

August 25, 2024

Bible Passage: Revelation 21—22
(Revelation: New Heaven and New Earth)



God Is the Beginning and the End

Remember Verse

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 20:31


LESSON OVERVIEW

CONNECT//
10 minutes



Candy Questions

SUPPLIES

- Candies (1 bag with multiple colors) 
- Bowl (for candies)
- Paper
- Pen


GATHER//
30 minutes



Remember Verse

Game: Marshmallow Verse

SUPPLIES

- Marshmallows (58, jumbo-sized) 
- Disposable skewers or chopsticks (at least 10)
- Permanent marker

Storytelling

SUPPLIES

- Optional: Investigate Questions*
- Bibles

Discussion Questions

RESPOND//
15 minutes



Heaven Stations

SUPPLIES

- Revelation Verses Stations signs*
- Card stock (4 sheets)
- Tissue paper (white, 1 sheet for 4 every children)
- Scissors
- Pens or markers
- Lamp
- Construction paper (black, 1 sheet per child)
- Chalk (yellow and/or orange, several pieces)
- Bowl (large)
- Water
- Disposable cups (1 per child)
- Permanent markers
- Pillows or mats (1 per child)
- Optional: worship music (suggestion: "I Am Listening

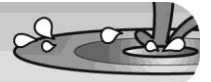
to You," TruWorship *Sincerely Yours* or "Come Unto Me," TruWorship *You Are*), laminator, small fountain

(Optional) Beginning and End

SUPPLIES

- None

BLESS//
5 minutes



SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards*
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 12*
- Bible

Further Resources

To help you plan and lead:

Customizable copy of Lesson 11 2018–19 Scope and Sequence TruStory How It Works Small Group Enhancement

At Home Weekly: Lesson 11

The weekly for the next lesson—to be sent home for preteaching by parents—is found in BLESS.

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find a list of resources along with encouraging articles that help you prepare your heart to present the lesson.

Inspire *Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

The fragrant jasmine sent me sweet memories of my wedding day—the moment when my husband and I stood for the first time as man and wife in front of this same jasmine bush. That day had celebrated the beginning of a potentially wonderful life together: all of our shared dreams, all of the newness of establishing a home together, all of the holy expectation that we would carry the joy of that night into a long life together, serving one another.

When I later reflected in the garden, I got a picture of the way God's presence is the same from beginning to end. God was present in my days as a young bride, and He's still present in my days as a mature mother. God was present with my children at their births and in their first days of junior high.

As remarkable as it is for me to imagine that a flower planted for my wedding day could still be blooming, it's even more unfathomable to imagine that the God who created heaven and earth has been with each of us since the beginning of our lives—and will be with us in the end. It's incredible to imagine that God weaves together the past and the present into a story of which we've only seen one small part.

It's incredible that God Himself, the One who loves us and is present with us in every detail of our lives, is also the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end.

Amy Palmerton
ROCKHARBOR Church

Equip *Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

God is the beginning and the end. He created heaven and earth, and when this age is over He'll create a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21–22 describes heaven—but what else do we know about this place?

In Hebrew thought, the term “heaven” is used in three different ways. The “first heaven” refers to the atmospheric heaven (Genesis 1:8, 20): the sky, the clouds, the air we breathe. The “second heaven” would refer to the celestial heaven (Genesis 1:14): outer space and the sun, moon, and stars. The “third heaven” would be the dwelling place of God (Genesis 28:12; 2 Corinthians 12:2).

When we talk about living in heaven someday, we're really referring to living on a new earth. Earth is the dwelling place of mankind now, and it will be then as well. The present heaven and earth will be destroyed at the end of the millennium (2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 21:1). God will then create a new heaven and new earth (Isaiah 65:17), and we will dwell on that new earth. Revelation 21:2, 24 describes the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven onto the new earth, where “the nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.”

The new heavens and new earth described in the Bible do not exist yet. But Jesus told us “I am going ... to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). This earth is not our ultimate home. We will dwell with God forever in a brand-new earth prepared especially for those who love and follow Him.

