

New Heaven and New Earth

1. Seven C's of history - final review
2. A Sunday school manifesto
3. An ending
4. A beginning
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Seven C's of history (according to Answers Bible Curriculum)

1. Creation
2. Corruption
3. Catastrophe
4. Confusion
5. Christ
6. Cross
7. Consummation

A Sunday school manifesto (midnight ramblings)

1. Sunday school - information dumps or learn by doing
 - a. 9 Marks article: "Pastor, Aim to Preach Simple Sermons"
 - b. Give a man a fish...teach a man to fish...
2. Why do you read the Bible?
 - a. To know what it says
 - b. Authorial intent
 - i. Who is the author? Holy Spirit? Men? Both?
 - ii. What is the author trying to communicate?
 1. Sometimes they tell us
 - a. Jude 3**
 - b. 2 Peter 3:1**
 2. Sometimes they don't
 - iii. Exegesis vs eisegesis
 - c. "The Big Idea" of a passage
 - i. What was the author saying to his readers?
 - ii. What is the timeless principle?
 - iii. How does this apply to us here and now?
 - d. Passage, pericope, thought unit
3. How do you read the Bible?

- a. Original languages
 - b. Different translations
 - i. Literal, essentially literal, dynamic equivalent, paraphrase
 - ii. Every translation is a commentary
 - iii. Some are more readable than others
 - c. How they are organized makes a difference
 - i. Each verse listed separately - what is this good for?
 - ii. By paragraphs, with verse numbers inline - better
 - iii. The problem with chapters and verses
 - 1. And headings, and study bibles :)
 - iv. Reader's versions
 - 1. ESV Reader's Bible
 - 2. ESV app (iPad, etc.) have reader's modes
 - 3. Esv.org
 - d. What about your own notes?
 - i. Potentially distracting
 - ii. Have a clean version available
4. Train your brain
- a. *Why Johnny Can't Preach* - His premise? Johnny doesn't read (especially literature)
 - b. Read literature to train your brain to follow an author's argument, storyline, etc.
 - c. "This book is coherent, progressive, historical and theological revelation."

An ending - what will happen to this heaven and earth?

1. 2 Peter 3:1-13

- a. Perhaps we are not as familiar with this passage as we are with others
- b. What's the Big Idea of this passage?

2. Scoffers doubt that Jesus will return (3:1-7)

- a. "second letter" (3:1) - what was the first letter?
 - i. Several different options, but 1 Peter is most likely
- b. "reminder" (3:1-2)
 - i. We all need reminders; perhaps much of what we hear taught or preached is a reminder of what we already knew
 - ii. cf. 1:12-15
- c. "holy prophets" (3:2)

- i. cf. **1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:19-21**
 - d. “your apostles” (3:2)
 - i. Who? Perhaps the apostles who first preached the gospel and taught them
 - ii. Paul? See 3:15-16
 - iii. Peter? See 1:16
 - iv. We do this today - “your pastor” or “our pastor” or “your teacher”
 - e. “Prophets and apostles” is a connection or return to chapter 1. Chapter 2 describes false prophets, teachers, apostles, and what they taught.
 - f. “last days” (3:3)
 - i. When are the last days? Now? Still in the future? Both?
 - ii. **Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:2**
 - g. “fathers” (3:4)
 - i. The OT patriarchs (Abraham, etc.)
 - ii. **(Draw a timeline on the whiteboard)**
 - iii. Deism? Teleological argument?
 - h. Peter’s three arguments against this way of thinking (3:5-7)
 - i. Creation - an act of God
 - 1. Genesis 1:1-2, 6-10**
 - a. God’s word
 - ii. The Flood
 - 1. “these” (3:6)
 - a. water, God’s word
 - iii. Future and final judgment
 - 1. again, God’s word
 - 2. “fire”
 - a. Why fire? Why not another flood?
 - i. **Big Idea of this paragraph?**

3. The Lord’s timing is different from ours (3:8-10)

- a. “a thousand years”
 - i. See **Psalm 90:4**
- b. God’s eternity
 - i. He transcends time - DISCUSS
- c. “The Lord is...patient toward you” (3:9)
 - i. Other examples of God’s patience?
 - 1. Building of the ark - how long did that take?
 - a. According to Answers in Genesis, 55-75 years
 - 2. All the OT prophets through the centuries
 - 3. Nearly 2,000 years since Jesus Christ was crucified
- d. “not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (3:9)

