

# lesson thirteen

MARCH 23–29

## *“I Make All Things New”*

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*“Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful’ ” (Revelation 21:5, NKJV).*



As spring approaches, flowers begin to bloom. Flowers are a sign that winter is coming to a close, that soon summer and sunny days will erase all signs of past cold, dark winter.

Rev. 21:5

## Introduction *Brand New Again*

For the past five years my family has served as missionaries in the Philippines. We are now in the process of, once again, moving back to our home country. It reminds me of how, when we first moved here, my brother and I were a little bit nervous. I thought my parents said we were moving to the land of the Philistines. You can imagine my relief when I learned we were actually moving to the Philippines instead!

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### **After a few days we learned that we had an added blessing—we lived under a mango tree.**

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When we arrived, it was better than we had imagined. Well, at least that was until we moved into our new home and heard these big thuds on the roof. After a few days we learned that we had an added blessing—we lived under a mango tree. Sometimes when we live in a new place it can be a bit nerve-racking, but in the end, we discovered that everything was far better than we had imagined it would be. We made new friends and have truly come to love the people here.

Of course when we moved, we brought some of our things. Some of those things didn't last very long. The high humidity meant that we had to buy dehumidifiers so that our books and other valuables did not get ruined. Now that we are leaving, we decided it was better to sell some of our things rather than take them back. It will be nice to have a new bed because the old one is getting rusty and worn out. I think everyone likes to have brand-new things.

No matter how hard we try, nothing in this world is going to last. Jesus spoke about this when He warned, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19, NIV). Even our physical bodies will not last. Eventually all of us are going to die because we live in a world dominated by sin. What I love about the lesson this week is that we are reminded of the promises of Scripture that there will be no more sin. Death will cease to exist. Best of all, we will get to be with our forever Friend, Jesus, through all eternity. This week is an opportunity to imagine how glorious heaven is going to be—it is a whole new world. It is better than moving to another country. In the words of the hymn: “The things of earth will grow strangely dim / In the light of His glory and grace.”<sup>1</sup>

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1. Helen H. Lemmel, “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus.” © 1952. Renewal 1980 by John M. Moore. Assigned to Singspiration (ASCAP), Division of the Zondervan Corp. All rights reserved.

Logos  
*The End Is Coming*

Dan. 12:6, 7;  
Ps. 79:5;  
Hab. 1:2;  
Rev. 21:5

***The Wedding Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6–9; John 14:1–3)***

The coming of Jesus is described as the wedding of the Lamb, in which Christ is the Groom and the saints are His bride. As the groom, Christ has promised to His people that He will come again to bring them to His Father's house (John 14:1–3). They will then be together forever. The readiness of the bride is indicated by her wearing the white wedding gown, which is the characteristic of the saints (Rev. 19:8). We do not deserve to be the spiritual bride of Jesus—after all, we are sinners and He is not. Jesus has made this marriage possible only through His righteous blood.

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**There will be no more people hiding behind a tree  
for fear because they have sinned.**

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***Armageddon Ends (Rev. 19:11–16)***

Armageddon refers to the final battle in the great controversy conflict between Christ and Satan. It involves Jesus and His people and is juxtaposed by Satan and his followers. The battle began in heaven (Rev. 12:7–9) and continues into the present. Ultimately it will not be finished until sin and Satan are destroyed and Jesus makes the earth new again after the millennium. Revelation 19:11–16 describes Jesus as the hero of the battle. He is called KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. He is our Savior, our groom, our Lord and King. The victory is sure. Would you not like to be on His side?

***The Millennium (Rev. 20:1–15; Jer. 4:23–26)***

Jesus, the groom, is now with the saints, who are His bride. They will spend a period of one thousand years together in heaven. This period is called the millennium because it represents one thousand literal years. According to Revelation 20:1–15, the following events will take place before, during, and after the millennium:

*Before the millennium:*

- Jesus comes again
- The righteous dead are resurrected
- The living righteous are taken to heaven together with the resurrected ones
- The living wicked perish
- The dead wicked remain in the grave

*During the millennium:*

- Satan is “chained” (he is alone with no people to tempt)
- The wicked remain dead
- The righteous reign with Jesus in heaven

