PROVIDENCE TEACHING MINISTRY

The Hope of Heaven

An Illustrated Scripture Guide

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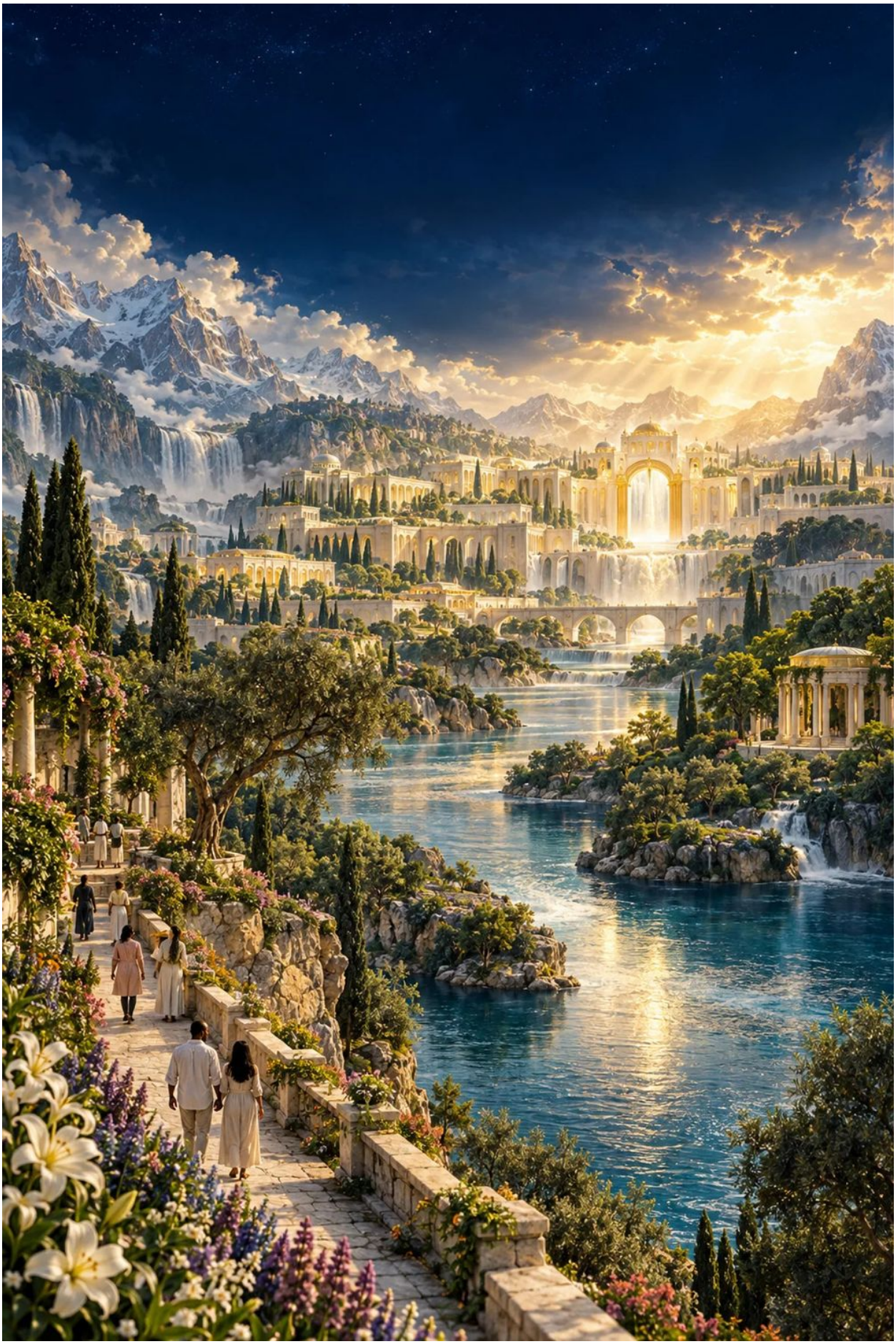


RESURRECTION · RENEWED CREATION · GOD'S PRESENCE

BEGIN HERE

Read the Bible's Hope as One Story

Heaven is often reduced to a vague afterlife. Scripture's picture is larger: God dwells with His people, the dead are raised, evil is judged, creation is renewed, and the nations walk in God's light. This guide helps you follow that movement without rushing past the text.

