

“ALL THINGS NEW”
by Rev. John C. Tittle

NT READING Revelation 21:1-7, 22-27; 22:1 NRSV

¹Then 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. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴he 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.” ⁵And 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.” ⁶Then 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. ⁷Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ²²I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life. ¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. ⁶And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.” ⁷“See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Comments or questions about the Scripture reading?
2. Do you enjoy Revelation or try to avoid it?
3. Why do you think it is in the Scriptures?
4. Throughout church history, persecuted Christians and also minorities have been particularly drawn to Revelation. Why do you think that is?
5. Pulp fiction novels about the end times sell extremely well—for example Tim LaHaye’s *Left Behind Series* has sold 80 million copies (no joke). Why has that been so popular?
6. The book of Revelation emphasizes worship—in fact, next to the Psalms, Revelation is the most influential book in Christian liturgy. Why is worship so important for the Christian?
7. The book of Revelation emphasizes endurance in the face of adversity. How might the book encourage Christians to persevere?

8. The book of Revelation emphasizes faithful witness, even in the midst of opposition. Why is this so important?
9. What does the book of Revelation teach us about God's plan for humanity?
10. Why is the ending of Revelation so important?