*After the millennium:*

- Satan is released
- The wicked are resurrected
- Jesus and the righteous come down to earth
- Satan and the wicked attack God's city that comes down from heaven
- Satan and the wicked are destroyed
- Heaven and earth are renewed

### ***A New Heaven and a New Earth (Genesis 2; Rev. 7:15–17; 21:2–8)***

After the millennium, God creates a new heaven and a new earth. Eden as described in Genesis 2 is finally restored. Revelation 21 describes not only the place but also where the place is located. All things that are caused and affected by sin disappear: “‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’ ” (verse 4, NKJV). Sin will never return. There will be no more people hiding behind a tree for fear because they have sinned. This is the place where only the righteous will abide. God will be among His people, not only for one thousand years but forever.

### ***The New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9–22:5)***

Revelation 21:9–22:5 describes what the New Jerusalem is like. It comes down from heaven. There will be no more night because the glory of God is so bright. The New Jerusalem is the place for those people whose names are written in the book of life. It is not a place for those who are deceitful and cause shame. Can you imagine what this new earth will be like? What an amazing promise to know that through the gift of salvation we can live with the Lord forever!

### ***REACT***

1. How do we prepare ourselves to make sure that we are on Christ's side?
2. Have you ever been afraid of Armageddon? How can we learn to trust Jesus to know that we will be safe?

# Testimony

## *Restored to Former Glory*

Rev. 21:4

In the closing chapters of *The Great Controversy*, Ellen G. White depicts the events of the last days when the New Jerusalem will descend to earth. Just as in the Old Testament after God's people have endured suffering, they cry out to God saying, "How long, O LORD!" It is comforting to know that a perfect ending awaits the faithful who have endured it all. This New Jerusalem is prepared for the faithful, who are described in intricate detail. God's Word reassures us that the pain and suffering of this world will not continue into the New Jerusalem that is prepared for those who remain faithful (Rev. 21:4).

"With unutterable love, Jesus welcomes His faithful ones to the joy of their Lord. The Saviour's joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls that have been saved by His agony and humiliation. And the redeemed will be sharers in His joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labors, and their loving sacrifice."<sup>1</sup>

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### **The human race, once lost to sin, is at last restored to its original glory.**

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When Christ returns to take His remnant people home with Him, they are restored by God to their original state that God intended for them to be in. Sin not only corrupted their mind but also marred the original form each human being was created to have. God, however, has promised to us that He will restore things to their former glory. These repeated assurances about the world to come will be far better than the present one and should remind us of the importance of prioritizing future blessings above temporary pleasures.

"The living righteous are changed 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels 'gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Little children are borne by holy angels to their mother's arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend to the City of God."<sup>2</sup> The human race, once lost to sin, is at last restored to its original glory.

### **REACT**

In what ways has sin corrupted human beings from God's original plan? Is it possible to achieve restoration without God's help?

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1. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 647.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 645.

Rev. 21:2-6

## Evidence

# *Folks, It Is Time to Push the “Reset” Button!*

Much of the intrigue and excitement in the book of Revelation stems from the destruction of the world at the end along with the hope of a new start. As suffering, oppression, pain, and death reach their demonic brink, God steps in and pushes the “Reset” button.

“How long, O LORD, till the end of these things?” is the cry of the suffering saints who are relentlessly assaulted by Satan and his evil forces. The answer to this question lies in Revelation 21:2–6, where God promises not just to end the suffering but also to create a “new heaven and a new earth” where evil and its consequences do not exist.

### **The New Jerusalem represents purity, life, joy, and healing.**

The endgame in this world’s history is a tale of two cities, Babylon and New Jerusalem. Which city do you belong to? Babylon the Great, the city described in Revelation 14:8; 17:5; and 18:21 is the world’s collective body of false religions, which God rejects. The purpose of this city is to subtly lead people away from the worship of the true God. On the other hand, the New Jerusalem represents purity, life, joy, and healing, which is indeed the antithesis of Babylon. When you accept Christ’s atoning sacrifice, you become a citizen of the New Jerusalem.

When does the New Jerusalem descend to earth? When evil, chaos, and moral debasement push the world to its tipping point, God will intervene by ushering in the New Jerusalem. This New Jerusalem embodies the end of suffering (Rev. 21:4).