> "Behold, I make all things new."
> — REVELATION 21:5 · KJV

How to use this guide

1. Open the passage.

Use your preferred Bible translation. Read the paragraph around each reference, not just a single verse.

2. Observe before interpreting.

Circle repeated words, note who is acting, and identify what changes between the beginning and end of the scene.

3. Connect the whole story.

Ask how the passage relates to resurrection, judgment, renewed creation, God's presence, and the people of God.

4. Respond with hope.

Write one belief to strengthen, one fear to surrender, and one practice that expresses faithful expectation.

A NOTE ABOUT INTERPRETATION

Christians agree on the return of Christ, resurrection, judgment, and God's final victory, while differing about the sequence of some events. This guide follows the broad canonical arc and avoids date-setting.

Isaiah 65:20 still speaks of death. Christians differ on how that passage relates to the final vision of Revelation 21:4, where death is no more. Read the passages in their full settings; *Home at the Center* discusses that distinction.

The guiding question

As you read, keep asking: What does this passage reveal about God's presence, God's purpose for creation, and the life of His redeemed people?

A SCRIPTURE MAP

The Bible's Arc of Hope

With Christ after death. Raised with Him when He returns. At home with God in a creation made new.

MOVEMENT	THE PROMISE / READ IN CONTEXT
1. Present life	**Faithful witness now** John 14:1–3; Romans 8:18–25
2. With Christ	**The believer's rest** Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:21–23
3. Return & resurrection	**Christ appears; the dead are raised** 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 1 Corinthians 15:51–54
4. Judgment	**Evil is exposed and answered** John 5:24–29; Revelation 20:11–15
5. All things new	**God dwells with His people** Revelation 21–22; 2 Peter 3:10–13

Four anchors to keep in view

God’s presence

Unbroken communion with God.

Revelation 21:3

Bodily resurrection

Raised and transformed in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:42–54

Renewed creation

New heavens and a new earth.

2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1

Justice and healing

Death and evil do not have the final word.

Revelation 21:4, 8; 22:2–3

Read the passages in context. This map shows the ministry’s broad reading of Christian hope, not a detailed timetable. Christians differ on the sequence of some events; this guide’s illustrations are symbolic.

The Hope of Heaven

30 PASSAGES / PRESENCE

Promise & Presence



Reunion and belonging · Artistic interpretation.

These passages answer the first question of Christian hope: not merely “Where will I be?” but “With whom will I be?”

> “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”
>
> — JOHN 14:3 · KJV

READ · OBSERVE · REFLECT

Promise & Presence

John 14:1–3

What does Jesus promise?

Jesus prepares a place and will gather His people to Himself. The heart of the promise is personal communion with Christ.

Luke 23:39–43

What hope can be immediate?

Jesus assures the repentant criminal of being with Him in paradise, grounding hope in Christ’s mercy rather than human merit.

2 Corinthians 5:1–8

How does Paul face death?

Paul contrasts our present mortality with God’s lasting provision and longs to be at home with the Lord.

Philippians 1:21–23

Why can death be gain?

Paul’s desire to depart and be with Christ shows the believer’s conscious, Christ-centered hope beyond death.

Hebrews 11:13–16

What country did faith seek?

The faithful confessed they were strangers and desired the better country God prepared for them.

Psalm 16:8–11

Where is fullness of joy?

The psalm locates enduring joy and life in God’s presence, a promise the New Testament connects with resurrection.

> Journal: Which promise most directly speaks to a fear or longing you carry today? Why?

The Hope of Heaven

30 PASSAGES / RESURRECTION

Resurrection & Embodied Life



The empty tomb at dawn · Artistic interpretation.

The New Testament's hope is concrete. God does not discard His people; He raises and transforms them.

> "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."
>
> — 1 CORINTHIANS 15:53 · KJV

READ · OBSERVE · REFLECT

Resurrection & Embodied Life

Job 19:23–27

What does Job expect to see?

In the midst of suffering, Job anchors hope in a living Redeemer and the astonishing expectation of seeing God.

