

Lesson 7 The New Jerusalem where Jesus & the Father are the Temple

Day 1

The Present Heaven

Okay. We have looked at Heaven so far in two different ways, maybe more. We started in the Garden of Eden. We thought the "Garden of Eden" was a pretty good picture of Heaven because at the beginning before Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it fit our two criteria for Heaven. The two criteria we have been looking at all along in our study are:

1. Heaven is where God chooses to be
2. Heaven is where there is no sin present

Remember that Creation takes up two and one-half chapters of Scripture at the beginning in Genesis and the rest of the Book from Genesis 3 forward to Revelation 22 is all about God redeeming Mankind to Himself. He protects sinful men from His own holiness breaking out upon them and consuming them by barriers He has placed between them and Him. He also protects His own Personal holiness from sinful men by barriers placed between Himself and men. It is "all about Him," not "all about us." However, God has gone to such great lengths to save us and also to protect us because, He "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." -**John 3:16**. Have the words, "redeem," "protect," "consume," "holiness," "begotten," "rest," "believe," and "trust" taken on enriched or new meaning for you throughout this study?

For me personally, my top words are "rest," "trust," "obedience," and "belief." These words have always been there in the Scripture in my sight. But, this time, the Holy Spirit has illuminated them for me. They have become personal and full of wonderful emotion for me.

I think the top word is "rest," because I think I've understood Hebrews chapter 4 for the first time in my life when God talks about the Israelites as 'not entering into His rest.'" I think I've had an inkling of the meaning of "rest" in the past as I wrote this note to myself and have had it prominently displayed on my desktop for the past nine years:

"LORD, Help me believe You. I need to learn to trust you...then I will have quietness and rest for my soul. Do not let me hurt You by not resting in You like the Israelites did. Let me enter into Your rest LORD. I so want to focus on You alone...for in that focus is true worship."

What is the practical way to enter "His rest?" How did Abram enter His rest? How did Joshua enter "His rest?" How did Christ enter "His rest?"

Abram was asked by God to go to a place where he didn't know and wouldn't know until God took Him there. He just got up and went. He put his big toe into the sand and He moved ahead.

Joshua entered God's rest a long time before the people entered God's rest in the Promised Land. He and Caleb had been the only two of twelve spies who initially went in to spy out the land and who came back with a positive report of the land and the peoples who were in the land. God rewarded them both for their belief and subsequent obedience. Joshua was the commander of the Israelite armies when they finally crossed over the Jordan River and into the Promised Land. Caleb was one of Joshua's right hand men and he, too, entered the land. What happened to the other ten spies? The other ten men died in the wilderness as did all who had come out of Egypt and had seen all the miracles God had done, and yet did not believe.

How did Christ come into His rest? In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ's anxiety over going to the cross was so bad that it caused the Savior to "sweat blood." He even asked God if there was another way to redeem Mankind. He found His peace in surrendering to His Father's will. "...yet, not as I will, but as You will." **Mathew26:39**

Review the two criteria for Heaven as in the first paragraph above. The first way we looked at heaven in this study was the Garden of Eden. It was a good fit for our two criteria for Heaven, until sin arrived. Let's get back to the other ways we have looked at Heaven. We have also considered "heaven" as the throne room of God on this earth in the tabernacle/temple according to the pattern that was given by God to Moses on the Mountain. Here God manifested Himself to the Israelites as the Shekinah Glory. Although there was mutual protection for God and men in the veil of the tabernacle and in the temple sacrifices, sin was still present. Next we studied about the New Covenant with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christ Himself and also men. Here we could see the exact representation of God in Christ Jesus, but He was face to face with the sin of Mankind. The Christ had to come to die for the sins of Mankind. He became sin, even though he knew no sin of His own, on the cross in order to pay for Mankind's sin.

Finally, we come to the real McCoy. Please read through Revelation 4 and 5 prior to Days 2 and 3's lesson. So, let's look at the present Heaven of Revelation 4 and 5 where it is either an intermediate heaven (perhaps Paradise) or it is already "the New Jerusalem" awaiting the descent into the new third heaven (the atmosphere) and the new earth.

