SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE · WEEK 7

LEAVING THE LIGHT ON

REVELATION 21:1–22:5

LISTENING GUIDE

Filled with the light of God's glory.
Nothing broken. Everything made new.



by Rick Melick

CAPITOL CITY CHURCH · DES MOINES, IOWA

START HERE

How to Use This Guide

Follow along while the message is preached, then come back to study.

During the message

Use the outline to follow the three points. Each point has listening notes with the key verses, and a box where you can type your own notes.

After the message

Write your response, read the full passages in two translations, and use the Scripture chart to find any verse quickly.

With your City Group

The City Group discussion walks through 12 questions with the passages printed beside each one.

TYPING YOUR NOTES

Open this PDF in the Books app, GoodNotes or Adobe Acrobat and tap any note box to type. Save a copy to keep your notes. Use the tabs on the right edge of every page to jump between sections.

FROM NOTES TO BOOK

This guide is one piece of a larger teaching system. The listening guides and sermon transcripts from each series become the chapters of an interactive book, linked to every sermon video.

FOLLOW THE MESSAGE

Teaching Outline

REVELATION 21:1–22:5

START HERE

Trust Jesus. John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled." John 14:1

"I am the way" John 14:6

Jesus promises a place with him. He is the way to the Father. Knowing who Jesus is and loving what he has done for us helps us look forward to being with him.

Filled with the light of God's glory.
Nothing broken. Everything made new.

1 Why is it different?

Revelation 21:1-8

- **A** A new world.
- **B** God makes his home with his people.
- **C** No more death, tears, or pain.
- **D** Everything made new. Life offered as a gift.

2 How will it look?

Revelation 21:9-21

- **A** A city shining with God's glory.
- **B** Gates and foundations that tell God's story.
- **C** A city whose size stretches our imagination.
- **D** Gold, precious stones, and gates of pearl.

3 Who makes it great?

Revelation 21:22-22:5

- **A** God himself will be there with his people.
- **B** Light that never fails. Evil cannot enter.
- **C** The river of life. No more curse.
- **D** We will see his face.

CLOSING QUESTION

What does this passage teach us that can help us face death without fear?

Scripture Chart

Tap a point for its listening notes. Tap a reference or excerpt to read the passage.

TEACHING POINT	REFERENCE	NIV EXCERPT
1. Why is it different? Revelation 21:1-8		
1A. A new world	Revelation 21:1	*"a new heaven and a new earth"*
1B. God makes his home with his people	Revelation 21:3	*"God's dwelling place is now among the people"*
1C. The old heartbreak ends	Revelation 21:4	*"He will wipe every tear from their eyes"; "There will be no more death"*
1D. A trustworthy promise and a free invitation	Revelation 21:5	*"these words are trustworthy and true"*
1D. A trustworthy promise and a free invitation	Revelation 21:6	*"water without cost"*
2. How will it look? Revelation 21:9-21		
2A. A city shining with God's glory	Revelation 21:11	*"It shone with the glory of God"*
2B. Gates and foundations that tell God's story	Revelation 21:14	*"the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb"*
2C. Dimensions that stretch our imagination	Revelation 21:16	*"The city was laid out like a square"*
2D. Beauty that ordinary words can barely describe	Revelation 21:21	*"The twelve gates were twelve pearls"*
3. Who makes it great? Revelation 21:22-22:5		
3A. God will be there: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit	Revelation 21:22	*"the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple"*
3B. Their light never fails; evil cannot enter	Revelation 21:23	*"the glory of God gives it light"*
3B. Their light never fails; evil cannot enter	Revelation 21:27	*"Nothing impure will ever enter it"*
3C. Life flows from God's throne; the curse is gone	Revelation 22:1	*"the river of the water of life"*
3C. Life flows from God's throne; the curse is gone	Revelation 22:3	*"No longer will there be any curse"*
3D. God's people see his face	Revelation 22:4	*"They will see his face"*

1 Why is it different?

A. A new world

"a new heaven and a new earth" Revelation 21:1

John sees a new heaven and earth, with the Holy City coming down from God.

