



The

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Latter Days

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Disclaimer! God's Word is TRUE. What is Scripture will be fulfilled exactly as God has revealed it. I have compiled and arranged prophetic verses as I understand and believe they will be fulfilled. However, I acknowledge there may be error in my understanding and our Sovereign God may have a different order in mind. My prayer and burden in writing this study guide is that God's Holy Name will be exalted through His Word, and His people be prepared for what He has in store for us.

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— NOTES —

❖ LESSON 1 ❖

GENERAL PROPHECIES OF THE LATTER DAYS

Purpose: To study scriptures that describe living conditions in the last days while the Church is yet upon the earth before Jesus' second coming.

The Bible teaches us that God is sovereign. As sovereign, He is the moderator of time and eternity. He has exclusive rights to prophetic events. Only God can spell out the details of future events written as history in advance.

In His goodness to the sons of men, God reveals in detail things that we can only try to imagine. As Christians, this gives us a priceless wealth in the midst of impoverished humanity. We have light in the midst of men who cannot see and security in the midst of men governed by fear.

In the Bible the church age is referred to as the “latter times” or “last days.” These last days are a strange blend of prosperity and uncertainty. Never has life been so easy in terms of prosperity, yet something is not quite settled.

According to the scriptures, the very next age time passes into is a time of tribulation that will come on all the world as travail comes on a woman with child. Labor pains always come before there is a birth. False labor pains often precede the actual labor.

Today we see the last of the signs of the “latter days” and many of the “false labor” signs coming on the earth. In this lesson we will analyze what will appear in tomorrow’s newspaper.

These general signs bring us a sense of anticipation and a desire to purify ourselves from our present age. We must be among those who are counted worthy to escape (Luke 21:36) with Christ in the rapture of the Holy Bride.



Times of Uncertainty and Fear

One of the interesting keys to understanding prophecy is to note what pronouns are used. When Christ wants His followers to understand the events will transpire in the church age, He uses pronouns such as “you” and “ye”. When Paul addresses this time frame and speaks to fellow disciples of Christ, he uses pronouns such as “we” and “us”.

In the same pattern, when Jesus and Paul speak of another time frame when the church age is over, they use the pronouns, “they” and “them”.

You will also find a third group in Jesus’ prophetic teaching; “the elect”. These will refer to those who are saved in the tribulation period, but are not technically a part of His bride, the church. Many or perhaps all of those referred to as elect are Jews by nationality.

1. What three events did the disciples desire to learn about?

2. Give two of Christ’s prophecies that relate to religion.

3. Give two political conditions Christians should consider a part of the last days.

4. Give two different conditions that will be normal among religious circles.

Matthew 24:3-14

3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

9. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.

10. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.



Times of Eating, Drinking and Marrying

One of the difficulties to picture in descriptions of the days when Jesus returns is that among all the turmoil, life will be so very normal. Since people do not know when Jesus will return, they are going about the affairs of life doing things that are very normal for them. They will not be anxiously looking to the skies, but rather making plans for what they will be doing with their lives tomorrow and the next day. Their appointment books will be filled with happy expectations.

The Christians are the only ones who know the profound change that is about to envelop the world. They are hammering away (working out their soul's salvation Php 2:12) on an ark that will take them to safety and a new world; their faith and life in Christ.

Matthew 24:36-39

36. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

5. What are some indications that life will be going on as normal when Jesus returns?



The Dispersed Jews will have Returned to their Land

One of the disciples' questions related to the beautiful stones and the destruction of temple environs. They could not imagine the type of destruction that Jesus vividly saw in His mind. Jesus' prophecy touches this horrid destruction, the dispersion of Jews to all nations of the world, and then fast forwards centuries to the time when Jews would return to their land.

Jesus' prophecy touches on an event of "when the times of the Gentiles" is fulfilled. This event will be when Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by those who are non-Jews. When this remarkable event transpires, Christians everywhere are to lift up their heads and pay special attention to the coming of Christ.

We are not sure if this has transpired or not. Jerusalem was freed from Arab control in June of 1967. But immediately the Israeli authorities turned the Temple Mount back over to the authority of the Muslims. So are the times of the Gentiles really fulfilled? We only wonder, watch and stay prepared for Christ's return.

6. What major sign related to the Jewish people has already been fulfilled and would indicate the lateness of the age?

7a. What hope did Jesus offer to his disciples as they see the night of tribulation coming on a world of sin?

7b. Read 1Thess 5:3 Who is specifically stated as unable to escape the tribulation to come?

Luke 21:24, 28-31

24. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

28. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

29. And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;

30. When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

36. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.



Specific Perils in the Last Times

The Bible makes it clear that as history comes to a close on the church age it will be more and more difficult for Christians to avoid deception. Satan and His demons will be increasing their activity of deception. There will have been much time for a host of religious voices to come forth, each one claiming to have the truth. Messianic personalities will become prominent.

These conditions should not cause us to despair, but rather to be prepared. One of the major ways to overcome the enemy is to know his manner of approach. The many voices we hear from the false works salvation to easy believeism to special manifestations of the Spirit etc are not a surprise to us. Thankfully God has provided His will written down so we can read it and find our guiding light that takes us through these days.

1 Timothy 4:1-3

1. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2. Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3. Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

2 Timothy 3:1-9

1. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

8. What are some false teachings which are to surface in the last days?

9. Select one of the following descriptions of men in the last days and describe how this trait will make living with this type of person difficult.

10. Describe how the true child of God should relate to these who falsely profess to be Christians?

11. How will the world eventually view the false professors of Christianity?



In Your Own Words

You are a Christian who is alive during the last month before Christ returns for His Church. What is life like? Write a description as if you were analyzing religious and economic conditions for a church article.



❖ LESSON 2 ❖

JESUS' SECOND COMING — OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM

Purpose: To discuss the second coming of Jesus Christ for the Church, His Chosen Bride.

Jesus is coming! This is and has been the glorious hope of thousands in every generation. Jesus himself made the promise that He will personally return for His faithful followers and take them home to heaven to be with Him for all future activities. What is more, He has told us enough about the context of His coming that we can understand when the time is drawing near.

The word imminent is not found in Scripture but the teaching is found in many passages and applied to a variety of challenges to Christian living. The word imminent means “close in time, impending”. It means there is nothing that needs to happen or transpire before Jesus can return again to this earth.