Days 2-3

Revelation 4, Inside the Holy of Holies in Heaven – the Throne Room in Heaven

The Holy Spirit illuminated my understanding last evening as I worked through Ezekiel 40-48 again and also "a new heaven and a new earth" in Revelation 21-22.

He brought to my mind a statement I had made in Lesson 6: "... I believe that the new heaven will be the atmosphere around the new earth." Look at the articles used for the description of heaven in Revelation 21:1 and then look at the articles used in my statement quote above. I am speaking of "a" and "the" as the two articles. Revelation 21 says this: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away..." If my quote above is true, then my understanding of the present heaven before this collision of a new heaven (a new atmosphere around the new earth) and a new earth has to change drastically. I now have to consider that God is bringing the present heaven of Revelation 4 and 5 to join the new earth. My thoughts were confirmed by reading in Dr. J. Vernon McGee's commentary Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee in his statement that he "will be in the New Jerusalem in Heaven during the MK on earth." This also brings up another statement I made in our present study that went something like this: "I am sure we will be rulers with the tribulation saints on the earth during the Millennial Kingdom because we have read it in other places in the Scripture." So, all of this to say, the present heaven in Revelation 4 and 5 may already be the New Jerusalem (the third heaven). God will come from the third heaven with the New Jerusalem to inhabit the new earth with a new atmosphere (the first heaven). We may visit the MK temple in the MK, but we may not be rulers with the tribulation saints. Instead of ruling in the MK on earth, we may be in the "New Jerusalem" awaiting our descent onto the new earth with a new atmosphere at the beginning of the eternal order.

Now, I'm sure that this is clear as mud to you, but I don't know how to explain it in any other way, although I will continue to refine it.

Revelation 4 Inside the Holy of Holies in Heaven

Wow! It is only a vision but look at all the different items that are conveyed using terms we would use like:

- a door standing open in heaven
- a voice which sounded like a trumpet speaking
- a throne standing in heaven
- a stone
- a green rainbow

Who was the one sitting on the throne?

Who were the 24 elders? In addition to reading Revelation 4, see the cross-reference in Matthew 19:27-28

With what kind of garment were the 24 elders clothed?

What was the meaning of the white raiment? See **2 Corinthians 5:21** and **Revelation 3:4-5**.

What was on their heads?

We have spoken about these 24 elders before. Our thoughts were the 24 orders of the priesthood or maybe 12 apostles of Christ plus 12 tribes of Israel. What I really want to know is if it was the 12 apostles, did John see himself in the lineup around the throne as he was being allowed to view? Wouldn't that have been freaky? Kind of like, you know, you can't be in the same time domain as your former self without cancelling each other out...I know, too Syfy for you, Meredith!

The Greek word for "elders" is *presbuteros*. This is the same word from which we get the word "Presbyterian." Elders were representatives. In the Old Testament, the Nation of Israel, had representatives and in the New Testament, the early Christian church had elders. In the church, the role of the elders was to be representative of the entire church. So therefore, for John, these 24 elders would have been understood with his first century cultural church mentality as representative of the entire church from Pentecost through to the rapture. Here, in Revelation 4, the 24 elders are representative of the church in heaven.

So what did the golden crowns on their 24 heads mean? See **1 Corinthians 6:3 and 2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:4.**

I believe that it indicates that in the eternal order of all things, the church will reign with Christ. You can also see that crowns will be given out during the Bema judgment to Believers who will then lay their crowns at Jesus' feet. Remember studying about the crowns in the first part of this series?

What came out of the throne in **Rev 4:5**?

What or who were the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne in **Rev 4:5**?
Cross-reference with **Isaiah 11:1-3,**

Can you clearly see these are the seven spirits of the Holy Spirit? What do you mean God? Okay you are Three in One and One of You comes with Seven Parts? Yes this is the way it is.

What does the thunder and lightning and voices represent in **Rev 4:5**? What does this verse bring to your mind?