B. God makes his home with his people

"God's dwelling place is now among the people" Revelation 21:3

God will dwell with his people. Belonging and closeness are central to this home.

C. The old heartbreak ends

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes" Revelation 21:4

"There will be no more death" Revelation 21:4

Death, mourning, crying, and pain will be gone. God's promise gives us hope while we grieve now.

D. A trustworthy promise and a free invitation

"these words are trustworthy and true" Revelation 21:5

"water without cost" Revelation 21:6

God's words are trustworthy, and he offers life freely. His invitation also comes with a serious warning about judgment.

REMEMBER

The heartbreak will end. Our pain is real, but it is not permanent.

CONSIDER

Which promise speaks most directly to a loss or fear in my life?

MY NOTES

Tap here to type

2 How will it look?

A. A city shining with God's glory

"It shone with the glory of God" Revelation 21:11

The city shines with God's glory. Its beauty reflects the One who gives it.

B. Gates and foundations that tell God's story

"the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" Revelation 21:14

Israel's tribes and Jesus' apostles are named on the gates and foundations. The names recall God's faithfulness to his people.

The Lamb: Jesus, who gave his life for our sins and rose again.

C. Dimensions that stretch our imagination

"The city was laid out like a square" Revelation 21:16

The city's length, width, and height are equal. Its size stretches our imagination.

D. Beauty that ordinary words can barely describe

"The twelve gates were twelve pearls" Revelation 21:21

John describes gold, precious stones, and pearl gates. We can trust God's promise without explaining every physical detail.

What if I can't picture heaven? Scripture tells us enough to trust God's promise without answering every question.

REMEMBER

God promises beauty and belonging - a home filled with his glory.

CONSIDER

What makes me look forward to the home John describes?

MY NOTES

Tap here to type

3 Who makes it great?

A. God will be there: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

"the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" Revelation 21:22

The one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - will be with his people. John's vision emphasizes God and the Lamb; Jesus is fully God.

B. Their light never fails; evil cannot enter

"the glory of God gives it light" Revelation 21:23

"Nothing impure will ever enter it" Revelation 21:27

God's glory gives the city light. Open gates express safety, and nothing impure will enter.

C. Life flows from God's throne; the curse is gone

"the river of the water of life" Revelation 22:1

"No longer will there be any curse" Revelation 22:3

The river and tree of life picture life and wholeness from God. No curse remains.

D. God's people see his face

"They will see his face" Revelation 22:4

God's people belong to him and will see his face. The greatest promise is life with God himself.

REMEMBER

The light never goes out. The welcome never ends.

CONSIDER

What does seeing God's face mean for the way I think about death?

MY NOTES

Tap here to type

MY RESPONSE

Why Look Forward to This Home?

God makes everything new. The heartbreak ends. We will live in his presence, and no evil will

Tap a box to type. Save a copy of the PDF to keep your responses.

A promise I want to remember

Which verse or promise most encouraged me today?

Tap here to type

Something this passage corrects

What did I assume about heaven that I need to rethink?

Tap here to type

The closing question

What does this passage teach us that can help us face death without fear?

Tap here to type

PRAY

: Thank God for a specific promise. Bring him a fear, a loss, or someone you love.

This week: What will our forever home be like? **Next week:** What will we be doing?

Cover artwork is an artistic interpretation of the city and renewed creation.

Revelation 21:1-8

READ THE PASSAGE

NIV

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

1 I saw Heaven and earth new-created. Gone the first
Heaven, gone the first earth, gone the sea. 2 I saw
Holy Jerusalem, new-created, descending
resplendent out of Heaven, as ready for God as a
bride for her husband. 3-5 I heard a voice thunder
from the Throne: “Look! Look! God has moved into
the neighborhood, making his home with men and
women! They’re his people, he’s their God. He’ll wipe
every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good -
tears gone, crying gone, pain gone - all the first order
of things gone.” The Enthroned continued, “Look!
I’m making everything new. Write it all down - each
word dependable and accurate.” 6-8 Then he said,
“It’s happened. I’m A to Z. I’m the Beginning, I’m the
Conclusion. From Water-of-Life Well I give freely to
the thirsty. Conquerors inherit all this. I’ll be God to
them, they’ll be sons and daughters to me. But for
the rest - the feckless and faithless, degenerates and
murderers, sex peddlers and sorcerers, idolaters and
all liars - for them it’s Lake Fire and Brimstone.
Second death!”

