

A Look at the New Heaven and Earth

In difficult seasons of life, we often find hope and encouragement by thinking about what we have to look forward to: upcoming celebrations, kids or grandkids, vacations, promotions, or anything else that motivates us. Yet, all of these things provide only short-term motivation or encouragement—they don't address the bigger feelings of pain, sorrow, or injustice we encounter in our lives. As Christians, we know that the promise of a new heaven and new earth provides the eternal hope and encouragement we need for faithfully living our lives right now. Join us as we study John's vision of the new heaven and earth in Revelation 21. We'll discuss the meaning of his visions, the promises of restoration we have to look forward to, the comfort and encouragement these images continue to provide us, and what this vision of the future means for us and how we live today.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- How do you picture heaven? Where do you think your knowledge and ideas about heaven come from?
- How is heaven often depicted in the larger culture?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [A Look at the New Heaven and Earth](#)

READ [Revelation 21](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- What does it mean to make something new again? How would you describe the difference between making new things and making all things new like Jesus says he will do in [Revelation 21:5](#)? Which relationships are you eager to see renewed in heaven?
- In segment 2, hosts Scott Hoezee and Darrell Delaney discuss the symbolism of the sea ([Revelation 21:1](#)) and the night ([Revelation 21:25](#)) for the ancient Israelites. Scott says that the use of these images here in [Revelation 21](#) symbolically mean that “the things that threaten human flourishing won't exist” in heaven. What threats to human flourishing exist in your context or culture that produce chaos, sin, and fear like the sea and night did for the Israelites? How does it make you feel to hear the message of [Revelation 21](#), and know that these threats will no longer exist in the new heaven and earth?
- Slowly read the below segment 3 reflections from Scott and Darrell on the truths of [Revelation 21](#) and what they mean for how we live now.

“The new creation will be landscaped with righteousness...What you do now is also going to be preserved.” —Scott

“Our deeds of kindness and love and mercy now will also endure. So, we live like we believe this isn’t the only life.” —Scott

“I think that as Jesus has given us believers the revelation [of heaven] now, we have a certain way that we can choose to live that brings honor and glory to God’s name...we know what is coming; we know that Christ is victorious; we know that we will end up with God; and we know that Satan will be defeated; and because we know that, we get to live with hope now; we get to live with the expectation now; we get to live as kingdom citizens today.” —Darrell

“The Bible says only what you do for Christ will last, so those are the actual things that we want to do; not to earn our salvation or to prove our worth, but to do it out of gratitude for the finished work of Christ the Lamb who was slain for us and for our salvation; out of gratitude for what he has done, we live as kingdom citizens, being ministers of reconciliation and agents of transformation in this broken world here today.” —Darrell

Now, consider the following questions:

- Do you think your life brings honor and glory to God’s name?
- Is there anything in your life now that you could tend more carefully, knowing God will preserve what is righteous?
- What does it mean to you that the way you live now has the potential to live on eternally as part of God’s kingdom?
- What do you want your faith legacy to be?
- In what ways do you think you are called to be a minister of reconciliation and an agent of transformation...bringing about God’s kingdom in the here and now?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Genesis 1:1](#), [Genesis 3:22-24](#), [1 Corinthians 3:16-17](#), [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#), [John 1:14](#), [John 2:20-22](#), [1 Peter 2:4-10](#), [2 Peter 3:10-14](#)

CONCLUSION

As Scott and Darrell studied [Revelation 21](#), they identified five truths this passage communicates to us about the new heaven and new earth:

1. Heaven comes down.
2. We will have a renewed way of interacting with each other.
3. There won’t be any more cause for sorrow and sadness; things that threaten human flourishing won’t exist.
4. God will dwell among us. Everything everywhere will be the temple, where God meets his people.
5. The creative things our generations and cultures have made will be redeemed and part of the splendor recorded in verse 24. What we do now has the potential to live on eternally as part of God’s kingdom.

Think again about your responses to the awareness questions above: “How do you picture heaven? Where do you think your knowledge and ideas about heaven come from?” Has your answer changed after listening to this program? Did any of the five truths surprise you? Comfort you? What do you look forward to?

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/a-look-at-the-new-heaven-and-earth>

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