

Chapter 21

[Chapter 20] ended with the dead, both small and great, standing before God to be judged according to the works they did while in the flesh, and being placed in their appropriate eternal home. It is forever too late for anyone to go back and redo their lives! And even if they could go back they would be like Korihor in [Alma 16:52-72], they would not, and could not change! And now comes the great and final step in the cycle of man, and of all of God's creation.

[1] And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

“A new heaven and a new earth!” Does this sound like the righteous will be flying around among the clouds throughout eternity? Certainly not! Why would there be a new earth if no one was going to live on it?

[Ether 6:9] And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and they shall be like unto the old, save the old have passed away, and **all things have become new.**

[D&C 28:6a-c] And when the thousand years are ended, and men again begin to deny their God, then will I spare the earth but for a little season; [b] and the end shall come, and the heaven and the earth shall be consumed, and pass away, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; [c] for all old things shall pass away, and all things shall become new, even the heaven and the earth, and all the fullness thereof, both men and beasts, the fowls of the air, **and the fishes of the sea.**

But wait! Doesn't [Verse 1] above say that after “the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; **there was no more sea?**” That is true, yet – this statement does not contradict the D&C; for the statements in the [D&C] are prose, while [Verse 1] above is allegorical.

Prose: the ordinary language people use in speaking or writing. [Webster]

John saw that there was “no more sea;” or, as was shown in [Chapters 16 & 20], no more “bottomless pit.” The devil and his angels have been resurrected but, as was stated in the last chapter, they have no power; they came out of the bottomless pit and will now be cast into perdition, i.e., destruction from God's presence, a.k.a. everlasting fire.

It was seen in the study of [Chapter 17:1 & 15] that the sea also represents the many waters on which the mother of abominations sat, which waters are allegorical of “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” These are the same people who worship the beast and it's doctrines!

Nephi saw these waters as representations of “filthiness;” as “an awful gulf, which separates the wicked from the tree of life, and also from the saints of God.” Thus, the wicked will not have access to the tree of life because of the filthiness of the doctrines they uphold! [1 Nephi 4:43-46]

[D&C 28:7b-8a, 10] The righteous shall be gathered on my right hand unto eternal life; and the wicked on my left hand will I be ashamed to own before the Father; [7c] wherefore I will say unto them, Depart from me you cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels. [8a] ... for where I am they can not come, **for they have no power**. [10] And then comes the New Jerusalem; and blessed are they who dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the lamb.

[D&C 85:4c-d] *The earth* must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory; for after it has filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father; [d] that bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it for ever and ever; for, for this intent was it made and created; and for this intent are they sanctified.

[D&C 85:5b-6b] ... The earth abides the law of a celestial kingdom, for it fills the measure of its creation, and transgresses not the law. [6b] Wherefore, it shall be sanctified; notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and the righteous shall inherit it.

[2] And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

This will be the celestial new Jerusalem, not the earthly one the Lord showed Enoch.

[Genesis 7:70-72] And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out my own elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare; an holy city, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and **it shall be called Zion; a New Jerusalem**. [71] And the Lord said unto Enoch, Then shall you and all your city meet them there; ... [72] And there shall be my abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years shall the earth rest. * *this city will be perfected during this time*.

[Genesis 14:34] And his (Melchizedek) people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, or the end of the world.

[3 Nephi 9:57-59] & [3 Nephi 10:1-4] support the assertion that a city will be built that will be called the “New Jerusalem” prior to the ushering in of the millennial reign. The Lord stated that “the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of it’s people.” [3 Nephi 9:59]

There are great promises made to the Old and the New Jerusalem that are to happen at that time; **Old Jerusalem**:

“I will give unto them again the land of their fathers, for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them for ever, saith the Father. And the time will come, when the fullness of my gospel shall be preached unto them, and they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name. Then shall their watchmen lift up their voices; and together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye. [3 Nephi 9:68-70]

New Jerusalem:

“All your children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of your children. In righteousness you shall be established.” [3 Nephi 10:21-22]

[3 Nephi 9:74-75] And then shall be brought to pass that which is written, Awake, awake again, and put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city, for henceforth there shall no more come into you the unclean. [75] Shake yourself from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; loose yourself from the bands of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

So, the New Jerusalem which John saw “coming down from God out of heaven” is a perfected city, while the one in [3 Nephi, ch 9 & 10] & [Ether, ch 6] is in the process of being perfected. For the events depicted in this chapter take place **after Jesus has perfected his work**, for “the fullness of times” will be here and, he “shall have subdued all enemies under his feet, and **shall have perfected his work**, when he shall deliver up the kingdom and present it unto the Father spotless, saying: [s] I have overcome and have trodden the wine press alone, even the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God; then shall he be crowned with the crown of his glory, to sit on the throne of his power to reign for ever and ever.” [D&C 76:7r-s]

This will bring about the fulfillment of the revelation given in:

[D&C 83:17b] The Lord has redeemed his people, And **Satan is bound**, and time is no longer: The Lord has gathered all things in one: The Lord has brought down Zion from above: The Lord has brought up Zion from beneath; The earth has travailed and brought forth her strength; And truth is established in her bowels; And the heavens have smiled upon her, And she is clothed with the glory of her God: **For he stands in the midst of his people**:

“Satan is bound,” is not referring to the millennial, for “time” will be present there. This is referring to the time that he is cast into his own place with his angels; this is the time when “God will stand in the midst of his people.” But, before this time arrives, the saints must first prepare for the great millennium which precedes it; for the Lord counsels us to:

[D&C 65:1c-f] Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom; [d] pray unto the Lord; call upon his holy name; make known his wonderful works among the people, call upon the Lord, **that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth**; [e] that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth; [f] wherefore, **may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come**, that you, O God, may be glorified in heaven, so on earth, that your enemies may be subdued; for yours is the honor, power, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

And during the “time” depicted by this chapter, his enemies will have been subdued.

[3] **And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

[4] And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

[5] And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful.

[6] And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

[7] He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

John, in [Chapter 7], “beheld a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, Saying, Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.... These are they which have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ... They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. [Revelation 7:9-17]

Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, “Whosoever shall drink of this well, shall thirst again; But whosoever drinks of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. [John 4:15-16]

If this doesn't make us thirst for this “living water,” we may be living too close to the world. And if we are living too close to the world, we may find ourselves among the following:

[8] But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

Remember the second death from [Chapter 20]? Being forever separated from God, and from all righteousness.

[Alma 9:28-32] And then comes a death, even a second death, which is a spiritual death; [29] Then is a time that whosoever dies in his sins, as to a temporal death, shall also die a spiritual death: yes, he shall die as to things pertaining unto righteousness; [30] Then is the time when their torments shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames ascends up for ever and ever; [31] And then is the time that they shall be chained down to an everlasting destruction, (from God's presence) according to the power and captivity of Satan: he having subjected them according to his will. [32] Then I say unto you, They shall be as though there had been no redemption made; for they can not be redeemed according to God's justice; and they can not die, seeing there is no more corruption.

“Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, ... saith the Lord. For my people

have committed two evils; they have forsaken me **the fountain of living waters**, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. [Jeremiah 2:12-13] [Jeremiah 17:13]

[9] And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.

[10] And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

This can be a little confusing; “the Lamb’s wife” being “the holy city Jerusalem.” But lets remember that women are allegorical of churches, or of cities, and now she is being referred to as the city which she brings forth. Another example of this case would be the woman of:

[Revelation 12:1-3, 7] And there appeared a great sign in heaven, in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. [2] And the woman being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. [3] And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and his throne.

[7] And ... the woman ... was the church of God, who had been delivered of her pains, and brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ.

And yet another example would be the woman of [Chapter 17], THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH; for she is also referred to as a city.

[Revelation 17:18] And the woman which you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

These are not literal women, nor are they literal cities; they are the body of people who have become a part of the “body of Christ.” [Romans 12:5-5] & [1 Corinthians 12:12-27] Paul likens the marriage relationship to the relationship between Jesus and his Church. [Ephesians 5:22-33]

[11] Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

[12] And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel;

[13] On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

[14] And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

[15] And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

[16] And the city laid foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. (furlong = about 220 yards or 660 feet) (mile = 5,280 feet)

[17] And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the

measure of a man, that is, of the angel. (cubit = about 18 inches or 46 centimeters)

[18] And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

[19] And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

[20] The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprusus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

[21] And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Remember! the woman portrayed in [Chapter 17:4] was “decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.”

[1 Nephi 3:140-144] I beheld this great and abominable church; and I saw the devil that he was the foundation of it. [142] And I also saw gold and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing; and I saw many harlots. [143] And the angel spoke unto me, saying, Behold the gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets, and the fine twined linen, and the precious clothing, and the harlots, are the desires of this great and abominable church.

But the gold, the pearls, and the precious stones of which the holy city will be built, are allegorical of the purity and perfection of the city. For the light of the city was “like unto” a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

The rarity of gold, of pearls, and of precious stones, in addition to their exquisiteness, contribute to their value, both in the natural world and in the spiritual world. If the entire world’s landscape was covered with these gems, they would significantly lose their value.

Example: *The rarity of diamonds makes them valuable.* [World Book Dictionary]

Is this not even a greater truism when it relates to the treasures of the holy city, the New Jerusalem! For these precious gems of the earth, with which we are familiar, will pale by comparison when measured against their elegance in the celestial world after “all things have become new,” as was seen in [Ether 6:9] & [D&C 28:6c] at the beginning of this chapter!”

And consider this; If access to this treasured city had no requirements, anyone could enter through it’s gates; then what would be the point of living righteous lives! And what would be the point of the following two parables?