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Revelation 21:9-14

NIV

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." 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. 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. 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. 13 There were three gates on
the east, three on the north, three on the south and
three on the west. 14 The wall of the city had twelve
foundations, and on them were the names of the
twelve apostles of the Lamb.

THE MESSAGE

The City of Light 9-12 One of the Seven Angels who
had carried the bowls filled with the seven final
disasters spoke to me: "Come here. I'll show you the
Bride, the Wife of the Lamb." He took me away in the
Spirit to an enormous, high mountain and showed
me Holy Jerusalem descending out of Heaven from
God, resplendent in the bright glory of God. 12-14 The
City shimmered like a precious gem, light-filled,
pulsing light. She had a wall majestic and high with
twelve gates. At each gate stood an Angel, and on the
gates were inscribed the names of the Twelve Tribes
of the sons of Israel: three gates on the east, three
gates on the north, three gates on the south, three
gates on the west. The wall was set on twelve
foundations, the names of the Twelve Apostles of the
Lamb inscribed on them.

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Revelation 21:15-21

NIV

15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring
rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.
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. 17 The angel measured the wall
using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits
thick. 18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of
pure gold, as pure as glass. 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, 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. 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.

THE MESSAGE

15-21 The Angel speaking with me had a gold
measuring stick to measure the City, its gates, and its
wall. The City was laid out in a perfect square. He
measured the City with the measuring stick: fifteen
hundred miles, its length, width, and height all
equal. Using the standard measure, the Angel
measured the thickness of its wall: seventy-two
yards. The wall was jasper, the color of Glory, and the
City was pure gold, translucent as glass. The
foundations of the City walls were garnished with
every precious gem imaginable: the first foundation
jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the
fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian,
the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth
topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth,
the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve
pearls, each gate a single pearl.

NIV teaching measurements: about 1,400 miles and about 200 feet. The Message uses different rounded conversions. Keep 12,000 stadia and 144 cubits as the common ancient measurements. Stone names also differ.

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Revelation 21:22-27

NIV

22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord
God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 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. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the
kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. 25
On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be
no night there. 26 The glory and honor of the nations
will be brought into it. 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 MESSAGE

21-27 The main street of the City was pure gold,
translucent as glass. But there was no sign of a
Temple, for the Lord God - the Sovereign-Strong - and
the Lamb are the Temple. The City doesn't need sun
or moon for light. God's Glory is its light, the Lamb
its lamp! The nations will walk in its light and
earth's kings bring in their splendor. Its gates will
never be shut by day, and there won't be any night.
They'll bring the glory and honor of the nations into
the City. Nothing dirty or defiled will get into the
City, and no one who defiles or deceives. Only those
whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life
will get in.

The Message groups 21-27 together, so its first sentence repeats the street description from the preceding page. Its original grouped ranges are preserved.

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Revelation 22:1-5

NIV

1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of
life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of
God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great
street of the city. On each side of the river stood the
tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its
fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for
the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be
any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be
in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They
will see his face, and his name will be on their
foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will
not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun,
for the Lord God will give them light. And they will
reign for ever and ever.

THE MESSAGE

22 1-5 Then the Angel showed me Water-of-Life
River, crystal bright. It flowed from the Throne of
God and the Lamb, right down the middle of the
street. The Tree of Life was planted on each side of
the River, producing twelve kinds of fruit, a ripe fruit
each month. The leaves of the Tree are for healing
the nations. Never again will anything be cursed.
The Throne of God and of the Lamb is at the center.
His servants will offer God service - worshiping,
they'll look on his face, their foreheads mirroring
God. Never again will there be any night. No one will
need lamplight or sunlight. The shining of God, the
Master, is all the light anyone needs. And they will
rule with him age after age after age.

