

# 10

## All Things New

### *Revelation 21:1-8*

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I'm always inspired by artists who take old, worn out, broken items and make them into something beautiful and new. Collages made from scraps of paper. Sculptures made from the remains of aluminum cans. Wallets made from old clothes and rags. I've even seen lovely purses made from gum wrappers. Things that look to most of us as though they have no further purpose in this world are refashioned and given a new future. Perhaps this is a little bit like God's intention for our world. In this study we'll watch with John as a new future for God's resurrected people is fashioned out of the brokenness of this world.

**Group Discussion.** When have you seen someone take something old and apparently useless and make it into something new?

**personal reflection.** What feels broken and worn out in your life? In what areas do you long to be made new and given new direction and purpose?

Much of the wild, apocalyptic book of Revelation is concerned with the brokenness of the world and the dire consequences of evil and rebellion against God. But it also assures us that God has not abandoned the world. It promises that death will be cast out and the whole

creation be renewed by the power of the one who triumphed over the grave. There is an unimaginably beautiful future in store for the resurrected people of God. *Read Revelation 21:1-8.*

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**1.** Imagine that you are with John watching this vision unfold before you. How would you respond to each of the images?

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**2.** What happens to the first heaven and the first earth that we live in now (v. 1)?

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**3.** Why do you think this must happen?

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**4.** The voice from the throne declares that "God's dwelling place is now among the people" (v. 3). How will this be different from the way we experience God's presence with us now?

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**5.** What will life be like in this place (v.4)?

**6.** Perhaps the most striking promise is that death itself “will be no more” (v. 4). How does the work of Jesus Christ, the Lamb who sits on the throne in Revelation, ensure that this promise will be fulfilled?

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**7.** What is included in the “everything” that will be made new (v. 5)?

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**8.** What gift is promised to those who are thirsty (v. 6)?

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**9.** What do you thirst for?

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**10.** How do we achieve victory in order to inherit this brand new creation (v. 7)?

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**11.** Why will some people be kept out of the new creation (v. 8)?

**12.** How might this vision of a death-free future—where all creation is healed from its hurts and made beautiful and new—shape the way you live today?

*Give thanks to God that death's days are numbered. Marvel before him at the great work of resurrection and transformation that he has already begun in Jesus Christ and will one day carry to completion. Pray that you will learn to live each day as a new creature, as one who reflects the beauty of the world to come right in the midst of the present time.*

### **Now or Later**

The vision of the new heavens and new earth reflected here in Revelation 21 comes straight from the Hebrew prophets. For instance, read and reflect on Isaiah 65:13-25 and 66:10-24. Do some of these images sound familiar? How does the vision offered in Isaiah help complete the picture of the new heavens and new earth that we glimpse in Revelation 21? What hope do these passages offer to the world? What warning do they bring?