[Matthew 13:46-47] The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field. And when a man has found a treasure which is hid, he secures it, and, straightway, for joy thereof, goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. [47] And again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. * this was discussed in the study of [Revelation 17:3].

In order for these men to obtain the “hidden treasure,” or the “pearl of great price,” they had to rid themselves of the things which they previously treasured. That was, and still is, the price of this heavenly treasure! “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
[**Matthew 6:21**] [**Luke 12:37**]

[**Matthew 16:25-26**] If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. [26] And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments.

[22] I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

* Reference the study of [**Revelation 15:5**] concerning the “temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven” that John saw, from which the commandments of God were sent to be taught in the temple which Israel was commanded to build; the one being parallel to the other.

However, when the earth and the creatures that dwell upon it receive their celestial bodies; when the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb dwell upon it, there will be no need of a temple. For the main purpose, and possibly the only purpose of a temple, is to shelter people from the elements such as heat, cold, rain, snow, hail, storms, and et cetera. These conditions will no more exist.

Temple: 1: an edifice for the worship of a deity 2: a place devoted to an exalted purpose [Webster]

[23] And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

[24] And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

[**Verse 23**] should offer a greater clarity to the vision John saw of the Church, symbolized by the woman pictured in:

[**Revelation 12:1, 7**] And there appeared a great sign in heaven, in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. [7] ... which was the church of God, who had been delivered of her pains, and brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ.

The following is taken from the study of the preceding scripture:

Without the sun there could be no life on earth, for it is because of the earth’s relationship to the sun that life can endure. Thus, the sun is the provider, conservator, and protector of earth..

The sun also furnishes light which allows us to plan and direct our lives, as well as to experience and enjoy the beauty which surrounds us. It allows us to see the world as it is. Jesus said;

“If any man walks in the day, he stumbles not, because he sees the light of this world. But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles, because there is no light in him.” [**John 11:9-10**]

It should be no surprise that the sun is used to typify the woman's clothing. For the sun represents the fullness of the gospel which sustains life in God's kingdom and enlightens those who walk in its light, who are not "walking in darkness at noonday," as some do. [D&C 92:1e]

. [John 1:4] In him was the gospel, and the gospel was the life, and the life was the light of men. [2 Corinthians 4:3-4] If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; [4] In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. [Malachi 4:2]

Now, because of [Verses 23 & 24] of this chapter, the significance of the sun with which the woman was clothed is heightened and could be read like this; "And there appeared a great sign in heaven," and et cetera; "a woman clothed with the glory of God, and the Lamb is the light thereof!"

But in the context of this chapter, these verses say that when God and the Lamb shall dwell in the holy city with those who embraced and lived by the fullness of the gospel, the gospel will no longer be essential because "the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light thereof."

The Lord told Jeremiah that the time would come when he would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, unlike the one made with them when he brought them out of Egypt:

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; **for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,** saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. [Jeremiah 31:33-34] & [Hebrews 8:8-12] * see the study of [Revelation 22:5-6]

Hopefully, now, this statement that Paul made will be better understood:

[1 Corinthians 13:8-12] Charity never fails; but whether there be **prophecies**, they shall fail; whether there be **tongues**, they shall cease; whether there be **knowledge**, it shall vanish away. [9] For we know in part, and we prophesy part. [10] **But when that which is perfect is come**, then that which is in part shall be done away. [11] When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. [12] For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. * it is the knowledge that we know in part which shall be done away with.

Prophecies: Will there be a need for prophets in the celestial world? Certainly not! What would they prophesy?

Tongues: Will there be a need for speaking in tongues? Absolutely not! What would they say? Shall those in the celestial glory not have a language as pure and undefiled as in the days of Adam?

[Genesis 6:6] Their children were taught to read and write, having a language which was pure and undefiled. And as in the days of Enoch?

[**Genesis 7:17**] All nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him. (Do you suppose this was English?)

[**Zephaniah 3:8-9, 13-15**] Wait upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them my indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. [9] For **then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.** [13] The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; ... [14] Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. [15] The Lord has taken away your judgments, he has cast out your enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in your midst; you shall not see evil any more.

Knowledge: How will knowledge vanish away? Will we all be stupid? Hopefully not everyone! But what is knowledge by itself? Prior to the subject at hand, Paul had just said, in [**Verse 2**] of the same chapter, that if he had all knowledge ... and have not charity, he is nothing. And what is knowledge without wisdom and understanding?

[**Proverbs 4:7**] Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all your getting get understanding.

All this can be wrapped up by answering this question; what knowledge can one have that won't vanish? The answer is - Truth! For Jesus said "If you continue in my word, then you are my disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." [**John 8:31-32**]

[25] **And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there.**

[26] **And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.**

[27] **And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

If we are guilty of doing those things which separate us from God, then we **must** repent before we can dwell in the holy city with the Father **and** the Son.