

Morning Overview

Lesson: *The New Heavens and the New Earth*

Lesson Objective:

Today we explore our last lesson in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation can be scary and even daunting, but Revelation is meant to encourage followers of Jesus. John gives us a picture of the New Heavens and the New Earth. This promise and future reality give us hope when we see so much hurt, pain, loneliness, sadness, sickness, and death in our world. It's important to remember God does not destroy the Earth but makes it new; God will remove all hurt, pain, sin and death from the presence of His people; and God will be worshipped and enjoyed by His people for forever. God promises us these things from the very beginning and He always keeps His promises. We wait for His second coming and say with John, "Come quickly Lord Jesus!"

Teaching Summary:

- God's promises do not change despite circumstances, people and even our inability to believe them. God keeps His promises even when we do not trust Him or follow His commands.
- God has promised to always be with His people. He is with us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- The Church is growing, but also experiencing persecution. Because of the persecution, followers of Jesus scatter.
- The scattered Church takes the Good News and tells others about Jesus.
- John is banished to Patmos. Near death God sends an angel to him with a revelation or vision.
- John's vision captures many, many things. But in our lesson, we focus on God creating the New Heavens, the New Earth and making all things new.
- John sees God create the New Heavens and New Earth and bring down the Holy City of Jerusalem.
- John describes all of it with splendor and beauty with God at the center of it all.
- The New Heavens and New Earth will be where God's people can enjoy Him forever and all hurt, sadness, pain, death and sin will be no more.
- Jesus promises to come back (second coming) to make all things new and all things right. And God always keeps His promises.

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-7, 10-14, 22-27; 22:1-5, 20

Story: *Jesus Storybook Bible, Pages 342-348; Vos Child's Story Bible, Pages 376-378; The Beginners Bible, Pages 523-526; The Beginners Gospel Story Bible, Pages 308-313*

Scripture Memory for May: Acts 13:32 (ESV)

We tell the good news: *(put both hands close to your mouth ... move hands outward away from mouth)*

What God *(point to heaven)*

promised our ancestors, *(put one open palm of your hand on top of other (also open) and then bring them to your heart ... like "cross my heart ...")*

He has fulfilled for us... *(make a fist and pound it against an open palm ... like a judge banging a gavel)*

by raising up *(put both hands below your waist ... then raise them up)*

Jesus *(sign language motion for Jesus ... put middle finger from one hand into palm of other and alternate back and forth)*

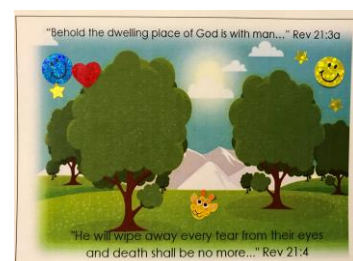
Craft: New Heavens and New Earth

Supplies: Cardstock earth scene, stickers, magnet

Instructions: 1. Attach stickers to scene

2. Place magnet on the back of cardstock.

If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet



Story

Transition

Boys and girls, what if all the sad things in the world went away? What about the things that hurt you (stub toe OR someone calls you a mean name)? In our story today we learn about when Jesus will make all the sad and broken things go away. Is that exciting? Let's find out what that will be like...

The End of the Bible: Revelation

We are coming to a close on God's Word – what God wanted us to know in the Bible. The Bible ends with the book of Revelation. Revelation was a vision or dream God gave to John the Apostle. John writes down everything he sees in the vision. Some things are very clear in Revelation, and much is strange and not-so clear. But what we can see in the book of Revelation is that Jesus is King, He deserves our worship, and He will make all things new.

The New Heavens and the New Earth

At the very end of his vision, John is shown something beautiful by the angel from God. John writes it down for us in Chapter 21 of Revelation. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." A new heaven and a new earth? In Genesis we learned that God created the heavens and the earth, do you remember? But because Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered the good world God created. Everything was now a mess and broken. God promised in Genesis, and we see here, that He would make everything new and right again.

John not only sees a new heaven and a new earth, but he sees "the holy city coming down out of heaven from God. This holy city is the new Jerusalem." Jerusalem was the city the temple was built in the Old Testament. Jerusalem was a special city for God's people. In Revelation, we read that God made the new Jerusalem, and it was beautiful! But what made the new Jerusalem beautiful? John tells us that he heard a voice say, "Now God's home is with His people. God will live with his people, and they are His people for forever. God will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain. All the old ways are gone."

What makes the new Heavens and the new Earth so beautiful and wonderful is that we will be with God finally. And God will be with us for forever. And anything that would ever make us question God's love for us will be gone, and anything that has ever hurt us, made us sad, lonely, afraid or cry, will be gone. No more sickness and no more dying either – those things will be gone too!

John heard a loud voice say, "Look! I am making everything new!" Then God told John, "Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted." God said these words. He'll make all the broken, hurt, and sad things come untrue. This is God's promise to us – and we know God always keeps His promises.

The Holy City of Jerusalem

Then the Spirit of God immediately carries John to the top of a very large and high mountain. From there he can see the holy city, the new Jerusalem. It was coming out of Heaven to be on Earth. The Bible tells us it is magnificent and splendid like precious stones and beautiful jewels. "It was shining with the glory of God," John writes. But John did not see a temple in the city, or a place for people to go and worship God. Where would people worship God? In the new Heavens and new Earth, "the Lord God All-Powerful and the Lamb are the city's temple." Temples were places in John's time where people went to worship God. But now that God was with His people, they did not need a temple at all! God's people were with God all the time, and they could worship Him face-to-face!

John also noticed that it never got dark in the city. Nighttime never came. He said, "the city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it." How would people see? How would it stay "daytime" all the time? Well "the glory of God is its light." John wrote that the "greatness and honor of the nations" – God's people from all nations, tongues, and tribes – could freely come into the city because the city gates will never shut. Nothing sinful, unclean, or impure would ever be able to enter the city. No one who does shameful things or tells lies will ever go in it, John tells us.

Nothing that God judges guilty will be in the city. God will be there. He is perfect and holy, and sinfulness cannot be in God's presence.

The only people that can go into the city are those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. That means those who Jesus has rescued from their sin!

The angel of God showed John more things in the New Heavens and the New Earth. John saw the river of the water of life. The river was so amazing. It was shining like crystal. There was also the tree of life in the Holy City. John tells us that it produced fruit 12 times a year.

John ends the book of Revelation with a promise. Jesus promises us that He will come back. "I am coming soon" Jesus tells John. When that may be, we do not know, but we can trust God always keeps His promises. John says, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" John believed God would keep His promise and one day Jesus will return to make all things new and all things right.

Questions for Review

Have children answer "yes" or "no."

- The Church is growing – adding more and more people. (Yes)
- The Holy Spirit is growing the Church. (Yes)
- John saw a new heaven and a new earth. (Yes)
- John saw people building a new city, the new Jerusalem on earth. (No! It came out of Heaven from God.)
- God will take away all the sadness, pain, hurt, loneliness, sickness and death in the New Heaven and New Earth (Yes)
- The New City, Jerusalem, was a splendid looking city that looked like precious stones and jewels. (Yes)
- Everyone in the New City gets a special flashlight to use at night. (No! There is no night because God's glory shines all the time.)
- Jesus told John He would come back again. (Yes! This is called the Second Coming.)
- Jesus will come back to make all things new and all things right. (Yes)