

28



THE NEVER-ENDING STORY

The Life of the World to Come

YEAR 2 – KINGDOM LIFE

UNIT 10: THE FOREVER KINGDOM

1 | Teacher's Notes

Scripture Revelation 19:6-7; 21:1-5, 11; 22:1-3

Objectives To explain that

- Today's lesson is about the Forever Kingdom and life in the New Creation.
- When Jesus comes back to the earth, all of God's creation will be restored and made new. The Bible gives us some clues about what it will be like.
- A beautiful city, called the New Jerusalem, will come down from Heaven. Heaven and earth will come together as one, and God will live with his people forever. There will be so much BEAUTY in the new creation because God's glory will be there!
- There will be a river flowing from the throne of God called the River of the Water of Life. The Tree of Life will be in the new creation, and we will be able to eat from it and it will give us God's LIFE.
- In the new creation there will be no death, or sadness or pain. There will be JOY, because Jesus will live with his people forever, and he will be their King.
- Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the bridegroom, and we, the Church, are his bride. This marriage will never end. Jesus will LOVE us, and we will love him forever!

Memory Verse "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people.... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:3-4 – ESV)

ACNA
Catechism
Connections

Today's lesson of The Never-Ending Story is connected to the following Catechism questions:

Q76 What does the Creed mean when it says, "He will come again"? Jesus promised that he would return. His coming in victory with great glory and power will be seen by all people and will bring this age to an end. The present world order will pass away, and God will usher in a fully renewed creation to stand forever. All the saints will be together with God at that time.

Q119 What do you know about the unending resurrected life of believers? I know that it will be an eternal life of joyful fellowship with our triune God, together with all his saints and angels, singing his praises and serving him in the renewed creation.

Q120 How should you live in light of this promise of unending life? I should live in joyful expectation of the fullness of my transformation, soul and body, into the likeness of Christ. In the midst of suffering or in the face of hostility and persecution, I am sustained by the hope of a new heaven and earth, freed from Satan, evil, suffering, and death.

Q147 What is signified in marriage? The union of husband and wife in one flesh signifies the communion between Christ, the heavenly bridegroom, and the Church, his holy bride. Not all are called or able to marry, but all Christians are joined to Christ as members of his Body.

Q367 For what does sanctification prepare you? Sanctification enables me to serve and bear witness to Christ in this life, and prepares me for the glory of God in the world to come. There I will be completely freed from sin and conformed to the likeness of my Lord, whom I will see face-to-face.

**Suggested
Materials,
Props, and
Costumes****Big story props:**

- Large Bible
- Kingdom Life storyboard (see photo)

Lesson Props: (see Props Document for instructions on how to make these)

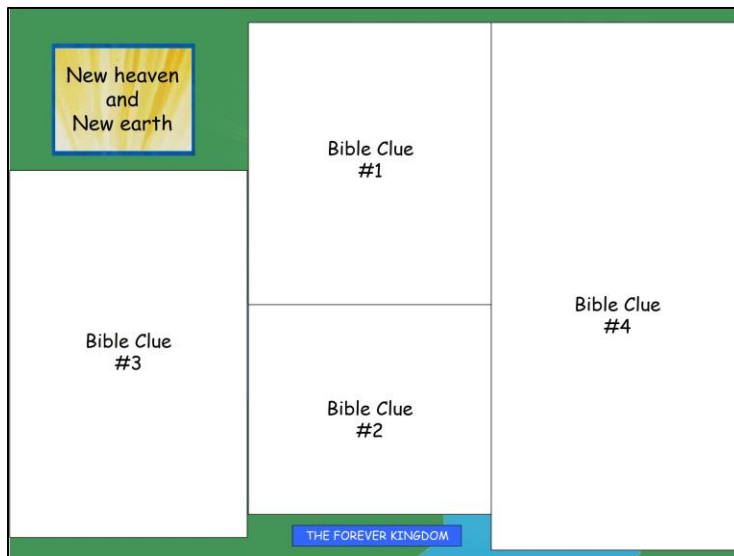
- Use the condensed lesson poster as a prop for this lesson (also found in props document). This poster has layers to be removed during the lesson. See photos on page 4.
- Cards numbered 1 to 4 with Bible verses printed on them as outlined in lesson, hidden between pages of large Bible with ends sticking out. Arrange them in the right order, from top to bottom, for the children to pull out. Don't add the Bible reference to the cards, just the verse itself.
- Flannelgraph or wall to display Bible verse cards.
- New word cards: BEAUTY, JOY (to add to the strips of felt during lesson)
- Gold confetti sprinkles
- Poster pictures from lesson 27: Jesus coming in a cloud, and lesson 27 poster with grey card attached.

Memory Verse: "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:3-4)

(Found on the last page of this lesson plan) Print out and place in large Bible.



This is how the **lesson 27** poster will look at the start of the lesson with the grey card attached.



