

Theme: God has promised a new heavens and earth, which believers begin to experience now, and will be completed at the return of Christ.

I. Intro – Grand Conclusion

- A. Good ending important for epic works
- B. Lewis' ending to Chronicles
- C. Great ending to a great series of books!
- D. Isaiah has a great ending to great book too
- E. End of 19 week series
- F. End of 2009 - year and decade
- G. Good thing for us to focus on to prepare for future

II. A New Heavens and A New Earth

- A. The background
 - 1. Many oracles of judgment
 - 2. God's people have failed and sinned
 - 3. They will be exiled for their sin
 - 4. Is there hope?
- B. A new heavens and earth
 - 1. New heavens and earth - new beginning (17)
 - 2. Former things forgotten - so great is new (17)
 - 3. We are called to rejoice - God does! (18-19)
 - a. Glad, rejoice, delight, joy - 6x

- b. We rejoice now for what God will do
- c. Rejoicing lasts forever
- d. God Himself delights - in Jerusalem - us!

III. Describing the Indescribable

- A. A place of no sorrows, regrets, tears (v19b)
 - 1. List of things causing sorrow removed
 - a. Premature death (20)
 - b. Fruitless labor (21-22)
 - c. Cursed children (23)
 - d. Unanswered prayers/alienation from God (24)
 - e. Conflict in nature (25)
 - 2. Effects of Curse removed - links with Gen 1-3
 - a. Create new heaven/earth
 - b. Fruitless labor
 - c. Childbearing
 - d. Death
 - e. Blessed - not cursed
 - f. But the serpent still cursed! (eat dust)
 - 3. What is this describing (and when)?
 - a. The millennium - arguments for

1. Still death, work, childbirth
 2. Seems to earthy for heaven
 - b. The millennium - arguments against
 1. Heaven more earthy than usually thought
 2. This is time of Rev 21-22 - not Rev 20
 3. New heavens and earth
 4. Former things forgotten
 5. Jerusalem
 6. God's people
 7. Removal of weeping
 - c. Eternity - arguments for
 1. Clear links with Rev 21-22
 2. Clear links with undoing curse
 3. Creation itself transformed
 4. Romans 8:18-23
 - d. Eternity - answering arguments
 1. Isaiah speaks of no death (25:6-8)
 2. All these, including death, in today's terms
- B. In Christ, end has broken into the middle!
1. 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15
 2. The now and the not yet
 3. We rejoice - and live in hope (v18)

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do we see there is a new world coming?
 1. The faithful God has made this promise
 2. This is God's work - not ours
 3. This was purchased by Christ
- B. Are we being nourished by this hope?
 1. This should produce rejoicing now
 2. To do this we must think on it
 3. Do we long for removal of all problems?
 4. Do we long for the goodness of new H&E?
 5. The greatest of all stories/reality/eternal!!!
- C. Communion - nourishing our soul in hope

The New Heavens and Earth

Isaiah 65:17-25
 Revelation 21:1-5
 December 27, 2009
 Communion
 Romans 15:13

And as He spoke He no longer looked to them like a Lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”

CS Lewis - The Last Battle

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Romans 8:18-23

On this **mountain** the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines. 7 On this **mountain** he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; 8 **he will swallow up death forever**. The Sovereign LORD will **wipe away the tears from all faces**; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

Isaiah 25:6-8

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

Galatians 6:15