

# Blessings and Curses

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*Revelation 21:5-8*

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about a home in eternity, *Illustrations Unlimited*, p. 174, #11.
  - 1. That is the difference between those who die in Christ and those who die apart from him.
  - 2. Those of us who die in Christ have hope beyond the grave, and those who die apart from Christ have no hope beyond the grave.
- B. Tonight, our text tells us about blessings for the faithful and curses for the unfaithful in eternity.

## BLESSINGS FOR THE FAITHFUL, vv. 5-7

- A. God declared, “Behold, I make all things new,” v. 5a.
  - 1. We should not at all be surprised to find God declaring that he makes all things new, for he has just created a new heaven and a new earth.
  - 2. But, instead of just a new heaven and a new earth, God makes all things new.
    - a. His interaction with man is new, for God now dwells with man (v. 3).
    - b. The nature of man has become new- 1 Cor. 15:51-53.
    - c. The interaction of man with man is new- man will no longer say good-bye to one another, there will be no more sin involved in man’s interaction with one another.
- B. God instructed John, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” v. 5b.
  - 1. God wanted those who read this to understand that these things are going to come to pass — this is not make-believe, this is not pie-in-the-sky theology, this is going to occur.
  - 2. The words of God are trustworthy and true.
    - a. God “never lies” (Tit. 1:2).
    - b. “It is impossible that God should prove false” (Heb. 6:18).
  - 3. Thus, everything we read here about the new heaven and the new earth is true and shall not be proven false.
- C. God told John, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end,” v. 6a.
  - 1. “It is done” is literally it has become, or it has come to be.
    - a. The verb is the perfect active indicative of the verb meaning “to become.” The perfect refers to an action that occurred in the past tense that has continuing results in the present.
    - b. Thus, the things in verse five being described as “trustworthy and true” will continue after the end of this world.
  - 2. God is the Alpha and the Omega.
    - a. God is the Alpha, the beginning. He is the source and origin of all things — he is the Creator of all that is.
    - b. God is the Omega, the end. He is the goal or aim of all things — He will be glorified when all things end.
- D. God promised to give the thirst from the fountain of the water of life without payment. v. 6b.
  - 1. In the arid climate of the near east, cool water would have been quite refreshing.
  - 2. This water is the water of life.
    - a. This is water that sustains life and allows the residents of the new Jerusalem to have eternal life.
    - b. An interesting note is that even in heaven, we will need God’s help to be able to live forever — it’s not that we can just go to heaven and live forever — we must have access to this water of life.

3. God will give those who thirst this water without payment.
  - a. Throughout Scripture, we are informed that salvation is free.
    - 1) “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come. buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Is. 55:1 ).
    - 2) Christians “are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24).
    - 3) “Let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price” (Rev. 22: 17).
  - b. The point is that there is nothing we can do to merit eternal life — God has paid the price.
- E. The one who conquers shall have his heritage, and God will be his God and he shall be God’s son, v. 7.
  1. The one who overcomes will have his heritage.
    - a. The heritage the one who overcomes will receive certainly refers to the blessings Jesus pronounced upon those who overcome.
      - 1) “To him who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7).
      - 2) “He who conquers shall not be hurt by the second death” (Rev. 2:11).
      - 3) “To him who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone, which no one knows except him who received it” (Rev. 2:17).
      - 4) Rev. 2:26-28.
      - 5) “He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels” (Rev. 3:5).
      - 6) Rev. 3:12.
      - 7) “He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my father on his throne (Rev. 3:21).
    - b. Those who remained faithful in the face of persecution would receive great blessings at the hand of God.
  2. God will be his God and he shall be God’s son.
    - a. This is an old promise of Scripture.
      - 1) To Abraham, God said. “I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you” (Gen. 17:7).
      - 2) To David, God said, concerning Solomon: “I will be his father, and he shall be my son” (2 Sam. 7:14).
      - 3) “In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith” (Gal. 3:26).
    - b. This is obviously a promise of intimacy — God will care intimately for those who are in the new Jerusalem, just as a Father does his son.
- F. What blessings are available to the faithful!

## **CURSES FOR THE UNFAITHFUL, v 8**

- A. God lists those who will not be in the new Jerusalem --
  1. The cowardly will not be there.
    - a. These cowardly undoubtedly refer to those who were persecuted and gave up their faith instead of their lives. They couldn’t take the pressure, and they gave up.
    - b. There may be some among us who are cowardly.
      - 1) We’re afraid to take a stand for the right thing at work, at school, at home, or wherever.
      - 2) We’re not willing to take a stand and let the chips fall where they may.
      - 3) Let us not be cowardly, or we shall not enter the new Jerusalem.

2. The faithless will not be there.
    - a. These faithless are those who gave up their faith during duress; these aren't atheists — they are Christians who turned back.
    - b. We dare not be faithless — we dare not turn back from our faith.
  3. The polluted will not be there.
    - a. The term “pollute” means to defile, to make detestable, to commit abomination.
    - b. The word indicates that the very nature of these individuals had been polluted with the abominations they practiced in their lifetimes.
  4. Murderers will not be there.
    - a. This could very well refer to those who murdered Christians simply because they were Christians.
    - b. But, no unrepentant murderers will have their part in the new Jerusalem.
  5. The sexually immoral will not be there.
    - a. This may indicate ritual sexual immorality where individuals were sexually immoral as part of their worship to pagan deities.
    - b. But, we know it to be the case that the sexually immoral displease God and will not have a part in the kingdom of God.
      - 1) “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18).
      - 2) “This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality” (1 Thess. 4:3).
    - c. Sexual immorality is a broad word encompassing all forms of sexual sin.
  6. Sorcerers will not be there.
    - a. Sorcery has always been forbidden by God.
      - 1) “You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying” (Lev. 19:26).
      - 2) “There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer” (Deut. 18:10).
    - b. Sorcery calls upon individuals to depend upon magical abilities rather than upon God.
      - 1) If you're having a problem at work and you can go to the sorcerer to get the problem fixed, why pray?
      - 2) If you're about to have an operation and you can go to the sorcerer and be healed, why depend on God?
  7. Idolaters will not be there — Those who worshiped the emperor rather than God will not enjoy the new Jerusalem.
  8. Liars will not be there.
    - a. This could possibly refer to those who denied they were Christians when asked by the governing authorities.
    - b. Liars will not have their part in the new Jerusalem, for lying is from the devil (Jn. 8:44).
- B. Instead of being in the new Jerusalem, these individuals will have “Their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”
1. We need to be certain that we are not cowardly, unbelieving, polluted, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, or liars.
  2. Do you need to come to put these sins —or some other sin — away from you?