

*"Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth,"for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 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 without cost from the spring of the water of life."*

*Revelation 21:1-6*

*"It is a matter of glimpsing that in God's new creation, of which Jesus's resurrection is the start, all that was good in the original creation is reaffirmed. All that has corrupted and defaced it - including many things which are woven so tightly in to the fabric of the world as we know it that we can't imagine being without them - will be done away. Learning to live as a Christian is learning to live as a renewed human being, anticipating the eventual new creation in and with a world which is still longing and groaning for that final redemption."*

*N.T. Wright, Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*

These are powerful words for all of us. Especially in Gemena, despite the current challenges we face, like lack of electricity or sufficient access to clean water, we are called to be renewed human beings, anticipating and hoping for that day where we can access the outside world through power and improved health through clean water for our children and our communities. That day, where Congolese mothers see God answer prayers of provision for their children.

N.T. Wright in this passage reminds us that hope is active, not passive. While we anticipate the change to come, we know that without our own contribution toward a different future we will not fully participate in the blessing of calling the Kingdom of God to this earth through liberation of all marginalized people – in this case, our Congolese friends.

The WASH program currently being implemented is revealing the many resources that already exist in Gemena to bring clean water to the town's population of 300,000 people. Water is abundant, but clean water is scarce. It will take digging wells, capping natural water sources, and maintaining functioning sources in order to provide protected water that will improve the health of this whole town. It will take reaffirming the gift of the original God-given creation to see resurrection, from sickness to health and from death to life.

Of equal importance, the WASH program will address education on sanitation and protecting water sources so they remain clean. If the community is not on board, clean water access will be temporary instead of long-term. God will provide, we have faith in that. But we know God loves to use us, His created, to reaffirm His own creation. We remember our work is always in the hands of our Creator who makes all things new.