

# The New Heaven & new Earth - Life in the Coming Kingdom

By Paul Herring

*The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire.... Everything will be destroyed in this way... That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. (2 Peter 3:5-13)*

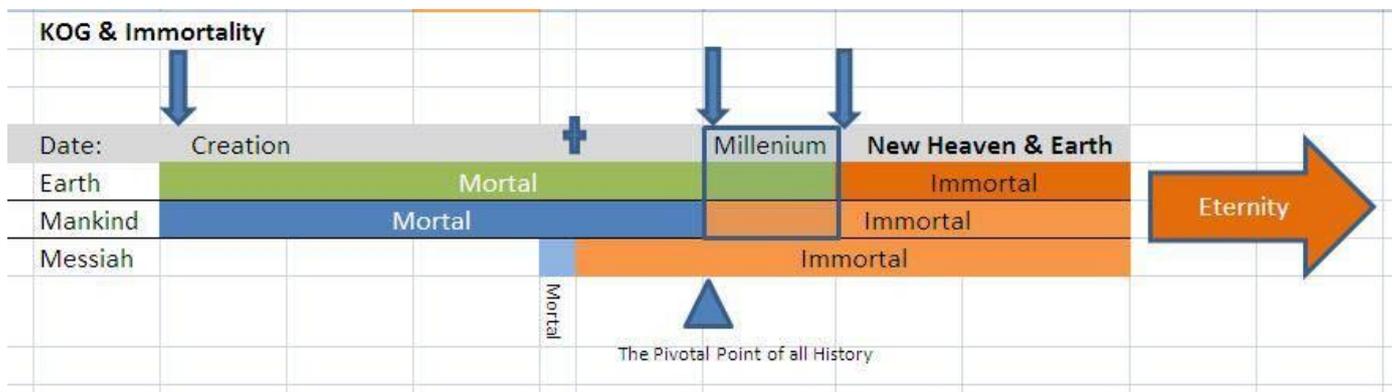
Today I want to excite you and tomorrow to challenge you!

**“Seek first the Kingdom of God (KoG)”** (Matt 6:33, Luke 12:31)

**Why?** – if you don’t know what the KoG is and what its value is why would you – I wish to try to answer this question today so you will desire to be obedient to this scripture.

I do not wish at this time to focus at all on any issues of Amillennialism (the argument that the KoG is already here) or the so-called Millennial reign and all the associated theological debate over this somewhat debatable time after the initial return of our Messiah.

Much of what I share about our transformed natures may also be valid during the transitional time (the Millennial Reign) but by trying to focus on the ‘new heaven and new earth’ I hope to eliminate some of the less well supported arguments and the more contentious issues.



Firstly, let me summarise what I want to present in some detail as time permits.

## 7 characteristics of the new creation – the new heaven & earth:

1. Radically different creation laws and constants (no thermodynamics, no gravity, no electromagnetism);
2. no evil, no death, no decay;
3. no regrets, no grief, no pain;
4. No darkness, no shadows, possibly no sun and no stars, and yet light everywhere;
5. Possibly a different dimensionality i.e the ability to move in more than the current 4 dimensions;
6. Unimaginable splendor, joy, beauty, peace, and love;
7. Wholly meaningful and satisfying work.

## 7 things that we will be, as we will be in the likeness of Yeshua:

1. immortal beings of glory;
2. **Completed** – we the bride will consummate our relationship with our bridegroom; we will for the first time in our lives be truly and fully complete, perfected people made in the image of God; **Fully alive and capable** – no handicaps; no depression; no sin around us so no need for sorrows or grief; no longer will we see innocent blood being shed and feeling impotent and unable to adequately respond;
3. able to enjoy eating without needing to for sustenance;

4. able to travel in some extra-dimensional manner that allows us to be transported from one location to another instantly and even move through locked doors or walls
5. able to communicate with our 'ministering spirits'; the 'messengers of God' (angels)
6. People of inexhaustible creativity – without tiring; without exhaustion; without aging and loss of faculties
7. Identified by a new name; something that most likely will fully identify our uniqueness and our value before our heavenly God

### **7 things that we will experience in the Kingdom of God;**

1. Fellowship with God & see the Creator in His fullness; see God face to face!
2. Touch and communicate face-to-face with our Messiah
3. A place of no regrets, no grief, no permanent pain;
4. Reunion with long dead, departed loved ones
5. Meet & converse with the hero's of the faith, from Abraham to the Apostle Paul
6. Rewards – for over-comers; for profitable servants;
7. Power, possessions and pleasures!

### **7 things that we will do in the Kingdom of God:**

1. Glorify and worship our God and our Messiah and have fellowship with them
2. Have authority over the new creation
3. Eat and have many banquets – for pleasure and relationships
4. create – cook, compose, write, paint, carve, build
5. play music, games, sport; and laugh – joy, fun, excitement!
6. travel and experience new wonders of our infinitely amazing God
7. Continually learn more about our God, who can never be exhausted

### **A New Creation?**

We read in 2 Peter 3:10 [and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved,....](#)"

Does this refer to just the earth; to the whole universe or it is perhaps a metaphor for the political and economic world as we know it? Some scholars argue that the only verse that definitely speaks of the time after the Millennial Reign of Messiah Jesus is 1 Cor 15: 28 [Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.](#)

(Refer to appendix for a discussion regarding some other scriptures that relate to this event)

Isaiah 65:17-25 ["For behold, I \*\*create\*\*<sup>1</sup> \*\*new heavens and a new earth\*\*, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I \*\*create\*\*; for behold, I \*\*create \(bara\) Jerusalem\*\* to be a joy, and her \*\*people\*\* to be a gladness. ... \*\*The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,\*\*" – see also \[Isa 11\]\(#\)](#)

Isaiah 65:15 declares a time when **God ends His rest** and is again creating – as God has already created it all and is at rest (enjoying His Sabbath day); this appears to be implying a new creation. Also note that the phrase 'they shall not hurt or destroy' – this appears to refer to the animals and as such appears to require new laws of Physics and biology and hence is part of the 'new heaven & new earth'.

Romans 8:20-23 [For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> Hebrew word 'bara' used here – significant creation term – only used 3 times in Gen 1: verses 1, 21 & 27 – creation of universe; animals and mankind. All other creation events use the Hebrew word 'assah' which means make or shape. So note how significant then that its use here in Isa 65 refers to the new universe; the new holy city and the new humanity!

While there is some confusion and debate over this issue, I think it is reasonable to conclude from the dual revelations of the Scriptures and nature, that many of these passages do have an application to our life in the new creation – the new universe and also perhaps to much of what will transpire in the Kingdom of God the moment it is established. (I have discussed at a previous RF Quarterly meeting in some detail the scientific evidence that this universe is dying and does indeed have a use by date – see “*It’s Life Jim, but not as we know it*” on website)

The Genesis creation ‘week’ represents just part of God's creation activity.

