

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: 9a  
The Incredible Journey  
Of The  
Church Age Believer  
May 9, 2003

INTRO: Where are we in our series? Well, we are in the fourth and final phase of the journey of the Church Age Believer. This phase began with the wife of Christ, the Church, returning from heaven to earth in the New Jerusalem. We have looked at the new heavens and what is changed and what remains unchanged. We are looking at the new earth, and who and what will be there. We saw that God the Father comes to dwell in the New Jerusalem on the new earth. Jesus Christ will be there. Angels will be there and all saved mankind will be there. All the saved of all ages will dwell on this new earth.

We said in our last message that if there are multiplied millions of people on the new earth, and there will be, it seems necessary that there will be government. We may wish we had come to a time where it would not be necessary to have government. We are not really tired of government. What we are tired of is bad government.

Some years ago now, we studied the Old Testament tabernacle at our mid-week Bible study. In this study we have learned the significance of various numbers. We found that the number 12 speaks of government. The number 12 occurs 8 times in chapter 21 of Revelation. Why is this city 12,000x12,000,x12,000? Why 12 gates? Why 12 angels? Why twelve tribes, 12 apostles, 12 pearls, 12 kinds of stones, 12 kinds of fruits on the tree of life? It may well be to show the perfect government of the new heaven and new earth.

You might ask if the Bible actually says there will be government on this new earth? Well, look at 22:3. Here we are told that the throne of God and of the lamb will be there. Now what is a throne but the seat of government. It is evident that the world and the entire universe will be ruled right from this throne which is situated in the New Jerusalem. And so, we want to see who is the governing head of this new government; who are the governmental representatives; and who are the governed subjects.

3) Government

a) The governing head

To find who the governing head, who the real king is, we turn to Revelation 22:3. "And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it..." We note first that the throne of God and the throne of the Lord Jesus are in the new Jerusalem. A throne is a sign of governmental authority. It is a place from which rulership is exercised. It speaks of government.

I believe God Almighty is the ultimate head of this government and Jesus Christ is the King of Kings under Him. Now what form of government is that? Is this a democracy? No. It is a theocracy. It is rule by God, not people. This is the ultimate kind of government.

b) The governmental representatives

Furthermore, it seems that under the governmental head will be delegated representatives ruling over various parts of God's kingdom. We find this in 21:24 (read). It is debated if these kings are people who were kings before the new earth came into being, or if they are kings in the new earth. I believe these are people who are appointed by the Lord as kings for the inhabitants of the new earth. I only stand to reason that if there are nations on the new earth, as our verse said, that there will be leaders of those nations, and in verse 24 these leaders are called kings.

c) The governed subjects

Who are the governed subjects of the new earth? Well, look at 21:24 (read). And who are these? Well, they are all the saved of the time before the Church age. That is all saved OT people (read Matt. 8:5-11). Then it will be all the saved of the Church age. That will include such people as the Apostles; all the converts they had. So

there will be the Philipppians, the Ephesians etc... Then there will be people like George Blaurock, Conrad Grebal, Menno Simons, etc... All the saved of the Church age will be there. Then there will be all the saved of the tribulation period. How many is that? (Read Rev. 7:9-14). But that is not all. During the millennium the world will be repopulated and I suppose literally millions upon millions of people will be saved in that age. Now, all of these are the nations of the saved on the new earth.

Well, we have seen that God Almighty, Jesus Christ, angels, and saved man will be on the new earth. Now we have seen that there will be government on this new earth. What else will be there?

#### 4) Physical sustenance

Now I want to remind us that all the people on this new earth will have bodies. And it appears that these bodies will need food and water just as they do now. You remember that after the Lord Jesus was resurrected and He had a new body that He ate fish and bread with the disciples. The resurrected body still has the capacity to eat and drink and it appears from the book of Revelation that this body will need to be sustained by food.

Look first at Revelation 22:1. Here we have the water of life. So it is evident that there will be water on this new earth and that man needs this water to live, for it is called the water of life. This water which flows from the throne of God is called the water of life. It would seem that it is life giving water.

One of the big questions of some time for scientists has been whether there is vegetation on mars. At present they have a little land rover doing exploratory work on mars. I do not know what all they have found as yet. Though I don't know about that, I do know there will be vegetation on the new earth. Look not at 22:2.