In my mind I thought about how terrified Martin Luther was of God's judgment. When he walked across that campus in a storm one day and saw his colleague die from a lightning strike, he was finally convinced he needed to enter the priesthood. He felt doomed. I also have experienced God's weightiness in judgment in something

I have done in the past. I know I am saved by grace, but I surely brought out God's wrath on me for lying as I did. Until I righted things, I remained in deep depression. This fire and lightning here most likely indicates a judgment of God ready to be carried out.

What does the sea of glass represent in **Rev 4:6**?

The sea of glass was like crystal. It was in the center and around the throne with the four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. This comes right after the impending judgment indicated by the thunder and lightning coming from the throne. Could this be the calm, the peace, the rest we receive from Him even though we know we are all still sinners and we are trusting in Him for our salvation?

What do all the eyes of the four living creatures represent in **Rev 4:6**? See their resemblance to the four living beasts around the throne of God in **Ezek 1:5-10** and **10:20**. Also cross-reference to **Isaiah 6:2-3**.

What do the four faces represent? One was like a lion, one like a calf, one like a man, and the last one like a flying eagle in **Rev 4:7**. Do you suppose that when Aaron, Moses, Nadab, and Abihu along with 70 of the elders went up the mountain of God to meet with God in **Exodus 24**, that they saw these four living creatures around God's throne room? They still couldn't see God's face, but did they see the details of God's flying throne, i.e., the four living creatures' faces? This is just something to think about: which living creature resembled a god the Egyptian's worshiped?

How many wings did the four living creatures have? See **Rev 4:8**.

What do these four living creatures say repeatedly? Notice this is the same phrase as the seraphim of **Isaiah 6**.

How do the four living creatures express who God is in **Rev 4:8**?

How did Jesus introduce Himself in **Rev 1:8**? How does He close out the book of Revelation describing Himself in **Rev 22: 13**? What is God's memorial name for all generations? See **Exod 3:13-15**?

What do the 24 elders do when the four living creatures worship Him in **Rev 4:9-11**?

This is worship!!! Focused worship!!! Complete worship!!! There is nothing else on their minds. They are one with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit!

It seems like this is indication that we will all be continuously worshipping Him in Heaven. There are some expositors of who will tell you, if you find worship boring here, you need to re-evaluate whether or not you want to go to heaven. Honestly, I don't think it is going to be boring and I don't think this is all that we will be doing, but I do believe whatever we are doing it will be done in worshipping mode. Just like here, whatever we do, we do all for the glory of God. This means our work, our play, our learning, and our resting. It is all about Him and it definitely looks like there will be some continuity between this earth and the new earth (or the New Jerusalem).

Day 4-5

Revelation 5, Inside the Holy of Holies-the Church in Heaven with Christ (cont.)

Why do you want to go to heaven? I think this is a question we all need to ponder? Do you just want to escape hell? I think this is a pretty good answer myself.

For we Christians, hell will be an eternity away from God and heaven will be an eternity in God's presence. In this study we have gotten acquainted with some of the highlights that will be going on in Heaven. For anything specific to each one of us we have to read between the lines. Hopefully, with the final class time, I will be able to give you some answers from this "reading between the lines," without altering the text as we are warned against in **Revelation 22**.

Jesus tells us in **John 14:2-3** that He is going to prepare a place for you, for where He is, we may be there also. I believe He will have a room for each one of us, whatever that is going to look like. In the Jewish faith, the father of the groom would build a room onto his house for his son and his new bride. When the room was completed, the groom's father would tell his son that it was then time to claim his

betrothed. Jesus told us the very same about His Father. He is waiting on His Father to tell Him when it will be time to claim His betrothed. We the Church are His Bride. However, the Church is Jew and Gentile in One Body. All of us, who are in Christ Jesus, who have accepted Him as Savior, are Jesus' bride. In the Jewish faith, in the first year of the groom and bride's life together, the husband is exempt from going to war and I also think he is exempt from working.¹⁵ While he and his bride are getting to know each other and getting use to one another the groom's father still supports both of them. What will it be like when we are married to God the Father's Son, Jesus Christ? Will we have a good year to just sit in His presence and learn from Him? What will that be like to be so intimate and personal with Him and yet to give Him all the awe, reverence and respect that are His due?

