



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Revelation 21:1-8

"A New Heaven and a New Earth"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] So turn with me, if you will, to Revelation chapter 21 and we are reading verses 1 through 8 for the Scripture reading this morning. For those of you who may have forgotten where we were, we have finished chapter 20 a couple of weeks ago on the note of divine judgment, the great white throne judgment. And now we begin verse 21, and remember that the apostle has been in the Revelation giving us seven last things. And this is the last of the seven last things,

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth passed away; and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them. And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death, there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain: the first things are passed away. And he who sits on the throne said, Behold, I'm making all things new. And he said, Write: for these words are faithful and true."

You may have noticed that there is a little asterisk by your New American Standard Bible for that second "said." The reason for it is that the tense is really a present tense, but it's the conviction of the translators and they are probable right, that this is the same person speaking and not an angelic being. Verse six,

"And he said to me, It is done. I am Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who over come shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he will be my son. But for the cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

May God bless this reading of his word and let's bow in a time of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we approach Thee through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and give Thee thanks for the acceptance that we have with him and through him with Thee. We thank Thee for the atoning work which has removed all danger of separation from Thee for eternity. And we, today Lord, give the thanks and praise. We are grateful, indeed, for all that Thou hast accomplished for us through the saving sacrifice on the cross at Calvary.

We thank Thee for the hopes that we do have and as we think of the new heavens and the new earth and of the blessings of fellowship with our Lord. We cannot but think on this, the Lord's Day, how blessed we are. And so we give Thee thanks. We praise Thee. We worship the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through him who has acted as our covenantal head and brought us into fellowship with Thee.

We pray Thy blessing upon us this day, upon the ministry of the word of God throughout this land, throughout this state, throughout this city, and in Believers Chapel in

the meetings of the day. We pray Thy blessing upon our elders, and deacons, and upon each one of us. May Lord, this day be a day in which, as we look back this evening, we may recognize it as a day in which we have come to live closer to Thee and to grow in grace and in the knowledge of him.

We pray Thy blessing upon our Sunday School, especially upon our young children who are growing up. May each of them, today, have the sense of the knowledge of divine truth as it is talked to them, and may there be responsiveness to the word. We pray for those who are ill and sick and hospitalized and who have requested our prayers. Lord, we ask Thy blessing upon them. Minister to them, build them up through healing in accordance with Thy perfect will and we commit them to Thee. We pray Thy blessing now upon the remainder of our service. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] The subject for today, as we continue the exposition of the last book of the New Testament, is taken from verse 1: "A New Heaven and a New Earth." The messianic judgments, the last of which has been particularly unfolded in verse 11 through verse 15 of chapter 20, is now followed by the last of the last things: the new order and the bliss of the redeemed, which is really the end of our pilgrimage, the pilgrimage of the church of Jesus Christ and it's the end of our spiritual pilgrimage as well. When we think about heaven and think about the things that Scripture has to say about it, it's rather startling that the Bible has more to say about hell than it has about heaven. I have often wondered about that.

Heaven is much easier to hear about than hell and perhaps that's the reason that the Bible says a great deal more about hell than it does about heaven. Someone accused Jonathon Edwards of preaching primarily about hell. Actually, he preached a little bit more about heaven than he did about hell, but he certainly did preach a lot about hell. In that sense, he was true to the Bible. The facts are that we know of heaven, but we do not know very much about heaven. In fact, it may surprise you, but our hymn books tell us more about heaven than the Bible does, which reflects the aspirations and the desires

of those who write our hymn books. We have, also, wrong ideas about heaven as well as wrong ideas, no doubt, about hell and about many other things in the word of God. We have wrong ideas about sin.