His rest period, or cessation from creating, had a definite start point (Genesis 2:2-3)

Genesis 2:2-3 *And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*

and will have a definite end point. (There is much scientific evidence now that the last species created was humans.)

Many thousands of years have already passed between the morning and (future) evening of God's rest day. According to Revelation 21 and 22, once God fulfills all His purposes for the cosmos, He will replace it with an entirely new creation - a new heaven, new Earth, and new Jerusalem.

### **His Sabbath rest is scheduled to end!**

Redemption's story culminates in this triumphant shout: *“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away”* (Rev. 21:3-4).

What is meant by the term ‘old order’ as used here?

ESV: “...for the former things have passed away “

ASV: “...the first things are passed away. “

In what context does redeemed humanity enjoy the glories of face-to-face fellowship with God?

Is it here on this planet, in this universe?

Yes, the Kingdom of God will be inaugurated here on Earth with the return of our Messiah but there is more; much more!!

Revelation 21 identifies our ultimate destination as the “new heaven and new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. . . .”

He declares, “I am making everything new!” (Rev 21:5)

The fulfillment of Romans 8:18-22 arrives.

The whole “groaning” creation—its time and space, matter and energy, and “we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit”—receives deliverance from “bondage to decay.” (The second law of thermodynamics is removed.) Again, this necessitates more than a transformed social and political order.

Humanity's deliverance from death and decay is the focal point of the passage; however, I believe this the reference does encompass the entire physical universe, to which space, time, matter, and energy belong. The passage would seem to suggest, then, that the deliverance applies even to the physical laws, which began in effect at the cosmic creation event. (or at least when Adam & Eve sinned.<sup>2</sup> )

---

<sup>2</sup> The brilliant Prof. William Dembski's ‘*Christian Theodicy in Light of Genesis and Modern Science*’ is worth reading on this issue

The laws are, thus, finite and the One who created them brings them to an end as soon as their purpose is fulfilled.

The Psalmist declares:

*In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. Ps 102: 25-26*

Just how new is the new creation?

It is more than just a remake or renovation of the old creation. It is completely and radically new.

The laws of gravity, electromagnetism, and thermodynamics are gone. The text directly claims that everything associated with the second law of thermodynamics (decay, death, pain, etc.) never again exists. (Rev 21:4) [It seems most unlikely, from scriptures such as Isaiah 65:25, that this refers to mankind only]

Gravity as we know it may therefore no longer exist. (Gravity does not allow a structure of the dimensions ascribed to the New Jerusalem. – assuming this scripture has a literal as well as figurative fulfillment – Rev 21: 16-17. *The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia Its length and width and height are equal.* Roughly the size of Australia! Gravity would force it into a spherical shape.)

Electromagnetism as we know it no longer exists, for light in an electromagnetic environment coexists with darkness and shadows. The new creation will be filled with “light” without any darkness or shadows and without the need for such entities as the sun, stars, and light bulbs as sources of illumination. Rev 21:23, 22:4

Some of the characteristics of the new creation, as described in Revelation 21-22 and elsewhere in the Bible, therefore as first highlighted include:

1. Radically different creation laws and constants (no thermodynamics, no gravity, no electromagnetism);
2. no evil, no death, no decay;
3. no regrets, no grief, no pain;
4. No darkness, no shadows, possibly no sun and no stars, and yet light everywhere;<sup>3</sup>

#### **The New Heavens & the New Earth:<sup>4</sup>**

For Christians, *life in the Coming Age, in the Kingdom of God, life in intimate relationship with our Messiah and our God* is our true home. Paul said, "As long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. We would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:6-8).

In John 14 Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am you may be also."

When we get married and are due to have our first child, we prepare a place for her/him, fussing over wall paper and the cot and toys, etc.. The quality of the place limited only by the skills and resourcefulness of the parents. What kind of place will He have prepared for us?!

How keen are you to see the place He has prepared for you? The 'place' is the new Heaven and new Earth!

If a brother or sister in Christ is dying, we do what can be reasonably done medically, we never withhold essential care, we certainly never assist in suicide, but neither do we wish them to desperately cling to this life as if it were all there is.

Imagine a homeless street kid offered ownership of a huge mansion. He might cling to his boxes and garbage cans in a back alley—because he just doesn't know better.

---

<sup>3</sup> See the appendix on the issue of Old Testament verses that seem to suggest the Earth and universe last forever?

<sup>4</sup> About 2,600 years ago the prophet Jeremiah described the "fixed laws of heaven and earth" The "heavens and earth" phrase in biblical Hebrew is usually a reference to the entire physical universe.

Some here today may desire to have many houses; many new cars; and to retire early.

**These desires are too narrow; too lacking; too little and too short-sighted.**

Our Father is going to reward us with far, far more in the Coming Age. To desire such things now; in this age when they decay and when we cannot take them with us, is too desire too little; to lack vision and great dreams. Jesus says, "Come blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." Tailor made for us, to fulfill our God-given dreams and desires, to be our eternal home.

We won't just inherit a house and car or a farm or even a city but a kingdom and a new universe; a place where our God-given creativity can be fully exercised!<sup>5</sup>

The Futurist Andrew Zoli argues that thanks to science and IT what was once rare; expensive and difficult is now fast becoming abundant; cheap, and easy. He argues that we therefore need to develop our creativity. Surely, this is a glimpse of the KoG?

Home is acceptance, security, rest, refuge, deep personal relationships, great memories.

Home is where your treasure is. If the Coming Age of eternity is your home, then your heart and mind should focus on that place as your true treasure will be there.

Perhaps that answers the question of why the Kingdom of God means much less to us than the saints of God throughout the ages. We have tried to build our ultimate home without embracing God and His plan; a plan that involves His rule.

We have become citizens of this present age. Our hopes rise and fall with this present evil age, rather than being centered on the next, on the time when we will rule alongside our King.

**The question is, do you think and live as if this world, or the next world, was your home? Is your mind on this present age or on the Coming Kingdom of God? <sup>6</sup>**

The Bible teaches that for Christians, our home is with Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8). When he inaugurates the Kingdom of God; when he returns, we will be with him.

When we are resurrected and enter the enter the KoG we may immediately feel like home because we'll instinctively connect it to all we longed for and occasionally caught magical glimpses of in this age. <sup>7</sup>

But in the 'new heaven and new earth' we won't just look back; we'll look forward to and anticipate all that's ahead of us there. The longer we're in the new creation, the more memories we'll make and the more our new home will be...home. It won't lose its sense of comfort and security; its sense of home and heart - it will always gain more.

**How do we know what the new universe will be like? Our only totally dependable authority is the Word of God.**

We know that the Coming Age will be indescribably beautiful and wonderful. Think of snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef. It is absolutely breathtaking. The thousands of fish of every shape and size and colour, and just when you think you've seen the most beautiful creation here comes another one. It's endless.