The doctrine of the imminent return forces one to think through what he will do with unfulfilled prophecies. There are many prophecies from the Old Testament and some from the New that do not seem to have had a literal fulfillment. If Jesus will come at any minute now what will happen to all those prophecies?

This question of the imminent return and unfulfilled prophecies divides Bible scholars into two main camps. Those who believe when Jesus comes all time will stop interpret these prophecies to have been fulfilled figuratively. In their sincere belief in the imminent return they do not believe anything has to be literally fulfilled that may prevent Christ from returning. These students are known as Amillennialists.

Another group of students is known as Premillennialists. Their understanding of the future is also shaped by the doctrine of the imminent return. They believe Jesus will return at any moment and also that all prophecies will be literally fulfilled. In their understanding, for these prophecies to be fulfilled, some may be fulfilled after Jesus comes for His Church. In their understanding the next events will be the tribulation period, then the coming of Christ with His Saints, then the millennium and finally the eternal age. This is the understanding this elementary Bible study follows.



Watch...Be Ye Also Ready!

It takes much energy and will power to maintain a state of wakefulness when hours and days pass by and nothing seems to call for alertness. When one hears noises in the dark, adrenaline naturally surges through the body and sleep flees away. But when all seems to pass uneventfully, it is easy to grow lax.

Jesus gave two commands which call for a lifestyle of vigilance. Watch. Be ye also ready. This demands that we order our lives in such a way to be prepared at any time for Jesus' return. As you study these verses, ask yourself if there is any thing you do that you would be embarrassed to be found doing should Jesus suddenly show up.

1. What two commands come through regarding Jesus' second coming?

2. What difference does it make when someone expects something to happen?

3. What is the primary difference between the evil servant and the faithful wise servant?

Matthew 24:42-51

42. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49. And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.



My Lord Delayeth His Coming

The temptation to think that Jesus won't come back yet is a common one. Nothing really seems that different today from yesterday or the days before. Added to the natural tendency of laxness is a new teaching that is afloat. This is a form of Premillennialism that opens the idea that perhaps Jesus won't come back until the middle of the tribulation period. They build this thought in part on Jesus' teaching in Matthew 24:29-31. In this passage Jesus speaks of a rapture of the "elect" after tribulation but before the judgement of nations.

As noted in lesson one, the "elect" speaks no doubt of those who turn to Christ in the tribulation. Why would Jesus and the apostles warn repeatedly in over twenty five passages of Jesus impending return and the disastrous consequences of being unprepared if Jesus could not yet return?

None of us need encouragement or doctrine to teach us to think it will be a long time until Jesus comes back. Rather we need to constantly purify ourselves for this life-changing event.

Luke 12:36-48

36. And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41. Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42. And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

4. What special treatment is implied for those who are ready for Jesus' return?

5. What temptations come to those who do not believe Jesus could come back at any time?

6. How do we know there will be a difference in rewards meted out depending upon our faithfulness?

43. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46. The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.



Conditions Surrounding Jesus' Coming

One of the interesting facts of verses regarding Jesus' return is the verses that describe how things will be in society when Jesus returns. There is a tremendous difference. Some verses describe life as being very normal. While there are heightening tensions, people are doing the things they have done for centuries. In fact, the return seems to come as a surprise, an interruption in the normal flow of life.

Other verses describe a return that comes as a climax of events that have built up with both political tensions and natural signs. There is practically no element of surprise in this return. The return of Christ that is expected and looked for by all men is not imminent; it is when He comes again in judgment. For more insight into these two different returns of our Lord, study the comparison charts on page thirty.

Luke 17:24-37

24. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26. And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

30. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32. Remember Lot's wife.

33. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

7. How many days was it after Noah was taken out of society that the flood actually came? How might this be a type of the rapture of the church?

8. How can the fact that fire fell on Sodom the same day when Lot was taken out also be a type of how it will be in the coming of the Lord for the church?

9. What Old Testament character warns us not to value material possessions as Christ returns?

10. Two at the mill makes it sound like the Lord's return will be during the day, but two in bed makes it sound like it will be at night. How can these statements be reconciled?



I Will Come Again

Jesus sat with His disciples and in a personal way made commitments to them. These verses parallel a Jewish betrothal. When a groom was to leave his bride in order to prepare for their wedded life, he would sit with his bride and talk to her about the future. "I am going away for a while, to my father's house in order to prepare our home. "Then one day when my father has declared that all is ready I will come again for you. "Be ready, because when I come for you, I will take you away, and we will live together." Then they would drink the cup of the covenant as a seal of this betrothal.

Jesus has this same intimate covenant with all of his disciples today. As his followers we eagerly await him to come.

11. What spiritual benefit is the promise of Christ's return to have on the Christian?

12. What did Jesus mean by the promised mansions in verse 2?

John 14:1-6

1. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.



The Lord Himself Shall Descend from Heaven

Experts often use the test of details to decide whether a report sounds authentic or not. When a person is able to give specifics then it is easy to believe he knows what he is talking about. Courts of law often use this test in determining the accuracy of witnesses. When persons have endured trauma, they can recount precisely what happened as it transpired. Even though they may be questioned repeatedly, their story does not change. Anyone who is fabricating a story finds himself breaking down in the details. He will not easily remember from one time to the next what he has said.

As the Apostle Paul gives details regarding Jesus' second coming the description has that ring of authenticity. He knew what it will be like. He is able to specify when the dead will rise, and when the living will be transformed. Follow the text closely as you answer these questions.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

13. What does it mean when it says that Jesus will bring those "who sleep in Jesus" with Him?

14. According to these verses, what is the very next thing the believer should expect to happen?

15. What will happen to the Christians whose bodies are in the graves when Jesus returns?

16. What will happen to Christians who are alive when Christ returns?



The "Day of the Lord"

When the Bible talks about the "day of the Lord", this is not to be understood as the second coming of Jesus. The "day of the Lord" is the next time period that will come to this earth after the Christians have been removed. Notice that while in our former passage Paul has been using "we", now he shifts to "they" and "them".

In the same vein of thought, the "day of the Lord" will be as when a woman is overtaken with travail. Travail signals a change for an expectant mother. She knows she will now have some nearly normal times but closer and closer intense suffering. Those who enter this time frame "will not escape," but will enter into great suffering. Our Lord has instructed us to pray that we might be accounted worthy to escape. (Luke 21:36)

17. What calamity is it that those who walk in darkness will not escape?

18. Write the verse which promises that Christians will not experience the day of Christ's wrath as is poured out on the earth.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

1. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.



