

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

4.11: NEW EARTH

1. ABRAHAM AND THE NEW EARTH

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Hebrews 11:8-10.

His Children Expected a Heavenly Country: “Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they have been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.” Hebrews 11:12-16.

“God gave to Abraham a view of this immortal inheritance, and with this hope he was content. “By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

“Of the posterity of Abraham it is written, “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” We must dwell as pilgrims and strangers here if we would gain “a better country, that is, a heavenly.” Those who are children of Abraham will be seeking the city which he looked for, “whose builder and maker is God.” Patriarchs and Prophets, 170.

“The true Christian's joys and consolation must and will be in heaven. The longing souls of those who have tasted of the powers of the world to come, and have feasted on heavenly joys, will not be satisfied with things of earth. Such will find enough to do in their leisure moments. Their souls will be drawn out after God. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be, holding sweet communion with the God they love and worship. Their amusement will be in contemplating their treasure—the holy city, the earth made new, their eternal home. And while they dwell upon those things which are lofty, pure, and holy, heaven will be brought near, and they will feel the power of the Holy Spirit, and this will tend to wean them more and more from the world, and cause their consolation and chief joy to be in the things of heaven, their sweet home. The power of attraction to God and heaven will then be so great that nothing can draw their minds from the great object of securing the soul's salvation, and honoring and glorifying God.

“As I realize how much has been done for us to keep us right, I am led to exclaim, Oh, what love, what wondrous love, hath the Son of God for us poor sinners!” Early Writings, 112, 113.

2. DESERT WASTES TO BE RESTORED

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Isaiah 35:1, 2.

The Diseased Shall Be Made Whole: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Isaiah 35:3-6.

"All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar, worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe, and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God's handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation, suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator's name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed.

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold. And ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise." The Great Controversy, 677, 678.

"Wherever thy path may lead,
God gives to thee no helpless, broken reed;
But His own hand, sufficient for thy need.
So where He leads thee thou can safely go.
And in the blest hereafter thou shall know
Why in His wisdom He hath led thee so."

3. EVERLASTING JOY

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10.

"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. 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." Revelation 21:3, 4.

"In the earth made new, the redeemed will engage in the occupations and pleasures that brought happiness to Adam and Eve in the beginning. The Eden life will be lived, the life in garden and field. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."

“There every power will be developed, every capability increased. The grandest enterprises will be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations will be reached, the highest ambitions realized. And still there will appear new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to study to call forth the powers of body and mind and soul.” Prophets and Kings, 730, 731.

“In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called a country. Hebrews 11:14-16. There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.

“My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” . . . There, “the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom. as the rose Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, . . . for the former things are passed away.” “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” The Great Controversy, 675, 676.

4. NO NIGHT THERE

“He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 22:1-5.

“In the city of God “there shall be no night.” None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close. “And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light.” The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.

“I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. “Now we see through a glass, darkly.” We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence, and behold the glory of His countenance.

“There the redeemed shall “know, even as also they are known.” The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul, shall there find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together “the whole family in heaven and earth.” These help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed.

“There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God.

Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body. . . .

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.” Revelation 5:13.” The Great Controversy, 676-678.

5. PURIFIED FROM SIN

“The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Peter 3:10-13.

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.” Isaiah 65:17-25.

“While Satan was rallying his army, the saints were in the city, beholding the beauty and glory of the Paradise of God. Jesus was at their head, leading them. All at once the lovely Savior was gone from our company; but soon we heard His lovely voice, saying, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” We gathered about Jesus, and just as He closed the gates of the city, the curse was pronounced upon the wicked. The gates were shut. Then the saints used their wings and mounted to the top of the wall of the city. Jesus was also with them; His crown looked brilliant and glorious. It was a crown within a crown, seven in number. The crowns of the saints were of the most pure gold, decked with stars. Their faces shone with glory, for they were in the express image of Jesus; and as they arose, and moved all together to the top of the city, I was enraptured with the sight.