NIV and The Message texts supplied by Rick. The Message retains its grouped verse ranges. NIV footnote letters are omitted; translation notes appear in the research section.

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12

CITY GROUPS · REVELATION 21:1–22:5

City Group Discussion

Twelve questions to read and discuss together.

Start here

1. Why is it different?

2. How will it look?

3. Who makes it great?

Closing conversation

Optional: What about animals?

Start Here

Read the passages together. Ask questions, share your thoughts, and listen to one another.

This week: What will our forever home be like? Next week: What will we be doing?

Find your place

1. Why is it different?
2. How will it look?
3. Who makes it great?
Closing conversation
Optional: What about animals?
Sources and reading notes

How to use the readings

The Bible passages are included with each question. NIV and The Message appear side by side. The Message sometimes groups several verses together; the verse range is shown. Short excerpts are labeled.

Take your time. Your group may choose a few questions from each point rather than cover every question.

Opening question

> **When you picture heaven, what comes to mind? Where did that picture come from - Scripture, something you were taught, movies, or your own imagination? It's okay if you aren't sure.**

1 Why is it different?

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 1

God promises an end to death, tears, and pain. Which of those means the most to you right now?

NIV / REVELATION 21:1-5

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. 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. 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. 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.”
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.”

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:1

I saw Heaven and earth new-created. Gone the first Heaven, gone the first earth, gone the sea.

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:2

I saw Holy Jerusalem, new-created, descending resplendent out of Heaven, as ready for God as a bride for her husband.

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:3-5

I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: “Look! Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making his home with men and women! They’re his people, he’s their God. He’ll wipe every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good - tears gone, crying gone, pain gone - all the first order of things gone.” The Enthroned continued, “Look! I’m making everything new. Write it all down - each word dependable and accurate.”

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 2

When you think about being with Jesus, do you feel hopeful, anxious, or both? What do these verses show us about his love and how he will care for us?

NIV / REVELATION 21:3-4

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.
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."

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:3-5

I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: "Look!
Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making
his home with men and women! They're his people,
he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death is gone for good - tears gone, crying gone, pain
gone - all the first order of things gone." The
Enthroned continued, "Look! I'm making everything
new. Write it all down - each word dependable and
accurate."

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 3

If a friend were grieving, how could you share this hope without making them feel they should stop being sad?

NIV / REVELATION 21:4

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."

NIV / ISAIAH 25:8 / EXCERPT

he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign
LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces;

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:3-5

I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: "Look!
Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making
his home with men and women! They're his people,
he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death is gone for good - tears gone, crying gone, pain
gone - all the first order of things gone." The
Enthroned continued, "Look! I'm making everything
new. Write it all down - each word dependable and
accurate."

THE MESSAGE / ISAIAH 25:6-8 / EXCERPT

Yes, he'll banish death forever. And God will wipe the
tears from every face.

Context in our own words. *Isaiah anticipates the end of death, tears, and the disgrace of God's people.*

God offers life as a gift, but he also warns that evil will be judged. What do you find reassuring - or hard to understand - about seeing those side by side?

NIV / REVELATION 21:6-8

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

NIV / EPHESIANS 2:8-9 / EXCERPT

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:6-8

Then he said, "It's happened. I'm A to Z. I'm the Beginning, I'm the Conclusion. From Water-of-Life Well I give freely to the thirsty. Conquerors inherit all this. I'll be God to them, they'll be sons and daughters to me. But for the rest - the feckless and faithless, degenerates and murderers, sex peddlers and sorcerers, idolaters and all liars - for them it's Lake Fire and Brimstone. Second death!"

THE MESSAGE / EPHESIANS 2:7-10 / EXCERPT

Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it.

Context in our own words. *Paul describes salvation as God's gift rather than an achievement we can boast about. Good works follow God's saving work.*

2 How will it look?

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 5

What catches your eye in John's description of the city? Is it different from the heaven you pictured growing up?