Daniel 12:1–3

Who awakens from the dust?

Daniel points to resurrection, judgment, and the lasting radiance of those who lead others toward righteousness.

1 Corinthians 15:35–44

What kind of body is raised?

Paul uses seed imagery: continuity with what is sown, yet transformation into an imperishable, glorious body.

1 Corinthians 15:50–54

What happens to mortality?

At the last trumpet, the dead are raised and God clothes His people with immortality; death is swallowed up in victory.

Philippians 3:20–21

What will Christ transform?

The returning Savior transforms our lowly bodies to be like His glorious body by His sovereign power.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

How should believers grieve?

Christian grief is real but not hopeless: Christ returns, the dead in Christ rise, and His people are forever with Him.

> Journal: How does bodily resurrection change the way you view aging, illness, grief, or care for the body?

The Hope of Heaven

30 PASSAGES / CREATION

Renewed Creation



A restored creation · Artistic interpretation.

Biblical hope does not treat creation as disposable. God's victory reaches bodies, communities, and the created world.

READ · OBSERVE · REFLECT

Renewed Creation

Isaiah 11:1–9

What does Messiah's reign restore?

Righteous judgment and deep peace reach the created order; the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Isaiah 25:6–9

What feast does God prepare?

God's victory is pictured as a feast for all peoples, the swallowing up of death, and the wiping away of tears.

Isaiah 65:17–25

What marks the renewed world?

Joy, fruitfulness, security, meaningful labor, and peace fill Isaiah's portrait of new heavens and a new earth.

Isaiah 66:22–23

How enduring is God's new creation?

The new heavens and the new earth endure before God, and worship extends across the whole human family.

Romans 8:18–25

What is creation waiting for?

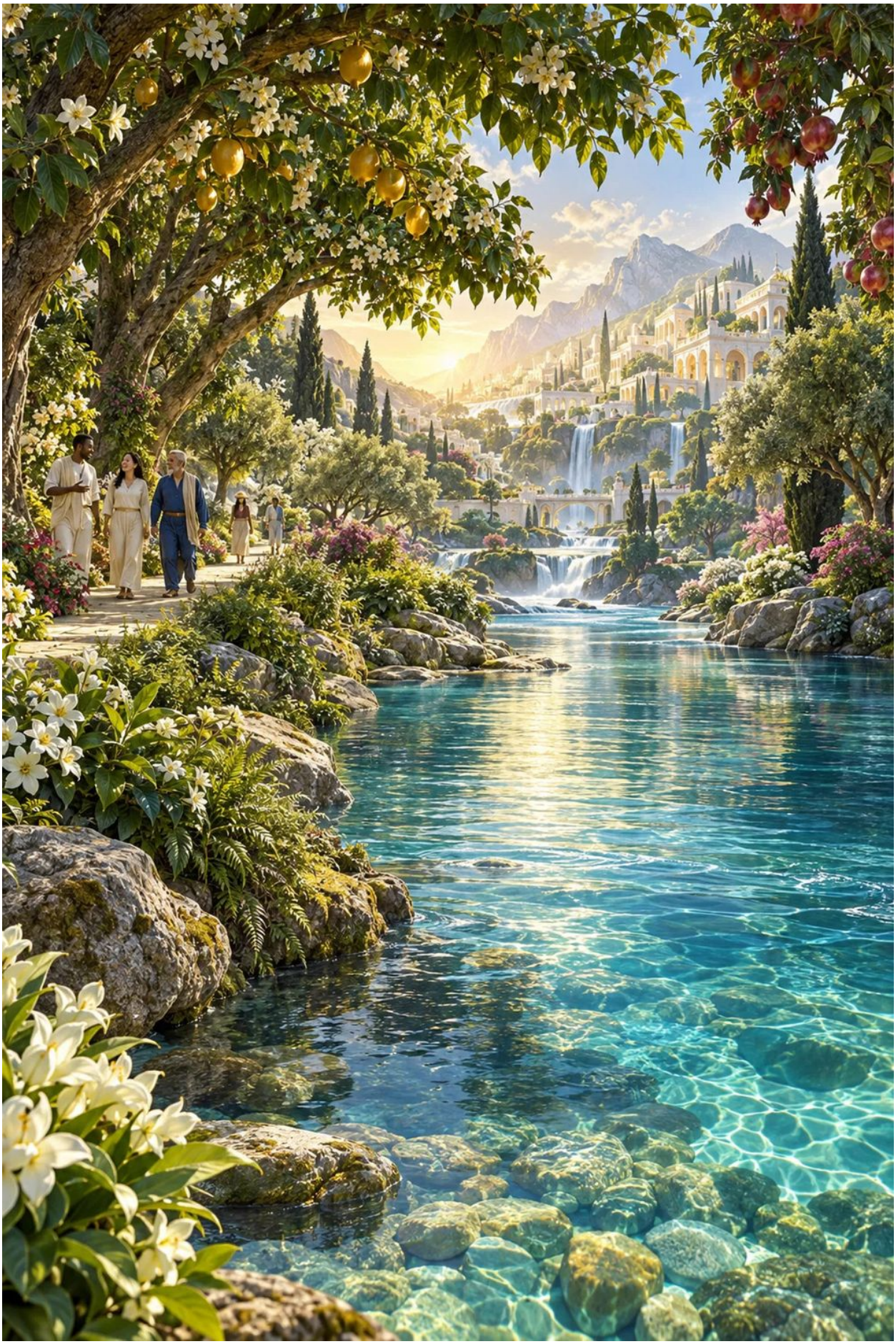
Creation groans in hope of liberation, while believers await adoption's completion — the redemption of our bodies.