---

<sup>5</sup> Speech to Ed-Tech 2007 by Andrew Zoli <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLj3CNHL-RI>

<sup>6</sup> **John Tillotson:** "He who provides for this life but takes no care for eternity is wise for a moment but a fool forever." **Martin Luther:** "There are two days on my calendar-'Today' and 'That Day.'" **Matthew Henry:** "It ought to be the business of every day to prepare for our last day."

**C. S. Lewis:** "If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

<sup>7</sup> Let me look back and tell you a little about when we first migrated to Queensland. It was Jan 5th 1989, we had hired a car at Brisbane Airport, staked it full of suitcases and 4 children and drove out to Kooralbyn. As we turned off the Mt Lindsay Highway my wife looked at the hills and trees and the brown, yellow and green and felt she was arriving home. She sensed that this was where her heart longed to be – a place of serenity, beauty, security and peace. Perhaps, her sense of arrival and 'home-coming' was a taste of what we will experience on 'That Day'.

Why should we expect the Coming Age to be any less incredible?

Simply imagine all the best this world currently has to offer and imagine this beauty without the corroding influence of sin and evil.

### **What is the Kingdom of God?**

Perhaps the Garden of Eden revisited but with one significant difference. No possibility of sinning and being cast out again. The last Adam, the Messiah Jesus has provided the way to restore the intimate relationship with God that the first Adam lost.

God Almighty is calling people to have the same faith that Jesus has, so that they may (in the future) enter into the Coming Age, the Kingdom of God on a renewed, redeemed earth. The lives we lead now through having the faith of Jesus may give us entry into this Kingdom - Jesus is preparing a place for his brothers and sisters (those who hear God's word and do it – Luke 8:21) in the future Coming Age.

Anthony Buzzard explains this well: *"The Gospel as Jesus preached it invites you also to dedicate the rest of your life to preparation for participation in the supervision of that future Kingdom on a renewed Earth. You are invited to be a co-heir of the Kingdom with the Messiah. In short, the Jesus of history, the original "theocrat", continues his work of recruiting members of his royal household, the theocratic party, who are urged to prepare themselves with divine help to take part in the Messiah's government of the future. This will be the first and only administration to rule the world successfully."* (from The Coming Kingdom of the Messiah' p7).

The 'new Jerusalem' is a city whose builder and maker is God. A city by definition consists of residences. People live together. No isolation.<sup>8</sup>

The area of the 'new Jerusalem' we are told in Revelation is roughly equivalent to Australia's land mass!

The base is 5.76 million square kms (Australia is approx. 6.4 million sq kms –so the 'new Jerusalem' is about 90%!! of the land mass of Australia). A city 2400 kms high--780,000 stories.

It would seem obvious that with the existing laws of Physics you cannot build a city that many stories high. In fact a shape of this size would be forced into a spherical shape by our current laws of Physics and would not be a cube.

But of course God is not limited by the laws he put in place and as I have indicated already it appears most likely that He will **create new laws** for the future new universe. (Isaiah 65:17 **"For behold, I create .."** if this is referring only to a new world order; a theocracy where Yeshua is King of Kings, is this really an example of Yahweh creating, because the new humanity seems to be assigned to our Messiah, as his creation – see Hebrews 1)

The City will have walls, gates, streets. Three gates on each side, 12 gates total. Access from all over the new earth.

No down payments, rates, mortgage payments, interest and insurance charges, electricity & gas bills.

And if you think you'd never like the city, it's because you're thinking of current cities, with litter and dirt and crime. We can expect the 'new Jerusalem' city will have all the freshness and vitality and openness of the country with all the vibrancy and interdependence and relationships of a city. And there will be no racial divisions between people.

Water: Perhaps no seas to separate people of earth but fresh water--a great river, flowing not stagnant.  
Trees: Tree of life, bears twelve fruits, leaves for healing, palm trees (palm branches). Vegetation--garden.  
Why not? Eden was a garden.

---

<sup>8</sup> The 'New Jerusalem' is described in Revelation. This book is largely full of symbolism and therefore, great care must be taken in reading descriptions written therein as literal rather than figurative. I would recommend HA Whittaker's book 'A Biblical Approach to Revelation' as the best I have read on this incredible portion of our Holy Scriptures. Thus, my views presented below about the size of our new City in the Coming Age are tentative and speculative. Regardless of how close or far the reality proves to be, we can be sure that our Father has a future in store for us far, far better than we can possibly imagine.

Thrones. Clothes. Precious stones and materials. Streets of gold--most costly materials of earth are common in the Kingdom of God.

Animals--certainly not incompatible with Paradise. Eden was full of them! Revelation talks of several angels riding out on horses. Elijah--chariots and horses of fire come to and from the throne of God. Elisha--God sent down horses and chariots and warriors.

Light. No secondary sources. No generators and power lines, even the sun is not necessary for illumination. Illumination right from God Himself.

There may be no night – certainly, not in the figurative sense of darkness being an absence of love and a presence of evil.

Physically, it could mean a variation in brightness; maybe a gentle suffused light.

But what will we do in the new universe? <sup>9</sup>

We will eat food, and have banquets. Christ promised that we would eat and drink at table with him; plus come from all over to sit at the table with Abraham and patriarchs. We will feast at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The Messianic Banquet is a very common theme throughout the TaNaK and especially in Isaiah and Ezekiel. It is really a term that refers to the Coming Age:

The banquet motif, referred to many times, in Isaiah is related to Yahweh's covenant with Israel (Deut 28:1-14; 30:1-20)<sup>10</sup>

The clearest passage of an eschatological meal and the most influential for later Jewish expectations is Isa 25:6-8.

*And the almighty Yahweh will prepare for all the nations on this mountain a banquet of rich foods, a banquet of preserved (wines), of spread out rich foods, (and) preserved refined (wines). And on this mountain he will swallow up the covering that is over all peoples, even the covering woven on all the nations. He will swallow up death forever. And the Lord Yahweh will wipe clean the tears from upon all faces. And the shame of his people he will remove from upon all the earth. For Yahweh has spoken.*

The context of the reversal of fortunes within which the two aspects of the messianic banquet theme occurs takes place on the earth. The nations who have oppressed Israel are punished and the righteous within Israel are blessed in their land. The righteous from among the other nations are called to worship Yahweh in Jerusalem which is the center of his earthly rule.

In Matt 8:11 “I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ...” the Gentiles sit at table with the Patriarchs in the future consummated kingdom.

---

<sup>9</sup> We won't float around and play harps and fold our wings. In fact, we won't have wings--not even all the 'messengers of God' or angels are said to have wings, and people are never said to. And Saint Peter isn't manning the gate either!

