

(b) *God's presence*, the light (compare 1 John 3:2, 3). Truth shall be seen as it is, not in the shadow-forms of this cave of existence as Plato suggested. The *mysteries* of life shall be understood.

(c) *No sorrow, no sin*. A famous philosopher said: "Life is a constant deception in great things as in small." Perhaps he was too pessimistic, but the laws which the flesh must obey, and the ignorance by which our horizon in life is narrowed, bring to our happiness, something of the bitterness of loss, or of disillusionment, or of defeat. And all this is augmented by the sense of sin or the works of sin. Yonder, the limitations of life shall be removed.

(d) *Abounding life*, ch. 22:1-5. Finally, emphasize the ethical character of the life of the holy city, ch. 21:7; 8:27; 22:4. And, necessarily, only those who prize the highest spiritual qualities can enter into the enjoyments of the city. The Mohammedan heaven of sensual delights would be the only life some could enjoy. Do we live as "pilgrims bound for the heavenly city?"

### For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Point out that the writer of Revelation is, in these closing chapters, reaching out into the future much farther than human eye can see: he is seeing the vision of the world and all the wonder that would be, "when all men's good shall be each man's rule, and universal peace shall lie, like a shaft of light across the land, through all the circle of the Golden Year." What progress is the world making towards this Golden Age? Teach that this time is sure to come because God has foretold it, and that our present duty is to do our bit in bringing in the good time coming. Note the revelation of the Golden Age as the holy city. What are the new conditions which will prevail when that glorious time comes?

1. *A Sweet Consciousness of the Divine Presence*, vs. 2, 3. Question the scholars about the intimations of the divine presence which we have now in all the most blessed experiences of life, in every good thought and aspiration, in every good word and deed, and remind them that these are only foretastes of what is in store for us when the holy city,

with all its beauty and blessedness, comes down from God out of heaven, and we find ourselves in a heavenly environment.

2. *Complete Freedom from all the Ills of Life*, v. 4. Show how there is in these words a sweetly tender mother-touch which is felt by every human heart that is human. Robert Burns used to say that he could never read these words without weeping. The thought of the loving God, wiping his children's tears away, touched a tender chord in the poet's heart, and made him think of man's inhumanity to man which made countless thousands mourn.

3. *Every Place Will Be Hallowed Ground*, vs. 22, 23. Bring out that in the present condition of things we need special times and places for worship or our weak hearts might forget God; but that in the happier future life will be so complete that there will be no need of anything of this kind, for every day will be sweet and sacred, and every place hallowed ground.

4. *Complete Freedom from Sin*, vs. 24-27. What kind of people will live in the holy city? There will be no slums there, and no need of city missionaries or settlement workers. There will be no night side of life there, and no one will be exposed to danger of any kind, v. 25. Note the inspiration and encouragement which we get from this revelation. For the joy set before us we can make life a brighter and better thing.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Ask who wrote the words of to-day's lesson, and why John speaks of the heaven and earth in his vision as new. (See Lesson Explained.) V. 1 tells of one great difference which made them new. What is it? Other differences are described in the following verses. Study the description of the holy city.

1. *The City of Joy*, vs. 1-4, 22. Ask one of the scholars to recall how heaven was pictured in the Book of Genesis. Why is it described as a city in John's vision? Bring out the fact that Jesus is the Christ of men and women,—not merely of gardens—and where these dwell in greatest numbers, is his dwelling place. Ask what is meant by the symbol of the bride adorned for her husband. (See Lesson Explained.)