

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