



THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH REVELATION CHAPTER 21 VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY

SUMMARY OF REVELATION CHAPTER 21

Revelation 21 now tells us about the glorious new heavens and new earth created by Jesus. Only those who are in the Lamb's book of life will live in the new Jerusalem. This new Jerusalem is the church of God in its new and perfect state, the church triumphant. Its blessedness came wholly from God, and depends on him. The presence of God with his people in heaven, will not be interrupted as it is on earth, he will dwell with them continually. All effects of former trouble including death, sin weeping and rebellion are no more.

“They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.” There can be no more joyful verse in the Bible than this one! The tabernacle of God is with men! The tabernacle, as that word is commonly used in the Scriptures, referring to the sacred "tent" erected in the wilderness, was regarded as the unique dwelling-place of God among his people - as the temple was afterward, which was also called a "tabernacle." It is not said that this would be "on the earth," because it is in the new heavens and the new earth.

The glory of God is the light of the city, and the Lamb is the lamp to all the saved. God in Christ will be an everlasting Fountain of knowledge and joy to the saints in heaven. There is no night, therefore no need of shutting the gates; all is at peace and secure. We should be led to think of heaven as filled with the glory of God, and enlightened by the presence of the Lord Jesus.

There is no temple in the new Jerusalem *“because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”* Compare this to what Paul said (*“God's Spirit dwells in your midst”*) about the temple on earth in 1 Corinthians. Compare to what Jeremiah and Isaiah wrote and about sacrifices. The temple is God dwelling in us, and God wants no animal or grain sacrifice. The only worthy sacrifice was Jesus. Any attempt to bring back Old Testament sacrifice dishonors Jesus.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NIV)

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

Jeremiah 6:20 (NIV)

“What do I care about incense from Sheba or sweet calamus from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable; your sacrifices do not please me.”

REVELATION CHAPTER 21 VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY

Rev 21:1 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

“Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.” In the Book of Revelation the “sea” is the spiritual realm, and the “earth” is the human realm. The beast from the Abyss came from the sea (Revelation 13:1 *“The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name”*) Likewise, the new heavens and earth have no sea, since the spiritual world will be visible.

The new heaven and the new earth will not be separate from each other; the earth of the saints, their glorified, bodies, will be heavenly. The old world, with all its troubles and tumults, will have passed away. This new Jerusalem is the church of God in its new and perfect state, the church triumphant. Its blessedness came wholly from God, and depends on him. The presence of God with his people in heaven, will not be interrupt as it is on earth, he will dwell with them continually. All problems or misfortune including death, sin, weeping and rebellion are no more.

Rev 21:2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.” The new Jerusalem is more fully described later on in this chapter in verses 10-27. The city is also the bride. The sacred city appears linked to God by a sacred bond. The Old Testament prophet Isaiah, Hebrews writer and the Apostle Paul wrote about this day.

Isaiah 61:10-11 (NIV)

I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

Hebrews 12:22 (NIV)

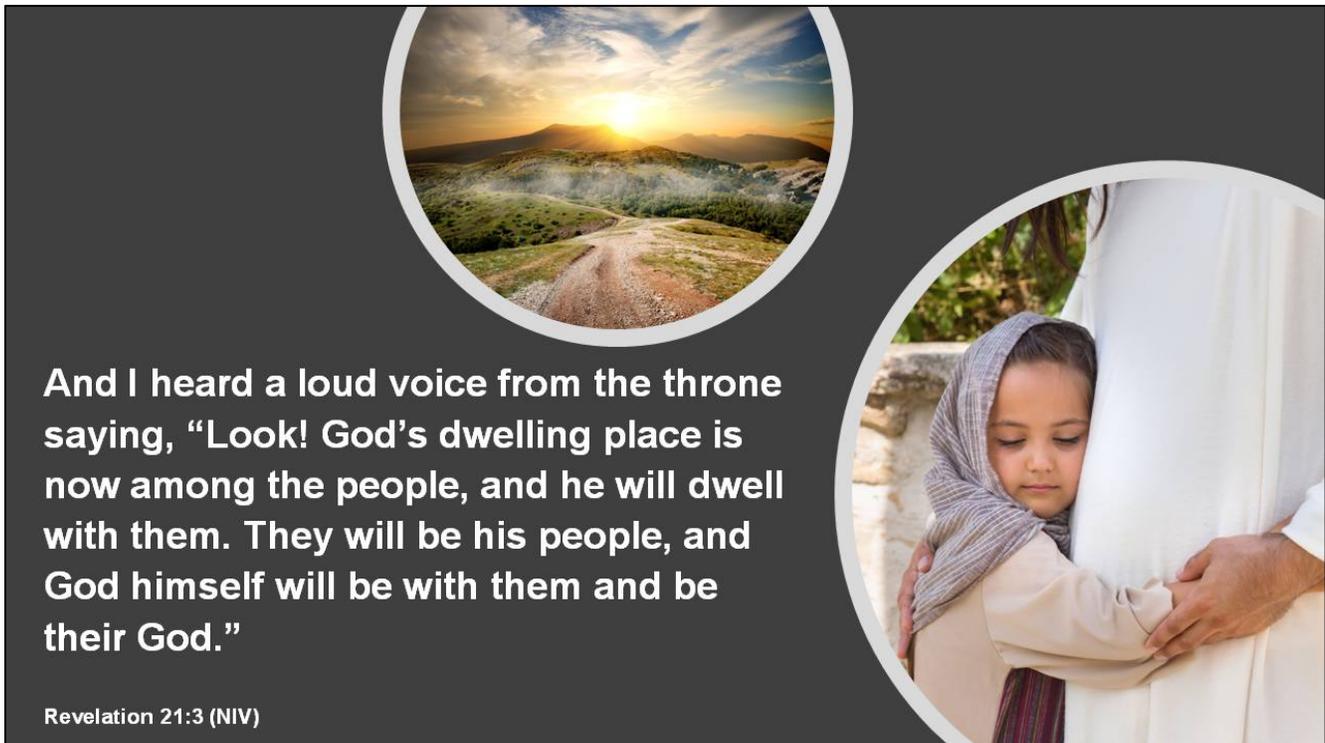
But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,

