

HANDOUT FOR “THE NEW ORDER”

BIBLE STUDY Revelation 21:1-14

Imagine that there was no book of Revelation. The impression then gained, at the close of the Bible could be of an unresolved conclusion, with God’s saints contending valiantly for the faith, but with no apparent final verdict on the conflict between good and evil.

The verdict of this book is inescapable. You cannot read the last pages of this wonderful prophecy and stay in the camp of the pessimists! Let this final vision of the glory of God’s kingdom inspire you in everything you are doing.

1 Verse 5 seems to be the key thought. What is its link with verses 1-2 and 4?

2 We are visualising a scene of glory (verses 10-14). How does this vision of the future make sense of the present turbulence, frailties and evils, mentioned in this passage?

3 How does our vision of the centre give shape to the whole? For the centre, see verses 3 and 5. How can we best transfer this thought into our own world-view?

4 “It is done” (verse 6) This is the tense of the “prophetic past” – it is as good as done already! How does this vision of the certain triumph of God add strength to the task in hand?

5 In the light of verses 7-8, discuss the statement, “God’s judgement is the proof of his goodness.”

6 What do the many “gates” of verses 12-14 speak to us of?

7 Why does God not achieve all this now, at a stroke?

REFLECTION

A Read Revelation 21. Try to put into your own words something of what this passage is telling us about God and His people. Would any kind of person feel at home in the new creation?

B “I am coming soon.” What does this concept do to your priorities at present? What should you do about it?

C Read Revelation 22:17. What are the different thoughts in this verse? What effect should they have on your praying and witnessing?

D What are the suggestions and hints of a likeness between your own Christian fellowship and the perfection of the new Jerusalem? How can such a likeness be developed?

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BIBLE CHECK

The triumph of the Lamb:

Revelation 5:12-13; 7:17; 12:11; 17:14

The new creation:

Revelation 21:1-8; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Romans 8:18-23

The new Jerusalem:

Revelation 21:2-3,9-27

Paradise restored:

Genesis 2:8-10; 3:22-24; Revelation 22:1-5,14

Jesus is coming:

Revelation 22:6-21; Isaiah 40:9-10

KEY TRUTH

Christian people look forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where the dwelling place of God and His Christ are to be found.

POSTSCRIPT

In the new order, Christians will have new bodies, there will be a new Jerusalem and a new heaven and earth. All these things marred by sin, have to be changed. But we have the confident assurance that God Himself, with His love and faithful ness, will not change.