

Session 7: Eternal Hope and Glory

Rev 21:1 - 22:21

(Scripture references based on NIV)

1. Key Learning Points

- Understand the vision of the New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem.
- Respond to Jesus' final exhortations with readiness, trust, and worship.
- Reflect on what it means to live with eternal hope and glory now.
- Grasp how Revelation ends not in fear, but in hope and restoration.

2. Warm-up activity / Starter Question

You may choose one of the following starter activities.

- **Option A:** Design Your City
 - "Design your perfect city—what would be in it, what wouldn't be?"
 - 3–5 minutes in pairs or small groups
- **Option B:** Discuss "Have you ever waited a long time for something really worth it?"

After this activity, you may share that the session today will discuss the New Creation and how it reveals God's heart for us.

3. Opening Prayer

Father, open our eyes to see the hope of Your eternal promises. Help us understand the beauty of what You have prepared for those who love You. Teach us to live with the assurance of Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

4. Context

- This is the final vision in Revelation. Evil has been judged (chapters 17–20).
- Now comes the unveiling of God's ultimate purpose—not escape from earth, but the renewal of all things.
- The "new heaven and new earth" replace the old (21:1)—this is not a renovation, but a complete and perfect re-creation. God is not patching up the old world but bringing about a fully renewed one.

5. Scripture Reading

Divide the group to read aloud in sections:

- Revelation 21:1–8
- Revelation 21:9–27
- Revelation 22:1–5
- Revelation 22:6–21

6. Discussion / Exploration

Part 1: Rev 21:1 - 22:5

1) According to these verses what will happen in the new creation? What will be missing in the new creation?

- What will happen
 - God dwells with His people permanently (Rev 21:3)
 - Everything will be made new (Rev 21:5)
- What is missing
 - The sea, which represents chaos (Rev 21:1)
 - No more death, mourning, crying, or pain (Rev 21:4)
 - Those who are evil and anything accursed (Rev 21:8, 22:3)
 - No temple because God is present Himself (Rev 21:22)
 - No more night because God Himself brings about light unceasingly (Rev 21:23, 25)

2) Do you think that New Jerusalem is a place or a people? How can you tell?

- The descriptions of New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 might be interpreted as symbolically representing both God's people and the dwelling place that has been prepared for them!
- How we can tell
 - God's people have been previously described as the bride of the Lamb
 - See: Eph 5:25–27, Rev 19:7–9
 - The Bride of the Lamb and the Holy City of Jerusalem are referred to be one and the same twice (Rev 21:2 and Rev 21:9)

3) How is New Jerusalem described in the passage? How do these descriptions make you feel about the state of God's people and their dwelling place in the New Creation?

Your group need not discuss and land on all the symbolic meanings of the descriptions here. The more important discussion is about how the descriptions make them feel about the New Creation.

Descriptions of New Jerusalem

- Pictured as a radiant city that shines with glory like a very precious jewel and pure gold (Rev 21:11).
 - This shows how God's people and their dwelling place also bear God's glory
- Built with various precious and beautiful materials (Rev 21:18–21)
 - While there exist interpretations of what each precious stone represents (e.g. high priest's breastplate in Exod 28), we might broadly understand their inclusion as how God's people are precious, valuable, and radiant in glory.
- Dimensions of New Jerusalem form a perfect cube (Rev 21:16)
 - This symbolizes God's dwelling with His people.
 - Exodus 26 describes the construction of the Tabernacle, where God dwelled with Israel in the wilderness, as also being a perfect cube.
 - 1 Kings 6:20 informs us that the Holy of Holies in the temple that he constructed for God to dwell was also a perfect cube.
- Various multiples of 12 (Rev 21:12-14, 16-17)
 - Broadly, these symbolize the vastness, completeness, fullness, and perfection in New Jerusalem.
 - 12 gates, 12 angels, names of 12 tribes, and the 12 foundations with the names of the 12 apostles represent the full inclusion of God's people from the Old Testament to the New Testament.
 - 12,000 stadia and 144 cubits represent the vastness and perfect security of God's people.

How they might make us feel

- Awe, security, comfort, majestic
- Sense of how God's people valued, privileged, perfect, in high status and regard in the New Creation

Part 2: Rev 22:6-21

4) Repetition tends to hint at something important! There are several phrases that are repeated by God and Jesus throughout the two chapters. What are some of these phrases?

- “These words are trustworthy and true” (Rev 21:5, 22:6)
- “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end” (Rev 21:6, 22:13)
- “I am coming soon” (Rev 22:7, 12, 20)

5) Why do you think these statements are important? Supp: How are each of these repeated statements linked to instructions that today’s passage gives?

“These words are trustworthy and true” (Rev 21:5, 22:6)

- Importance
 - Emphasizes the importance of heeding everything that is written in the book of Revelation because they are from God Himself.
- Link to instructions given
 - Echoes the instruction to keep, not seal up, nor alter the words of prophecy in Revelation (Rev 22:7, 10, 18-19)

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end” (Rev 21:6, 22:13)

- Importance
 - Emphasizes the authority and eternal nature of God since Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.
 - God is the start and end from Genesis to Revelation:
 - In Genesis, creation began with God's presence in Eden.
 - At the Fall, God promised a Savior who would crush the serpent (Gen 3:15)
 - At the cross, Jesus declared, “It is finished” (Jn 19:30), showing that He had completed the work of salvation.
 - In Revelation, Eden is restored — the tree of life reappears, the curse is gone, and God lives with His people forever.
- Link to instructions given
 - God’s declaration of who He is emphasizes the authority by which He will make judgement upon Man as He describes in Rev 21:7-8 and Rev 22:12-15

“I am coming soon” (Rev 22:7, 12, 20)

- Importance
 - Speaks to the urgency of believing the gospel and being ready for the return of Christ and the Great Judgement
- Link to instructions given
 - Jesus gives a different call each time:
 - v7 issues a call to obey the words of the prophecy in Revelation
 - v12 issues a call to live rightly, knowing that He will judge and reward.
 - v20 issues a call to long for His return with John's response: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”.

6) What do the repeated invitations to come in Rev 22:17 and Rev 22:20 tell us about God's heart and the message of Revelation?

- At the end, God's heart in Revelation is more an invitation to come to Him than about judgement
 - In v17, God gives His final invitation: “Let the one who is thirsty come.”
 - This shows God's heart — generous, welcoming, and always reaching out.
 - The Spirit and the Bride (the Church) join the invitation, calling people to respond to God favourably.
- John's hope in Revelation is a longing for Christ to come.
 - In v20, in response to Jesus declaring that He is coming soon, John replies with longing: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”
- Revelation ends with an open invitation and joyful anticipation — not fear, but hope.

7. Main Discipleship Takeaway

Jesus is coming soon and His words are trustworthy and true. Hence, we are called to live faithfully now, with our eyes fixed on eternal hope and glory, and with a longing for Christ to return.

8. Application / Reflection questions

- 1) Did today's session change your understanding of 'heaven' in any way? How so?
- 2) What aspect of the New Creation is the most exciting or appealing to you? Why?
- 3) What does “Jesus is coming soon” stir in our hearts? Fear, excitement, joy, urgency?
- 4) What would change in our life if we truly believed that the end of the story has already been written so beautifully?
- 5) Is there anyone in your life who needs to hear the invitation from Jesus to “Come”?

9. Closing Prayer

Allow space for silent response to Jesus' words: "I am coming soon."

Close together with: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.
Amen."