

for the first time. Possibly the "new heaven" and the "new earth" may be the old heavens and the old earth with "a new aspect and a new character, adapted to a new end." *Are passed away* (Rev. Ver.); giving place to something better and nobler. *The sea is no more* (Rev. Ver.). In the view of the ancients the sea was only turbulent, hostile, destructive; it could have no place, therefore, in a world made perfect.

V. 2. *The holy city*; a title commonly given to Jerusalem (see Matt. 4:5; 27:53). *New Jerusalem*; God's city of the future, as the old Jerusalem had been his city of the past. The new earth must have a new city. *Out of heaven from God* (Rev. Ver.). The true Jerusalem is now above; in the days of which John speaks, it will be realized on earth. *Made ready as a bride* (Rev. Ver.); a figure beautifully suggestive of mutual love and attractiveness. The Old Testament often represents in the same way God's relation to his people (see Isa. 54:5; 61:10; 62:5; Ezek. 16:6-16; Hos. 2:19).

V. 3. *A great voice*; God's voice. *Out of the throne* (Rev. Ver.). See ch. 20:11. *The tabernacle of God is with men*. The Greek word for "tabernacle" is the same as that used for the tabernacle in the wilderness, with the Schechinah, a cloud of glory symbolizing God's presence. *Dwell with them*; literally, "have his tabernacle with them" (compare John 1:14). *His people*; Rev. Ver., "peoples," including other nations as well as the Jews. *Be with them . . . their God*; fulfilling the promise in the name Emmanuel, "God with us," Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23.

V. 4. *Wipe away all tears*. Compare ch. 7:17 and Isa. 25:8. *No more death . . . sorrow . . . crying . . . pain*; but all these things shall give place to endless life and perfect joy. *First things . . . passed away* (Rev. Ver.); the things belonging to this present world.

Vs. 5-21 describe in detail the vision of the holy city.

## II. The City of Glory, 22-24.

V. 22. *I saw no temple therein*; for none was needed. In the old Jerusalem the temple was a symbol of God's presence. But in the new Jerusalem he is so manifestly present that no symbol is needed. *God Almighty*; the great creator and ruler of all things. *The*

*Lamb*; a title used of Christ 27 times in the Revelation. *The temple thereof* (Rev. Ver.). Since they are felt to be everywhere there is no need of a temple as a meeting place with them.

Vs. 23, 24. *No need of the sun, neither of the moon*. Where the uncreated light shines, there is no place nor use for the created luminaries. *The glory of God . . . and the Lamb*. Compare Isa. 60:19 and John 8:12. *Nations . . . kings . . . glory . . . honour*. The new Jerusalem is pictured as an imperial city, receiving the tribute of the whole world.

## III. The City of Peace, 25-27.

Vs. 25, 26. *Gates . . . not . . . shut*. Gates open continually signify perfect tranquility and safety. *By day*. It is only in time of war that the gates of an earthly city are closed by day. *No night there*; and therefore no need to close the gates because of darkness. The two reasons for closed gates,—danger and darkness—are unknown in the heavenly city. *Glory and honour*; which all belong to God. *Of the nations*. The redeemed will include people of all races.

V. 27. *Defileth . . . worketh abomination . . . maketh a lie*. All who do these things will be shut out of the holy city. Citizenship in that city "is a matter of moral character and divine choice, not of nationality. The Lord's city is like the Lord's table . . . 'common and open to all, yet in another sense no common thing.'" *Written in the Lamb's book of life*. In Jerusalem a roll was kept having on it the names of all the citizens. So Christ is here represented as having a list of all his people. (Compare Ex. 32:32; Isa. 4:3; Luke 10:20.)

## Light from the East

"A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH" (v. 1)—The Hebrew expectation for the future (see *Light from the East*, Dec. 3) grew from its Old Testament beginnings. On the day of Jehovah he would come and smite his enemies, for he was a mighty warrior, Ex. 15:3. He bare a mighty bow to shoot his lightning-arrows. He carried a fiery lance to hurl at his foes. He might come on the storm-cloud or he might "arise to shake terribly the earth." In some such way he would strike dismay into men's hearts and deliver his own. Ezekiel preached