I am reminded of Billy Nicholson, the famous Irish evangelist. His son, incidentally, was a friend of mine on the staff of The Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles for many years. And he told me once about his father answering questions from audiences in his evangelistic preaching throughout the land of Ireland and Scotland. He was very well known, came to the United States, also, as an outstanding evangelist. And Billy Nicholson was very experienced in dealing with scoffers who would interrupt his preaching. And one day he was preaching and one of the young men, when Mr. Nicholson evidently had mentioned heaven, he began to shout out, "Mr. Nicholson, how am I, in heaven, going to get my shirt on over my wings?" And Mr. Nicholson went on preaching and this young man, every now and then, would say, "Mr. Nicholson, how am I going to get my shirt on over my wings in heaven?" Finally the third time he shouted out, "Mr. Nicholson, how am I, in heaven, going to get my shirt on over my wings?" And finally Mr. Nicholson turned to the audience and he said, "This fellow here is worried about getting his shirt on over his wings when he ought to be worried about getting his tail into his trousers." [Laughter]. So there are many things that we do not know about heaven and there are certainly lots of things that we don't know about hell as well.

What we do know about the eternal state is largely found here, and it's likely that what we are dealing with is the eternal state because the context would seem to indicate it. We have the final judgment in chapter 20, verse 11 through verse 15 and verse 21 begins, "And I saw." And we have noticed that those expressions, "And I saw," of which there are a number of them, generally point chronologically to something that follows. And furthermore, the contents of chapters 21 and 22 suggest that. We have reference to the fact that there is no more sea. We read that. We have reference to the fact that there

is a tree of life in the new earth. We have reference to the fact that there is no sun. So the evidence would suggest that what we are dealing with here is not the kind of thing that we might expect for the earth during the renewed period of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. And further, there is a kind of logical compliment to the Book of Genesis, because in the Book of Genesis we have the tree of life and now the tree of life returns. In a sense, what we have is paradise lost in Genesis chapter 3 becomes paradise regained in Revelation chapter 21 and 22. So this is likely to be about the eternal state, the new heavens and the new earth. Now, John writes of his vision in verses 1 and 2, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Now, the fact that John sees this new heaven and the new earth witnesses to a number of significant things. It witnesses to the fact that man's immortal longings include a vision of the future. And further, it witnesses to man's inherent sense of sin because he sees the necessity for a new heavens and a new earth. In fact, the Scripture says that the heavens, at the present time, are not clean in his sight. Job, more than once, makes reference to that fact. So "a new heaven and a new earth" refers to the fact that man has an inherent sense of sin, but the time is coming when there is to be a new heaven and a new earth as a result of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And, of course, this dream of the new heaven and the new earth witnesses to the spiritual man's faith in God. He describes the makeup of the new creation in verse 1, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth passed away; and there is no longer any sea." Not "another earth and another heaven," but "a new earth and a new heaven." In fact, the adjective that he uses, the adjective "new" here, one of several adjectives for new, particularly one of the two primary ones is a word that means something like fresh, a fresh heavens and a fresh earth. And the sense that one gets from it is that there is a correspondence between the new heavens and the new earth and the present heavens and the present earth. But the new one is a fresh one, a correspondence that is suggested by other things in the word of God.

In Romans chapter 8, in verse 19 the apostle makes a statement which may be linked up with this for he speaks of the anxious longing of the creation and how it waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. There is to come a fresh heavens and a fresh earth, but there will be a correspondence with the present heavens and the present earth. Perhaps the "new heavens and the new earth" is similar to the new creation which God has wrought in the hearts and minds of those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul tells us, "He that is in Christ is a new creation." And so just as I am the same person but I am new, so there is a correspondence between the old heavens and the old earth but this one is as new and as fresh as the kind of life that you and I have received when we believed in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Someone has suggested it's very much as if God were to take some dirty coal and put it in a fiery furnace, liquefy it, and then from it bring out a beautiful diamond. It's still the same thing, but nevertheless, entirely different. Irenaeus and some of the early believers used to liken this new creation just to something like that, so a new heaven and a new earth.