This is how the **lesson 28** poster will look with the clue cards attached.



This is how the **lesson 28** poster will look at the end of the lesson, with the clue cards removed.

2 | Lesson Outline:

Welcome	As the children arrive ensure each one is personally welcomed and everyone knows each other's name.
Greeting & Collect for Purity	Light the candles Say the Greeting and Collect for Purity (<i>see Resource Section</i>)
Prayer of Confession	Say the Prayer of Confession (<i>see Resource Section</i>) Extinguish the candles
Music	Heaven is Real (I can only imagine) Hymn of Heaven (Phil Wickham) Please check internet for lyrics and music.
Review of foundations	Choose from the following as appropriate: The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles Creed, The Ten Commandments or The Greatest Commandment. For more information on how to teach these, see Resource Section
Reading	Memory verse (Printed out and placed in large Bible – invite older child to read)
Story Board Review	Ask review questions relating to props from previous lessons on story board. Story board review is found in Section 4
Props/Costumes	Take a few moments to arrange the narrator and actors. (Props should already be set up prior to the start of the class.) Big story props: Large Bible, Kingdom Life storyboard
Bible Story	Proceed with story and questions found in Section 4.
Related activities	After the story, proceed with related activities found in Section 5.
Preparation for Communion & leaving class	Gather the children together for the Preparation for Communion prayer before exiting the classroom. See Resource Section.

4 | Story and Questions

SETUP: Set up two teaching stations. At the first station have the condensed poster up on a flannelgraph or wall, with the clue cards attached. At this station you will also need the Bible with the Bible verse cards hidden in it, and the lesson 27 poster with the grey card attached. At the second station set up the Kingdom Life storyboard, complete with the strips of green felt. Start the lesson at the first station.

BIBLE: Hold up the Bible and say: 'Today's lesson is from the Bible, and it is about God's Forever Kingdom.'

FLANNELGRAPH REVIEW:

TEACHER: (*Show posters from previous lesson 27 - Second Coming poster AND lesson poster w/grey card attached*): Last lesson we learned that one day Jesus will return to the earth, and we found some clues in the Bible about what will happen at that time.

Clue #1 One day Jesus will come back to earth in a cloud as the glorious **Forever King!**

Clue #2 When Jesus comes back, all that was sad, bad, and evil will be put away forever. **Satan will be punished** forever for all the evil he has done.

Clue #3 King Jesus will also judge all the people who ever lived. **Those who did not want to follow Jesus** in this life will be found **guilty** for their **sin**. They will be separated from God's love and life forever.

But those who loved and followed Jesus will be given new, eternal bodies and will live forever with Jesus because his sacrifice has covered their sins.

Clue #4 When Jesus comes back, there will be **a new heaven and a new earth**. That means that all of God's creation in heaven and on earth will be restored and made new. All sin and death and evil will be gone forever (*remove black card from poster and put it away*) and all of God's creation will be healed and filled with God's love and life.

STORY:

TEACHER: I wonder what life will be like in the new creation. Do you wonder about that too?

Only God knows exactly what it will look like, but we know it will be more wonderful and more beautiful than anything we can imagine. We will feel more at home there than we ever did on this earth.

(Point to the poster for this lesson) The book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, gives us some clues about what the new heaven and new earth will be like. Let's look at some of those clues now.

I need your help to pull some cards with those clues out of the Bible. You can hold them until I call out the number on your card. Then you can put it up on this board and we will read it out loud.

ACTION: *Invite children to follow the above instructions.*

TEACHER: Let's read our **1st verse for clue #1**, and the question is "what will the new creation be like?":

Verse #1: *"I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem. It was coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God. It gleamed like a very valuable jewel. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city." (Revelation 21:2,11 and 22:3)*

TEACHER: What will the new creation be like? *(Point to verse #1 on the board, and have children respond based on the scripture.)*

TEACHER: Let's see what is behind clue card #1 on our poster. *(Ask child to remove clue card # 1 from poster.)* Yes. In the new creation there will be a beautiful city, called the New Jerusalem, that will come down from heaven.

Let's use our hands to illustrate this. Your right hand represents heaven, and your left hand represents earth. Now fold your hands so they become one.

ACTION: *Have the children use their hands to illustrate heaven and earth coming together as one.*

This means that heaven and earth will come together as one, and God will live with his people forever. In the New Jerusalem, Jesus (the Lamb of God) will sit on his throne as the Forever King *(point to crown.)*

There will be so much **BEAUTY** in the new creation because God's glory will be there! *(Point to the word BEAUTY on the poster.)*

TEACHER: Let's read our **2nd verse for clue #2**, and the question is "what will the new creation be like?":

Verse #2: *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life. It was as clear as crystal. It flowed from the throne of God and of the Lamb...On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing 12 crops of fruit. Its fruit was ripe every month.” (Revelation 22:1-2)*

TEACHER: What will the new creation be like? *(Point to verse #2 on the board, and have children respond based on the scripture.)*

TEACHER: Let's see what is behind clue card #2 on our poster. *(Ask child to remove clue card #2 from poster.)* In the new creation the River of the Water of Life will be flowing from the throne of God. *(Point to river.)* And the Tree of Life will be there. Remember the Tree of Life from the Garden of Eden? *(Point to tree.)* The Tree of Life will be in the new creation, and we will be able to eat from it and it will give us God's **LIFE**. *(Point to the word LIFE.)* Can you see the cross in the tree? This reminds us that it is through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross that we can receive God's life.