2 Peter 3:10–13

What should hope produce now?

The promised new heavens and new earth call believers to holiness, peace, patience, and lives shaped by righteousness.

> Journal: Which feature of renewed creation most expands your picture of God's salvation?



30 PASSAGES / COMMUNITY

New Jerusalem & the Peoples of God

The river and the city · Artistic interpretation.

Illustration notes · The complete artwork appears on the preceding page.

Revelation's final city is both place and people: God's dwelling, the Lamb's bride, and the home of a redeemed multitude.

> "[T]hey shall see his face"
> — REVELATION 22:4 · KJV

READ · OBSERVE · REFLECT

New Jerusalem & the Peoples of God

Hebrews 12:22–28

What community do believers approach?

Zion is pictured as a joyful assembly gathered around God, Christ the mediator, and a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

Revelation 7:9–17

Who gathers before the throne?

A countless, multiethnic people worship God; hunger, thirst, scorching heat, and tears are finally answered.

Revelation 19:6–9

Why is the future a wedding feast?

The marriage supper celebrates the Lamb's victory, covenant joy, and the prepared people who belong to Him.

Revelation 21:9–21

What does the holy city reveal?

The radiant New Jerusalem portrays God's people in covenant fullness — secure, beautiful, ordered, and filled with divine glory.

Revelation 21:22–27

What fills the city with light?

God and the Lamb are its temple and light; the nations walk by that light and bring their glory into the city.

Revelation 22:1–5

What flows from God’s throne?

The river and tree of life picture unending life, healing, service, God’s visible presence, and the reign of His servants.

> Journal: What do the city, garden, temple, bride, and feast images each contribute to the final picture?

The Hope of Heaven

30 PASSAGES / INVITATION

Judgment, Invitation & Fulfillment



The father welcomes his returning son · Artistic interpretation.

God's final victory includes both justice and grace. The Bible closes with sober accountability and a free invitation to life.

> "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."
>
> — LUKE 15:20 · KJV

READ · OBSERVE · REFLECT

Judgment, Invitation & Fulfillment

Matthew 25:31–46

What does the King bring to light?

Jesus depicts final judgment as personal, public, and morally serious; allegiance to the King is revealed in lived mercy.

John 5:24–29

Who has authority to judge and raise?

The Son gives life and executes judgment. His voice will summon the dead, displaying His divine authority.

Revelation 20:11–15

Why does final judgment matter?

No evil is hidden and no life is insignificant before God. Death itself is judged and removed from the future.

Revelation 21:1–5

What is made new?

God dwells with humanity; death, mourning, crying, and pain pass away as the One on the throne makes all things new.