Today we live in the cataclysmic rule of Babylon the Great. Whether it may be cunningly crafted New Age ideologies, alternate sexualities, exaggerated faith in technology, fantasy art, desensitization to extreme violence, or ethics devoid of morality, confusion is reflected in all that surrounds us. Frankly, our sufferings are far from over. As the end draws near, so does the time for tribulation. Babylon will seemingly achieve unprecedented greatness and may even seem invincible. At this time our hope and faith must endure that Jesus is coming again. Eventually, Babylon will fall, and the New Jerusalem will descend. Jesus, our Lord, will then make all things new! God Himself will wipe away every tear, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. The endgame leads to a new start!

### **REACT**

1. To which city do you belong? Babylon the Great or the New Jerusalem?
2. Comparing and contrasting the two cities, what do you detest in Babylon, and what do you look forward to in the New Jerusalem?

## How-to “He Will Wipe Away Every Tear”

Ps. 34:19;  
2 Cor. 4:17;  
Rev. 21:4

Revelation 21:4 shares a profound promise that will bring hope to every sufferer of pain, oppression, or misery. God promises to make all things new. We will be renewed in the likeness of Christ, perfect and flawless. God will then take us to heaven and give us everlasting life.

Suffering and hardships are inevitable episodes in our earthly life. As Christians we are not free from worldly struggles, be it disease, death, or despair. In our everyday life, however, we may find solace in the Lord, His promises for us, and His sure return. Exercising this hope and claiming His promises will certainly bring us comfort. This is how we can experience firsthand God’s promise of no tears, no death, no sorrow, no crying, and no pain.

### We will be renewed in the likeness of Christ, perfect and flawless.

*No tears.* Tears are often triggered by strong feelings such as joy and sadness. The tears referred to in Revelation 12:4 are caused by intense sadness because of despair, pain, or death. “Wiping away every tear” is the assurance that Jesus, our Friend, will remove the very cause of our sadness.

*No death.* In 1 Corinthians 15:55 we read, “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” (NIV). Jesus conquered death at the cross, and in the earth made new, death shall be no more. Therefore, we need not sorrow for someone’s death because it is just a sleep!

*No sorrow.* Hurtful experiences cause sorrow, such as the passing of a loved one or a painful breakup. The Holy Spirit came to comfort us—that’s why He is called the Comforter. There shall be no mourning when we are comforted by none other than God Himself!

*No crying.* A cry is a primal sound of anguish, pain, or despair that calls attention to one’s situation. When a baby cries, you soothe the child by immediate attention, an assuring touch, and removing the cause of despair. God does just that by eliminating sin, pain, and death!

*No pain.* Pain is a highly unpleasant sensation caused by physical or psychological trauma. When God makes all things new, illnesses, injuries, and traumas will be things of the past. Hence, there is no pain!

In the final chapter of earth’s history God will re-create this planet, and the original perfection of Eden will be restored.

### REACT

What is one thing you are really looking forward to in the earth made new?

Eph. 6:12

## Opinion

# *Beauty and Beasts*

The first section of Revelation chapter 12 shows a radiant woman (verses 1, 2), the dragon (verse 3), and the woman's child (verse 2) as the main characters. The setting is heaven. The child is caught up to heaven, and the woman flees into the wilderness (verses 5, 6).

The wonder, or sign, of the pregnant woman clothed with the sun, crowned with stars, and standing on the moon symbolizes God's pure church, which is faithful to her Love, Jesus (Isa. 54:5, 6; Jer. 3:20; 6:2; Ezek. 16:8–14; Hosea 1–3; Gal. 4:26). The sun as a garment symbolizes Christ's righteousness that clothes the church (Mal. 4:2). The imagery of clothes appears also in Isaiah 61:10. Since the moon reflects the light of the sun, the moon symbolizes the Mosaic and sanctuary system that pointed forward to Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> The twelve stars signify the twelve tribes of Israel, bringing a continuity in symbols between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

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### Ultimately Satan is not able to at last overcome God's people, who will be victorious.