TEACHER: Let's read our **3rd verse for clue #3**, and the question is “what will the new creation be like?”:

Verse #3: *“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” (Rev 21:3-4)*

TEACHER: This is our memory verse. What does this verse tell us the new creation will be like? *(Point to verse #3 on the board, and have children respond based on the scripture.)*

TEACHER: Let's see what is behind clue card #3 on our poster. *(Ask child to remove clue card #3 from poster.)* It is our memory verse again! In the new creation there will be no sadness, no pain, and no death. There will be so much **JOY**, because Jesus will live with his people forever, and he will be their King. *(Point to the word JOY.)*

TEACHER: This next clue is a bit more challenging to understand. In this verse the Lamb of God represents Jesus, and the Church (that is us!) is seen as a beautiful bride. This verse talks about a wedding between Jesus and the Church. It is a joyful celebration! This marriage will never end. Jesus will love us, and we will love him forever!

Let's read our **final verse for clue #4**, and the question is "what will the new creation be like?":

Verse #4: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us be joyful and glad! Let us give him glory! It is time for the Lamb's wedding. His bride has made herself ready." (Revelation 19:6-7)

TEACHER: What will the new creation be like? *(Point to verse #4 on the board, and have children respond based on the scripture.)*

TEACHER: Let's see what is behind clue card #4 on our poster. *(Ask child to remove clue card #4 from poster.)* It is a picture of wedding rings. In the new creation we will be joined to Jesus and will live with him forever. The Bible describes this wonderful moment as the wedding supper of the Lamb. *(Point to wedding rings.)* Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the bridegroom, and we, the Church, are his bride. This marriage will never end. Jesus will **LOVE** us, and we will love him forever! *(Point to the word LOVE on the poster.)*

TEACHER: *(Point to Adam and Eve.)* Remember God's creation before there was sin, when everything was good and perfect, and God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve? It will be like that again in the new creation, but even more amazing!

It's like a big, beautiful surprise that God is preparing for us, and it will all be revealed when Jesus comes back.

Are you excited about the new creation? What do you look forward to the most?

Let's finish our lesson by looking again at our storyboard:

ACTION: *Take the children over to the storyboard.*

TEACHER: In God's eternal Kingdom there will be no more sin, sickness, pain, or death. There will only be LOVE and LIFE, BEAUTY and JOY. *(Place "beauty" and "joy" on the edges of storyboard as shown.)*

God's light and glory will shine throughout the new creation. Jesus will reign as our Forever King! *(Sprinkle gold confetti all over the storyboard.)*

The story of God's Kingdom is the most beautiful story ever told.

It is a true story, and **we** are **in** it,
and it will **never ever** end.

Life Application Prayer:

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that with you there is love, life, beauty, and joy forever. Thank you for loving us. Thank you for inviting us to follow you and live with you in your Kingdom forever!

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- **What does this lesson tell us about Jesus?** (He will come back to the earth. He will make all things new and will live with his people forever in God's eternal Kingdom. He will sit on his throne in the New Jerusalem. He will wipe away our tears. He is the Lamb of God. He will be our bridegroom. He will give us love, life, beauty, and joy.)
- **What is your favourite part of today's lesson?**
- **What does it mean that there will be a new heaven and a new earth?** (It means that all sin and death, anything that was sad or bad or evil will be gone forever. There will be no more crying or pain, but all of God's creation will be healed and filled with God's life and love. Heaven and earth will come together as one.)
- **What is the New Jerusalem?** (It is a beautiful city that will come down from heaven. In this city, God will live with his people forever. There, Jesus will sit on his throne as the Forever King.)
- **What will flow out from the throne of God?** (The River of the Water of Life.)
- **What is the tree called that will grow next to the River of the Water of Life?** (The Tree of Life, from the Garden of Eden. We will be able to eat from it and it will give us God's life.)
- **Who is the Lamb of God?** (Jesus)
- **Who is the bride of Christ?** (The Church - that is us)
- **What are the four words on our story board that describe life in God's Forever Kingdom?** (Love, life, beauty, and joy)

5 | Response Activities

Kingdom News handout and colouring supplement

- Have the children complete the activities in the Kingdom News handout and colouring supplement.

Optional activities

- Different learning stations, such as: a book table, modelling clay, colouring papers

Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

(Revelation 21:3-4)