Revelation 22:12–17

How does the Bible’s final invitation sound?

The coming Judge also gives a gracious invitation: the thirsty may receive the water of life without price.

1 John 3:1–3

How does future likeness shape us now?

Those who hope to see Christ as He is pursue purity in the present, living as God’s beloved children.

> Journal: Where does this final vision bring comfort — and where does it call you to repentance or action?

New Jerusalem: a sense of its scale



The New Jerusalem · Artistic interpretation.

12,000 stadia (KJV: furlongs) · approximately 1,380 miles long, wide and high

REVELATION 21:9–27 / 22:1–5

Wonder, with the Word at the center

John's final vision gives us more than a distant glow. He sees a holy city coming down from God, radiant with His glory. Its extraordinary dimensions invite us to pause and consider the greatness of the home He prepares for His people.

Using a stadion of about 607 feet, the measurement is roughly 1,380 miles in each direction. Ancient unit conversions vary; the number here is an approximation used in this study. These are the dimensions of the New Jerusalem, not a measurement of all heaven or the whole new creation.

> "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth … The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."
>
> — REVELATION 21:16 · KJV

The equal dimensions are depicted here as a cube. This study reads that form alongside the Holy of Holies, whose length, width and height were equal (1 Kings 6:20). The connection is an interpretation: God's presence, once associated with the inner sanctuary, now fills the life of His redeemed people.

The city's scale and beauty awaken wonder, but the heart of the vision is relationship: *"they shall see his face"* (Revelation 22:4). No curse, no night, and no final separation from the One who gives life. His servants worship, serve and reign with Him for ever (Revelation 22:3–5).

As you look at the image, ask: What changes in my life today if my future is life with God? Let the picture lead you back to His Word, and let His promise strengthen your faithfulness now.

NEW JERUSALEM

Within her walls

Twelve gates of pearl — *"every several gate was of one pearl"* (Revelation 21:21).

A wall of jasper — John records 144 cubits — about 216 feet using an 18-inch cubit. The verse does not specify whether this is its height or thickness. John calls this *"the measure of a man, that is, of the angel"* (Revelation 21:17–18).

Pure gold, clear as glass — *"the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass"* (Revelation 21:21).

God and the Lamb are its temple — *"for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it"* (Revelation 21:22).

Divine light; no night — the city has no need of sun or moon to shine in it, because God's glory illuminates it and the Lamb is its light. This does not require the conclusion that all created luminaries cease to exist (Revelation 21:23–25).

The river and the tree of life — *"a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal"* proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb; the tree of life bears its fruit beside it (Revelation 22:1–2).

Read the full setting: Revelation 21:9–27 and 22:1–5. The numerical conversions and pictured architecture are explanatory aids.

WHAT WILL WE DO?

A life filled with purpose

Scripture gives us anchors rather than an exhaustive itinerary. These promised activities are enough to replace the caricature of an endless, passive existence.

SEE. We will see God's face. Revelation 22:4 — Unbroken communion replaces distance, shame, and concealment.

SERVE. We will serve God. Revelation 22:3 — Service remains, but the curse, frustration, and corruption that distort it are gone.

REIGN. We will reign with God. Revelation 22:5 — Human vocation is restored under God's wise and life-giving rule.

WORSHIP. We will delight in God. Revelation 7:9–12 — Worship is the full-hearted recognition of God's beauty, victory, and worth.

FEAST. We will celebrate together. Isaiah 25:6–9; Revelation 19:9 — The future is pictured as shared abundance, covenant joy, and welcome.

BELONG. We will live as one redeemed people. Revelation 7:9; 21:24–26 — Distinct peoples bring their glory into a reconciled, holy community.

CREATE. We will inhabit a fruitful world. Isaiah 65:21–23 — Scripture's imagery includes building, planting, enjoyment, and meaningful fruitfulness.

REST. We will be free from the curse. Revelation 14:13; 22:3 — Biblical rest is not emptiness; it is completed work, secure belonging, and unhindered life.

> Keep the center centered: The deepest promise is not an activity list. It is this: *"[T]hey shall see his face"* (Revelation 22:4).

