

What next?

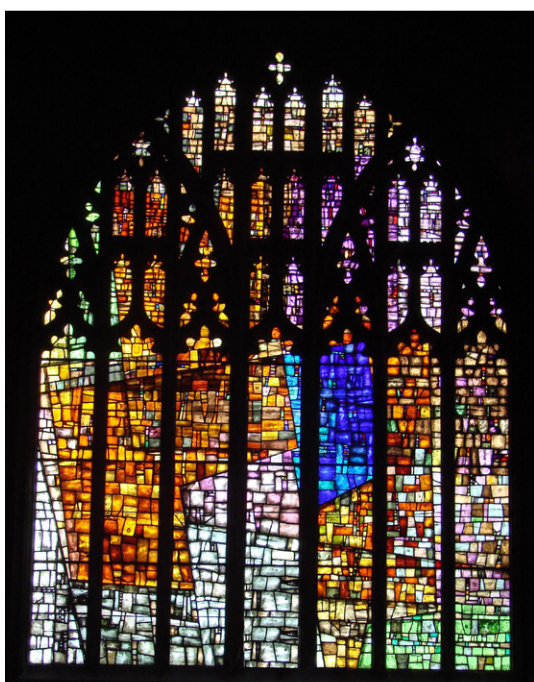
Revelation 21.1-6

John sees a vision of a new heaven and a new earth. As God's city, descends to the earth, he hears a voice saying that God is coming to live with human beings.

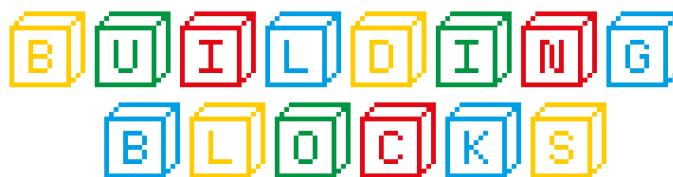
Now read **Revelation 21.1-6** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

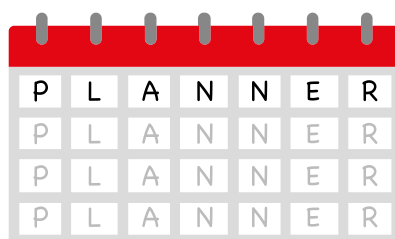
As the Christians of Asia Minor in the first century AD looked around them, they must have seen the world as a hostile place. As they suffered persecution, they may have felt that God was far away, too distant to offer them the protection they desired. What could be more reassuring then, than John's vision? In it, the frightening world around them was made new and God was coming down from heaven to live with them. They could live in the present knowing that this future had been promised to them.



What glimpses of heaven can be seen in the world around us?



Using Lego™ blocks, or Minecraft™, try to build the new Jerusalem as you imagine it might have appeared to John. If you need some inspiration, try looking at this model: <http://blog.susanevans.org/lego-new-jerusalem/> Do you picture more buildings than this? What would they look like?



Every evening this week, think ahead to the next day. What are your plans? Have you scheduled in any time for God? In Revelation, John sees God's plan to make everything new. Can you plan to do something new every day this week? Write your ideas down so that you remember to try!

Pray



The people with whom John first shared his vision were worried about the persecution they faced every day. We probably worry about different things, but we can bring those worries to God, asking for reassurance. Think about what worries you the most and say this prayer:
Loving God, I know that you are the beginning and the end, and that you have a plan for your creation. I'm really worried about [...]. Please help me to see that one day you will make everything new. **Amen.**



We can look forward to a future when God comes to live among humanity, but, at present, we have the responsibility to protect the world we live in. Take a walk in your neighbourhood. Has the area been spoiled by people who have dropped litter? Play your part in renewing the world God has given to us by taking a bin bag and picking up the rubbish you find.



Place Jesus on the Throne

On a large piece of paper, draw the throne in heaven which John describes in his vision. Draw a picture of Jesus to fit the throne and cut it out. Attach the throne picture to a wall or a door. Now play a game based on 'pin the tail on the donkey', blindfolding each participant in turn and challenging them to seat Jesus on the throne.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

In his vision, John sees the city of God coming from heaven to earth, so that God can live with human beings.

In my vision, the first earth, where we live now, had gone. The first heaven had gone. The sea had gone too.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth. Coming out of the new heaven was a city; it was the new Jerusalem, coming from God down to the new earth, looking as beautiful as a woman coming to meet her husband on her wedding day.

As the new Jerusalem came down, a loud voice from the throne in heaven said, 'See! God's home is with human beings. He will live among them and they will be his people.'

'God will be with his people, wiping away all the tears from their eyes. There will be no more death or pain; there will be no more mourning or crying, because the first earth and the first heaven have passed away.'



'See!' said the one sitting on the throne in heaven, 'I am making everything new.' Then he said to me, 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.'

'I will give a gift to everyone who is thirsty and the gift will be the water of life.'

Revelation 21.1-6

Did you know?

- Jerusalem is the capital city of Israel. In the Bible, it is a very special place because the Temple is there, and the Temple is God's house on earth.
- When somebody dies and all their family and friends are very upset, we say that they are in mourning.
- The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet are Alpha and Omega.

Revelation 21.1-6 (NRSV)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.'

Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.'