John writes of trees that yield fruit every month.

I wonder how many of you like gardening? Look at these trees. They bear 12 fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. What kind of productivity is this! At creation, in the Garden of Eden, there was a tree of life. Here we have trees of life! And so there are the water of life and the trees of life. Now notice in verse 2 as well, that these are, "...for the healing of the nations." This word *healing* is the Greek word *therapia* from which we get *therapy*. Vines says it primarily denotes care or attention. Since it is the tree of life, we get the idea that it is attention in the area of health and I think this word *healing* would probably be better translated *health*. Since there will be no sickness there, there will not be need for healing, but there will be the necessity to remain healthy, and that is what the water of life and the trees of life will do.

#### 5) Work

I gather from these chapters in Revelation that there will be work on this new earth. In 22:3 we are told that His servants will serve Him. The word servants is *douloi*, referring to bondservants or slaves. But they are not forced servants but servants who have chosen to serve because they love their Master. The service they do is spiritual service (*latreuo*, as used in Rom. 12:1).

Now I do not doubt that there will be other physical work as well. For example, there will be a need to get the water of life. There will be the need to harvest the trees of life. You see, work is not a curse. When God created Adam and Eve He gave them work to do. That was in a perfect world, before sin entered. Work was not a curse, it was a joy. Now I know a lot of you like work. I know some of you like farming and others like gardening. This is the kind of world Adam and Eve came into. Work only became

a drag when sin entered the world and weeds and thorns and thistles started to grow (See Gen. 3:17-19).

I wonder if you farmers or gardeners can imagine an earth without weeds? I don't suppose anyone will ever have experienced complete satisfaction in their work until they come to this new earth. Even here on this earth, how fulfilling can work be at times. I expect it will be fulfillment to the ultimate on the new earth.

b. What will not be there

Well, having seen some of the things that will be there, and how encouraging that is; we will now look at some things that won't be there. This is also very encouraging. Except for the first one?

1) No more sea (21:1)

The first thing John noted about this new earth is that there were no sea. When it first dawned on me what this might mean, I found it disappointing. After initially speaking on this I have rethought and considered if this actually means what it sounds like it means. When I originally spoke on this I said the Scriptures said there would be no more seas. I have discovered that I was in error. I want you to look at it in 21:1. It says, "And there was no more sea." Did you notice that it is singular? There is no more sea, singular? My next question was, does the Bible refer to the oceans as seas, plural? The Greek word for sea here is *thalasa*. The plural is *thalasas*. Well, the NT never uses the plural, so I checked the Greek version of the OT and we find the plural right in the beginning. Listen to Genesis 1:10, "And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. There it is, *thalasas*, plural.

So, the fact that it is in the singular indicates that it does not refer to all the seas. Second, in the original the word "sea"

has the article before it. Here is how it reads, "And THE sea was no more." This clearly indicates that a specific sea is intended. The question now is, which sea in Scripture could be referred to as THE sea? Doubtless, it would have to be either the Sea of Galilee or the Mediterranean Sea. And in studying these two seas, I think that with little room for question, it refers to the Mediterranean Sea. This sea is referred to as THE GREAT SEA 13 times in the OT. And it is referred to as "the" sea in such Scriptures as (Gen. 49:13).

And what is most interesting, when you measure the New Jerusalem and place it on the map, this city will cover most of the Mediterranean Sea. So, I now believe that this sea will have to make way for the New Jerusalem.

But, let us look at a few more things that will not be there.

2) No more tears (21:4 read)

What a word is this? No more tears! The Greek is so descriptive here for it says God will wipe away every teardrop. What is the significance of a teardrop? Man is a tremendously complex being. One of those deeply complex parts of mankind is the area of the emotions. The relation between the soul of man and the body is very interesting. Man's face is the mirror of the soul. When we meet one another we do not look at the other person's feet or hands, we look at their face. It is the mirror of the person. That is where the person's soul is displayed.