READING GUIDE

Revelation 21: All Things New

Read the chapter once without stopping. Then return to each movement below. Record what disappears, what appears, who speaks, and how God's presence reshapes the scene.

READ	OBSERVE THE MOVEMENT
21:1–4	**New creation and God's dwelling.** List every "no more" statement. What positive reality takes the place of each loss?
21:5–8	**The throne speaks.** Mark the promises, the invitation to the thirsty, and the warning. What do they reveal about God's character?
21:9–14	**The bride becomes a city.** Notice the mixture of people, place, covenant, and beauty. Why might all four be needed?
21:15–21	**Measured glory and security.** What do the measurements, foundations, gates, and costly materials communicate beyond literal size?
21:22–27	**God and the Lamb are its light.** What is absent from the city? What remains of nations, culture, honor, holiness, and access?

Read slowly. Write what the text says before drawing a conclusion.

REVELATION 21 / OBSERVE THE CONTRASTS

The former things have passed away

THE FORMER ORDER	THE NEW ORDER
Sea as chaos and threat	Creation made secure under God's rule
Death, mourning, crying, pain	God's presence and comfort
Night, impurity, deception	Divine light, holiness, truth
Closed access through sin	Open gates for those written in the Lamb's book

Write one sentence that captures the chapter's central announcement:

> "Behold, I make all things new."
> — REVELATION 21:5 · KJV

READING GUIDE

Revelation 22: Life, Worship & Invitation

The Bible closes by returning to garden imagery, but the story has moved forward into a radiant city. The final chapter joins restored life, faithful service, urgent expectation, and grace.

1. 22:1–2 — River and tree

Trace the source of life. What has been restored from Eden, and what is added for the healing of the nations?

2. 22:3–5 — No curse; face-to-face service

Underline what God's servants do and receive. How do worship, identity, light, and reign fit together?

3. 22:6–11 — A trustworthy and urgent word

Why is the prophecy not sealed? What kind of readiness does the nearness of Christ's coming require?

4. 22:12–15 — Reward, identity, and access

How do Jesus' titles frame His authority over creation, history, and final accountability?

5. 22:16–17 — The Spirit and the bride say, Come

Notice both directions of "Come": longing for Christ and inviting the thirsty to receive life.

6. 22:18–21 — Guard the word; live by grace

How do warning, promise, prayer, and grace form a fitting conclusion to all Scripture?

DISCUSSION

Let the vision become a conversation

1. Which image in Revelation 21–22 most corrects your previous picture of heaven?

2. What do the chapters say explicitly — and what questions do they leave open?

3. How do God's throne and the Lamb shape every part of the final vision?

4. What present habit would make sense if this future is true?

5. Who in your life needs the chapter's invitation to the thirsty?

PERSONAL STUDY

From future hope to present faithfulness

Biblical hope is not speculation for its own sake. It strengthens endurance, purifies desire, produces worship, and sends God's people into the world with courage and invitation.

A Truth to Believe

What does this study show you about God's character or promise?

A Fear to Surrender

Which anxiety about death, judgment, loss, or the future can you bring to Christ?

A Hope to Practice

How could resurrection hope change your work, relationships, generosity, grief, or care for creation this week?

A Person to Encourage

Who needs a Scripture, conversation, prayer, or practical act of hope from you?

A simple prayer: God of hope, fix my eyes on Christ. Teach me to live today in the light of resurrection, justice, renewed creation, and Your promised presence. Make me faithful, courageous, holy, and generous. Amen.

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

Let the final vision shape the present

The Bible's final hope is not an invitation to escape faithfulness. It is a summons to patient endurance, holy imagination, costly love, and confident witness.

	THREE WAYS TO KEEP GOING
READ	Return to Revelation 21–22 once a week for the next month. Each time, focus on a different theme: presence, justice, beauty, community, or mission.
EXPLORE	Read the complete long-form study, What Will Heaven Really Be Like? — *Home at the Center*.
SHARE	Invite a friend or small group to work through the 30 passages. Compare observations before consulting commentaries.

> "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come."
>
> — REVELATION 22:17 · KJV

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Biblical imagination for the unseen war — and the promised world to come.

Readers may study the full passages in their preferred translation.

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