Ephesians 5:25-27 (NIV)

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

“They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.” There can be no more joyful verse in the Bible than this one! The tabernacle of God is with men! The tabernacle, as that word is commonly used in the Scriptures, referring to the sacred "tent" erected in the wilderness, was regarded as the unique dwelling-place of God among his people - as the temple was afterward, which was also called a “tabernacle.” It is not said that this would be "on the earth," because it is in the new heavens and the new earth. The Hebrews writer explains the significance of the tabernacle.



And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”

Revelation 21:3 (NIV)

Hebrews 9:1-4 (NIV)

Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand and the table with its consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant.

Hebrews 9:11-12 (NIV)

But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

Rev 21:4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'

"There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." The reign with Jesus will be perfect and free from sin, death, weeping and rebellion. The first, or former, things are passed away: death shall not be any longer; neither shall mourning, nor crying, nor pain, be any longer.

The great array of negatives comes as a herald of the positive peace of the new Jerusalem: no sea (no divide from the spiritual world), no tears, no death, no mourning, no crying, no rebellion, no pain; with the former things these dark shadows pass away from life.

Those in the heavenly room will not be able to see those in the lake of fire. But those in the lake of fire will be able to see those in the heavenly room. For those with Christ, neither sorrow, nor crying; on account of sin, or because of oppression and persecution, or through the loss of near relations and friends; sorrow and sighing will flee away, all occasions thereof being gone: neither shall there be any more pain; either of body or mind; there will be nothing to afflict the mind, and make that uneasy, but all the reverse; nor will there be any sickness or diseases of body, for the body will be raised glorious, powerful, incorruptible, and spiritual.

Rev 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

"I am making everything new!" In spite of the moral disorder, the pain and grief, the dark shadows of life and history, the new creation is being prepared, and will rise, like the early creation, out of chaos. The analogy between the old and new creation is the reason why the first chapter of Genesis and Revelation 21-22 are tied together. Out of an earth without form and void rose the world of order and beauty, which God pronounced very good, so out of the world, so full of distress and tears, and overshadowed by so many clouds of sin, will emerge the glad new world, where only righteousness dwells. God will pronounce it good once again!

The closing words of the verse, perhaps an instruction from the angel, but more probably still the voice of Him that sits on the throne, adds the further assurance, *"for these words are trustworthy and true."* You can trust the words of Jesus.

Rev 21:6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life."

"He said unto me, It is done." The world is at an end, and the wrath of Jesus against His enemies, and promises to His people, are now fulfilled, in the eternal damnation of the one, and deliverance and salvation of the other.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Jesus first made the world, and Jesus has put a period to it. Jesus first gave out those promises and warnings, and Jesus has now fulfilled them.

"To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life." It is not possible to buy salvation. It is only from the Blood of Jesus. Following the Qur'an and Sharia Law and good works will never be enough to be in the presence of a Holy God..

It is not possible to buy salvation. Think about what Jesus said to the rich young man.

(Mark 10:21-22; *Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.*)

Revelation 21:6 (NIV)

He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life."