- i. “any” and “all” - refer to whom?
 - 1. “you”?
 - 2. everyone?
- ii. We see this desire of God taught elsewhere in Scripture, notably in:
 - 1. **1 Timothy 2:4**
 - 2. **Ezekiel 18:23, 32**
 - 3. This tells us that God is compassionate
- iii. We also see that God has ordained or predestined that only some will ultimately be saved
 - 1. **Ephesians 1:4-5, 11**
 - 2. **Romans 8:29-30; 9:1-24**
 - 3. This tells us that God is merciful AND just
- iv. What is going on here? If God desires that everyone would be saved, but it is (clearly) not happening, does this mean God is incapable of doing what he desires? Or is he schizophrenic? Confused? No.
 - 1. Consider that God has two wills, or two senses of his will. Theologians have long described these two wills as:
 - a. His moral will (revealed will, will of command, desired will)
 - b. His sovereign will (secret will, will of decree, decretive will)
 - 2. This complexity in an infinitely complex God should not surprise us.
 - a. Consider the crucifixion of Christ: **Acts 2:23, 27-28**
- v. To conclude, hear what Tom Schreiner writes in his commentary:

“Still, God genuinely desires in one sense that all will be saved, even if he has not ultimately decreed that all will be saved. Many object that a desire that is not decreed is nonsense and theological double-talk. I would reply that such a view is rooted in biblical exegesis, that the Scriptures themselves, if accepted as a harmonious whole, compel us to make such distinctions. Such complexity is not all that surprising since God is an infinite and complex being, one who exceeds our understanding. In other words, such exegesis is not a rationalistic expedient but an acknowledgement of the mystery and depth of God’s revelation. Neither dimension of the biblical text should be denied. God really and truly desires that every person repent and turn to him. We should not retreat to God’s decreed will to nullify and negate what the text says. Nor should we use this verse to cancel out God’s ordained will. Better to live with the tension and mystery of the text than to swallow it up in a philosophical system that pretends to understand all of God’s ways.” Schreiner, 382-3

- e. “heavens will pass away” (3:10)
 - i. cf. **Matthew 5:18**
 - ii. heavenly bodies/elements

1. The word “elements” refers to what something is made of
 - a. ABC’s of the alphabet
 - b. The notes of a musical scale
 - c. The (presumed) basic elements of our world: earth, air, wind, fire
- f. “found” or “exposed” (3:10)
 - i. Some translations: “will be burned up”
 1. Every translation is a commentary
 - ii. exposed in judgment, cf. to verse 7
- g. Big Idea of this paragraph?**

4. How to live knowing that the end is coming (3:11-13)

- a. “hastening the coming...” (3:12)
 - i. Is this possible?
 - ii. cf. **Matthew 6:10**
- b. Destruction (annihilation) or purification?
 - i. Either way, what we know now as the heavens and the earth will be gone, with new heavens and earth taking its place
- c. Big Idea of this paragraph?**

5. So what’s the Big Idea of this entire passage?

- a. Remember that the day of the Lord will come, and live accordingly

A beginning - what will the new heaven and earth be like?

1. Revelation 21:1-8

- a. Big idea? What eternity will be like for believers and unbelievers

2. 2 Thessalonians 1:9

- a. Is this fair? Just?
- b. Have you ever tried to imagine what an eternity of this kind of suffering is like?
 - i. *Safely Home*, 327-330 (5 minutes?)

3. Revelation 21:22-22:5

- a. Connections with the Garden of Eden
 - i. River of the water of life (Genesis 2:10)
 - ii. The tree of life (Genesis 3:22, 24)

4. *The Last Battle*, C. S. Lewis, 183-4

- a. Cf. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**, momentary affliction and the eternal weight of glory

Concluding thoughts

1. Knowing that everything you see or know in this world, other than people, will be destroyed, how should this affect your life and how you live it?
2. Where will believers in Christ spend eternity?
3. What common ideas about heaven don't seem to come from Scripture?

Resources

1. *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, Thomas Schreiner
2. *Systematic Theology*, Wayne Grudem
3. <https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/how-long-did-it-take-for-noah-to-build-the-ark/>
4. *Safely Home*, Randy Alcorn
5. *The Last Battle*, C. S. Lewis