

The Outcome of It All — **Revelation 21:1-8; 22:12-15**

When I read these passages in Revelation, I think of a humanity who, for the most part, has been denied the opportunity to live decently, without so many unpleasant situations around them. I think of those whose pain has been so constant that they have become insensitive to life. I think of peoples who have lived forever rejected by the rest of humankind because of their birthplace, lack of resources, ethnicity, darker skin, or different skin color. Those for whom, not having access to an education, the doors of opportunity have been closed, condemning them to live in misery. Those who, for lack of resources, daily mourn the loss of a loved one who could not be taken to a hospital. I think of those who flee their countries, risking their lives and living in deplorable conditions, holding on with faith that they will find a better future for their loved ones. I am reminded of those who mourn their relatives—children, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins, grandparents—who were left behind in the desert and/or at sea.

I also think of parents who, after giving the blessing to their children to leave for distant lands to fight for their nation, permanently mourn their children's absence and inability to return home. For those who, still in the 21st century, are victims of slavery. Patients who have spent a large part of their lives prostrated on a bed. In this passage, I see all of them and many more, and each one of us who aspires to a life without tears, sadness, and suffering.

For this situation and many others, God our heavenly Father sent his only Son. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 NIV). God became a human to fulfill this redemptive work. Yet many have not chosen to turn toward God and repent of their evil ways.

Those who live with disadvantage, in deplorable situations, as victims of abuse or harassment—many of them have the conviction that one day the pain, crying, abuse, and injustice will cease. And their hope is in Christ. One day, if we believe in him, we will be worthy to accompany him into his kingdom and enjoy a new life without tears, death, sadness, or pain.

Our hope is in Christ. The one who sits on the throne will make all things new and dwell with all his faithful eternally (21:5, 3). For all those tireless fighters, victors, and all who have persevered to the end, he is the one who blesses the victor with a full inheritance and a new relation as between father and son, for those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

We all know that the essence of God is love, and because of that God will save humanity. "So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him" (Hebrews 9:28 NIV). By accepting Jesus, we are cleansed, and therefore we will be worthy to enter God's kingdom. Then we will enjoy life without pain, death, tears, and sadness.

- Who do you think of when you read Revelation 21–22?

Blessings,
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1. Norman Cousins Quotes. BrainyQuote.com, BrainyMedia Inc, 2021. https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/norman_cousins_121747. Norman Cousins (June 24, 1915–November 30, 1990) was an American political journalist, author, professor, and world peace advocate.



Andrew Bodden, a Honduran native, serves as a program director for Mennonite Central Committee East Coast, providing leadership to the programs in New York, Philadelphia, Florida, Puerto Rico, and to the Young Adult, and Peace and Justice programs. He also connects with Anabaptist pastors and churches on the East Coast and in Puerto Rico. Andrew has worked in multicultural settings in Central and South America, Mexico, Dominican Republic, and the United States. He is an ordained minister in the Atlantic Coast Conference and serves as vice-chair of the Mennonite Mission Network board.

Looking for participant guide page numbers in the leader guide? The page numbers in the leader guide work for both guides.

Resources for this session

- ["One Day \(When We All Get to Heaven\)"](#)
- A dramatic reading of this study's text is found as an [S&L Reproducible here](#).