Rev 21:7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

"Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

Only those whose names are in the Lamb's Book of Life will be victorious. Everyone falls short of God's glory. Only the Blood of Jesus can atone for our sins. When Jesus said: *"will inherit all this"* it means we will be an heir of God in all things. When Jesus said: *"I will be their God"*, it means forever without end. He would be to them all that is properly implied in the name of God; he would bestow upon them all the blessings which it was appropriate for God to bestow. Even greater is when Jesus said: *"and they will be my children"*, it means Jesus will sustain all the saved souls in the close and loving relationship of a parent to a child, not a distant relative or stranger.

The source of victory is the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (Revelation 12:11; *"They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."*), and the victory of faith (1 John 5:5; *"Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God."*)

Rev 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

The list starts up referring to the worst sins such as murderers and those that practice the magic arts. Some unsaved people may feel their good works are better than the first part of this list. They think their works are sufficient. But when Jesus gets to the end of the list (*“the idolaters and all liars”*) it is clear Jesus means everyone's sins are too great to be included in the kingdom. How then can we be saved from the second death, since everyone has sinned and lied at some point in their life? Peter tells us we can only go to Jesus—who has the words of eternal life.

John 6:68 (NIV)

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

Rev 21:9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

“One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me.” Most probably this angel is the same one who in Revelation 17-18 showed John the desert wilderness Babylon (Islamic Mecca) and her destruction. Now one of the seven shows him, by way of contrast, the new Jerusalem and her glory. In Ezekiel 40:2, he was brought in the visions of God, and set on a very high mountain, and showed Ezekiel the “what if” holy city Jerusalem. The old city is now forgotten, so that this is no longer termed the new, but absolutely, Jerusalem.

“Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” The "Lamb" is Christ, who is often so called in this book; see Revelation 5:6 and Revelation 19:7. Jesus is the Son of God, the heir of all things, the Maker and Governor of the universe, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and who, as Mediator, has all accomplishments and qualifications to recommend him as a bridegroom. His glory, riches, and wisdom: the bride, his wife, is not any particular believer, nor any particular church; not the Gentile church, nor the Jewish church only, but all the elect of God, consisting of the raised and living saints at the coming of Christ; who will make up one body, one general assembly, and be as a bride, prepared and adorned for her husband: these were first betrothed to Christ in eternity, and were openly espoused by him, one by one, at conversion.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

John was in an ecstasy and utter astonishment, as in Revelation 1:10 and in the thoughts and apprehensions of his mind and spirit, as he was carried away from one place to another. A sharp contrast exists between historic Jerusalem and the New Jerusalem of eternity. The former Jerusalem is often disrupted by internal and external strife. The new Jerusalem will be a city of perfect peace. Men designed and built the former Jerusalem. God is the designer and builder of the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is secure, indestructible, and eternal.

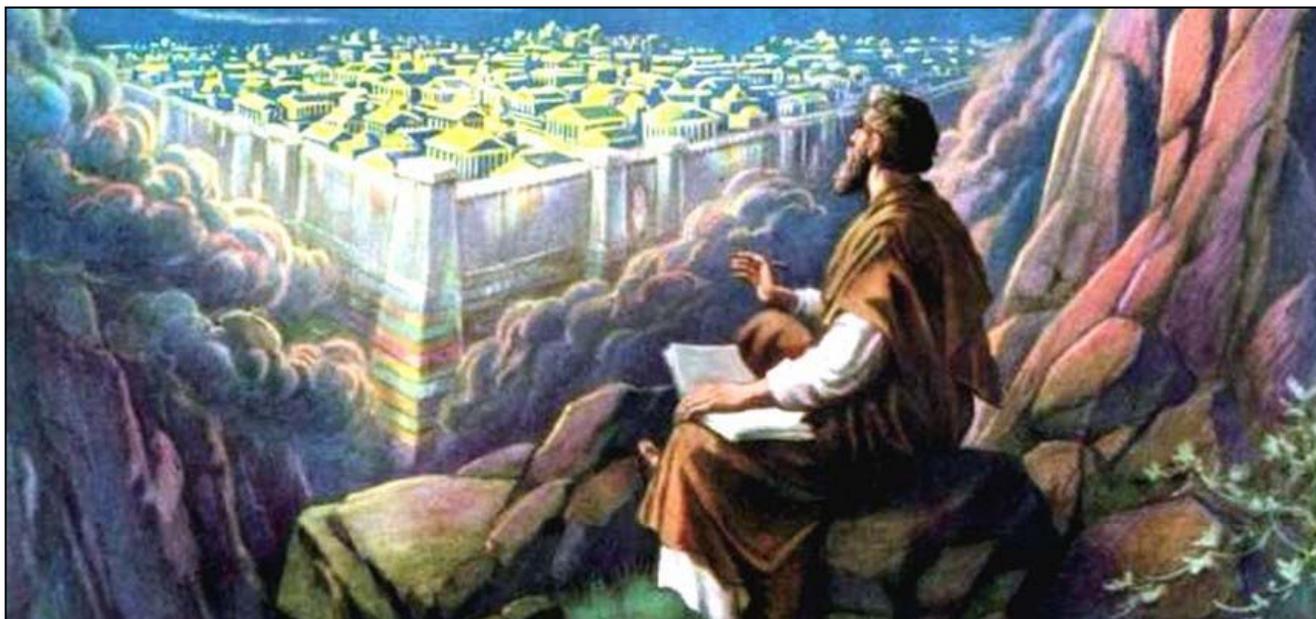
Rev 21:11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

Rev 21:12 It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Rev 21:13 There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.