Now, the metropolis is describes to us in verse 2, but perhaps I ought to say something about "there is no longer any sea." That has puzzled commentators a little bit. We do know that the Jews did not like the sea; they were land loving people. And why there should be no sea has been a puzzle. Perhaps, it's because the sea is used in prophetic Scripture, particularly, for that which is the home of that opposed to the Lord God. For example, "the beast arises out of the sea." In the Old Testament, the figure of chaos is associated with the sea. So it may be, simply, a reference to the fact that those things that have played a part in the Book of the Revelation and have been used to indicate the chaotic is now no longer present in the new heavens and the new earth; there is no longer any sea. I know that Bible teachers like to say, at this point, to men who are fisherman in the congregation, "Men, if you are going to fish, you better get it done now because there is not going to be any opportunity to do it in heaven." But I

don't think there is anything in the text itself that suggests that that's a legitimate kind of incentive that we should derive from that little clause: "There is no longer any sea."

Now, the city is described in verse 2, "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." Isn't it interesting that we have one verse for the new universe but twenty-five verses for the new city? Now this city is a real city, just as the universe is a real universe. We are not to think of this as something spiritual, but it is a real city. Other side becomes this side, eternity transfigures time, and the new Jerusalem is the place and home of the redeemed for the ages of eternity. I like the way it is described, "Made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." Lovely picture of ravishing beauty. Edwards and one of his comments on heaven remarks that, "The eternal embraces and eternal joys are found in the new Jerusalem and the atoning blood that he offered on Calvary's Cross has removed all hindrances to intimate union with him."

Think of it, intimate union with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, "in the new heavens and the new earth" and in the "new Jerusalem," the new city, "that comes down out of heaven from God made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." It's almost as if this is designed for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and we, of course as Scripture points out, are the bride. One of the things that I have noticed in conducting weddings through the years is that when the bride comes down and the audience rises and takes a look, you frequently hear kind of a gasp from the audience. And the gasp is accompanied sometimes by little things that I hear like, "Isn't she lovely?" "Isn't she beautiful?"

And it's amazing sometimes how some of that's not really true to fact, but nevertheless, the words come out. [Laughter] "Isn't she beautiful?" "Isn't she lovely?" And a little gasp, you know, when you look. I've never noticed, incidentally, a little gasp when I came out. [Laughter] In all my handsome appearance, no one has ever gasped. As far as I'm concerned, if you want to gasp sometime in the future that will be alright with me, but I don't anticipate it and really I hope you don't do it. [Laughter] When I

was much younger, I used to tell the audience, "Now, I'm looking for you to do that in the next wedding," but no longer do I look for that.

But the fact that the new city is described as, "made ready as a bride adorned for her husband" is one of the marvelous ways in which the Bible touches upon the things that have to do with ordinary life and makes them so vitally real. So she looks like a bride that is ready to be united to her husband and united for life. That's the picture, of course, that we have here: the new Jerusalem and the people of God having a union very much like a husband and wife who are married in the marriage ceremony. Here is the ultimate of the marriage supper of the lamb.

Well, at this point, the apostle describes some voices out of the throne. He says, "And I heard a loud voice from of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them." The perfection of the divine fellowship is described, the elucidation of this new creation. In fact, in this statement, "the tabernacle of God is among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them," is really the whole story of the word of God, isn't it? Listen to it again, "the tabernacle of God is among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them." That describes the story of Scripture. When we look over the story of Scripture and we think of the sin that took place in the Garden of Eden, and how God came down and Adam and Eve fled and hid in the bushes in the Garden of Eden. That's the story of the results of the Fall.

And the rest of the Bible is the story of how God, in his marvelous grace, through the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, brings man back again to himself in fellowship with him. The great illustration in the history of Israel was the Tabernacle. And in the tabernacle was the picture, again, of God tabernacling with men. That's the story. When the Lord Jesus came we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh." All of you know, of course,

that that expression, "became flesh" is followed by, "and tabernacled among us." The picture of the Lord God tabernacling with us but, of course, redemption has not been accomplished but the story is there in the account that John writes. And the church, described by the Apostle Paul, is described in similar language. In Ephesians chapter 2, in verse 20 through verse 22, of chapter 2 we read,

"Having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone; In whom the whole building being fitted together growing into an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are being built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit."

So the tabernacle of God is with men. The accomplishment of the atoning work now reaches its climax, "And God and men dwell together in marvelous union." We are the bride, and he is the groom, and we become married to him.