<sup>10</sup> In Deuteronomy 28-30, the nation is promised prosperity in the land if they obey Yahweh's commandments, but cursing if there is disobedience. The nation will suffer exile as a result of their disobedience, but later be restored and brought back from captivity (Deut 30:3). The restored nation will prosper even more than the former one (Deut 30:5). In Isaiah, the nation is promised bountiful provisions in their land as blessings that will follow repentance and obedience (Isa 1:19; 9:3; 27:2-6, 12, 13; 29:17-24; 30:19-29; 32:1-8; 49:6-13; 51:3; 55:1, 2). This bountiful future is directly related to the coming of the Messiah (Isa 9:6-7; 24:23; 11:1-5; 42:1-9; 49:6-13) and the gathering of dispersed Israel back into the land (Isa 24:23; 26:1-4, 15-19; 27:6, 13; 35:1-10; 43:5-7; 45:20; 49:8-13; 22-23; 51:11-14; 54:7; 60:4-14). Israel is protected and fed as the Messiah leads them back into the land of promised blessings (Isa 49:10). These messianic blessings are not exclusive to Israel, but include blessings upon all the nations (Isa 2:1-4; 9:1; 11:10-12; 18:7; 19:18-25; 25:6-8; 42:6, 7; 49:6, 7; 49:22, 23; 56:3; 61:7; 66:21). The nations have a participatory role in the return of Israel (Isa 2:1-4; 49:22-23; 56:3-8; 60:10, 11; 66:21). – see my commentary on Isaiah 49 for an expansion of these prophecies.

However, at the miraculous feedings (Matt 14:13-21; 15:32-38) the Messianic Banquet is actualized into the present aspect of the kingdom as proof that Jesus is the truly the Messiah.

The inclusion of the Canaanite woman as a participant of the children's table (Matt 15:21-28) also actualizes the Messianic Banquet with Gentile participation in the current age.

Some also argue that the image of the Messianic Banquet in the Parable of the Marriage Feast (Matt 22:1-14) is best understood as the present kingdom age in which many are sitting down enjoying the Lord's blessings in the Church awaiting a final entrance of the King for judgment. Personally, I can appreciate that for the time that the Messiah walked amongst the disciples that this understanding would have been valid as did not our Lord say: *Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.* Matt 9:15.

But I do not believe we are truly experiencing the Messianic Banquet at this time. We are certainly not sitting down with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob, as our Lord told us we would at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Instead, despite the protestation of some of my Pentecostal friends, who seem able to deny the reality of the world around them, we now live in a time of evil and tribulation, a time without the physical presence of our bridegroom - but our sorrow will turn to joy! *Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy* John 16:20

*Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. <sup>14</sup> I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the LORD* Jer 31:13-14

But it does seem clear that Matthew uses the Jewish expectations of the Messianic Banquet to affirm that the Messiah has arrived and that the time of The Banquet, the Marriage Supper approaches.<sup>11</sup>

Isaiah and Matthew also make it clear that Messianic Banquet does not require that Israel be replaced by the Church as the Gentile participation was prophesied by Isaiah and even maintained in the Jewish literature for centuries after Christ. (again - see my commentary on Isa 49)

While this event is before the creation of the new heavens and new earth (or new universe), it does imply a continuation rather than a last meal. As it appears from passages like Isaiah 65:25 we may no longer eat meat as no harm is to come to animals – perhaps we will all be vegetarians, but regardless you can be assured that everything will taste at least as good as it can now, and perhaps increasingly better thanks to the creativity of our kingdom Chefs!

When Jesus was on earth in his resurrection body, he ate fish Luke 24:41-43 *And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat? <sup>42</sup> And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. <sup>43</sup> And he took it, and ate before them.* (and honeycomb in some versions; Jn 21:12 – breakfast on the shore).

There was clearly no need for him to so it would appear that he did so to further demonstrate that physical nature of his resurrection body.

There will be an endless supply of water and food. No famine or drought. No food poisoning, no indigestion, no high or low blood sugars.

Eating is not just to eat--the table is the center of conversation and fellowship. We will meet and converse with other inhabitants of the new universe. God tells us we'll fellowship with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. We'll meet David and Ruth and Esther and John the Baptist and Miriam (The Lord's mother) and Peter. We can look forward to meeting and feasting with such people as Hudson Taylor, Amy Carmichael, Isaac Newton, and Keith Green!

---

<sup>11</sup> See THE MESSIANIC BANQUET AND THE ESCHATOLOGY OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL by Prof. Daniel S. Steffen

The 'messengers of God' or angels are rational communicative beings--we will no doubt converse with them. Because they are "ministering spirits" who serve us, we will no doubt get to know those that ministered to us whether angels or not, and protected us during this present evil age. The Bible says some we have extended hospitality to are angels.

We will serve our Messiah in the kingdom. We are called joint heirs with Christ. We will own property, residences in the Kingdom of God. We will enjoy those treasures that have been laid up for us in Heaven with our Lord and which will be presented to us sometime after His return and the inauguration of his reign.

**Revelation 22:5** says we will reign with Christ over the earth. **Luke 19** tells us those who have been faithful and profitable in this life will be placed in authority, some over one city, some five, some ten. I will come back to this significant issue. **1 Corinthians 6** tells us we will judge or rule over angels.

How else will we serve Christ besides ruling?

Well, we will be creative and exercise abilities--all will sing and some will play instruments. (Harp and trumpet mentioned, but no doubt many other instruments too.<sup>12</sup>) We are made in the image of God – our Father is creative beyond imagination – our creative powers may well increase as we have an endless supply of time and energy without the dampening effects of decay in any form. Everything we create will have a permanency that will allow us to continue to improve our creations and our creative skills.

We will no doubt compose, write, paint, carve, build. We will exercise our God-given gifts, and continue to develop and perfect our talents.

We will worship in the Kingdom of God. See **Revelation 5 and 15 and 19**. We will join with those of every tribe and nation and tongue in singing praise to the Lamb. We will become lost in our worship, even more than we can imagine now. Twice in Rev. 5 it says the living creatures and "the elders fell down in worship." Overcome with emotion.

Revelation 4 tells us of four living creatures, covered with eyes, one that looks like a lion, one an ox, one a man and one an eagle. They each have six wings, and "day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

I grew up next to the ocean (Carters Beach, South Island, New Zealand) --the constant reassuring comforting sound of the tide, the waves, forms a backdrop. Always there – day & night.

In the new universe, wherever we travel in the holy city or beyond, perhaps to the far corner of the universe, the backdrop sound may be this--day and night the chant of the four living creatures who never, even for a moment stop speaking the praise of God. And of course we will never be separated from our Heavenly Father.

There will be no church buildings in the Kingdom of God. We will need no props to worship him. God Almighty and His Messiah will be the focus of all. Worship will be unaffected, without pretense, and without distraction.

We will lose ourselves in worship of God the Father and His only begotten Son, and before we turn to the duties at hand we may suddenly realize that we were so caught up in worship that we have spent several days gazing upon our Father and our Passover Lamb!