Rev 21:14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

It is difficult to describe in human terms the immense and unimaginable glory of God, so in these few verses John uses the metaphors of gold and precious stones to reach his readers with some idea of what he saw!



IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR JOHN TO DESCRIBE THE NEW JERUSALEM

Rev 21:15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls

Rev 21:16 The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long.

Rev 21:17 The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick.

Since the height, length and width are the same, the New Jerusalem is a 1500 mile cube, just as the Old Testament Tabernacle Holy of Holies of God was a cube. In Islam, Baal in the Kaaba image of the beast in Mecca tries to copy the cube design--to no avail.



THE HOLY OF HOLIES IN THE TABERNACLE WAS A CUBE

2 Chronicles 3:8-9 (NIV)

He built the Most Holy Place, its length corresponding to the width of the temple—twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide. He overlaid the inside with six hundred talents of fine gold. The gold nails weighed fifty shekels. He also overlaid the upper parts with gold.



BAAL, IN THE ISLAMIC KAABA IMAGE OF THE BEAST IN MECCA, TRIES TO COPY THE CUBE DESIGN--TO NO AVAIL

Rev 21:18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

Rev 21:19 The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,

Rev 21:20 the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

Rev 21:21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

In these verses John again tries to describe the new Jerusalem, illuminated by the glory of God, in human terms. We can compare this to the luxury and wealth of the harlot Mecca and the Kaaba image (Revelation 17:4 *“The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls.”*). The Bride, the Lamb’s wife, has her beautiful ornaments, richer and rarer than those which adorned the beast and dragon’s home of Mecca.

Rev 21:22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

“I did not see a temple in the city.” In Ezekiel’s vision the vast and splendid proportions of the temple formed a conspicuous part: its gigantic proportions declared it to be figurative, and it was also dependant on Israel’s obedience to God, which they did not do. (Ezekiel 48:8-20) The vision of John passes on to a higher state of things. Ezekiel’s vision declared that the literal temple would be replaced by a far more glorious spiritual temple.

There is no temple in the new Jerusalem *“because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”* Compare this to what Paul said (*“God’s Spirit dwells in your midst”*) about the temple on earth in 1 Corinthians. Compare to what Jeremiah and Isaiah wrote and about sacrifices. The temple is God dwelling in us, and God wants no animal or grain sacrifice. The only worthy sacrifice was Jesus. Any attempt to bring back Old Testament sacrifice dishonors Jesus.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NIV)

Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst?

Jeremiah 6:20 (NIV)

“What do I care about incense from Sheba or sweet calamus from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable; your sacrifices do not please me.”

Isaiah 1:11 (NIV)

“The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?” says the Lord. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.”

Rev 21:23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

Rev 21:24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

Rev 21:25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there

Rev 21:26 The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

Rev 21:27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The glory of God is the light of the city, and the Lamb is the lamp to all the saved. God in Christ will be an everlasting Fountain of knowledge and joy to the saints in heaven. There is no night, therefore no need of shutting the gates; all is at peace and secure. The whole shows us that we should be more and more led to think of heaven as filled with the glory of God, and enlightened by the presence of the Lord Jesus.

In Revelation 21:24 the Greek word for "nations" is "ethne". In this case, ethne in context mean a collection or group of like minded creatures (resurrected humans, meaning saved believers) walking in the glory of God. In Revelation 21:26 the Greek word for "nations" is "ethnon". In this context it has the same meaning as Revelation 21:24, i.e., a collection or group with a similar characteristic—meaning those redeemed by Christ.

Nothing sinful or unclean, idolatrous, or false and deceitful, can enter. This would be all souls since Adam if not for the blood of Jesus.

Matthew 19: 25-26

"When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

All the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem are made perfect in holiness. None are admitted into heaven who carry sin. It is free from hypocrites and liars. As nothing unclean can enter heaven, let us give praise to God by these glimpses of heavenly things, to use all diligence, and to perfect our ways in the fear of God.

Those that are in the lake of fire from believing the Qur'an and praying to the Kaaba will only be able to watch the Lamb as they suffer.

Revelation 14:10 (NIV)

They, too, will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.