Now, the next statement is, to my mind, one of the greatest in the Bible. We read, "And he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them." Now, when we read here, "he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them," if you're a reader of Scripture, you'll recognize, immediately, that that's covenantal language. That's the language that is used of the Abrahamic Covenant. That's the language that is used of the Davidic Covenant. That's the language that is used of the new covenant. In other words, we being his people, God being our God, is the story of the covenantal work of the Lord God. You go back and read the account of the covenants and you will find out that that's the climactic promise of the covenants that God makes with men. That is, they shall be his people, he shall be their God.

And here the final consummation of it all is found right here. What one has called the unfluctuating joy of the future is bound up in God fulfilling the ancient unconditional

covenants, the Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the new, and now we have them before us:

"He shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them." But you know there is something else there in that verse that is very interesting to me. We read, "And God himself shall be among them."

Now if we just read this version as I have just it in the New American Standard Bible, the sense of it does not quite come through. But in the great text, at this point, reading manuscript of the Book of Revelation plus some other manuscripts have a slightly different text. I'm inclined to think that it is the correct text. I'm going to translate it for you. We read, instead of "God himself shall be among them" that "God with them shall be their God." "God with them shall be their God."

Now, I wonder if you have ever wondered, I know that you have, why when our Lord is announced by the angel as to be born of Mary and it is said of him that his name shall be Immanuel, why in the whole of the Bible, all of the New Testament, we have no reference to our Lord being called Immanuel? Isn't that interesting? Nowhere. It would seem, incidentally, that if anyone was writing the Bible apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit, he would surely have put in a sentence about his name being Immanuel, which is very interesting for New Testament courtesism -- and I'm using that in the technical sense of the study of the New Testament by scholars. Because if it's true that the writers of the New Testament are people who looked at the Old Testament and then made up the facts of our Lord's life in order to agree with what they saw in the Old Testament as modern scholars have often tried to tell us, then surely we would have, in the gospel accounts, an incident which he is called Immanuel, but we do not. But if this is the way in which we have to read it, and both conservative and liberal scholars are inclined to think that it is so, then we do have that: "God with them," for that's the meaning of Immanuel, God with us. "God with them shall be their God." "Immanuel shall be their God." In Isaiah chapter 7, verse 14 finds its consummation here. And that's simply in the birth of the Son

of the virgin, but the full meaning of it is right here, "God with them shall be their God."  
What a magnificent thing it is to think about heaven.

In Scotland, when I was driving all over that country and thought of the great preachers, and the great pastors, and the great Christians who at one time populated that land and now look and see many of those places experiencing spiritual decline, I cannot help but think of the great promises that the word of God has given to us which we would gain so much joy from if we simply realized that they are true. The greatest thing about heaven is not that I shall be able to have fellowship with the great saints of the Old and New Testament times and of the history church times. It's not that I shall ultimately be able to meet Thomas Boston and say, "Mr. Boston, I have your works in my library. I have profited from reading them. I have been blessed by your experiences and so many others." But the greatest blessing of all is the fact that, God with them shall be among us, and I shall be part of his bride, the Lamb of God. So, "God himself shall be with them." Heaven is no heaven if it is not the union that we enjoy with our Lord Jesus Christ. When we think of a marriage, we think of a marriage and the marriage ceremony as the consummation, outwardly of the union that will be consummated later. That's what John is talking about; he's talking about the eternal union that we shall enjoy as a result of our relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr. Moody used to tell a story which I always appreciated because I think it's so true. He told a story of a young man who had married and his wife had become sick after their first child was born. And the little child was just a few years old, but since she was so sick he thought it would be helpful to take the child and put the child with some members of the family or friends while the mother sought to recuperate from her illness. Well the facts were that she died. And he waited for awhile, he said, "I think we should not take her back to the house until after the funeral service, but then perhaps we can go back to the house then."

