

# July 19 Lesson



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

### Items to gather:

- Upbeat music
- Chairs (1 per person)
- Paper (5 sheets)
- Marker
- Tape
- Whiteboard
- Dry erase marker
- Marshmallows (58, jumbo-sized)
- Disposable skewers or chopsticks (at least 10)
- Permanent marker
- Butcher paper (light blue or white, 4')
- Markers
- Tissue paper (various colors, but especially white, blue, and yellow)
- Stick-on jewels (at least 4 per child)
- Colored pencils or markers
- Scissors
- Chalk (various colors)
- Glue sticks or tape
- Stickers (various pictures of nature and fruit)
- Worship music
- Optional: paint, paintbrushes, glitter
- Beach ball
- Masking or painter's tape



# 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.*

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## **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

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## **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.

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**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



## Musical Answers

Today invite your family to get to know one another better by playing Musical Chairs—with a twist.

### SUPPLIES

- Upbeat music
- Chairs (1 per person)
- Paper (5 sheets)
- Marker
- Tape
- Whiteboard
- Dry erase marker

### SET UP

Set up the chairs in a circle facing outward. Number five sheets of paper from one to five and tape them to the backs of five random chairs in the circle. They don't need to be in order. On the board, write five numbered questions for your family to answer during the game (use these or think of your own):

1. What is the coolest place you've ever visited?
2. What was something really fun you did this past week?
3. What is something you're looking forward to doing this coming week?
4. If you could have any meal for dinner tonight, what would it be?
5. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

### RELATE

**CONNECT QUESTION:** 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.**

**Let's play Musical Chairs—with a twist.** First, ask each person to stand next to a chair. Then start the music and have everyone walk around the circle as the music plays. When the music stops, everyone will sit in the chairs where they've stopped. The people sitting in the numbered chairs will answer the question that corresponds to the number on their chair.

Once everyone answers their questions, start the music again. Play a few rounds.

**GATHER**//30 minutes



## 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 family 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**

**God Is the Beginning and the End**

### RELATE

**You did a great job sharing your answers to the questions earlier during Musical Chairs. Before we get started with today's portion of The Big God Story, let's arrange our family into a big, long chain so we have a beginning and an end.** Help everyone get into place. They can sit next to one another or stand and form a line down the middle of your house. **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.

Watch the storytelling video and then answer the discussion questions together.

**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? Invite 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
- **What are you most looking forward to about heaven?**

**RESPOND**//15 minutes



## Craft: Heaven Collage

Children will work together to create a worship response collage of heaven.

### SUPPLIES

- Butcher paper (light blue or white, 4')
- Markers
- Tissue paper (various colors, but especially white, blue, and yellow)
- Stick-on jewels (at least 4 per child)
- Colored pencils or markers
- Scissors
- Chalk (various colors)
- Glue sticks or tape
- Stickers (various pictures of nature and fruit)
- Worship music
- Optional: paint, paintbrushes, glitter

### SET UP

In the upper-left corner of the butcher paper, write “I AM the Beginning.” In the bottom right corner, write “and the End.”

### RELATE

**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. God loves us so much that He will prepare a place for us so we can be with Him forever.** Play worship music and invite the children to ponder what it will be like to be in heaven with Jesus. Once they finish, spend some time in discussion. **What will heaven be like?** Invite responses. **What about heaven makes you the most excited?** Invite responses.

**The book of Revelation describes many vivid images of what heaven will look like. What are some things that will be in heaven?** Allow responses. **Heaven will be a beautiful place. But before we go to heaven and see its beauty, we can share Jesus with others and tell them what He did for us. Who are some people in your life who need to hear about heaven?** Allow responses.

Encourage the children to work together to create a worship response collage of heaven on the butcher paper. Using various art supplies, they can create different images and words representing their future in heaven and what they are looking forward to. As they respond, encourage children to also consider people in their lives who may be suffering or may need the hope of heaven. Invite the kids to write words of prayer to God for those people on the collage. Hang the collage as a reminder of the hope we have in heaven.

## Game: Heaven Ball

In this game, kids must come up with different words related to what heaven will be like.

### SUPPLIES

- Beach ball
- Masking or painter's tape

### SET UP

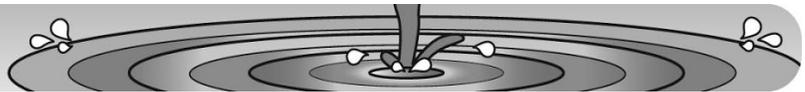
Create a masking tape line on the floor in the middle of the room.

### 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.** Today invite the children to play a game during which they must come up with different words related to what heaven will be like. To play, divide your family into two even teams, and have each team line up along the line, with everyone facing each other a few feet apart. If you have an uneven number, join one of the teams yourself.

Begin by having one player say a word or phrase about heaven and then toss the ball to the other team. Each time a child catches the ball, she must immediately say a word or phrase that deals with today's lesson or something she already knows about heaven. Some examples: “beginning,” “God,” “Revelation,” and “no tears.” Have teams continue to go back and forth as they say words and phrases—*without* repeating a previous term. Once a player has caught the ball and said a word, he should move to the sidelines and sit down and cheer on his teammates. Play until everyone has a chance to catch the ball and say a word.

**BLESS//5 minutes**



### SUPPLIES

- Bible

### RELATE

Gather your family 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.**