



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"Beyond the Sea"

21:1

Introduction

This is a recent real estate listing in Malibu:

This gated compound on a private bluff encompasses seven acres of land. The main house has seven bedrooms, 11 baths and panoramic ocean views. The property includes a riding ring, gym, swimming pool, tennis court, guardhouse, and a private road to the beach.

It's a steal at a mere \$65 million.

Beachfront or ocean view property is always coveted. So are privately owned islands. The list of celebrities who do or have owned their own island is impressive. Nicholas Cage, Mel Gibson, Gene Hackman, Ted Turner, Richard Branson, and Diana Ross.

In 2005 Leonardo DiCaprio bought the 104-acre Blackadore Caye in Belize for the bargain price of \$1.75 million and plans to turn it into an eco-resort, *People* magazine reported.

In 2007 Forbes magazine published an article titled, *World's Most Expensive Private Islands*.¹

"More than any other type of real estate, private islands fulfill the fantasy we all have of ruling over our own little kingdom," says Chris Krolow, CEO of Private Islands Online, a Toronto-based real estate company.

Among Krolow's listings: Ronde Island in Grenada. Of its 2,000 acres, 1,970 can be yours for \$100 million. The pricey property... tops [the] list of the most expensive private islands... for sale around the world.

Back down to earth **we** all seem to love some ocean or beach getaway. Whether it's Cambria or Pismo or some other location along our central coast; or Hawaii or Catalina. Families and couples from our fellowship love the ocean.

Keep that in mind and read the first verse of Revelation chapter twenty-one.

Revelation 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Where'd the ocean go? Why "no more sea?" It's a stunning intro to eternity. Not at all what you were expecting.

Three times John wrote, "I saw" - here and in verses two and twenty-two. Each introduces something amazing:

1. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth."
2. "I... saw the holy city, New Jerusalem..."
3. "I saw no temple in it..."

John saw "a new heaven and a new earth" because "the first heaven and the first earth had passed away." Let's start there - with the passing away of the current heaven and earth.

The apostle Peter tells you how this is going to happen.

¹ http://www.forbes.com/2007/10/19/islands-private-sale-forbeslife-cx_sv_1017realestate.html

2 Peter 3:7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

2 Peter 3:11 ... all these things will be dissolved...

It's all going to burn! Creation scientist Dr. Henry Morris puts it like this:

After terrestrial matter had been converted either into the vapor state or, more probably, into pure energy, God had once again exercised His mighty powers of creation and integration, and the new heavens and the new earth had appeared out of the ashes, so to speak, of the old.

When Adam and Eve sinned all of creation was affected. In the book of Romans we read that "the whole creation groans" (Romans 8:22) but will be "delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Romans 8:21).

Peter's concept of things being "dissolved" is really the method of God's deliverance of them.

There will be something "new." The word means not merely new as to time but new as to kind. It will be a whole new kind of earth.

It seems that the current heavens and earth will not be annihilated but renewed and refreshed. We might almost say (as some do) they will be regenerated.

All the ravages of sin and decay will be purged. The earth will be fresh and new.

Remarkably few passages of Scripture describe the new earth and the new heaven. There's a lot about the millennial earth but little about eternity.

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No problem! What we are told is quite enough to whet our appetite.

By the way: We know that we're looking at a new earth and heaven and not the Millennium because in passages referring to the Millennium there is frequent mention of bodies of water.

Think of what it means to have a new "heaven." We're not talking about the Heaven of God's dwelling place but the heavens above us. The Bible speaks of three heavens:

1. The first is what we would call earth's atmosphere.
2. The second is what we'd call space.
3. The third is God's dwelling place.

I love a good sunrise. I enjoy the moon in its phases. Pam just downloaded an app on her iPhone to help identify stars and planets and such. Yeah, there's an app for that!

But I could live without hurricanes and tornadoes and lightning. Lots of terror is generated in the heavens. As 2012 approaches scientists are warning about the effect of massive solar flares. Then there are meteors that might hit the earth and kill us all.

Beyond that we must remember that currently the heavens above us are the headquarters of Satan and his demons. He is called "the prince of the power of the air" in Ephesians and commentators feel that is where he strikes out at us from in terms of his diabolical operations.

Then, too, we've just read for many chapters about God Himself pouring forth wrath from Heaven through our heavens. **So, yeah, I for one am looking forward to a change above us!**

We could similarly meditate upon a new earth. Even in all its beauty it is, as one author put it, "in its soiled and work-day garb, where the miseries of a deep, dark, and universal apostasy from God holds sway" (Seiss).

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There's a lot about the earth to fear and loathe. Those who want to appeal to nature must not understand its cruelty.

Remember those margarine ads where the punch-line was, "It's not nice to fool Mother Nature?" Nature is awful in its ravages. It is amoral, killing at will.

What about the sea - the oceans and other bodies of water? Why "no more sea?" Let me mention three theories.

1. One is that there **will** be a sea! Those commentators who hold to that view say that this only refers to the passing away of the current oceans and bodies of water. They don't think it is a prediction of the conditions of the future. It seems a pretty weak argument.
2. Another is a complicated argument based on some theories of our blood being 90% water. In the future our resurrection bodies, they say, will be only flesh and bone - no blood - so water won't be a necessity to sustain life. It seems a pretty weird argument - a stretch at best. Especially when you consider there will be water in the form of a river running through the New Jerusalem. I, for one, plan to drink of it!
3. There is a scientific argument that discusses the hydrological cycles of the planet with regard to the oceans being huge recycling engines for the waste of the current earth. None of that, they say, will be needed in the future when conditions are perfect. But perfect conditions don't cancel-out cycles or natural processes to achieve them.

In the end we're not told why there is "no more sea." We're left to ponder.

I will tell you what it means to me. It goes back to my opening comments.

Location is important to people. Realtors and developers always say “Location! Location! Location!” to emphasize just how important it is to the value of a property.

I pointed out how valuable beachfront and ocean view property is on the current earth. Not so on the new earth! All will revolve around something else.

John will say “I... saw the holy city, New Jerusalem...” Everything will revolve around the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. We’ll see it in its magnificence in future studies. You won’t be itching to ‘get away from the city’ and over to the coast!

Of even greater importance John will say “I saw no temple in it.” He will go on to explain why there was no need for a temple.

Revelation 21:22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

In eternity, on the new earth, you won’t say, “Location! Location! Location!” You will say, “Lord! Lord! Lord!”

It won’t be about a place; it will be about a Person - Jesus Christ.

Even today location can be over-hyped. Before we were believers in Jesus Pam and I were struggling in our marriage. One of the strategies we tried to salvage our relationship was to move to a new, more romantic location. We left the big city and moved to the mountains. We had a little cabin built on a great lot in Running Springs. Going home every night from work was like taking a daily vacation.

But it didn’t work. The problems we were experiencing weren’t going to be solved by a physical change. Only a change within, a spiritual change, could save our marriage.

We first needed to be changed from within by grace through faith in Jesus. After that location didn't matter!

Over the years I've seen too many believers try to solve their problems by changing locations. It won't work; it can't work. Even now, on the current earth, it's not about a place, no matter how comfortable or beautiful.

It's about a Person. It's about Jesus.