

# ***Finding Hope in Christ's Return (Chapters 19-20)***



## **Hope in God's Justice (19:1-5)**

**\*John sees a great multitude rejoicing over Babylon's destruction, but we are still surrounded by Babylon's influence and tempted by her seduction.**

**\*Psalm 73-the Psalmist Asaph sees what seems like injustice all around. He sees the wicked prosper while the rest of mankind is stricken with trouble. Yet he finds peace in focusing on the end of the story, knowing that the wicked will be destroyed and swept away.**

**\*Even if the wicked never have to answer for their sins here on earth, we can find hope in the fact that one day they will stand before God and answer to Him. God's justice will be complete. We can rejoice even now with the multitude in heaven, worshiping and praising God, proclaiming, "Amen. Hallelujah!"**

## **Hope in Our Marriage (19:6-10)**

**\*Next, John hears a voice announcing the marriage of the Lamb to His Bride. Marriage between a man and a woman is intended to be a picture of our relationship with Christ, as we see from Ephesians 5:22-33.**

**\*On our own, all we have to wear to the wedding are dirty, filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Jesus makes sure that we are adequately clothed. He washes us clean and dresses us in His own righteousness. We see in Revelation 19:8 that it is granted the Bride to wear fine linen, bright and pure.**

**\*Although we are provided with the clothing, we must do our part in putting it on. The Bride has to make herself ready for the wedding (v.7).**

**\*To prepare for the wedding, we must accept Christ's work for us on the cross and be saved. We must also keep ourselves pure out of love for our Groom.**

**\*Our hope is in the fact that, one day, we will be united with Christ in marriage. He will be able to meet our deepest longings. He will never disappoint us. He will love us unconditionally, and our marriage to Christ will last forever and ever.**

## **Hope in Christ's Victory (19:11-21)**

**\*Next, John sees heaven opened and a rider on a white horse appear, along with the armies of heaven (v.14). This rider is Christ, but He's dressed for war, not a wedding. There are a few things He must take care of before the marriage can take place. He's prepared the Bride for the wedding; now He must prepare for her the perfect home.**

**\*Jesus is described as having eyes like flames (v.12), which shows that He can see and judge the human heart. He's wearing many crowns (v.12), indicating His authority to judge. His robe is dipped with blood, likely the blood of His enemies (v.13), which is an allusion to Isaiah 63:3 .**

**\*The purpose of Jesus' second coming: He is coming in righteousness to judge and make war (v.11); He will strike down the nations, and rule them with a rod of iron (v.15) (see Psalm 2:9); He will also trample the unrighteous with the fury of God's wrath, as grapes trampled in a winepress (v.15).**

**\*For the Bride of Christ, His coming will be a glorious celebration, something to look forward to. But for those outside of Christ, it will be a horrific time of judgment and punishment (Rev. 19:17-18).**

**\*Then, John's attention turns to the beast and the false prophet with their armies gathered to make war against Christ and His army. There will not be an actual battle. Jesus will do our fighting for us, and He will be victorious (v.20-21).**

**\*Our hope is found in Christ's victory. The days of the beast and the false prophet are numbered. No matter how bad things get, we can look forward to the day when there is no more oppression and persecution, when there are no lies being told. Instead, we will be able to freely worship our God in in the truth of His word.**

## **Hope in Christ's Reign (20:1-6)**

**\*John sees an angel holding a key to the bottomless pit and a chain. He comes down, binds Satan, and throws him into a pit, where he is sealed until the thousand years are ended. While in the pit, Satan can no longer deceive the nations.**

**\*Then, John sees thrones for those given authority to judge. He sees the souls of those killed for their faith. They came to life and reigned with Christ for the thousand years.**

**\*Three Millennial Views:**

**1. Premillennialists: View the events of this passage after the second coming from Rev. 19:11-21. According to this view, Jesus' return happens before the thousand-year reign, which will be a period of earthly peace and prosperity.**

**2. Amillennialists: View the Millennium as a picture of the period that we're in now, from the resurrection to the return of Christ. Chris is currently reigning; Satan was bound by Jesus' death and resurrection so his power is limited. The thousand years is symbolic rather than literal.**

**3. Postmillennialists: Believe that the church will experience a drastic expansion as the gospel spreads in a great revival.**

## **Hope in Satan's Defeat (20:7-10)**

**\*At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be released for one last rebellion, where he will gather an army from the four corners of the earth.**

**\*Gog and Magog allude to Ezekiel 38-39, and represent the final enemies of God.**

**\*We will not fight in a literal battle. Although Satan's army is huge, they are no match for God. Fire comes down from heaven and consumes the evil army, and Satan is thrown into the lake of fire with the beast and false prophet.**

**\*We can find hope in knowing that Satan will ultimately be defeated. He can try his best to overcome the forces of God, yet he doesn't stand a chance against God's power and might. So, no matter how wicked the world around us becomes, no matter how many battles Satan wins in this world, we know that God will win the war.**

## **Hope in God's Judgment (20:11-15)**

**\*John sees all of the dead standing before God, who has some books before Him. These books records every deed done by every person who has ever lived. God also has before Him the book of life, which contains all the names of those covered by the blood of Christ. If your name is in the book of life, you are granted entrance to heaven because your sins have been forgiven. If your name is not in the book of life, then you are judged according to the deeds in the other books, and you are condemned because of your sins.**

**\*Thinking about judgment may cause fear in those who are not Christians. For those of us in Christ, however, it can be a source of hope because we can be confident that our names are written in the book of life. We can know beyond a doubt that our entrance into heaven was secured by the blood of the Lamb. We can look forward to a day when all evil is removed from the earth, preparing the way for the new heaven and the new earth, where all things are restored to the way God intended them to be.**

# Hope in the Restoration of All Things (Chaps. 21-22)



## The Theme of these chapters (21:1, 5-6)

\*God is declaring His purpose in purging the world of evil...to make all things new.