We will worship God in singing. In Revelation 5 we are told of a choir of angels of ten thousand times ten thousand--that's a hundred million. And then we are told that the whole rest of creation joins these 100 million. The 100 million are merely a little ensemble up front. Can you imagine the power of the song? If hearing or singing 'Amazing Grace' or 'Shout to the Lord' moves us on earth, what will this be like? If you have ever been in a crowd of several thousand singing praises to God in unison you can't help but be affected by the power and impact of it

---

<sup>12</sup> Rev 18:<sup>22</sup> (WEY) No harp or song, no flute or trumpet, shall ever again be heard in thee; no craftsman of any kind shall ever again be found in thee; nor shall the grinding of the mill ever again be heard in thee. As a contrast the removal of musical instruments and singing is a sign of the removal or separation from God and thus by implication suggests their inclusion in the KoG.

The Kingdom of God will be dynamic, not static. We will learn, and progress in knowledge. When **1 Corinthians 13** says we will know in full, it's in contrast to seeing through a dark glass. We will know accurately. But we will not be all-knowing. Only God is that, and we will never be God. **Ephesians 2:6-7**: ". . . in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace . . ."

A continual learning more about God, who can never exhausted.

And while theology will be our main subject (not the dry subject many may imagine when this word is uttered but the study of our amazing God!), I imagine we will learn of other things as well, perhaps in studying the wonders of a new universe that will declare his glory even better than this one.

I would love to explore the universe, to discover and learn about the new and different.

Why not? Who has placed in us the thirst for knowledge and understanding and beauty?

Our Creator. What's more our Creator has designed this world for us to discover it and through it to discover Him.

One of the more amazing foundational principles of the universe that has been discovered over the last 40 years and especially over the last 10, is the manner in which our Creator has structured the universe so that we can discover its mysteries in a tutorial like manner and using the classic teaching method of the unpeeling the onion, that is exposing layer upon layer of complexity and knowledge.

We now understand that this whole universe has been designed for man – mankind is truly at the centre of the universe after-all and of-course The Man, our Messiah is the absolute centre of all humanity as he is the perfect agent or representative of the Creator Himself!

How much more will He reveal and allow us to understand in the new universe?

There will be travel, people will go from one place to another. Gates never shut. Our means of travel may be interesting--we are told we will be like Jesus and that his resurrection body is the prototype of ours. He walked through walls with his resurrection body.

Perhaps we will have the option of walking, or traveling at the speed of light, or even the speed of thought.

**1 John 3:2-3** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>

**Romans 6:3-5** <sup>3</sup> Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him through baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have become united with *him* in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;

Another way in which we will be like him, is that somehow we will likely shine or give off light. Moses, when he came down of Mt Sinai shone to some degree, after being in the presence of God (Ex 34:29-30); Jesus shone at the transfiguration; (**And while He was praying the appearance of His face underwent a change, and His clothing became white and radiant** Luke 9:29 (WEY)). Moses & Elijah perhaps also shone "two persons of a glorious form were seen talking with him; they were Moses, and Elias," Luke 9:30 (MacNT)

The angel of the Lord at the tomb is said to have an "appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow." Matt 28:3 and we are said to be like angels after the resurrection.

We are told in Matthew 13 that the righteous will shine like the sun and in Daniel, like the stars (which are all suns).

**Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father** Matt 13:43

**And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.** Dan 12:3

Frank Selch has argued that this shining glory was possibly what 'clothed' Adam and Eve before their sin.

Will we remember the past, what happened on earth before the return of Jesus and our bodily resurrection?

Well, we know that in the Holy City, the 'new Jerusalem', there will be memorials to the twelve tribes and to the apostles. Remembrance is something very important to God. We will sing of Christ's redemption, his space and time history and death on our behalf. Christ's resurrection body bore the nail scars--this itself reminds us of redemption.

Some people take a verse in Isaiah ([Isa 65: 17-19](#)) out of context and conclude we won't remember our earthly lives. Of course, the pain of the past will be gone. But memories of the walk with Christ and the most intimate times with family and friends will surely not be. For what is worth remembering, our memories will be sharper, not duller. When we truly forgive someone, we don't necessarily forget the sin they perpetuated against us but we forget the pain, the hurt, the sadness and grief. The events are normally still remembered but in some watered down way where the sharp and harsh edges have been removed.

Those of you who have been on the receiving end of betrayal or hatred or adultery and have totally forgiven may be able to reflect on the accuracy of this analysis. Think also from the Father's perspective – He forgives us, yet as He is God, He can not forget how we have hurt Him – perhaps when we seek His forgiveness He like us 'forgets' or dampens the memory of the pain?

Will we know our loved ones who were also believers, in the Kingdom of God?

Of course. We'll know even those we *didn't* know on earth. Peter, James and John recognized Moses and Elijah in the vision that was the transfiguration. They had died 900 years earlier and nobody had a picture! They had no cameras in their day!

Christ's resurrection body resembled him--the disciples had a hard time recognizing him at first, but they thought he was still dead!

**Those of us who long for justice, justice for the racially oppressed, for the politically persecuted, for the unborn children need to remind ourselves not to give up hope, not to become embittered. The Kingdom of God will bring great relief to the suffering, the hungry, the hurting. No crying, no enduring and unending pain, no sorrow, no more death. No hospitals, cemeteries. No sin. No evil.**

God is watching. He's keeping track. In the future Kingdom of God he'll reward us for our acts of faithfulness to him, right down to every cup of cold water we've given to the needy in his name ([Mark 9:41](#)).

Pro-life work is often like this in that it often doesn't have obvious or immediate fruit. Those who spend their lives reaching out to Muslims and in other "low fruit" ministries should remember God says, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," not successful ([1 Corinthians 4:2](#), KJV). Of course, we want to be successful, but we can't control the results. Those we must leave to God, reminding ourselves that one day we'll learn of eternal results we never saw in this present age. (Just as some of us may learn in the Kingdom of God that our present ministries weren't as successful as everyone thought.)

*[Mid-session break here: Stand up; those born on an odd numbered day take 5 steps to the right and those on an even day 5 steps to the left. Now say hello to someone new and share with each other the 3 most exciting things you will look forward to doing in the new creation]*

**There is a fascinating contrast in the first three and the last three chapters of the Bible.**

**In both we see the tree of life, a river, a bride and a bridegroom.**

**In Genesis paradise is lost, in Revelation paradise regained. In Genesis Satan wins his first victory, in Revelation his final defeat.**

**In Genesis God hides his face from sinful man, in Revelation "we shall see his face."**

**In Genesis the curse is pronounced, in Revelation it is removed.**

**In Genesis the gates are shut, in Revelation the gates are open.**

**In Genesis death first comes, in Revelation death is finally destroyed.**

**And it is the Lamb of God, Messiah Yeshua, the Second Adam, who is given full credit for all this.**

"God himself (personal) will wipe away every tear." No evil. No fear. No abuse, rape, murder, drugs, drunkenness, no bombs or guns. Walk the streets safely. No miscommunication or fear of misunderstanding. And total intimacy with our Messiah and with God Almighty.