In Your Own Words

You are one of the elect! Today you were raptured and taken home to be with Christ. Write what you experienced as if you were writing about your experience in your own diary or journal.

Scriptures That Teach the Imminent Return of Christ

“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” (Mt 24:42) (Mt 25:13)
(Mr 13:35-37) (Lu 12:40)

“11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” (Ro 13:11, 12)

“And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” (Ro 16:20)

“Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.” (Php 4:5)

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col 3:4)

“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.” (1Th 1:10)

“15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
(1Th 4:15-17)

“11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” (Tit 2:11-13)

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”
(2Ti 4:8)

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”
(Heb 9:28)

“24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”
(Heb 10:24-25)

“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” (Heb 10:37)

“7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. 9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.” (Jas 5:7-9)

“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” (1Pe 4:7)

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”
(1Pe 5:4)

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.” (1Jo 2:18)

“2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
(1Jo 3:2-3)

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:” (Re 1:1)

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” (Re 3:11)

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” (Re 22:7)

❖ LESSON 3 ❖

THE TRIBULATION —
SATAN'S ACTIVITIES ON THE EARTH

Purpose: To introduce the fact of the tribulation and the activities of Satan during this time. Also to discuss what signs are evident today that Satan is preparing the world for His program.

At some point in time after the Church of Christ is raptured to be with Christ the Day of the Lord will begin. This Day of the Lord is the time when Satan is allowed to initiate an open program of wickedness on the earth. The Antichrist is revealed and he begins global influence and control. This lesson focuses on what the Bible says about this infamous personality.

In our day novels have theorized how life will be after the Church is taken away to be with Christ. One of the common fallacies of these books is that often those who knew God's will and were unprepared to meet Christ are given role as heroes. They give their hearts to Christ after the rapture and do exploits for Christ in resisting the program of the Antichrist.

The Bible never has anything good or even hopeful to say about those who knew the Lord's will and were not ready for His return. Rather it specifies "they all will be damned who believed not but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2Th 2:12) and "that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Lk 12:47)

This period of time is identified by several terms in the Scriptures. One of the most common is "tribulation" and also "wrath of the Lamb". Each term emphasizes some different aspect of this era of time. The Day of the Lord signifies the fact of Jesus' Sovereignty in liberating the world from evil to reclaim it for Himself. He does this through special manifestations of His wrath. As He opens the title deed (seals) He rids the earth of the squatters who inhabit what He has already redeemed through His blood. Tribulation describes what men on this earth endure as they have rejected Christ's grace and must now suffer the down payment of His judgement.

In this lesson we will also mark the specified time frames of the day of the Lord. We see different characters and also a change in the political atmosphere as we move through these seven years when the fate of the world is decided.



That Man of Sin...The Son of Perdition

The chief personality of the tribulation is the antichrist. This person is an enigmatic figure who seems to be a person who had lived at a former period in time. In Revelation 17:8 we are told that he was, and is not and will ascend out of the bottomless pit. As he moves into power at this time his program seems unstoppable.

This person is apparently kept ready by Satan in every age, but also restrained by a greater power and not allowed to come into power until God's timing is complete.

He will sit in the temple of God. Apparently the temple in Jerusalem will soon be rebuilt and through treason he install himself there as god over all. Since the Bible says his working will be after the "power of Satan", and the dragon gave the power to the beast, there does seem to be a certain time when the lines are blurred enough that the beast (Antichrist) is Satan incarnate.

1. What event gives the Christian consolation as he faces distress in this life?

2. What is the day of Christ that cannot come until the great apostasy and the Antichrist is revealed?

3. What is the primary center or headquarters for this son of perdition?

4. What must happen before the Antichrist may begin his activities on earth?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1. Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2. That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4. Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6. And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9. Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

5. Give two reasons why nominal believers are deceived by the Antichrist.



Understanding the Tribulation Time Frame

As one studies the scriptures that describe this tribulation period, a specific time frame emerges. The time given to the Antichrist for his activities will be seven years, divided into two three and one half year time periods.

This establishing of a time period of years is a distinct change from all references to Jesus' coming for His disciples. Always Jesus' return is referred to as being when "ye think not." In contrast, this time frame is identified as two 1260 days, 2 forty two weeks or two three and one half year periods. We will look at some of the passages which refer to these time periods in this lesson.

Daniel 9:24-27

24. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

6. What do you think this scripture means by way of a time frame when it says a "week"?

7. v24 What is to be accomplished when this time frame of seventy weeks is completed?

8. How long from the time when the commandment to restore Jerusalem until Jesus the Messiah would be slain?

9. Who was prophesied to destroy Jerusalem?

10. Who is the "he" in this verse who shall confirm or strengthen a covenant with Israel, and then stop all temple worship by pollutions and desolations?

27. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.



Activities in the First Half of the Day of the Lord

When the Antichrist begins his reign he comes as the answer man for the world's woes. He signs covenants of peace and unites the world to solve their problems. The Bible indicates that during this time relative freedom is granted to both Jews and for those who believe in Christ to evangelize the world. The evangelistic activities of the 144,000 Jews seem to take place in this time frame.

Another unique activity of this time frame is the evangelistic ministry of the two witnesses. We will study their unique ministry in more detail in lesson five, so here we will only notice the time frame their time on earth.

11. What are some powers given to the two witnesses for the 3 1/2 years of their ministry?

Revelation 11:3-7

3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

12. Who is eventually given power over these witnesses to destroy them?

13. Where is the Antichrist said to come from?

The Second Half of the Tribulation Period

There are many more prophecies of the activities of the Antichrist during the second half of the tribulation. He is given increased power to murder those who represent God and His people. He is given power to do many miracles. He is given assistants who with him form the satanic trinity. But his goal of taking the entire world under his control is frustrated. Near the end there are trouble spots across the globe. As he mounts his efforts to conquer the Jews, they turn in desperation to Jesus and He returns with the army of heaven to destroy the Antichrist and his cohorts.

Daniel 12:1,5-7

1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

5. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river.

6. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

7. And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Daniel 12:11

And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Revelation 12:6

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

14. What words describe this time in relation to the Jewish people?

15. How long will these intense sufferings last? What will be the sign when the time of suffering is almost over?

16. How does the 1290 days correspond with the time, times and a half time?

17. What condition will the temple be in during this time?

18. What will be the condition of the remnant of the Jewish believers for this time of suffering?

19. These verses are spoken about the Antichrist. What specific liberties is he given and does he take during this time?

Revelation 13:5-7

5. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.