\*God's plan for restoring the earth is to create a new heaven and new earth.

\*The sea will be no more. For the people in John's day, the sea represented a place of chaos and danger. It's where the beast lived, so it's associated with evil. So, no more sea means no more evil.

## The Restoration of Marriage (21:2-4)

\*First, we see that God will restore His relationship with His people to the way it was meant to be. Here that relationship is depicted as marriage. Earlier, we saw that the Bride was prepared for the wedding, but that Christ had to remove the last of the evildoers before the wedding could take place. Now, Satan has been defeated and all the wicked have been judged. So, it's time for the wedding to begin. We see the Bride coming down, here described as the city of Jerusalem, but still referring to the people of God (v.2).

\*God's vow, His promise to His bride, is that He will dwell with them and comfort them, removing anything that causes pain or sadness.

\*We can find great hope in knowing that one day we will dwell in the presence of God forever. Sin and sadness will never again plague us, and we can enjoy an intimate relationship with our God for all eternity.

## The Restoration of Our Inheritance (21:7-8)

\*Throughout Scripture God has promised an inheritance to His people, and it's often tied to land. Adam and Eve were given land in the Garden, which they lost due to their rebellion. God called Abraham to go to the land that He would give him. The Israelites were also promised a land.

\*The inheritance is more than just the land itself; it also refers to the blessing and riches that God would pour out on His people while in that land.

\*The Israelites' Promised Land was foreshadowing the ultimate Promised Land that we are promised as our inheritance. One day Jesus, our greater Joshua, will lead us into the land of which the promised land of Canaan was a mere shadow.

\*Our hope is in the fact that our heavenly Father has something much, much better prepared for us than even the best things we have here on earth. We can eagerly await the day that we leave this world behind and receive our inheritance as sons (and daughters) of God.

## **The Restoration of the Community of God (21:9-14)**

**\*Next, John describes the Bride in terms of a city, the holy city of Jerusalem.**

**\*High walls surround the city, symbolizing the security that can be found inside the city. In this community, there will be nothing to fear.**

**\*There will be four gates, each with the name of one of the 12 tribes of Israel. The wall has 12 foundations, each with a name of one of the 12 apostles. This shows the unified nature of God's community. There will not be two communities: one for Old Testament Israel and one for the New Testament Church. Believers from all of history will live together in this one perfect community.**

**\*Also, there are gates facing north, south, east, and west, indicating that members of this community will be brought in from all over globe. This will be a multiethnic, multicultural community.**

**\*We can find hope in the fact that in the New Jerusalem, we will experience community the way God intended. We will not have to live in fear that other people will cause us harm. Race and skin color will no longer matter. We will live in peace with everyone, and together we will reflect the beauty and glory of God.**

## **The Restoration of the Temple (21:15-27)**

**\*John writes that the length, width, and height are all equal (v.16), which actually makes the city a cube. That's significant, because in the tabernacle built by the Israelites in the wilderness, the Most Holy Place was the part of the tabernacle where God came down to dwell with His people. It was a perfect cube. When Solomon built the Temple later, the dimensions of this Most Holy Place was still cubic.**

**\*The whole earth will become the Most Holy Place. God will dwell in the midst of His people.**

**\*In the Old Testament, the temple was meant to be a holy place where a holy God could dwell amongst an unholy people. In the New Jerusalem, a temple is no longer necessary, because everyone will be perfectly holy.**

**\*Also, there will be no sun or moon because God and Jesus will provide their light to the city (v.23-24). Throughout Scripture, light is associated with righteousness. So, everyone in this city will walk in the light of Christ, in perfect righteousness.**

**\*Our hope is found in knowing that one day we will dwell in the perfect light of God's holiness and righteousness. We will enjoy God's presence in His Holy Temple where nothing unclean can ever affect us again.**

## **The Restoration of the Garden (22:1-5)**

**\*Finally, in Revelation 22:1-5, John describes the garden that's in the city. This garden will have a river flowing through it, the river of life that flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb (v.1).**

**\*The heavenly garden will also have in it the tree of life (v.2), and we will all be able to eat of it. The fact that it yields twelve different fruits, one each month, symbolizes that the tree doesn't just provide—it will provide complete and abundant satisfaction. The leaves of this tree are also healing (v.2).**

**\*The effects of the curse will have been undone. Things will go back to the way they were created to be in the original garden, before the Fall. God will dwell in the garden on His throne, and His servants will worship Him and the Lamb face-to-face. There will be no more night, or darkness, which is symbolic of unrighteousness.**

**\*We can find hope in the promise that there will come a day when our bodies will no longer be susceptible to illness. There's coming a day when death will no longer be a threat. We will eat of the tree of life and drink from the river of life and live forever, completely healed and completely satisfied in this garden of God.**

## **Epilogue (22:6-21)**



**From this passage we are reminded...**

- 1. Of the trustworthiness of the book (v.6).**
  
- 2. Of the importance of keeping the words of the book (v.7).**
  
- 3. That God and the Lamb are the only ones worthy of our worship (v.8-9).**
  
- 4. To persevere in spite of opposition (v.10-11).**
  
- 5. That judgment is coming (v.12-15).**
  
- 6. Of who Christ is (v.16).**
  
- 7. To invite others to the marriage supper (v.17).**
  
- 8. To be faithful to the Word (v.18-19).**
  
- 9. That the grace of God will sustain us until Christ comes again (v.20-21).**