NIV / REVELATION 21:18-21

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

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:15-21

The Angel speaking with me had a gold measuring stick to measure the City, its gates, and its wall. The City was laid out in a perfect square. He measured the City with the measuring stick: fifteen hundred miles, its length, width, and height all equal. Using the standard measure, the Angel measured the thickness of its wall: seventy-two yards. The wall was jasper, the color of Glory, and the City was pure gold, translucent as glass. The foundations of the City walls were garnished with every precious gem imaginable: the first foundation jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate a single pearl.

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 6

The names on the gates and foundations recall people from long before John's time. What does it mean to you that God has not forgotten them?

NIV / REVELATION 21:12-14

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. 13
There were three gates on the east, three on the
north, three on the south and three on the west. 14
The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on
them were the names of the twelve apostles of the
Lamb.

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:12-14

The City shimmered like a precious gem, light-filled,
pulsing light. She had a wall majestic and high with
twelve gates. At each gate stood an Angel, and on the
gates were inscribed the names of the Twelve Tribes
of the sons of Israel: three gates on the east, three
gates on the north, three gates on the south, three
gates on the west. The wall was set on twelve
foundations, the names of the Twelve Apostles of the
Lamb inscribed on them.

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 7

Have you heard that everyone gets a mansion in heaven? Jesus promises a place with him. What does that promise give us to look forward to, even without knowing what our homes will look like?

NIV / JOHN 14:1-3 / EXCERPT

My Father's house has many rooms

THE MESSAGE / JOHN 14:1-4 / EXCERPT

There is plenty of room for you in my Father's home.

Context in our own words. *Jesus comforts his troubled followers, calls them to trust him, and promises to prepare a place and bring them to be with him.*

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 8

Is it hard to imagine enjoying a place you can't fully picture? What would help you trust God with the parts you don't understand?

NIV / REVELATION 21:10-11

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. 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.

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:9-12

One of the Seven Angels who had carried the bowls
filled with the seven final disasters spoke to me:
"Come here. I'll show you the Bride, the Wife of the
Lamb." He took me away in the Spirit to an
enormous, high mountain and showed me Holy
Jerusalem descending out of Heaven from God,
resplendent in the bright glory of God.

3 Who makes it great?

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 9

John says there is no temple building because God himself is there with his people. How do you think being close to God then will be different from what we experience now?

NIV / REVELATION 21:22-23

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

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:21-27

The main street of the City was pure gold, translucent as glass. But there was no sign of a Temple, for the Lord God - the Sovereign-Strong - and the Lamb are the Temple. The City doesn't need sun or moon for light. God's Glory is its light, the Lamb its lamp! The nations will walk in its light and earth's kings bring in their splendor. Its gates will never be shut by day, and there won't be any night. They'll bring the glory and honor of the nations into the City. Nothing dirty or defiled will get into the City, and no one who defiles or deceives. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life will get in.

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 10

John calls Jesus "the Lamb" - the one who gave his life for us. How does that shape the way you picture the person at the center of this city?

NIV / REVELATION 21:22-23

22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord
God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 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
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earth's kings bring in their splendor. Its gates will
never be shut by day, and there won't be any night.
They'll bring the glory and honor of the nations into
the City. Nothing dirty or defiled will get into the
City, and no one who defiles or deceives. Only those
whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life
will get in.

LET'S TALK / QUESTION 11

What would it be like to live somewhere you never had to worry about being hurt or deceived?

NIV / REVELATION 21:25-27

25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will
be no night there. 26 The glory and honor of the
nations will be brought into it. 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 MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:21-27

The main street of the City was pure gold,
translucent as glass. But there was no sign of a
Temple, for the Lord God - the Sovereign-Strong - and
the Lamb are the Temple. The City doesn't need sun
or moon for light. God's Glory is its light, the Lamb
its lamp! The nations will walk in its light and
earth's kings bring in their splendor. Its gates will
never be shut by day, and there won't be any night.
They'll bring the glory and honor of the nations into
the City. Nothing dirty or defiled will get into the
City, and no one who defiles or deceives. Only those
whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life
will get in.