We are told that he will give each of us a new name. A personal name that will mean much to us and to him.

The new universe will be deeply appreciated by the handicapped who will not be handicapped any longer. Think of those who can't walk and run and hear. Think of those blind from birth who will see for the first time. The hymn writer Fanny Crosby said, **"Do not pity me for my blindness, for the first face I ever see will be the face of my Lord Jesus."**

And think what the Kingdom of God will mean to the mentally handicapped, who will wake up in the Kingdom of God to great powers of understanding and learning. Who will be as free in their minds as those who were crippled on earth will be free in their bodies.

There will be marvelous diversity. Our God is a God of diversity and different-ness. Look around you. Look at your family. Look at the world. Look through a microscope or telescope. In Revelation 5 & 7 we see people of every tribe and nation and tongue worshipping God and the Lamb. This is true diversity. Some of what is called diversity today is perversity. But diversity under the Lordship of our Creator is a beautiful thing.

There will be great joy in the Kingdom of God. *"In thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures forever more. – Ps 16:11"*

**Of course, the greatest joy of the Kingdom of God will be being joined to Messiah Yeshua. If we truly love Yeshua, we long to be with him, to see him; to hear him; to be accepted by him, to hear those incredible words of commendation that mean so much because of who speaks them – Cliff to speak on this.**

As a bride is incomplete without her bridegroom, so are we without him. We long for the wedding, we long to consummate the relationship.

The next greatest joy may be being joined to our departed loved ones. The great reunion. That's what **1 Thessalonians 4** is saying--we will be together again. The certainty of ultimate Reunion is so sweet that it makes the parting bearable and almost exciting. None of us like to be away from our families, but the one redeeming feature is the anticipation of reunion. And the longer the separation the more glorious the reunion. Some of you will meet parents you've not seen for fifty years, some will meet for the first time your child who died before birth.

No relationships between two believers ever end. They can only be interrupted, but never terminated. My relationship with my father-in-law has not ended. Has your believing husband, your Father, your sister, your child gone before you? You will see them face to face, and worship with them side by side. This is the believer's certain hope (hope as used by Paul, etc means a certain expectation for the future) --a hope that can sustain us through life's darkest hours.)

Scripture says our citizenship is in stored for us in Heaven, that is, with God. This means it is secure; guaranteed to a degree not possible by any in this world. *'Kept safe and secure from all alarms!'*

As citizens of the coming Kingdom we are currently ambassadors representing our Messiah on this earth. We are called aliens, strangers, and pilgrims on earth. We are told this present evil age is not our home, but the future Kingdom of God is our home. We must live in this evil age in light of the Coming Age – that is with God's perspective, with an eternal perspective We must learn to live our short today's in light of the long tomorrow. We should live for the coming eternal line, not the present dot.

Imagine an ambassador from Australia who goes to work in another country that is generally hostile to his own. Naturally, he will want to learn about this new place, see the sights, become familiar with the people and culture. But suppose eventually he becomes so assimilated into this foreign country that he begins to regard it as his true home.

His allegiance wavers, and he gradually compromises his position as an Australian ambassador, becoming increasingly ineffective in representing the best interests of his mother country. His loyalties are transferred, and eventually he defects. In doing so he not only becomes useless to, but actually betrays the cause of his own country. Have you become too assimilated with this country? Are you no longer a profitable servant & ambassador? (I will look at this issue in my next session)

**Hebrews 11 (v. 13-16)** describes the great people of faith this way:

*All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country--a Heavenly or Godly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.*

The black slaves in early America understood the pilgrim mentality. Without possessions, without rights, they lived for another world, a better one. This central theme permeated their spirituals. They sang "I am a poor wayfarin' stranger, a travelin' far away from home," and "Soon I will be done with the troubles of the world."

**May God give us the grace to live now with the perspective that will be ours, when we are resurrected at the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus.**

*"If there be so certain and glorious a rest for the saints, why is there no more industrious seeking after it? One would think, if a man did but once hear of such unspeakable glory to be obtained, and believed what he heard to be true, he should be transported with the vehemence of his desire after it, and should almost forget to eat and drink, and should care for nothing else, and speak of and inquire after nothing else, but how to get this treasure. And yet people who hear of it daily, and profess to believe it as a fundamental article of their faith, do as little mind it, or labour for it, as if they had never heard of any such thing, or did not believe one word they hear." Richard Baxter, 1649*

It's a predominant theme of Scripture that this place is not our home and that the Carpenter from Nazareth has gone to prepare a place for us.

Perhaps the reason that we get derailed from it and don't pay attention to it is partly because of this demonic influence or our fleshly lusts that try to convince us that this world is really our home.

But part of it, too, is that we fall into the myth that our bodies are a temporary thing that we live in on earth and then when we die our spirit is separated from our bodies until the resurrection. (Note: The Platonic view of the immortality of the soul has so permeated the Christian worldview that it is a real challenge to seek the reality revealed in the Scriptures that our spirit, mind and body cannot be separated, but are one complete entity.) Perhaps we live under a Platonic myth that the body is evil and the spirit is good and then the spirit is separated from that evil body and somehow liberated from it.

Every portrayal of the Kingdom of God that is made in Scripture is physical in its nature.

**Death is not a hole; it's a door.<sup>13</sup>**

**Through his death and resurrection the Carpenter flung open the door to the Kingdom of God. If you're a Christian suffering with great pains and losses, take cheer (John 16:33).**

**The new house is almost ready for you. Moving day is coming. The dark winter is about to be magically transformed into spring. Soon your Saviour will return and take you into His Kingdom, the Kingdom of God.**

Imagine a new universe where you can spend years learning the violin or some new musical instrument that you invented; or play your favourite sports, or some better versions of them untainted by sin.

---

<sup>13</sup> Bertrand Russell has been called by some the greatest mind of the twentieth century. Anticipating his death he said, *"There is darkness without, and when I die there will be darkness within. There is no splendor, no vastness anywhere; only triviality for a moment, and then nothing."*

We are called to have child-like faith and spirit – children love to play; it's almost the only thing they do; their lives are play! **Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.** <sup>15</sup> **Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.** <sup>16</sup> Mark 10:14-16.

Paul uses sporting comparisons or analogies. For example in 1 Cor 9:24-27 **Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.** <sup>25</sup> **Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.** <sup>26</sup> **So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.** <sup>27</sup> **But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.** And 2 Tim 2:5 **An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.**

Paul is not necessarily endorsing athletics and sports, yet he makes it clear that the character needed is valuable. Sport after all is good for the mind and the body. The exercise involved develops both physical abilities as well as mental strength and character. The joy and pleasure that can be gained from sport is very real and can be very satisfying – as long as the sport does not involve any thing that is sinful, it can be most beneficial in our growth as people and even in improving our relationships through shared challenges and through the spiritual unity that can come from competition.