Other Insights into the Personality and Power of the Antichrist

There are many references throughout the Holy Scriptures that give us a snapshot view of the Antichrist, his background and personality. As we study these, we find a clearer view of the next world ruler.

20. Describe the political environment out of which the Antichrist will come.

Daniel 7:19-28

19. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

20. And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

21. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

22. Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

23. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

24. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

25. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

26. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

27. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

28. Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Daniel 11:36

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

Zechariah 11:1517

15. And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

16. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.

17. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

21. What will be the extent of his kingdom?

22. Since the rapture has already taken the church home to heaven, who are the Saints whom the Antichrist will endeavor to wear out? v25

23. If this is describing the Antichrist, what physical deformities will he have?

24. What are some of the mixed responses of the Jewish people toward the Antichrist?

25. As you think of the work of Christ and the work of the Antichrist, why do you think the name Anti christ is given to the deceiver?

John 5:43

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

Matthew 24:15

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth, let him understand:

Mark 13:14

But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, let him that readeth understand, then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

1 John 2:18

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

1 John 2:22

Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2 John 1:7

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.



In Your Own Words

You are a newspaper reporter. Today you interviewed the newly revealed Antichrist. What kind of person did you meet? What did you learn about his convictions, goals etc. Write this for the newspaper that employs you.

New Testament Prophecies on the Second Coming of Christ

Representing two distinctly differing lines of prophecy
in regards to two distinctly differing groups of people.

Group # 1 — Christ's coming for the Saints.

John 14:13 and 1 Cor 15:50-58 compare with 1 Thes 4:13-18

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Let not your heart be troubled . . . John 14:1 | 1. Sorrow not as others 1 Thes 4:13 |
| 2. Believe in God — Believe in me. 14:2 | 2. Believe In Jesus — Believe in God 4:14 |
| 3. If it were not so I would have told you 14:2 | 3. I say unto you. 4:15 |
| 4. I will come again 14:3 | 4. Coming of the Lord — Himself 4:15 |
| 5. I will receive you. 14:3 | 5. Meet the Lord in the air 4:17 |
| 6. Where I am there you may be also . . . 14:3 | 6. Ever be with the Lord 4:17 |
| 7. Resurrection of them that are Christ's at his coming 1 Cor 15:23 | 7. Dead in Christ are raised first 4:16 |
| 8. Let not your heart be troubled . . . John 14:1 | 8. Comfort ye one another with these words 4:18 |

Group # 2 — Christ's Coming to the Sinner

2 Thessalonians 1 & 2 compares with Revelation 1:7 & 19:11

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Lord revealed from heaven 2 Thes 1:7 | 1. Heaven opened Rev 19:11 |
| 2. Taking vengeance. 1:8 | 2. Doth judge and make war 19:11 |
| 3. Admired by saints 1:10 | 3. Saints following in white raiment . . . 19:8,14 |
| 4. Vengeance in flaming fire. 1:8 | 4. Eyes as a flame of fire. 19:12 |
| 5. Man of sin destroyed 2:8 | 5. Beast and false prophet cast into lake of fire 19:20 |

Groups 1 and 2 Contrasted

Group 1

Rapture and Reception of Saints

1. Meet Him in the air 1 Thes 4:17
2. Received by Him John 14:3
3. Rewarded Revelation 22:12
4. Comforted John 14:1; 1 Thes 4:18
5. Resurrection of those asleep in Jesus 1 Thes 4:16
6. Forever with the Lord 1 Thes 4:17
7. Not as a thief. 1 Thes 5:4
8. Only saints see Him Acts. 1:11

Group 2

Revelation and Rejection of Sinners

1. Meet Him on the earth. Rev 19:19
2. Destroyed by Him. 2 Thes 1:9; 2:8
3. Punished 2 Thes 1:9; Rev 19:20
4. Terrified — Wail at His presence . . . Rev 1:7
5. No resurrection 2 Thes 1&2; Rev 19
. resurrection 1,000 years later Rev 20
6. Destruction from the presence of the the Lord. 2 Thes 1:9
7. As a thief — to kill and to destroy John 10:10; 1 Thes 5:2; Rev 19
8. All kindreds see Him. . . Matt 24:30; Rev 1:7

Scripture List Credit:
Aaron M. Shank

❖ LESSON 4 ❖

THE TRIBULATION — THE SUFFERING OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH

Purpose: To discover what the Bible teaches about the extreme suffering mankind will experience in the day of the Lord.

God has created mankind with the ability to experience both pain and pleasure. This pain and pleasure are experienced in both a physical, emotional and a spiritual dimension. These sensations add meaning to our existence, in fact they define our existence in time and in eternity. We naturally seek pleasure and avoid all forms of pain.

Pain has come into the earth because of sin. Man has suffered from the very first moments of the fall even until now. Man schemes to eliminate pain by scientific advancements. In our day we see technology and medicine proposing to relieve suffering. Because of this, mankind seems to separate moral choices from pain, believing he can continue to sin and avoid pain at the same time.

God will soon destroy the myth that mankind can eliminate his own pain and create his own bliss.

In the tribulation we see clear signs that man is horribly out of tune with his Creator. All of creation seems to come to a cataclysmic shudder of pain as evil is purged from the earth.

In this lesson we will turn our attention more and more toward the book of Revelation. The outline of the book of Revelation (in 1:19) helps us understand that chapter 1 records the vision of Christ that John saw and chapters 2-3 describe the present church age. The “things which shall be hereafter” are descriptions of what is yet to be in the next dispensation. Chapters 4-5 describe the pleasures of worshiping Christ in glory while chapters 6-18 describe the suffering experienced by those who were not worthy to escape and are consigned to go through the travail of the earth.

These graphic descriptions are written for our warning. Sin has its pleasurable appeal to us today and if we choose its temporary gratification we open ourselves to be rejected by Christ when He comes for His saints. Then we will be rejected by Him to endure the horrors described in this lesson.



“A Voice of Trembling of Fear”

The fearsomeness of the tribulation seems to come upon man unsuspected. While there were signs of deterioration in society and economics, man apparently will continue to convince himself he has things under control. New treaties and development plans are being worked out. Mankind will feel he may solve his problems yet!

Then comes sudden destruction. Pang after pang sweep over mankind. Each pang surpasses the former. New unheard of forms of suffering come in the form of plagues and natural disasters. Man has ever new reasons to worry.