And that was done and they walked back to the house, and as they walked into the house, the little girl said, "Where's mother?" And she ran from one room of the house to another and saying, "Where's mother?" And the young man found it necessary to tell her exactly what had happened: that her mother had died. And she is reported to have said, "Take me away, take me away, I don't want to be here without mother." Well I think we can all appreciate that and that's really the way I feel about heaven. Heaven and all of the things that have to do with the new Jerusalem, and the new heavens, and the new earth is as nothing compared with the consummation of the relationship that we shall have with our Lord Jesus Christ. I like Mr. Moody, he said that when he got to heaven he was going to spend a thousand days at the feet of the Lord Jesus and then he was going to say, "Where's Paul?" But that expresses, I think, really what the Bible says when it talks about the new heavens, the new earth, the new Jerusalem.

The things that are described about it are as you might expect, "He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death, there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain: the first things have passed away." Now, if I should ask you a question right at this point and ask you now, "What are the products of the divine habitation in the new Jerusalem?" If you looked at that text carefully, you would be unable to tell me much of anything. They're all negatives, aren't they? Notice what he says, "He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, no longer death, no longer mourning, no longer crying, no longer pain: the first things have passed away." But the positives are not there. That's characteristic of the New Testament and you remember, no doubt, in 1 Peter the same thing is true. Peter speaks about the fact that,

"Blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to live in hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable," (it doesn't perish) "undefiled," (it will not corrupt) "will not fade away," (doesn't fade away).

But really we don't know anything about the inheritance; we just know the things that are not true of it. But specifically what it is, we don't know. The reason is very plain, the positives are not receivable. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" the apostle says, "but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." But if I were to say, "What is it to be like him?" We have only the vaguest, general ideas of what it will be like. The reason being, of course, we don't have the capacity for understanding then. We live in a society in which death reigns. I was stuck by that. When I finally reached Thomas Boston's house, on the advice of the bar, and then looked at it, it gave the appearance of death. The church was closed, just a little church really; the man had such a wide influence with a small church, I don't imagine, looking at it from the outside, it could have seated a hundred people. But his twelve volumes of sound theology have been read all over this world, really.

Then I looked around and there's the graveyard. And I traveled around in the graveyard and finally found his grave. In fact, a marker had been placed there of quite some size a hundred and seventy-five or so years ago. The little community, which is largely a farming community, so far as I could tell, gave no evidence of ever knowing that Mr. Boston lived there. And then in the graveyard were just tombs after the other. We do live in a society in which death reigns. That is descriptive of it. I noticed that even in the malls in Scotland the funeral parlors have places in the mall, and you can go in the funeral parlor office and there buy whatever you want to buy and make whatever arrangements you want to make in the malls just as if they had an office over in the galleria. In other words, the one thing that is characteristic of our society is the reign of death. It is true, the reign of death.

Now, "the voice out of the throne," we don't have time to speak about it very much. Three times God speaks, "And he who sits on the throne said, Behold, I am making all things new." What a magnificent statement that is: "I am making," a divine

word, "I am making all things," not some things, "all things." Another test, another reference to his deity or the attestation of it. And then, "I am making all things new." Only God can do that. This is a divine utterance of divine authority and power. You go back over the Book of Revelation, and I'll put it all together real quickly. On us there is a new name, in us a new song, around us a new Jerusalem, under us a new earth, over us a new heaven, before us always new revelations of the never-ending love of God. And go back to the great events of salvation history and in each one of them, from the creation on through to the cross, the burial, the resurrection, and the second coming, always new revelations of the never-ending love of God: "I make all things new."

The second utterance is, "Write: for these words are faithful and true." "They are as true as they are tremendous," one of the commentators has put it. And finally the third utterance in verse 6 through verse 8, "He said to me, it is done." That remind us of it is finished, on the cross in which the completion of the ground of pardon took place. In chapter 16, in verse 7 we have, "It is done," the completion of divine punishment, and here, "It is done," the completion of the great purposes of the eternal sovereign God. He says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the source of all things, the goal of all things." Alpha, the first letter of the alphabet in Greek and, of course, the Omega, the last.

What a magnificent description of the Lord God: the beginning and the end of all things. And he also says, "I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost," freely. We might have been misled by the preceding. I think it was William Barker who said, "If we read the preceding we might think of ourselves, against all of this great divine being, as just a fly on a windowpane." But that's not true. You see, we are the objects of all that this chapter has to say. "I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely." And the preceding words guarantee the truth of that. He will do it, because he is the Alpha and the Omega, he's the beginning and the end.

