

Reflection Questions: Revelation 6:9-11 & 21:1-5

For the message, "Lament & the Longing for Heaven" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on September 20, 2020

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Revelation 6:9-11 & 21:1-5

6:9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. **10** They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" **11** Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

21:1 Then 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. **2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. **4** 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." **5** And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- How does it strike you that in the present experience of Heaven (now, before the New Heavens & Earth), there is lament over this world that has of yet to be set right ("...how long....")?
- When these followers of Jesus who have been slain are told to "rest a little long, until...", what does that tell you about God's purposes and plan? What questions or thoughts come to mind?
- How is the story about the renewal of all things when God wipes away our tears meant to anchor us in our journey through life, and especially through the pain and suffering of life? What happens when we forget this story?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- The Apostle Paul spoke being "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Corinthians 6:10). What comes to your mind as you think of a community of Jesus' followers who embody this well?

- How might we be able to remind one another of the purposes of God (which are often not seen by us), to persevere “a little longer,” without being trite or unsupportive?

3. Let’s think about how this text applies to our city.

- How does this text serve as Good News for those outside the faith? In other words, how does it invite people into the true story of the world centered on Jesus?
- What kind of new life / future in Christ is this text calling our city to experience?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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- _____
- _____