1. What common natural event does God use to describe the suffering of man during the tribulation?

2. Draw some parallels between child birth and the suffering of persons in this time.

3. Why is the suffering of the day of the Lord such a shock to the unbeliever?

Jeremiah 30:4-7

4. And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

5. For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.

6. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

7. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-4

1. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.



“...Power... to take Peace from the Earth”

There are different ways to understand the book of Revelation. One view is that the book is laid out sequentially, beginning in chapter six events develop until you are through with time in chapter nineteen. Another view is that the events of the tribulation period are developed from different angles, or with a different focus in mind. In other words, the seals in chapter six may give the overview of the entire tribulation period. While we are not for sure, it is this perspective we will work from. In other words, we will understand these four horses to picture the entire work of the Antichrist. He begins as conqueror whom the world rallies around to the devastator who brings the earth to the brink of starvation.

Revelation 6:1-8

1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

4. What clues do you have that the first rider on a white horse is a different person than the rider in Revelation 19?

5. Write the color of each horse. Study the activity of the rider and write what you believe the horse typifies.

6. What is signified when small measures of wheat and barley cost a day's wages, but the oil and wine are not hurt?

Lightnings, Earthquakes, Hail, Firestorms and a Star Named Wormwood

The Antichrist is not the only one who brings suffering during the tribulation. Jesus also opens a book to unleash a host of natural disasters. The book with seals described in Revelation 5 represents the title deed of the earth. Jesus has already paid the redemption price for the earth with His blood. But as Romans 8:19-23 describes, the whole creation still groans waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies. Once that is complete, Jesus will then rid the earth of those who possess it illegally.

God gave Adam dominion over the earth. But when Adam hearkened to Satan's suggestion in the Garden of Eden, the earth came under Satan's curse. Evil men have filled the earth with corruption. In the flood God sent water to rid the earth of evil men. But water could not change the heart and wickedness soon returned. At Calvary, the redemption was paid for the earth and its inhabitants. God chose then to woo the world through His grace. We can see the world has been sweetened by God's grace, but grace is too often turned into lasciviousness and as such wickedness abounds more and more.

The Day of the Lord is the time when the Messiah begins to rid the world of the evil squatters before He sets up His millennial kingdom. In this chapter we will witness the great natural and unnatural disasters He has under His control.

7. Where does the suffering on earth originally come from?

8. If the mortality rate recorded in chapter six is added to the mortality rate in chapter eight, what percentage of the earth's population is left?

Revelation 8:5-13

5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

7. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became

wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

13. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

9. Describe from a scientific perspective what might be happening in the event with Wormwood.



Torment from Demons

Satan has another method to torment the human race. In our age we witness a great shift in attitude toward demons. Where once the general public feared demons, now we observe an active fascination with the occult. Some illustrations are children's books, movies, tattoos, studs, rap music etc. Western civilization is spurning their Christian influence and opportunities. They are giving Satan access into their lives on every side.

In the tribulation an increased number of demons will come to infest the world. Their main purpose will be to harass mankind with suffering as described below.

Revelation 9:1-21

1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

10. What is the origin of the locusts who will be released to torment men?

11. What is unique in the limitations set in the torment they will bring?

12. We know God's justice is being served on the wickedness of men, but who actually torments the wicked men?

5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

8. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

11. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

12. One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions;

and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

18. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

21. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Revelation 16:1-14

1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

2. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

3. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

4. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

5. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

13. These verses describe unbelievable suffering and bloodshed. What kind of effect does this have on the men of the earth? Why?

14. Why is having to drink "bloody" water appropriate punishment for these men?

15. Why do these men who have seen the power and judgment of God defiantly blaspheme and gather to fight in battle against God?

8. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

9. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

10. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

11. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.



In Your Own Words

Your cousin who was your good friend was not ready when Jesus came back for the church and was left to go through the Great Tribulation. What hardships are he and his community going through?

❖ LESSON 5 ❖

THE TRIBULATION—
GOD'S KINGDOM ADVANCES

Purpose: To study what the Bible teaches about God's efforts to reach humanity, and the multitudes who find salvation during the tribulation period.

A study of world population charts is amazing. Approximately one half the people who have lived since the days of Noah are alive today. World population levels hovered in the millions for centuries. Then eventually in the 1900's a billion people inhabited this globe. Since that time modern medicine and a high birth rate have pushed the number of inhabitants on planet earth to approximately 6 billion souls.

Many of these eternal souls have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even here in the West, ignorance of God and His Word is increasing in the rising generation. Schools are not only not to give anything of a religious slant, there is a strong bent to eliminate all reference to God altogether. In other cultures people have a distorted view of Christianity, because the decadence of the Western world is understood to be Christianity!

When Jesus returns for His saints, true Christians will be removed. Christ's servants who knew His will but told themselves that Jesus was delaying His coming are appointed their portion with the unbelievers. The world will know in a vivid pronouncement who were the ones who walked with Christ.

But what about the ones who never knew?

This lesson reveals the new ways God has of having the world learn of His offer of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for the sins of humanity. In our dispensation Disciples of Christ, not angels are given the work of preaching the word. Christians are ordinary people, not miracle workers. They are to be nonresistant and not take revenge when people would harm them. But let us see what God has in store in the Day of the Lord.



A Cry for Vengeance

One of the strange scenes in Heaven is disembodied martyrs crying for vengeance. These are not raptured saints, because these saints already have their bodies. They are saints killed in the tribulation, after the rapture and awaiting a future resurrection of their own bodies.

They are given a special place at the altar, the place where God's justice is highlighted. Here they do something never recorded as being what saints on earth have ever done. On earth, Christ's followers have always pled to God to forgive the wickedness of their oppressors.

There is apparently a good reason for this cry. Their tormentor's fate is already sealed, and further time will only give them opportunity to heap more judgment to their reward. The answer God gives them is that judgment must wait for their adversaries until the tribulation saints have all been martyred.

1. Give some unique features about these souls under the altar.
2. What is in store for any who would live for God through the Tribulation period?

Revelation 6:9-11

9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11. And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.



The 144,000 Sealed Jewish Evangelists

Here at the beginning of the discourse on the tribulation is a strange scene, at least strange compared to anything that takes place in our dispensation. From each of the twelve tribes of Israel, twelve thousand young men are sealed with the mark of God. These men are referred to twice, once on earth when they are sealed in chapter 7, and then again in chapter 14 when their work is completed.