Support *Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

While we live on this earth, we deal with many kinds of pain: financial instability, marital challenges, struggles with children, and more. Each day we walk the line between feeling peace and turmoil, comfort and fear, confidence and insecurity. We live in a world corrupted by sin. But the good news is that since the beginning of The Big God Story, God has been working to make all things new. And He is daily bringing us closer to the lasting peace that can only be found beyond anything even possible on earth—closer to the day when we, as His children, will see Him face-to-face and live with Him forever.

Do you know people in your faith community who could use a reminder of this hope? You might encourage them with the promises of these Scriptures: Revelation 21:4, Psalm 23:6, 2 Thessalonians 1:6–7. One day we believers will be with God in His glorious presence forever. This is an incredible, beautiful hope. Praise God, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end!

CONNECT//10 minutes




Children develop relationships with their leaders and one another through simple activities and conversation starters.

Candy Questions

Children will answer questions that correspond with different colors of candy.

SUPPLIES

- Candies (1 bag with multiple colors) 
- Bowl (for candies)
- Paper
- Pen

PREPARE AHEAD

On the paper, write several different getting-to-know-you questions, one for each color of candy. Some sample questions:

Red: If you had an unlimited amount of money to spend, what would you buy?

Orange: What was the best part of the past week?

Yellow: What is your favorite thing to do on a summer day?

Green: What is something fun you're looking forward to this week?

Blue: What is your favorite story or book, and why?

Purple: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

SET UP

Pour the candies into the bowl.

RELATE

CONNECT QUESTION: Welcome and greet children. Open your time by asking this question: **What is something you're looking forward to doing?**

In the book of Revelation, John reveals the vision God gave him of the new heaven and new earth that believers look forward to experiencing when Jesus returns.

Help your third and fourth graders to get to know one another better by answering questions that correspond with different colors of candy. To play, invite children to sit in a circle. Pass the bowl of candy around the circle and ask each child to choose one piece of candy. Then go around the circle and ask the kids the questions that correspond to the colors of their candies. Once everyone answers a question, pass around the bowl again.

GATHER//30 minutes



Children experience and learn more about God through prayer, storytelling from The Big God Story, an investigation into God's Word, and creative ways to memorize Scripture.


Remember Verse

Each week children will spend time memorizing a portion of Scripture together. The Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31

Game: Marshmallow Verse

SUPPLIES

- Marshmallows (58, jumbo-sized) 
- Disposable skewers or chopsticks (at least 10)
- Permanent marker

PREPARE AHEAD

Write each word of the Remember Verse (and the reference) on a marshmallow. Make two sets of the verse.

RELATE

Lead the children in a sweet experience as they learn this week's Remember Verse using marshmallows. Divide your class into two groups and give each group about five skewers (or chopsticks) and a set of marshmallows. Have groups work together to assemble the verse by placing the marshmallows on the skewers end-to-end in the correct order of the verse. It may take several skewers to fit the whole verse, although kids can squish the marshmallows. (Caution children to be careful with the skewers, always holding the tips down and facing away from their bodies and others, like they do with scissors.) The first team to correctly assemble the verse wins.

Storytelling

Bible Passage: Revelation 21—22

Storytelling Technique: Forming a Human Chain

God Is the Beginning and the End

SUPPLIES

- Optional: Investigate Questions (see Resources)
- Bibles

RELATE

You did a great job sharing your answers to the questions earlier. Before we get started with today's portion of The Big God Story, let's arrange our group into a big, long chain so we have a beginning and an end. Help children get into place. They can sit next to one another or stand and form a line down the middle of the room. **Great job! Now, let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts today.** Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

God is the beginning of all things. Each time you refer to "the beginning" or "the end," walk to the beginning or end of the chain. **Let's turn in our Bibles to the very beginning of The Big God Story in Genesis 1:1.** Stand at beginning of the chain. Invite a child nearby to read the first four words of the verse while the others follow along. **In the very beginning of time, before the earth even existed, God was there. He was there from the very first sentence of the Bible!**