When the soul is saddened you can tell by the face of the person. When the soul reaches a very high point of sadness the whole body is affected. Millions of messages occur in the body, especially in the brain. Information comes to the brain from one of the five senses. Maybe you picked up the telephone and just received some very sad news. By the sense of sound the message comes to the soul. From the

saddened soul the message is immediately transported via neuro-transmitters which are electrical charges, to those areas that are affected by sadness. From the brain these messages go to the lacrimal nerve. There is an area where tears collect. The lacrimal sac fills up and when it is full it spills over through the lacrimal ducts. You can usually tell sadness by the face but heightened sadness is easily recognized by the visible signs of tears. If the news is extremely saddening it will evoke another physical response which moves beyond tears. We call it crying. And there are various kinds of crying. From these kinds of crying one can tell the affect the news has had on the soul. Tears seem to be a release to the body for news too sad for the soul. It is something like a radiator cap. When the temperature of a motor becomes too great this cap will let off the pressure.

The first thing God will do in eternity will be to wipe away all the tears. You see, tears come after bad things happen. Many bad things have happened in this sinful world since man sinned but when we arrive at the new earth God will wipe away all tears. It speaks of the past.

It may well be that what this speaks of is that God will take away all those things that evoke sadness. Isaiah 65:17 says these interesting words, "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come to mind." When something is remembered or comes to mind that is the first step in producing tears.

Imagine for a moment eternity in light of no more tears.

But that is not all. There will be:

3) No more death (21:4)

Death is basically separation. Physical death is the separation of soul and spirit from the body and it is physical death that is in view

in this passage. Then there is spiritual death and eternal death. On the new earth there will be no more death. The tears that have been shed on this present earth would make an ocean. When man sinned the only hope for man to gain something better would come through death. If it were not for death man would have to live with tears and sorrow and crying forever. Through death a better life is possible. But how great will be the time when death will be no more.

4) No more sorrow (21:4)

The Greek word here is *penthos*, meaning to mourn. On the new earth there will not be one sad life or one sad moment. Everyone will achieve to perfection that which God originally designed him or her for.

On the new earth there will be:

5) No more crying (21:4)

I view crying as the physical manifestation that shows the greatest extent of sorrow or sadness. In this verse we have already seen that God wipes away the tears that have been evoked by or on this present earth. But He will not only take care of the past. Now He takes care of all those things that can evoke tears and ultimately crying.

Let this news of "no more" fill your soul this morning in anticipation of the new earth. I am not telling you fairy tales. This is the message of God's Word.

Then there will be:

6) No more pain (21:4)

That is encouraging isn't it. Just think, no more going to the doctor and no more needles. Well, some of us find those worse than others. Do you remember the "olden" days, when the nurse would go from house to house. Mom would



have to come dig us out of the hay, chase us out from behind the pig trough, and any other good hiding place. But, no more needles. There will be no more pain; physically, spiritually, or emotionally.

7) No more sin, sinners or Satan (21:8)

Sin is not finished, not even in the millennium. But when the new earth becomes man's habitation, sin on earth is forever finished. That is why there are no more tears. That is why there is no more sorrow. That is why there is no more crying. And all unrepentant sinners cannot inherit the kingdom of God. And so all of these, including Satan, will not be on the new earth. They will be burning for all eternity in hell.

On this new earth there will be no more tears; no more death; no more sorrow; no more crying; no more sin, or sinners or Satan. But that is not all. There will be:

8) No more curse (22:3)

Vines dictionary says of this word that it denotes by metonymy an accursed thing. Not the curse itself but the thing accursed. We might say then that there will not be a single accursed thing on the new earth. The Greek word is *katanathema*. It has as its root the word *anathema*. In Galatians 1:8 those who preach a false Gospel are spoken of as anathema, cursed.

On this present earth there are many things that are forbidden because they are anathema. On the new earth nothing will be forbidden. There will be no false gods; no false Gospels, and no false teachers.

CONCL: In this fourth phase, we will continue our journey on the new earth. The Scriptures tell us, "And, You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands; They will perish, but you remain; And they will grow old like a garment; Like a cloke You will fold them up, And they will be changed (Heb. 1:10-11), Nevertheless

we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (2 Pet. 3:13). And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away (Rev. 21:1). And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things are passed away (Rev. 21:4). He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son (Rev. 21:6).