It would appear they are evangelists because of their dedication to the Lamb and because of the recorded great number of souls who are won to Christ noted in the context of their sealing. Their seal is in contrast to those who receive the mark of the beast, but it is likely once a person receives a seal he cannot change his allegiance but is forever on the side of the mark he bears.

Revelation 7:1-4

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Revelation 14:1-5

1. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

3. What was the intention of the angels who hold the four winds of the earth?

4. Give some unique features of the 144,000 on earth?

5. What name is written with the seal in the forehead of the 144,000?

6. What are some of the unique features of the 144,000 in heaven?



A Multitude No Man Can Number

The assembly of saints who are saved during the Tribulation must be very impressive. We find a number of descriptions that stretch our imagination in the number, the race and the national origin. In our efforts to evangelize today we often are dismayed that we seem unable to win more for Christ than we are. That will all change.

Remember some of the factors that are bringing about this revival. The rapture of the Church has taken true disciples of Christ away all over the world. Suddenly people see the ones who said "Lord, Lord" left behind. Then there are plagues and disasters all over the world. Then come these specially sealed ones with the Gospel. We will observe more who represent God's Kingdom. All of this is very convincing to those who had never known God's love.

7. How large is the group of persons saved during the Tribulation period?

8. What benefits will the martyred have in being martyred early during the Tribulation?

Revelation 7:9-17

9. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14. And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.



The Ministry of the Two Witnesses

Another special feature of the first half of the tribulation period is the ministry of the two witnesses. These enigmatic personalities seem more to fit in with the Old Testament than with the New. When James and John wanted fire called down from Heaven, Christ rebuked them. But Elijah performed this miracle with the blessing of God. These two witnesses are a persuasive voice for truth for the three and one half years they are given to serve on the earth.

Revelation 11:3-13

3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9. What are some things these personalities do that New Testament Saints are not to do? Can you explain how this can be?

10. How do the witnesses meet their death?

11. What phrase sounds like the Bible would have predicted the modern news media?

12. What unusual event transpired after these two witnesses were slain?

9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

13. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.



The Witness of Angels

We know that angels are present here on the earth today even though we do not see them. We are told that angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” Heb1:14. We also are to “be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” Heb 13:2 But angels are not involved in giving the gospel message or in giving warnings to mankind in our dispensation. This is another feature that will change in the next dispensation. An angel will preach the “everlasting gospel” around the world calling men and women to worship God. Another angel will give the announcement of the fall of Babylon, the crown jewel of human civilization accomplishments. The third angel will give explicit warnings to all mankind to not receive the mark of the beast. These angels will leave a profound impact on man’s choices during the tribulation.

Revelation 14:6-13

6. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

8. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

9. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

12. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

13. What other method of evangelism will God use in the Tribulation which he does not use in this Church age?

14. What is the message the first angel carries to the peoples of the earth?

15. What reason does the second angel give for the fall of Babylon?

16. What does the third angel warn will be the portion of all who receive the mark of the beast?

17. What requirement is set forth for tribulation saints to receive eternal reward?



Singing the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb

As the tribulation draws to a close, seven angels prepare to deliver plagues that contain the wrath of God. The contrast to this horror is amazing, because while such suffering is happening on earth, a grand chorale is being sung in heaven. Heaven has the souls of many who have gotten the victory over the Antichrist and his deceptions and now these souls are rejoicing in the presence of God and the Lamb.

Try to picture the ecstasy of these martyr/victors who will never again face the fury of the Antichrist. They anticipate the glory of the Millennium which awaits in just a few days.

18. Even though the Tribulation saints are saved in a different era, what is it about their song which identifies them with saints from both the Old and New Testament eras?

19. Some would feel that the belief that there will be souls saved during the Tribulation is giving persons an unfair second chance. Is this a valid concern?

Revelation 15:1-4

1. And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

3. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

4. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.



In Your Own Words

You were a young person who didn't know about Christ in one of the large cities of Europe when Jesus came back for the Church, so you were not taken along. But now you are a believer. How did you hear the gospel? What convinced you it was truth? What will you have to pay for your faith?

❖ LESSON 6 ❖

THE ARMAGEDDON OF THE NATIONS AND THE REVIVAL OF ISRAEL

Purpose: To examine how the climax of hatred turns the nations of the world to fight against Israel, and then Israel will repent and call on Jesus for salvation and He will return to deliver them.

Does God have something in store for the Jews? This is a question that brings a variety of answers. Some maintain that God is finished with the Jewish people as a separate people. He now deals with them strictly as He would the Gentiles and has no changes in store for the future. They believe Jews may come to Christ even as Gentiles do, but there are no special prophecies awaiting fulfilment. They believe all the promises made to Israel in the Old Testament are fulfilled spiritually in the New Testament Church. For them the Jewish people are either a hoax or simply a people like the Palestinians or Iranians who have no special place in God's program in the future.

Others believe God has a special plan that will include the Jews as He brings world history to a close. As an individual, a Jew will not be saved nor have God's blessing unless he repents of his sins and accepts Jesus as the long awaited and promised Messiah. However, the Jews as a people are seen as having a work to accomplish in the future. They have a work to do in returning to their homeland Israel, rebuilding the temple, entering into agreement with the Antichrist, and finally after severe suffering will finally come individually and collectively to repentance and faith in Christ.

This lesson traces the build up of tensions as the nations of the world seek the final solution, ie. total elimination of the Jews. Down through the centuries Satan has stirred nations and peoples to antisemitism, or strong hatred for Jews. He convinces men that Jews are behind economic problems, and almost every other ill mankind faces. This view is held not only by Arab Muslims, and by maniac leaders such as Adolph Hitler, but also by many educated upper class men and even some nominal Christians. This hatred is unreasonable, illogical from a human perspective. It is driven by Satanic fury.

Since this lesson is a basic retelling of the same account, several of the sections will not have additional comments written about them.



1. What is the prophecy (already partially fulfilled) that must first be fulfilled before the nations will attack Israel?

2. What reason is given for God bringing the armies of the Gentile world together for this holocaust?

3. How do we know mankind will take resources normally used for farming and use them for war?

4. What will God accomplish through this attack of Gentile nations upon Israel?

Joel 3:1-3; 9-17

1. For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

2. I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

3. And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.

9. Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

10. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

11. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.

12. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

13. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

14. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

15. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

16. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

17. So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.



I Will Pour upon the House of David... the Spirit of Grace

The doctrine of predestination is confusing to many people. Calvinists take the issue too far and believe that God in His sovereignty has decreed from eternity past that some are to be elect and others are to be damned regardless of their personal choice. This teaching is false. God has determined the great plan of salvation so that all those who choose to repent and come to Him for salvation are the elect. Likewise, all those who reject Him and His mercy are the damned.

The other extreme of this doctrine of predestination is failure to recognize that God can put it into the hearts of man to fulfill His will as it comes to natural choices. Once man has rejected God, God can put it in man's heart to do very foolish and unwise things.

The decision of the world armies to go attack Israel is one example of the foolish things God will lead wicked men to do. Their mission will be doomed from the start.

Another closely related subject to predestination is foreknowledge. God already knows who will believe on Him and how they will come to faith. In this passage we learn that a vast remnant of Jews will yet turn to Christ in repentance and faith. Notice though that it is house and family "apart". This means they will individually come to believe. They will be saved in the same way you and I are saved, through personal choice.

This passage also leads us to question the thought that the Holy Spirit is supposedly absent from world events during the tribulation. Here the prophecy is clear that the Spirit of grace and supplications will be poured upon the Jewish remnant as a vital part of their salvation.

Zechariah 12:1-14

1. The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

2. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.

3. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

4. In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

5. What makes the world decide to go fight against Jerusalem?

6. Do you know why Jerusalem is already one of the most unstable places in the world?

7. What affliction of horse and rider will enable Israel to survive the attack upon them?

8. Which lineage will come to repentance and revival first? Why?

9. What spiritual miracle will come about upon the Jewish people?

10. What phrase helps us to realize the Jews will come to accept Jesus as their Messiah?

5. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.

6. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.

7. The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.

8. In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

9. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

11. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

12. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;

13. The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;

14. All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.



I Will Refine Them... They Shall Call on My Name

Jesus' arrival on planet earth will be just in time. The Jewish people will suffer their greatest holocaust so that only one third yet survives. For the ones who survive and call out in repentance and faith, Jesus will return in vengeance upon their enemies.

When His feet land on the Mount of Olives a tremendous geological change will take place. A valley will open up from east to west and out of Jerusalem a river will flow both toward the Dead Sea and toward the Mediterranean Sea. Other geographical changes in the topography will also take place, causing more consternation among the opposing armies.

Of great interest is the manner whereby the enemies of Christ will meet their death. Accounts given of the victims of nuclear holocaust as in Japan in the final days of WWII seem to parallel what is described in this passage. Victims will have their flesh melt away and their eyes disappear in their sockets even while they are standing on their feet.

Zechariah 13:8-14:15

8. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

9. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

1. Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

2. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

4. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

5. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach

11. What percentage of the Jews will be killed off before the remnant turns to Christ?

12. Who is going to bring the destruction upon the Gentile armies? What will be the site of His operations?

13. What geographical changes will occur?

14. What changes in nature will occur at this time?

unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

6. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:

7. But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

8. And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

9. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

15. Describe the type of death the armies who are gathered against Jerusalem will experience.

10. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

11. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

12. And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

13. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

14. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

15. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

And So All Israel Shall be Saved

Israel or the Jewish people as a whole did not accept Jesus the son of Mary as their long promised Messiah. As they rejected Christ, He eventually came to the place in His ministry where He prophesied their house would be left desolate. God turned his favor toward the Gentiles, they were grafted into His Kingdom.

The following verses teach of the fulness of the Jews, of their being grafted into God's kingdom again. When they turn to the Lord and His favor is upon them as His covenant people, this will usher in even greater fulness of riches for the entire Human family. Oh the riches of the God's grace! While we look with wonder at these passages, we know we only see through a dark glass what we one day may experience in blessed reality.

Romans 11:7; 12-15

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

12. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

13. For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14. If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

15. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

Romans 11:22-27

22. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.

24. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?

25. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in

16. What has Israel not obtained that the Church has?

17. In what way was the "fall of them" and the "diminishing of them" (referring to Jews) the riches of the Gentiles?

18. What does Paul say will happen to Israel in the future?

19. What warning would indicate that some who are now unbelieving Jews may be saved while some proud professors of Christianity may be lost?

20. What is in store for the remnant of Jews who endure to the end?

part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

The Chinese Army is reportedly some two million men strong. This has led many to speculate that the scene here of an army of the East responding to a build up of armaments in Israel is about to take place. This scene described here seems in many ways a parallel to the passage given in Zechariah.

21. What are some countries that lie to the east of the Euphrates river?

Revelation 16:12-21

12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

19. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

22. In Zechariah we read that God called the armies together. Here it appears as if it was devils. Which one is it?

24. What happens to the armies that are gathered to Armageddon to fight?

20. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.



In Your Own Words

You are a Jewish adherent who survived the bloodshed of Armageddon. You have just come to realize that Jesus is the Messiah, and the Christians who hated you through the years weren't really Christians at all. Write what you see and feel through this climactic experience.

❖ LESSON 7 ❖

THE REVELATION OF JESUS— THE CLIMACTIC SCENARIOS OF THE AGE

Purpose: To study what it will be like in the last day when Jesus comes back to take vengeance upon the world of the wicked.

People understand the Book of the Revelation in different ways. Some of course interpret it figuratively and some see it as mostly having already been fulfilled. Among those who see it as describing the tribulation period again there are differences in understanding. Some would see a progression or development of events as one moves from chapter six through chapter eighteen.

There is however a problem with this interpretation. Five times in the Revelation we have what may be called climaxes when it appears time is coming to an end. Then another sequence of trumpets or vials is revealed and things seem to start all over again. This leads us to ponder if the last chapters of the Bible may be written like some of the first chapters. For example, Genesis 1 tells the story of Creation, but Chapter 2 goes back and retells the story in a greater detail, especially what had been described as taking place on the sixth day. For someone to try to understand chapter 2 as taking place after chapter 1 there would only be confusion. (This interpretation has already been introduced in Lesson 4.)

We have therefore chosen to take each of these climactic scenes and put them together into one lesson. Following these scenarios we will study other New Testament passages that describe what it will be like when Jesus comes back in Judgment to the earth.

In Lesson 2 we have already studied when Christ comes to the earth for the Church. This will have been in a time of uncertainty, but when there was life as we know it today. The return of Christ with the Church and Holy Angels is in a totally different setting. As we studied in the last lesson, Israel has been surrounded with the armies of the world. The Antichrist has brought world wide devastation politically and finally economically. When Jesus finally comes, it will not be with surprise, but as a long awaited climax. Evil will finally be brought to a conclusion.