In Genesis, people are shut out of the garden. Here, the curse is gone and God's people see his face. What do you like about the Bible's story ending this way?

NIV / REVELATION 22:1-4

[1] Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2] down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. [3] No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. [4] They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

NIV / GENESIS 3:22-24 / EXCERPT

to guard the way to the tree of life.

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 22:1-5

Then the Angel showed me Water-of-Life River, crystal bright. It flowed from the Throne of God and the Lamb, right down the middle of the street. The Tree of Life was planted on each side of the River, producing twelve kinds of fruit, a ripe fruit each month. The leaves of the Tree are for healing the nations. Never again will anything be cursed. The Throne of God and of the Lamb is at the center. His servants will offer God service - worshiping, they'll look on his face, their foreheads mirroring God. Never again will there be any night. No one will need lamplight or sunlight. The shining of God, the Master, is all the light anyone needs. And they will rule with him age after age after age.

THE MESSAGE / GENESIS 3:23-24 / EXCERPT

guarding the path to the Tree-of-Life.

Context in our own words. *After human disobedience, God sends the people from Eden and guards access to the tree of life. Compare that exclusion with Revelation's restored access and the removal of the curse.*

One Thing to Take With You

What does this passage teach us that can help us face death without fear?

It's okay if fear is still part of your answer. You can share, listen, or ask to talk privately.

READ AGAIN / REVELATION 21:3-4

NIV / REVELATION 21:3-4

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.
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."

THE MESSAGE / REVELATION 21:3-5

I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: "Look!
Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making
his home with men and women! They're his people,
he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death is gone for good - tears gone, crying gone, pain
gone - all the first order of things gone." The
Enthroned continued, "Look! I'm making everything
new. Write it all down - each word dependable and
accurate."

Pray together

Thank God for one promise from the reading. Make room to pray for people facing grief, fear or uncertainty. Nobody needs to share more than they want to.

OPTIONAL · SUPPORTING CONVERSATION

What About Animals?

Would the possibility of animals make you look forward to this home more? Some Bible teachers think there are good biblical reasons to expect them, but the Bible doesn't promise that a particular pet will be there. How do you feel about that?

What the supporting passages say

Romans 8:19-23 describes creation's future liberation from decay. Isaiah 65:20-25 pictures peaceful animals, but it also speaks of death, while Revelation 21:4 excludes death from the new creation. These are summaries, not Scripture quotations.

Why some expect animals

Some teachers connect the liberation of creation in Romans 8 with animals as part of the renewed world, along with Isaiah's peaceable animals and the restoration of Eden. Others note that animals and their variety belong to God's good creation, which God renews rather than discards.

What is inference, not promise

The return of a particular pet is a hopeful possibility, not an explicit biblical promise. Christians differ about how these passages relate to the millennium, the final new earth, and symbolic pictures of peace.

WHAT WE CAN RESPONSIBLY SAY

There are biblical reasons for expecting animals in the new creation. Do not treat anyone's expectation as a promise from God.

Sources and Reading Notes

Scripture is the basis of this guide. Background notes help explain the passages, but their conclusions must be checked against the Bible, and no one's opinion creates an additional promise.

Background

NET Bible translators, John 14 notes 3–4

Greek meaning and translation history of "rooms" (mone / monai); permanent dwelling.

Romans 8:19-23 (NIV)

Creation's liberation from decay.

Isaiah 65:20-25 (NIV)

Peaceful animals, but also a reference to death; do not transfer every detail to the final new creation.

Supporting Bible passages

Isaiah 25:8 · NIV

Isaiah 25:8 · The Message

Ephesians 2:8-9 · NIV

Ephesians 2:8-9 · The Message

John 14:1-3 · NIV

John 14:1-3 · The Message

Genesis 3:22-24 · NIV

Genesis 3:22-24 · The Message

About the primary readings

Quoted Revelation text is taken from the material supplied for this message. The Message's grouped verse ranges are retained. Readings beside a question may be excerpts; supplemental quotations are clearly marked as short excerpts.

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