



1. [about 5 minutes] Describe the perfect wedding.
 (Hint for Husbands: it was your own.)

2. [about 5 minutes] Read Revelation 21. The narrative may simply be read around the group verse by verse. Or, a separate reader or readers could read the direct speech as it occurs (verses 3–4, 5, 6–8, 9).

This chapter presents a marvellous picture of God's people in God's place.

new heaven, new earth
Revelation 21

Week 9 • Sunday 2 October 2016

Revelation 21 — The great wedding day

As we near the end of the book, notice how it ties back to the beginning. Listen out for echoes of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 here in Chapter 21. Once again, John seems to grasp for words, trying to describe the indescribable, to express in human words an overwhelming, spiritual, heavenly experience. The passage is rich in imagery and symbolism. Try not to get bogged down in interpreting every detail, but get swept up in the big picture John is painting.

21:1–4

Isaiah 65:17 and 25:8 are quoted. Here are themes of renewal, transience, preparation, wedding, mutuality, ownership, painlessness, deathlessness. How do these touch you?

21:5–8

Here is God, here are the victors, and here, but not for long, are the rest. How does John describe each?



Looking ahead: Next week is Revelation 22, last chapter of the book, and of the Bible.

fold away here second

He will wipe every tear from their eyes.
 There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain,
 for the old order of things has passed away.

Worth remembering (from Revelation 21:4)

1. How might you explain the content of Revelation 21 to a blind person?
 2. How is your self-understanding affected by such descriptors as God's people (21:3), victor (21:7), inheritor (21:7), God's children (21:7), the bride, the wife of the lamb (21:9), name written in the book of life (21:27)?

From there to here [spend about 10 minutes on this page]

fold away here first

21:9–10

The images tumble one on another here — angel, bowls, plagues, bride, wife, Lamb, Spirit, mountain, Jerusalem, heaven, God. What do you think John is trying to convey?

21:11–21

Briefly describe the city: height, length, width, gates, foundations, dimensions, materials. If time permits, you could look at related Old Testament passages (Ezekiel 40, Isaiah 60) and lists (Ezekiel 28:13, Isaiah 54:11, Exodus 28:17). But don't let such details detract or distract from the magnificence of the scene.

21:22–27

Again, John struggles to depict what he sees, literally the lighting of the scene. Which words related to light does he use? How is God described in this section? Apart from God, who is there ... and who is not there?