In **Revelation 5**, the scene in Heaven is set in preparation for the events of the Great Tribulation. I think this is very important: if the 24 elders represent the whole church, then we are definitely raptured before this scene in heaven and we will not go through the Great Tribulation. Remember this is a continuation of chapter four's scene in heaven and this is "after these things" of chapters two and three of Revelation or after the seven churches of Asia Minor." The church on earth subject disappears after the end of the third chapter and returns in chapter 19. The time in between will be of the subject of Daniel's 70th week we will study next fall 2017.

Now, the scene of chapter 5 is set in Heaven. The throne was the center of chapter 4 and Christ is the center of chapter 5 in that both the Lion and the Lamb represent the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lion of Judah and He is the Passover Lamb who was sacrificed for us and for our sins.

For those of you who have King James' version of the Bible, what is the first word written in chapter 5 and what does this word imply?

For the rest of you, your Bibles do not have the word "and" at the beginning of chapter 5. Chapters 4 and 5 are the same scene and therefore do not need a chapter division. However, those who put together the chapter divisions of Scripture didn't ask for my input.

This chapter starts out with "I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals." God the Father holds in His right hand a tightly wound scroll that has seven seals. No one was found worthy to take the scroll out of the Father's hand in heaven or on earth. I understand from Roman law at the time of the early church, that a will had to be sealed with seven seals. It is interesting that the Romans decided on "seven" seals, but more interesting to me is that this seven-sealed scroll in Revelation has seven seals because God uses the number seven as a number of completion. This scroll

¹⁵ I'm not sure of this one, but I keep looking for it. I know I have heard it or seen it someplace.

with the seven seals contains seven judgments that will go out upon all those who are the earth dwellers. As a result of breaking these seven seals, some will die, some will change their minds and find the LORD, and some will still be rebellious and shake their finger in the face of God crying, “unfair,” “unfair.” I believe what you will find out about this scroll in our study of Daniel’s 70th week in the fall of 2017, is that this scroll is the title deed to this earth. Who owns the title deed to this earth? The Lord Jesus Christ owns it. That is why He is the only one who can open the scroll with the seven seals. The breaking of these seven seals will open up the seven plagues on all those who dwell on the earth at this time.

What do you find out about the dominion, the glory and the kingdom given over to the Son of man in **Daniel 7:13-14**?

For what reason was the Son of man given dominion, glory and a kingdom?

All people, all nations, all languages, will serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away and his kingdom will not be destroyed.

Please read **Zechariah 5:1-3**.

What is the purpose of the flying scroll in Zechariah? Is this the same scroll as the scroll with the seven seals of Revelation?

What is on this scroll from Zechariah? This is a thinking question. We don’t actually have a Scriptural answer to this question.

Some think it is the Ten Commandments. Others think it is the New Covenant.

In **Rev 5:2**, it says a “strong” angel is asking with a “loud” voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?” Who do you think can rule this world? Who do you think can establish justice on this earth? Our government certainly has shown itself falling short. How about the United Nations? The jihadists? The Jihadists think they have the answer to ruling the world by killing every body that doesn’t agree with them. I think the Word of God here is very clear: no one is worthy except Jesus!

No one from the sinful line of Adam has the right to open the seals to the book. Adam lost the title deed to the earth through disobedience and sin. Although Moses was used by God to bring the law to the people of Israel, he himself still broke the law and he, too was disobedient. Even though David is the man after God’s own heart, he too was disobedient and broke the law. This is what J. Vernon McGee says,

“The Ruler must be a Redeemer, the Sovereign must be a Savior of mankind, and Jesus Christ is the only One.”¹⁶

John is really disturbed and starts crying (I think uncontrollably) when no one is found worthy to open the seals of the book or even to look into the book. At this point what does one of the 24 elders tell John to do?

John can stop crying now because the Lion of Judah, who is the Root of David has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.

Who is standing between the Throne of God (with the four living creatures) and the 24 elders?