“Then the wicked saw what they had lost; and fire was breathed from God upon them, and consumed them. This was the execution of the judgment. The wicked then received according as the saints, in unison with Jesus, had meted out to them during the one thousand years. The same fire from God that consumed the wicked, purified the whole earth. The broken, ragged mountains melted with fervent heat, the atmosphere also, and all the stubble was consumed. Then our inheritance opened before us,

glorious and beautiful, and we inherited the whole earth made new. We all shouted with a loud voice, "Glory; Alleluia!" Early Writings, pages 53, 54.

6. THE CAPITAL CITY

"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, having the glory of God. And her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Revelation 21:10, 11.

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 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." Revelation 21:22, 23.

"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. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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." Revelation 21:1-3.

"In the city was a most glorious throne, from which proceeded a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. On each side of this river was the tree of life, and on the banks of the river were other beautiful trees bearing fruit which was good for food.

"Language is altogether too feeble to attempt a description of heaven. As the scene rises before me, I am lost in amazement. Carried away with the surpassing splendor and excellent glory, I lay down the pen, and exclaim, "Oh, what love! what wondrous love!" The most exalted language fails to describe the glory of heaven or the matchless depths of a Savior's love." Early Writings, page 289.

"With Jesus at our head we all descended from the city down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great city, with twelve foundations, and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out, "The city, the great city, it's coming, it's coming down from God out of heaven," and it came and settled on the place where we stood.

"Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city. There I saw most glorious houses that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls most glorious to behold. These were to be inhabited by the saints. In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns, and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God." Early Writings, 17, 18.

There's a beautiful city that lies far away
From the earth with its burden of tears,
Where the night never enters, but shadowless day
Shines on through eternity's years.

From the shadows are lifted our sorrowful eyes,
To the hills where the angels have trod,
And our hearts ever yearn for our home in the skies,
Our home in the garden of God.

And there all our sorrows shall fade as a dream
As we enter the country of rest,
While before us in heavenly beauty shall gleam
The mansions prepared for the blest.
J. D. Santee.

7. THE NEW EARTH BESTOWED ON THE SAINTS

“The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.” Daniel 7:27.

The goodly land! I can hardly forbear, before I close, casting a glance forward to that heavenly inheritance which is the objective point of all our struggles, our toils, and our desires. I see there a land which stands in a wonderful contrast to this. As the hymn says: “Oh! how unlike the present world, Will be the one to come.”

I see fields smiling in living green, trees majestic in their wealth of verdure, flowers dazzling with their rainbow hues, and on neither field nor tree nor flower do I see the touch of frost or the pale hand of decay. I see no footprints of the curse, no scars of sin. I see no pestilence walking in darkness, nor destruction wasting at noonday. I see no forms distorted with pain, nor brows furrowed with anxiety and care. I see no mournful shafts telling where weary forms and sad and broken hearts have gone down into dust and darkness. I see no painful messages passing over that land, as two days ago we received one here, telling that a friend, a brother, a fellow laborer, had fallen beneath the cruel stroke of a relentless foe. I see no darkened room where the tide of a precious life is ebbing slowly away. I see no bosoms heaving with anguish, no badges of mourning, no funeral trains, no yawning, insatiate grave.

But on the other hand, I see a glorious company who bear bright palms of victory over death and the grave. I see, as one of our hymns says, that; “The glory of God, like a molten sea, Bathes the immortal company.”

See every eye sparkling with the fullness of the joy that reigns within. I see on every cheek the bloom of eternal youth and everlasting health. I see every limb lithe and strong. I see the lame man leaping as a hart. I see the blind gazing with rapture on the celestial glory. I see the deaf listening enchanted to the heavenly melody. I see the dumb joining with loud voice in the anthems of praise. I see the mother clasping to her bosom the children she had lost awhile in the land of the enemy, but now recovered forever. I see long-parted friends meet in eternal reunion. I see a river so pure and clear, so charged with every element of refreshment and life, that it is called “the river of life.” I see a tree overarching all, so healing in its leaves, so vivifying in its fruits, that it is called “the tree of life.” . . .

Such is the goodly land we may go up and possess. Such is the land that awaits every laborer who is faithful to the end. The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and whosoever will, may come. If any here have not yet turned their feet Zion ward, let me say, “Come with us, and we will do thee good.” Uriah Smith, in ‘The Coming Crisis’.