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The woman in labor pain is a description of the suffering of God's people (John 16:33). The good news is that Jesus Christ gives each believer the full armor of God to protect them against evil (Eph. 6:10, 11, 13). The struggle of God's people is both from within and from without, but ultimately it is Christ's righteousness that keeps our hearts and minds pure despite such attacks (2 Cor. 10:3–5).

The second wonder of the red dragon symbolizes the ancient serpent, also known as the devil, or Satan. The color red often symbolizes iniquity but can also represent the shed blood of Satan's innocent victims (Rev. 16:6; 17:6; 18:24). Ultimately Satan is not able to overcome God's people, who will be victorious (Eph. 6:12).

Revelation 12 points to the past, present, and future conflict that God's people will face. It describes who the main antagonist is against God's people—the devil. Thus Revelation 12 is vital for understanding the ultimate outcome of the cosmic conflict between Christ and Satan.

### **REACT**

How do you see events unfolding that indicate to you that spiritual forces are at work around you?

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1. Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1946), p. 549.

# Exploration

## *The Promise*

Rev. 21:5

### CONCLUDE

In Revelation 21:5 God promises to make all things new. Our troubles, sorrows, and burdens will be finally washed away. We will get to live in a place where there is nothing to sadden our hearts (verse 4). The Lord promised to prepare a place for us, and He stands with open arms, ready to welcome us. He desires to wash away your sins and make you pure. All that He asks is that you accept Him into your heart.

### CONSIDER

- Listening to the song “No More Night” by David Phelps. Think about how all the things of this world will pass away and how God promises to make everything new.
- Listing the times in history when God’s people were oppressed by other powers and how His people persevered in the midst of adversity.
- Describing how God makes things new in our lives every day. Think about how He will change everything for the better when He returns.
- Writing a song or a poem about the assurance given to God’s people that evil, oppression, and suffering will eventually come to an end (cf. Genesis 2; Rev. 7:15–17; 21:2–8).
- Making a skit that shows how the world is now and contrasts it with what it will be like when Jesus comes again.
- Praying for missionaries around the world who are sharing God’s Word and sharing with others about who Jesus Christ is so that they can be ready to meet Jesus too. How can you share God’s love with someone whom you know?

### CONNECT

Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 674–678.

Roberto Badenas, “New Jerusalem—The Holy City,” in *Symposium on Revelation*, bk. 2 (Biblical Research Institute, 1992), pp. 243–271.

Daeguik Nam, “The New Earth and the Eternal Kingdom,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Review and Herald, 2000), pp. 947–968.

*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 2nd ed., vol. 7, pp. 888–893.

Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Andrews University Press, 2002), pp. 573–600.

## *Family Seasons*

If you have not yet received a copy of *CQ* for second quarter 2019, here is a summary of the first two lessons:

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### **Lesson 1 The Rhythms of Life**

**Logos:** Gen. 1; Eccl. 3:2; Job 1:13–19; Acts 9:1–22; Rom. 15:7

**Memory Text:** “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven” (Eccl. 3:1, NKJV).

**Key Thought:** Some of the most beautiful poetry ever penned by King Solomon is found in Ecclesiastes 3:1–8. Those words capture so much of human existence—the seasons, the rhythms of our lives. Yes, our lives go through stages, through changes, and they do so from the moment we are born. Sometimes the changes are good, sometimes not; sometimes we have control over them; sometimes not. This week let’s look at the seasons and rhythms of our lives, especially as they impact us and our families, too.

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### **Lesson 2 The Choices We Make**

**Logos:** Eph. 1:1–4; Prov. 3:5, 6; James 1:23–25; Eccl. 2:1–11

**Memory Text:** “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15, NKJV).

**Key Thought:** Some choices are simple and even become routine, while others are life-changing and have eternal consequences, not only for us but even for our own families. Hence, how crucial that we think through our choices, especially the big ones, the ones that can impact us and our families for the rest of not only our own lives but our family members’ lives, as well. How many of us, to this day, regret the choices we have made? How many, to this day, live with the wreckage from the wrong choices made even long ago?

Fortunately, there is forgiveness. There is redemption, and there

is healing, even for the worst of decisions. This week, we will look in a very broad way at the question of the choices we make, how we should make them, and what impact these choices can have on ourselves and our families.

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