

Blessed Endurance  
The message of Revelation

**Lesson Nine: A Promise Kept**  
The New Creation (21:1-22:5)

Where we've been:

Chapters	Vision	What we are to know	Culmination
7-II	Opening the Seals, the Seven Trumpets	Judgment will come on the world; believers must endure	Christ reigns over the world; the elders sing proclaiming his victory
12-15:4	Battle in Heaven and on Earth	Persecution will come as Satan tries to thwart God's victory; believers must endure	Christ returns to the perfect city of God with his people and avenges their blood; the saints sing proclaiming his victory
15:5-19:21	Seven Bowls; The Prostitute; Babylon	All previous judgments combined; the current world system will be destroyed. Believers must endure.	Christ returns on a White horse and destroys all opposing powers in bloody battle; heaven rejoices at a marriage supper.
20	The Millennium	Believers will be/already are triumphant over Satan; all humanity will be resurrected and judged.	Christ returns and judges the world; those who have followed him are saved from the "second death": eternal punishment

The "End" comes

The new heavens and new earth are vision of a redeemed cosmos.

Καινός—“ New, fresh, of a new time, miraculous, distinct ”

Romans 8:19-22: “For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now...”

The pattern of the cosmos’ redemption follows that of Christ’s death and resurrection.

- Jesus body was “transformed” into a new kind of body (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 15:42-43)
- Jesus body remains recognizable as both a human and Jesus himself (John 20:24-29; 21:1-8, esp. v.7).

There is both continuity and discontinuity between this world and the world to come.

## Symbols of the New Cosmos

### 1. God’s presence is forever with his people on earth (21:2-8)

“New Jerusalem” – symbolic for God’s presence (Gal.4:26; Heb. 11:16, vv.2-3)

“sea no more”—symbolic for the defeat of chaos, death, and evil (vv.1a, 4)

This was the plan all along (vv.5-6a)

We will be there—if we remain faithful (vv.7-8)

### 2. God’s presence on earth is permanent, beautiful, and safe (21:9-27)

Symbols of beauty —“the bride” (21:9); “radiant like the most rare jewel...” (21:11); “the wall was built of jasper, the city was pure gold, like clear glass” (21:18); “the foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel” (21:19-20); the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl” (21:21).

Symbols of safety — “a great, high wall” (21:12) “its gates will never be shut by day— and there will be no night there” (21:25); “the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it...they will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.” (21:24, 26); “nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false...” (21:27a).

Symbols of permanence — “twelve foundations...” (21:14); the measurement of the city connotes permanence and perfection (21:15-17); “no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb” (21:22)

### 3. God's Presence is the culmination of Eden's Promise (22:1-5)

“River of the Water Life”—Symbol of God's abundant life (Ezek 47:1; Ps. 46:4; John 4:13; Rev 21:6).

The Tree of Life on Both Sides of the River—The Tree of Life has grown into a Forest! (Genesis 2:9)

“Twelve Kinds of Fruit...” -it offers perfect life  
“yielding its fruit each month...” -it offers it eternally .  
“the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations...” -it offers it  
to all who are in Christ (Rev. 2:7)

No more curse ! (22:3a)

We will receive our destiny—to live in God's presence on earth (3b), to serve him as priests (4), and to be the kings and queens of creation (5).

## Discussion Questions

*What does it do to your heart to hear these promises? What emotions come up?*

*How does it help to think of the new creation through the lens of Jesus' resurrection? What pitfalls can it help us avoid?*

*Have you ever realized that you were destined to live with God on earth and serve him as his priest and king/queen? How could this influence how you read Paul's words in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:17?*

Next Week:

The Conclusion: Endure (22:6-21)