Even the risks associated and enjoyed in sports such as scuba diving or skydiving can heighten our appreciation of God's creation and enliven our sense of our own identity. Provided we don't worship the creation to the exclusion or dismissal of the Creator, we can grow closer and more in awe of our Father through such pursuits. It is possible that the leaves for healing mentioned in Rev 22 may imply that we may still injure ourselves in our sporting pursuits although obviously we cannot kill ourselves.

You may:

- create your ultimate house or boat or mode of transport;
- write a few books;
- debate for days or months with leading experts on any topic;
- get a few degrees or at least study some aspect of God's creation for a few hundred years;
- develop deep and very close relationships with thousands and especially of course, with Messiah Jesus;
- Sit at the throne of God and be totally awestruck and overwhelmed by indescribable joy in the presence of the Creator of all!

Everyday have many incredible experiences believing 'that can't be topped' only to have the next day be even more fulfilling as you continue to learn more and more about your Creator and His creation without ever being able to exhaust His knowledge or be over-filled with His peace and joy.

What now? - Get real; get excited; get awestruck; get challenged – our Lord will soon be here – the Day of the Lord beckons – are you ready? – are your family and friends ready? – are you breathless with anticipation!?

If not – are you alive!

### **Analogy with selling Encyclopedias:**

I was once a very successful encyclopedia salesman. In fact I was too successful in convincing couple to purchase – out of every 3 sales per night as many as 2 would often change their minds during the 7 day cooling off period. I found I needed to lift the couple up to get the sale and then try to bring down to sober reality of affordability. If they couldn't really afford it, I didn't want to leave their home with a contract that would be ripped up in 7 days.

Similarly, we need to be encouraged that the KoG is worth everything – the pearl of great price – but we need to consider if we are prepared to pay the price; not all are; for those who aren't our Father still often abundantly blesses them in this life; but they will miss the far far superior blessings of the next age.

Also a time of tribulation and purification is coming – we need to prepare ourselves by getting close to God – by seeking Him and His ways daily.

Everyday we live we're moving towards death and away from our earthly treasures.

That doesn't feel good if our real treasures are being stored up in this present age where moth and rust destroy. But if we've stored up our treasures in Heaven to be presented to us at the inauguration of the Kingdom of God, then every day instead of moving away from our treasures we'll be moving toward them.

*"Let no one apologize for the powerful emphasis Christianity lays upon the doctrine of the world to come. Right there lies its immense superiority to everything else within the whole sphere of human thought or experience. When Christ arose from death and ascended into Heaven he established forever three important facts, namely, that this world has been condemned to ultimate dissolution, that the human spirit persists beyond the grave and that there is indeed a world to come." A.W. TOZER.*

The Kingdom of God is to be the scene of a great wedding that our Saviour has long anticipated. We ought to be eagerly anticipating His return to take us to His Father's house for our marriage to Him. How can His bride not share that joyful hope?

One of the most beautiful Old Testament pictures of the church as the bride of Christ is found in Genesis 24. Abraham's servant, a type of the Holy Spirit, had claimed Rebecca as Isaac's bride. As it is with us, however, she had to choose for herself between the husband waiting for her in a far country, and the family she would have to leave behind. "Will thou go with this man?" her family asked her and she said, "I will go" Such is the choice that confronts us. Surely the Bridegroom must grieve over a bride that is so reluctant to join Him in that great heavenly marriage.

Is it not time that the bride of Christ, laying all else aside, become excited about the prospect of seeing and being with her Bridegroom forever?

Oh that a great cry would arise from the church: "We love you, Lord Jesus! Please come and take us home! The Spirit and the bride say, Come! Come, Lord Jesus come!

Another reason why we want Christ to return: We long to see Christ return to see Him glorified on this earth where He has been rejected for so long. If we love the Lord, then we will want to see Him honoured and praised where He was rejected. We long to see Him rule, whose right it is to rule, and we want to be at His side, singing His praises, pointing men to Him who is the Lover of our Souls.

It is easy to believe that the God who created the present universe (it obviously didn't just happen by chance – the more one understands the incredible history of creation the harder it is to believe in 'chance') is able to create a new one to take its place, from which sin, suffering, disease, and death will be excluded forever.

Likewise it would be a small thing for the God who created us in the first place to recreate our bodies not merely as they were in our prime, but in a new form immune to fatigue, disease, and death.

### **Rewards in the Kingdom:**

Just as this universe was designed for the purpose of Redemption, the new creation is designed for Reward.

Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,

Matt 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Luke 6:23 Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

1 Corinthians 3:14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.

Ephesians 6:8 "knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free."

Colossians 3:24 "knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward"

Hebrews 11:26 He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.

There are a great many passages that detail the fact they many will receive rewards in the KoG. I will look at some of these in my other presentation tomorrow, but for now let us look at a couple. The rewards promised to the seven churches of Revelation and the 5 crowns.

In Revelation we read of 7 rewards to the over-comers of the 7 churches.

1. Ephesus:

To the one who conquers I will grant to **eat of the tree of life**, which is in the paradise of God.' Rev 2:7

2. Smyrna:

Be faithful unto death, and **I will give you the crown of life** ...The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death. Rev 2:10-11

*Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the **crown of life**, which God has promised to those who love him. James 1:12*

3. Pergamum

To the one 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 that no one knows except the one who receives it.' Rev 2:17

4. Thyatira

The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give **authority over the nations**,<sup>27</sup> and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father.<sup>28</sup> **And I will give him the morning star** Rev 2:26-28 (Morning star – Messiah – fellowship with; indwelling – may also refer to being part of the triumphant march into Jerusalem that Mark will be speaking on.)

5. Sardis

The one who conquers will be **clothed thus in white garments**, and I will **never 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. Philadelphia

Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will **keep you from the hour of trial** that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth... He that overcometh, I will **make him a pillar in the temple** of my God, and he shall go out thence no more: and I will **write upon him the name of my God**, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and mine own new name. Rev 3:12

(Pillar – not able to be removed from the base, the foundations – as a contra to the earthquake. New Jerusalem – perhaps also referring to the commonwealth of Saints who will live in the New Jerusalem)

7. Laodicea

The one who conquers, I will **grant him to sit with me on my throne**, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Rev 3:21-22

## CROWNS AS REWARDS In the Kingdom of God

Crowns are a common symbol of ruling authority. Five crowns are specifically mentioned as rewards:

1. **The Crown of Life**-given for faithfulness to Christ in persecution or martyrdom.

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him." (James 1:12)

"Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer . . . Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

2. **The Incorruptible Crown**-given for determination, discipline and victory in the Christian life.

