

April 24, 2016  
Revelation 21:1-7

Easter 5C  
An Eternal Spring

*Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our Resurrected King. Amen.*

Many of you know by now, I am no fan of winter. The snow, the ice, the cold, the wind that bites at you through your winter jacket. As you look at the calendar it says, April 24. The calendar says it's been spring for over a month now and finally besides the snow being gone, you can hear the songs of the birds more, the perennials are starting to burst through the soil, grass is turning green, the fields are being planted, the sun when it shines is warmer and brighter, we've even had some of that spring time rain. We are beginning to see new things once again.

Spring could become favorite season if it wasn't for the drastic differences in weather. However, spring is my favorite season when it comes to the new things. Green grass, buds on trees, watching the fields go from bare soil to green with growth. Spring is a time of new life.

In our text from the Revelation to St. John, Jesus tells John, "I'm making all things new." When the Resurrected Christ returns we will all live in an eternal spring, with the Lord Christ as the son that gives light and warmth to the renewed creation.

This text talks about the new creation as opposed to the former things. What are the former things that have passed away in the new rather, renewed creation?

The former things are those things that cause death, tears, mourning, crying, and pain. The former things are those wrapped up in the sea. Yes, the sea. The sea that is talked about in verse 1 of our text is not just the body of water. This sea represents chaos. Louis Brighton in his commentary on Revelation asks the question "What is meant by 'the sea'?" He then answers: "'The sea' in 21:1 seems to represent the chaos caused by sin and the fearful gulf that separated God and humanity resulting from human sin and rebellion against God." The sea is part of those former things. The sea though is not former yet...its current reality. We live in a world marked by chaos. We live in a world marked by sin. We live in a world marked by rebellion against God.

It's not just the world that is sinful and rebels against God. It's you and me. We are born into sin. We by nature rebel against God. The list of people in Revelation 21:8 are part of who we are. *<sup>8</sup> But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.* <sup>1</sup> We lie, we worship idols, we are sexually immoral, we are murderers, we at times are faithless, we are cowards when it comes to our faith.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version.* (2001). (Re 21:8). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

It's what you and I do. We think to the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus explains the Law and we see that even if we hate another person we commit murder. If we look at someone else in a lustful manner, we commit adultery and are therefore sexually immoral. Who amongst us hasn't told a lie, cheated on a test, told half-truths to our parents, teachers, bosses and other authority figures. Who here hasn't stretched the truth or spread a rumor about someone else. Idolatry...we are all idolaters. We all have other gods. Your family, job, money, activities, education. Yourself and what's best for the self. Idols for us come in all shapes, sizes, power, prestige, and people.

You see, the sea, represents everything that is chaotic to the Savior. Amos tells us that the sea is the home to evil serpent, Leviathan. Several times the disciples were caught in a storm on a sea, which threatened them. The sea represents everything that tries to prevent us from fully trusting in the Savior.

It's not just sins that try and prevent us from fully trusting our Savior...it's the fallenness of the world as well. It's the cancers, injuries, sicknesses, depression, diseases. It's the financial troubles, it's the political turmoil. Satan, the evil serpent, uses anything and everything at his disposal to get us away from our Savior.

Yet, the Lord has promised, that there is coming a day when the sea will be no more, when the sea will be calm and at peace, much as the sea was when Jesus said, "Peace, be still." Brighton comments: "Thus calmed, such a sea will never again remind God's people of the fearful gulf that once separated them from God's Holy presence." You and I we've gone through the sea, much like the Lord God brought the Children of Israel through the waters of the Red Sea on dry land and also the water of the Jordan River. Isaiah brings a promise of deliverance through water. You and I experienced that deliverance through the waters of the Holy Baptism. You and I were brought through the waters and are made new there. Our Old Adam was drowned and the renewed man is brought forth.

This is the beginning for us a way that the Lord God brings us into the renewed creation where there will be an eternal spring, an eternal sign of new life. Not just an eternal sign, but eternal life in all its joy and beauty.

When Jesus Christ says, "I'm making all things new" he means it. The old order of things will be done away with. This began at the cross when Jesus said with one word "tetelestai - It is finished." The Old Order of things was being undone. The temple curtain was torn in two and we had access to God. It's not just there that one word starts to undo the old order of things... In several of Jesus' healing miracles he says a single word and the blind see, the deaf hear, and the dead live. Here in the text we see this eternal spring come into being with one word "Gegonan" "It has come into being."

Here in Revelation 21, John sees the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven as from God, prepared as a bride for her husband. God's dwelling place is now with man. God is now present

amongst His people; the Second Advent has come. The creation is renewed. The heavens and earth have been made new and thus restored to their original pristine condition. This is coming, this is coming soon. The eternal spring is soon upon us.

Until that time comes, the Lord will continue to be with you, His people. Until that time comes, the Lord will continue to bless you as His people.

The Eternal Spring though is a wait for it to be fully filled, it is even now already here. The eternal spring began when Christ rose in the Spring. We celebrate Easter in the Spring season. As we know, as I have already stated, Spring is the season of new life. Indeed, our Lord is the God of new life. Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life." Peter once told Jesus, "You have the words of eternal life."

Jesus Christ through His life, death, and resurrection has brought us into the season of new life. There is coming that day, as already been said that creation will be renewed, when we will be fully in restored creation. Jesus is the author of all that when it comes into play with the new creation. We hear it when He says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End." Louis Brighton says this: "For 'the Beginning and the End,' while explaining the sense of 'the Alpha and the Omega,' does so in reference to all creation. That is, it declares that 'the alpha and the omega,' is also 'the Beginning and the End' of all creation, of all life." Jesus Christ as the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and End makes all things new.

He is the one who gives thirsty people water from the springs of the water of life for free. It is without cost, the life water is without cost. It's freely bestowed on the thirsty. Our text concludes with these words: <sup>2</sup>*The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.*<sup>2</sup> On your own you cannot conquer. On your own you have no inheritance, but as the text shows us, it's coming from heaven for you. The one who is speaking is the one who has conquered. The one who has conquered has conquered the chaos for you. The one who has conquered is the one that is Riding the White Stallion in victory. The one who has conquered also rode the donkey into Jerusalem with people waving palm branches. Jesus Christ is the one who has conquered. And because of that you have inheritance. You are called His Son, His daughter. You are called that because you are wearing the Robe of Righteousness that he put on you in your baptism. When you were brought the sea into the eternal spring.

In this eternal spring, life will be forever, creation will be restored, you will live without pain, sickness, tears, sin, and death. In this eternal spring, you will live in both body and soul for eternity. In this eternal spring you will live on this restored earth. In this eternal spring, you will live in Eden restored. In this eternal spring, you will constantly drink from the water of life and eat from the bread of life. Praise be to God that we live in a season of new life, and even

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<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version.* (2001). (Re 21:7). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

when fall and winter do come, we still live in Spring, for you and I, we are Resurrection People, we live after the Resurrection of Jesus as we await our own Resurrections.

In Jesus Name. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! Amen

*Now may the peace of God which passes all human understanding, guard you hearts and your minds and keep them focused in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, our Resurrected King. Amen.*