cries for help throughout the centuries since Christ’s ascension, finds perhaps its fullest expression in the words of Revelation 21. John’s vision of the new heaven and the new earth provided an escape for those enduring persecution for their commitment to Jesus. Though their life may end, they could hold fast to the knowledge that a better life awaited them at the fulfillment of God’s plan for this world. Even today, this vision exceeds the limits of our imagination as we anticipate the beauty and joy that will be revealed when the Lord makes his home on the new earth. The new Jerusalem is described in majestic terms. It stretches our capacity to visualize the colors, materials, and precision of the craftsmanship. We have been told explicitly of its likeness, but yet, we fully expect the reality of it to take our breath away. Undoubtedly, the same was true of John’s original audience. When they heard the description, they had no memory of anything to which this vision might compare. It could only be imagined. The vision helped to inspire the ecstasy of hope, a hope that could bear the realities of broken dreams, burned homes and violent bloodshed.

The Joy is not only for those who are enduring horrific and painful experience, but just the hardship of life. Past all of our disappointments, concerns and frustrations is this reality - a New heaven and Earth is waiting...it is real.”— Pastor Justin

modified from:

Heide, G. Z. (1997). *What is New About the New Heaven and the New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 and 2 Peter 3. Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, 40(1), 36.*

Revelation 21

The New Creation

21 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. ²I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. ³Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God.⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away. ⁵Then the one seated on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new.” He also said, “Write, because these words are faithful

and true.”⁶ Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will freely give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life.”⁷ The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son.⁸ But the cowards, faithless, detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars—their share will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem

⁹ Then one of the seven angels, who had held the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me: “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”¹⁰ He then carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,¹¹ arrayed with God’s glory. Her radiance was like a precious jewel, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.¹² The city had a massive high wall, with twelve gates. Twelve angels were at the gates; the names of the twelve tribes of Israel’s sons were inscribed on the gates.¹³ There were three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.¹⁴ The city wall had twelve foundations, and the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb were on the foundations.¹⁵ The one who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.¹⁶ The city is laid out in a square; its length and width are the same. He measured the city with the rod at 12,000 *stadia*. Its length, width, and height are equal.¹⁷ Then he measured its wall, 144 cubits according to human measurement, which the angel used.¹⁸ The building material of its wall was jasper, and the city was pure gold clear as glass.¹⁹ The foundations of the city wall were adorned with every kind of jewel: the first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.²¹ The twelve gates are twelve pearls; each individual gate was made of a single pearl. The main street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.²² I did not see a temple in it, because the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb.²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.²⁵ Its gates will never close by day because it will never be night there.²⁶ They will bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.²⁷ Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those written in the Lamb’s book of life.

1. What do you see about hope in this passage?

2. What does it teach us about God?

3. What does it teach us about man?

4. What should we do in light of this passage?