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever." (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

3. **The Crown of Glory**-given for faithfully representing Christ in a position of spiritual leadership (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

"To the elders among you, be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away." (1 Peter 5:1-4)

4. **The Crown of Righteousness**-given for purifying and readying yourself to meet Christ at his return.

"The time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8)

**5. The Crown of Rejoicing**-given for pouring oneself into others in evangelism and discipleship.

"For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?" (1 Thessalonians 2:19) ". . . my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown . . ." (Philippians 4:1)

There may be innumerable crowns and types of crowns, and rewards unrelated to crowns. They are all graciously given by the Lord Yeshua, and earned through the faithful efforts of the believer. Our rewards are given not merely for our recognition, but for our Father's eternal glory:

"The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.'" (Revelation 4:10-11)

(Revelation 4:10-11)

Though God's glory is the highest and ultimate reason for any course of action, Scripture sees no contradiction between God's eternal glory and our eternal good. On the contrary, glorifying God will always result in our greatest eternal good. Likewise, pursuing our eternal good, as he commands us to, will always glorify God.

While the Kingdom of God will be wonderful for all its inhabitants, not every believer's position and experience in the Kingdom of God will be the same.

Perhaps it will be a matter of differing capacity. Two jars can both be full, but the one with greater capacity contains more. Likewise, all of us will be full of joy in the Kingdom of God, but some may have more joy because their capacity for joy will be larger, having been stretched through their trust in and obedience to God in this life.

God appeals to our natures as people, not as sinners. Power, possessions and pleasures are legitimate desires he has instilled in us, and by which he motivates us.

So in summary, let us look at our lists of seven:

### **7 characteristics of the new creation – the new heaven & earth:**

1. Radically different creation laws and constants Romans 8:20-23
2. no evil, no death, no decay; 2 Peter 3:10-14
3. no regrets, no grief, no pain; Rev 21:4; Isa 25
4. No darkness, no shadows, possibly no sun and no stars, and yet light everywhere; Isa 60:18-23
5. Possibly a different dimensionality i.e the ability to move in more than the current 4 dimensions; (equal to angels) – Luke 20:36
6. Unimaginable splendor, joy, beauty, peace, and love; 1 Cor 2: 9-10; Luke 6 23
7. Wholly meaningful and satisfying work. Rev 22:3; John 5:17

### **7 things that we will be, as we will be in the likeness of Yeshua:**

1. Immortal beings of glory; Matt 13:43; Dan 12:3
2. Completed & Fully alive and capable – no handicaps; no depression; no sin around us so no need for sorrows or grief; no longer will we see innocent blood being shed and feeling impotent and unable to adequately respond;
3. able to enjoy eating without needing to for sustenance;
4. able to travel in some extra-dimensional manner that allows us to be transported from one location to another instantly and even move through locked doors or walls
5. able to communicate with our 'ministering spirits'; the 'messengers of God' (angels) Luke 20:36
6. inexhaustible creativity – without tiring; without exhaustion; without aging and loss of faculties
7. Identified by a new name; something that most likely will fully identify our uniqueness and our value before our heavenly God

### **7 things that we will experience in the Kingdom of God;**

1. Fellowship with God & see God in His fullness; see God face to face! Rev 22:4
2. Touch and communicate face-to-face with our Messiah
3. A place of no regrets, no grief, no pain; Rev. 21:3-4
4. Reunion with long dead, departed loved ones
5. Meet & converse with the hero's of the faith, from Abraham to the Apostle Paul Luke 20:37-38
6. Rewards – for over-comers; for profitable servants; Luke 6:23; 1 Cor 3:12-15; Rev 2:23
7. Power, possessions and pleasures! Matt 6:19-21; Matt 19:27-30

### **7 things that we will do in the Kingdom of God:**

1. **Glorify and worship our God and our Messiah and have fellowship with them**
2. **Have authority over the new creation Luke 19:17; Acts 5:13**
3. **Eat and have many banquets – for pleasure and relationships**
4. **create – cook, compose, write, paint, carve, build**
5. **play music, games, sport; and laugh – joy, fun, excitement!**
6. **travel and experience new wonders of our infinitely awesome God**
7. **Continually learn more about our God, who can never be exhausted!**

Who wants to be part of this? Is this worth giving up all that this present age may offer you? Is this worth dying for?

### **Appendix**

#### **1: Is the New Heaven & new Earth literal:**

Isaiah 60:18-21 ...**The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended..** [This appears to be a literal reference]

Isaiah 66:22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. [Suggesting the eternity of the new universe]

It does appear that the references of verse 30 in Isa 65 (Isaiah 65:20) **No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.** These verse may be a euphemism for the days before the Flood – the days of very long life spans, rather than a statement with a literal fulfillment during the Millennial time.

Luke 20:36 ... **nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.** [Angels may be creatures who exist in another dimension yet are able to somehow interact in our dimensions. Perhaps when we put on immortal, incorruptible bodies we, in being equal to angels, will be able to exist in another dimension while the universe in our detectable 4 dimensions is recreated.]

1 Corinthians 6:13 **13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them.** [This appears literal and yet is most ;likely not as there as so many references to food and the Messianic banquet, etc.]

1 Corinthians 2:9-11 **But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."** [No eye has seen the new future creation, but we have seen much of this one]

1 Corinthians 15:50 **Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.** [The body is destroyed or at least transformed – perhaps into flesh & bone]

1 John 2:17 **And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.** [This passage could be taken both ways]

2 Peter 3:5-7,10

**For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved**

by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ... But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. [As the first reference is to the physical earth and heavens or universe; it seems most reasonable that the second is as well]

Revelation 21:1,5

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ... Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

As this whole book of the Revelation of Christ Jesus is very much a figurative account, it is hard to be sure about this reference. Because the sanctuary of the Lord was in Jerusalem and the holy city is spoken of as 'heaven' and the Holy Land is referred to as Earth then 'a new heaven and a new Earth' could refer to Eretz Israel, rather than a new universe. However, even this reference I suspect is a 'type' – that is, Eretz Israel is representative of the physical KoG which in turn is representative of its ultimate fulfillment in the new universe.

The mention of sea could refer to the brazen sea – that is to the water which the Priest was to pass through before entering the Temple as a means of purifying himself. This rite of purification will no longer be needed in the Millennial reign so this phrase may refer only to this time.

Rev 21:4 speaks of wiping away their tears – this is mentioned in Is 25:8-9 and refers to KoG.

He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken. And it will be said in that day:

" Behold, this is our God; We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the LORD; We have waited for Him.

The universe has an ending in finite time - Job 14:12; Ecclesiastes 12.2; Isaiah 34:4; 51:6; 65:17; 66:22; Matthew 24:35; Hebrews 1:10-12;12:27-28; 2 Peter 3:7,10-13; Revelation 21:1-5

At its end, the universe will roll up like a scroll and vanish in a burst of extreme heat - Isaiah 34:4; 2 Peter 3:7,10; Revelation 6:14