Now let's turn to the last book of the Bible: Revelation. Stand near end of chain. Invite a child nearby to help you read Revelation 22:13. **Right there, in the very last chapter of the Bible, God calls Himself "the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."** This story is God's story. **He is the One writing the story. He is the subject. He is the hero. He is the beginning and the end.**

From the first events that happened in our world all the way to the end, we see God at work. Go back to beginning of the chain and slowly walk to end while mentioning each event. **God was there when Adam and Eve sinned against Him and had to leave the garden. God was there when He promised Abraham that through his family the Savior would come. God was there when He led Moses and the Israelites out of Egypt. God was there when David became king. God was there when Israel was unfaithful to Him, when the people were captured by their enemies, and, later, when God rescued them. God was there when Jesus, the promised Savior, was born in a stable in Bethlehem. God was there when Jesus died on a cross to save us from our sins. And God is here now, guiding us, loving us, and caring for us.**

In the book of Revelation, God shows us that He will create a brand-new heaven and a brand-new earth where we will live with Him forever. Storyteller should be near end of chain. **Jesus promised He would come back, and after He does, this earth will pass away, and the place God prepares for us will be perfect—a place with no sickness, death, pain, or suffering.**

I'm going to read a few verses that describe the new heaven and new earth. While I do, close your eyes and picture how it might look. Read Revelation 21:2–7, 10–14, 18–19a, 21, 23, 25; 22:1–4. **What did you notice about the new heaven and new earth?** Invite responses. **Wow! It's hard to even imagine just how beautiful this place will be! What do you think will be the most beautiful part?** Invite responses. **Good thoughts. And we will see God's face and be with Him forever!**

As followers of Jesus, we have an incredible future to look forward to! But many people don't know God. They don't know that God loves them. They don't know that Jesus died for them so they can know God now and live with Him forever. Because we know God, we can share His love with others. What are some ways we can tell others about God's love and the wonderful place He will prepare? Pause for responses. Good thinking. We can serve God by showing others that He has been working throughout history to save us and bring us back to Him. God is the beginning and the end. Share a personal story of a time someone told you about eternal life in Jesus or a time you told someone else about Jesus.

Discussion Questions

- What did God create in the beginning? Genesis 1:1
- What will God create in the end? Revelation 21:1
- How does it make you feel to know there will be no more crying or pain or death in heaven? Revelation 21:4
- What are some other good things about heaven? Revelation 22:3–5
- The Bible says God is the beginning and the end. What do you think that means? Revelation 21:6; 22:13
- What are you most looking forward to about heaven?
- Why is it important to tell others about heaven?

RESPOND//15 minutes



Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond to God through creative activities and games.

Heaven Stations

Kids will visit various stations around the room as they ponder what heaven will be like one day.

SUPPLIES

- Revelation Verses Stations signs (see Resources)
- Card stock (4 sheets)
- Tissue paper (white, 1 sheet for 4 every children)
- Scissors
- Pens or markers
- Lamp
- Construction paper (black, 1 sheet per child)
- Chalk (yellow and/or orange, several pieces)
- Bowl (large)
- Water
- Disposable cups (1 per child)
- Permanent markers
- Pillows or mats (1 per child)
- Optional: worship music (suggestion: "I Am Listening to You," TruWorship *Sincerely Yours* or "Come Unto Me," TruWorship *You Are*), laminator, small fountain

PREPARE AHEAD

Print the Revelation Verses Stations signs. On the card stock, write brief instructions for each station (see descriptions of stations below). Cut each sheet of tissue paper into four quarters. Optional: Laminate the verses.

SET UP

Create four different worship response stations around the room. Each station should have instructions and one of the Revelation Verses Stations signs. At Station 1, set out the tissue paper squares and pens or markers. At Station 2, place the lamp (turned on) with the black construction paper and chalk next to it. At Station 3, set out a large bowl of water (or a small fountain), the disposable cups, and the permanent markers. At Station 4, set up an area of pillows or mats.