And then again we read in verse 7, "He who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he will be my son," that promise given to three great men. I wish it were possible to go back and show you this specifically from Scripture; you'll just have to take my word for it. The first person to whom that word was given was Abraham, in the Abrahamic Covenant. "He shall be my son, I will be his God." The second person whom it was given was David, the great King of Israel, the type of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the third person of whom it was said, "I will be his God, and he will be my son," is in David's great messianic psalm, Psalm 89, a reference to our Lord Jesus Christ. So, in other words, to Abraham it is said, "I will be his God, he will be my son," to David, "I will be his God, and he will be my son," and then to the Messiah himself, the God man, "I will be his God, and he shall be my son." These are the three with whom we are united by the covenantal purposes of God.

You know when we take the bread and the wine in the communion service, we are doing that which represents the consummation of the covenantal work of God. When I take the bread and reflect upon the bread, I reflect upon the purposes of God that reach their climax and our Lord's gift of himself on Calvary's cross. And when I take the wine, I reflect upon the blood that was shed which consummated the atonement which removed all hindrances to the eternal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why, for me, to sit at the Lord's table is always the highlight of the Lord's Day. It's the time that I reflect upon the consummation of the purposes of God.

And I must confess, I know you will think I'm a legalist when I say this, some of you, I hope not, but I must confess, I find it very difficult to understand how many useful Christians, and I acknowledge that, useful Christians in the Lord's work, hardly ever sit at the Lord's table and reflect upon what Christ has done for them. That puzzles me greatly. In the light of the fact that all that it means is all that is signified ultimately, by this text, highlighted by the fact that the Lord Jesus has told us specifically, it gives him joy to sit at the table with us and for us to sit at that table. It puzzles me greatly. It really does. That

in reading the Scriptures we fail to see how important it is to spend that time around him. So when I take the bread, I don't try to analyze it, think about it, I eat it. And when I take the wine, I don't try to analyze that, I drink it. But reflect upon all that it means in the consummation of the purposes of God.

There are those of course who will not participate and John says, "But for the cowardly, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." To the saved, no more death. To the unsaved, no more life. These words, remember, are faithful and true, so he has told us. Why don't you come to him, and trust in him, and find in your future the glorious experience of the new heavens, the new earth, and the new city of Jerusalem? Do you not come because your doubt is power? Why look, "Behold, I'll make all things new." Me? Yes, all things. My heart, Lord, is like flint, I do not respond to divine things. He can make even your heart the heart of flesh. I am so wicked, "he makes all things new." I have such great doubts, "he makes all things new." I am so weak, "all things." We cannot doubt his power. He can do this.

Or, perhaps, it's that you doubt his willingness. Notice what he says, "I will give." "I will give." Read those covenantal promises. Characteristic of them is the unconditional, "I will" do this, "I will," "I will," "I will." I think in the new covenant there are eight or nine "I wills" to express what God is going to do. He uses invitations of the freest kind, keeps open house for sinners, offers the plain and lively symbols of the bread and the wine and like the smitten rock and the great symbols of the word of God. Why do we need persuading to come to our Lord Jesus Christ? Why is it necessary for me, as a preacher of the word of God, to seek to persuade you to come to him? You should knock me down in your rush to come to him. May God and his grace touch your heart and may you come to him and find the life that is life, indeed. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for these magnificent promises. We are not surprised Lord, that Scripture does not tell us precisely the city and its environs, and the beauty of it, the glory of it in detail. We know we sinners could not understand. We don't have the faculty for understanding the greatness of the promises of God. We thank Thee for the confidence that they are precisely and more than that of which Thou hast given indication in holy Scripture.

And Father, we pray that if there are some in this audience who have never believed in our Lord Jesus Christ, oh God, so touch their hearts at this very moment. That they may truly flee and find refuge in him who has removed all hindrances by his atoning blood for the most intimate communion and intercourse with the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Son, the triune God through the Holy Spirit. Be with us as we part.

In Jesus' name. Amen.