The Lamb standing who appeared as slain with seven horns and seven eyes is between the Throne and the 24 elders. Here the Lamb was in front of the representatives for the entire church from Pentecost to the rapture.

What happens next?

And what do the four living creatures and the 24 elders do when the Lamb takes the book out of the right hand of God the Father who sat on the throne?

What do each of the four living creatures and the 24 elders hold in their hands?

What is the meaning of the golden bowls of incense they are holding in their hands?

What do they do next?

They sing a new song. This is the song they sing,:

“Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for you were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

“You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

¹⁶ J Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible with J Vernon McGee, Volume 5, p. 934.

I can't help but hear the tune in my head with the words we sing in church:

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy! Worthy! Worthy!¹⁷

It looks like in **Rev 5:11-12** that whole myriads of angels join in the singing. How many gifts was Jesus worthy to "take?"¹⁸ Name them below.

That's right all of them – seven in number. Seven means completeness.

The 24 elders here represent the entire church from Pentecost to the rapture. Is **Rev 5:10** saying that all of the Believers of the church age have then become priests to their God? Are the priests to our God here taking over the duties of intercessory prayer that formerly was Jesus' responsibility? Just asking. I know a light bulb went off in my mind just now. From this point forward, Jesus is on the move and It will be His primary responsibility to reign upon the earth.

And here we go in **Rev 5:10**: the Believers of the church age will reign upon the earth. But which earth, the old one or the new one? Will this be during the Millennial Kingdom on the old earth or during the New Order of the New Jerusalem on the new earth?

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only one who can open the seals on the scroll because He is the only one who has the right and title to this world. Do some background reading here;

1. Read about the Lion of the Tribe of Judah when Jacob (Israel) was on his deathbed and giving out blessings for his twelve sons in **Genesis 49:9-10**. Write your thoughts about the blessing received from Israel to Judah below.
2. Read about the Root of David and the covenant God made with David in **2 Samuel 7** and write your thoughts below.

What is the nature of a little lamb? Christ was lead as a lamb to the slaughter. Please read **Isaiah 53:7** and **John 1:29** and write your thoughts below:

¹⁷ Hillsong Music: "Worthy is the Lamb Who was Slain," Hillsong Pentecostal Church, Australia..

¹⁸ J Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible with J Vernon McGee, Vol. 5, page 937

What is the meaning of the seven horns? Please cross-reference to the book of **Daniel chapters 7-8**. What does the word omnipotent mean? Please comment below:

What is the meaning of the seven eyes? Please cross-reference to the book of **Daniel chapters 7-8**. What does the word omniscient mean? Please comment below:

The Lord Jesus Christ is a Lion and He is also a Lamb. In which Coming did He come as a Lamb? In which Coming will He come as the Lion?

The Lion of Judah is symbolic of His Majesty. What is the Lamb of God symbolic for?

Jesus as the Lion of Judah is the Sovereign Judge. What is the Lamb of God, symbolic for?

The Finale, Eternity Unveiled in Revelation 21 and 22

One of the things we do as a family in the Grinstead tradition is to put a brand new puzzle together on Christmas day. My sister, Carol, is very good to always supply us with another new puzzle each year. I usually take a picture of the finished product and send it to her with all the names of those who stayed the course until the end when the puzzle was completed. It's usually both of my kids, my son's wife, and myself who finish the puzzle. Why would I be telling you this at the end of our study of Heaven?

I hope in this study you have been able to put the border pieces and some of the color-matched and pattern-matched pieces of the puzzle together. Some of you have known all of what we have studied for some time. Perhaps this study has helped you put all the pieces into place or at least some of the pieces. For others this has been a really big stretch to just get through the reading done for the lessons. But you all have worked so hard and I am so very pleased with the progress that you have made. Know this that He is in the process of sanctifying you, making you look more like Him today than yesterday and He has you on track for knowing Him more and more with each passing day. Stay focused, worship Him fully, and go ahead and dream about Heaven. It is a real place. He has prepared a place for you in Heaven and you have an address there.