

Heaven and the New Creation

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Jesus is preparing a place, and He will come again. Heaven is God's promise of hope.

Bible passage: John 14:1–3 and Revelation 21–22. Read them before class.

Memory verse: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." *John 14:2 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible, a chair, a small blanket or pillow, a cup, 6 paper strips, a paper triangle, a marker, tape, 12 white paper circles, masking tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.

Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at John 14 and Revelation 21.

1. Opening game: A Place Ready for You (5 minutes)

Ask one helper to wait just outside the door with a grown-up. The class gets a place ready for the helper: set out the chair, put the blanket or pillow on it and set the cup beside it. Then bring the helper in and say, "We got this place ready just for you!" Play again with a new helper. Ask: *How does it feel when someone gets a place ready for you?* Say: "Today we will hear what Jesus said He would get ready, and what God showed about the new heaven and the new earth."

2. Bible teaching: Jesus Prepares a Place (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to John 14, so the kids can see this comes from God's Word. This is not a story about one day. It is what Jesus promised and what God showed John. Tell it in your own words:

Jesus told His disciples that He was going away, and they could not come with Him yet (John 13:33, 13:36). Then He said, "Let not your heart be troubled" (14:1). **Troubled** means worried and upset. **Read John 14:2–3 from your Bible:** "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 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." Say: "**Mansions** means places to live. **Prepare** means get ready. Jesus said He would come again and take His people to be with Him."

Later, God showed a man named John what is coming (Revelation 1:9). John wrote, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (21:1). He saw the holy city, **new Jerusalem**, coming down from God out of heaven (21:2). A great voice said, "God himself shall be with them" (21:3).



The teaching continues: **Read Revelation 21:4 from your Bible:** "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Say: "**Sorrow** means being very sad. No more crying, no more hurting, ever!"

John saw the city. Its wall was made of **jasper**, a precious stone (21:18). It had **twelve gates**: three on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west (21:12–13). Each gate was **one pearl**, and the street of the city was **pure gold**, "as it were transparent glass," so clear you could see through it (21:21). The city did not need the sun or the moon, "for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (21:23). **The Lamb** is a Bible name for Jesus (John 1:29). There is no night there, and the gates are never shut (21:25).

Then John saw a river, the **river of water of life**, clear as crystal. On either side of the river was the **tree of life**, with twelve kinds of fruit, fruit every month (22:1–2). God's people "shall see his face" (22:4).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did Jesus say He would go and do? (*Prepare a place for you, John 14:2*)
2. What did Jesus promise to do after that? (*Come again, and receive you unto Himself, 14:3*)
3. What will God wipe away? (*All tears from their eyes, Revelation 21:4*)
4. How many gates did the city have? (*Twelve, three on each side, 21:12–13*)
5. Why does the city not need the sun or the moon? (*The glory of God lights it, and the Lamb is the light, 21:23*)

4. Memory verse: Build the House (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips on the wall one under the other, like the walls of a house, and tape the paper triangle on top for a roof: *In my Father's house / are many mansions: / if it were not so, / I would have told you. / I go to prepare / a place for you. John 14:2.* Explain the words: **Father** is a Bible word for God; Jesus is God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). **Mansions** means places to live, and **prepare** means get ready. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away until only the roof is left and the kids can say the whole verse.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God's city is clean and perfect. The Bible says nothing that **defileth**, that means nothing dirty with sin, will go in. The people there are the ones written in **the Lamb's book of life** (Revelation 21:27). The Lamb is Jesus, and here is the good news: Jesus came to wash our sins away! God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4). Jesus wants you to come: 'whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Revelation 22:17)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: when you feel worried or sad, remember what Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1). Jesus keeps His promises.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **heaven word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/heaven-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the new heaven and new earth craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/heaven), or **Twelve Gates**: make a big square on the floor with masking tape and tape three white paper "pearls" on each side for gates: east, north, south and west. Call out a side ("Three gates on the north!") and the kids walk in through those gates. Count the gates together: 3, 6, 9, 12 (Revelation 21:13).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus went to prepare a place, and that He will come again. Thank You that one day You will wipe away all tears. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child is sad about someone who died: some children may be missing someone they love. Let them talk, and say it is all right to be sad: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). Tell them what God promises: He will wipe away all tears (Revelation 21:4). Don't guess about where any person is now, and don't say people become angels; the Bible doesn't teach that. Let the child's parents and pastor know so they can talk about it at home.

If a child asks about something the Bible doesn't say (pets, clouds and harps): say kindly, "The Bible doesn't tell us that. Here is what it does tell us" (John 14:2–3; Revelation 21:4).