RELATE

Have children sit on the floor. **God is the beginning and the end. The world began with Him, and one day, when this world ends, He will create a new heaven and a new earth. As Jesus' followers, we get to look forward to**

spending eternity with Him. He's preparing a place for us there.

The book of Revelation describes many vivid images of what heaven will look like. It says there will be pearly gates and streets made of gold (Revelation 21:21). There will be a great throne where God will sit (Revelation 4). There will be no pain or suffering or tears (Revelation 21:4). Today we're going to consider four different aspects of heaven as we go through worship response stations around the room.

Play worship music and encourage children to visit stations 1 through 3 in whatever order they desire. Invite everyone to end together at Station 4. If you have enough space in your room, consider leaving the stations up for another week so your children can revisit them. You might also invite parents to join their kids in responding at the stations.

Station 1: He Will Wipe Away Our Tears

Invite children to respond by writing a word or a message to God on the tissue paper.

Station 2: The Glory of God Gives Light

Under the bright lamp, have kids use yellow and orange chalk to draw on black construction paper. Invite them to write words and draw pictures that represent God's glory, which lights the world.

Station 3: The Water of Life

Encourage the children to take disposable cups, dip them into the large bowl of water, and fill them up. Then have them pour the water back into the bowl. Have them do this a few times as they ponder what it means that God offers the "water of life" (Revelation 21:6). Then have them ponder what it means to never be thirsty again. Finally, have them write any words or phrases that came to mind about God on the cups.

Station 4: He Is Coming Soon

At this final station, have kids come and sit or kneel on the pillows and pray. They can pray the words of the verse from Revelation or say their own prayers. Encourage kids not only to pray for themselves but also to pray for others who might need to hear God's truth. Who needs to hear the good news that God is the beginning and the end? Who needs to hear of the hope that He wants to spend eternity with them? Who needs to hear about the hope of heaven, where there will be no more death and no more tears?

(Optional) Beginning and End

In this game, kids create a big chain that has a beginning and an end.

SUPPLIES

- None

RELATE

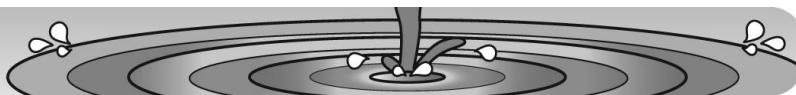
In Revelation, God describes Himself as "the Beginning and the End." The world began with Him, and it will end with Him when He makes all things new.

Invite children to play a game called "Beginning and End." Choose a few children to be "It," and have them go to one side of the classroom. Then have the remaining children divide up into groups of three. Have each group of three make a small chain by standing in a line and putting their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. On your signal, all the It children will try to attach themselves to one of the chains. They will do this by putting their hands on the shoulders of the person at the end of the chain. When that happens, It becomes the new end of the chain, and the person formerly at the beginning of the chain becomes It and will try to attach to another chain. Play until each child gets to be It as well as a part of a chain.

Developmentally Speaking

Now that third and fourth graders have mastered large motor movements, they're developing coordination and speed. Be sure children have enough room to move with accuracy as they use these skills in today's game.

BLESS// 5 minutes



Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 12 (see Resources)
- Bible

RELATE

Gather your group in one area and read the following blessing from 1 Corinthians 2:9:

“What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived”—the things God has prepared for those who love him.

Invite your kids to bless each other with this verse using hand motions. First, review the hand motions with them. Then lead the group through the motions a couple times. When children seem to have the hang of the motions, have each child turn to a neighbor and say the blessing over her while doing the hand motions.

“No eye has seen”—Cover your eyes with your hands

“No ear has heard”—Cover your ears with your hands

“No human mind has conceived”—Place your hands on the sides of your head

“The things God has prepared”—Point up to the heavens

“For those who love”—Cross arms across chest

“Him”—Point up to the heavens

Close your time by speaking these words over your children. They might choose to hold their hands out in front of them, palms up, in a posture of receiving blessing so that they may be a blessing to others:

May you know God loves you and wants to spend forever with you. May you accept His free gift of everlasting life.

Send home Remember Verse cards and the At Home Weekly with your kids.