1. Scan down through the verses in this lesson. List the fearsome events that transpire in the heavens.
2. List the frightening geological events.
3. Why will the great and mighty men act so cowardly in the day of judgment?
4. Who are the mighty men so afraid of?

Revelation 6:12-17

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?



The Last Darkness Before the Coming Dawn

This second climactic scenario takes the vantage point as to how things appear from heaven. What a wonderful announcement to hear that now Jesus will be the king of the nations of the world. This proclamation causes great rejoicing among the twenty four elders, apparently because they represent the Old Testament and New Testament saints and they have been given promise they will reign with Christ.

Here the inhabitants of earth are given opportunity to see right into the presence of heaven itself, much like after the temple veil rent and occupants of the temple could look into the Holy of Holies. One difference though, when the temple veil was rent there was no ark of the covenant in its prescribed place. It had been missing ever since the Babylonian captivity. Imagine the joy of the Jewish believers in Christ as Messiah to see their beloved ark in the presence of God himself.

Revelation 11:15-19

15. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17. Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

19. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

5. How does the reaction to the announcement in heaven differ from the reaction on earth?

6. What unique piece of furniture made on earth is now seen in heaven? What do you think this represents?



The Harvest of the Earth

A fall harvest of crops is a description of the events of Jesus' second coming. The farmer joyfully plants his crops, patiently weeds and perhaps waters the fields but mostly waits. Not one act of his could be interpreted as an act of aggression against his crop. But suddenly one day that all changes. With fitting instruments of reaping he descends on the fields and begins to cut down what he earlier carefully cultivated. Much is discarded, but a small percentage is carefully garnered in.

In the following harvest scene Christ takes the tribulation saints out unto himself. While they are never referred to as the bride of Christ, nevertheless they are part of the great reward which is rightfully His.

Then the angels will be sent on a separate mission. This time it will be to gather up the wicked for judgment. This gory harvest will be without mercy, but reveal the holy nature of God.

7. Why are two different harvests depicted in this passage? What do they each represent?

8. Who does the reaping in the first harvest? Who does it in the second?

9. What leads us to believe the final battle of the earth will have a gruesome and gory climax?

Revelation 14:14-20

14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.



The Judgment of Babylon

Here is another of the vivid descriptions of the climax of the ages. A hint is dropped of the judgment that will focus on Babylon. Since chapter 18 gives a more detailed description of this annihilation of a great city we will include these two passages together.

With the aid of technology and earth resources man has made a strange paradox. Even while morals decline to a low point, civilization and craft rise higher and higher. Babylon the great seems to be a symbol of the apex of all civilization. But man's wickedness will undo the greatness that men's efforts give her. The punishment seems to astound the whole world with its horror.

Revelation 16:17-21

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

19. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

Revelation 18:21-24

21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

24. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

10. What announcement was made from the open heaven to the inhabitants of the earth?

11. What catastrophic events convince the world of the fierceness of God's wrath?

12. What phrases would indicate the completeness of the destruction of Babylon?

13. What one prophecy of Babylon does not fit for America as we know her?

14. How do you know Jesus will not always be nonresistant? Can you explain the reason why?

15. Which verse should mean much to the present day saint because it portrays where he will be in this terrible conflict if he continues steadfast in faith?

16. What is the response of the Antichrist and his supporting armies when they discover Jesus is bringing armies from heaven?

17. What is unique about the judgment of the Antichrist and his false prophet compared with the rest of mankind?

18. How are the bodies of the vast armies of the Gentiles disposed of?

Revelation 19:11-21

11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

18. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

19. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

Vengeance upon the Wicked

It may be difficult to determine the exact sequence of events described in all these passages. There does seem to be some lapse of time. It appears in some passages the accompanying armies are saints and in others angels. Other mysteries surface about the details. But one thing is consistent. That is there will be horrible punishment poured out on the wicked.

Today the wicked lives side by side with the righteous. The two may even attend the same church and in cases of hypocrisy share the same communion. The fate will be decidedly different.

These verses should convince us of the importance of living for Christ with all our heart every day of our lives. The reality of the final conflict will be upon us very soon.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Matthew 24:27-31 (Also recorded in Mark 13:24-27, and Luke 21:25-28)

27. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

19. Who does these verses teach shall be with Jesus when He returns? Does this contradict Rev 19:14?

20. What two different classes of people will meet the same judgment of flaming fire? Why?

22. What are some events that need to be fulfilled before this coming of Christ can take place?

23. What will the ungodly be finally and forever convinced of?

Jude 1:14-15

14. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15. To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.



In Your Own Words

You are one of the saints who returned with Christ today to bring judgment upon the ungodly. What did you see and do during the day?

THE JUDGMENTS: THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST & THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Purpose: To compare the different judgments of mankind discussed in the Scriptures, and to endeavor to understand the time frame in which they occur.

The Scriptures are clear in the proposition that we as humans are given a short time on earth and then we will face judgment. Our lifetime is a test, a time when we may make choices. We constantly are exposed to and tempted with evil. We pass through experiences where we are treated wrongfully. We make decisions how we will relate when it seems no one will ever know. We have opportunities to do good by our fellow man or take advantage of him. All these decisions seem to slip through our fingers, some hardly noticed and others we agonize over. What about all these decisions?

The Bible consistently holds forth the prospect of judgment scenes, where the deeds of each person are analyzed by the Divine standard.

Each of us faces a mini judgment in our conscience. After we have done a thing, our thoughts excuse or accuse us. Memories from long gone deeds seem to float out of the past and haunt us. Once a deed is done or a word is said, it is impossible to undo. But memory brings it back to us in fresh detail. Often when the frothy thrill of sinful indulgence is over, only bitter dregs remain.

If a person permits the conscience to do its work and examines his life before the Word of God, genuine repentance will take place. Repentance literally means to change one's mind. Whereas sin looked desirable in prospect, we now judge it differently. In genuine repentance confession or telling on oneself is not a guarded experience. In genuine repentance a person can hardly wait to unload himself of the burden of his guilt.

Sins that are not sent on beforehand will follow us and be judged. All after-life-judgment offers no opportunity to change.

In this study we will observe there is a large difference between the judgments of those saved by faith in Christ and those who rejected Christ.



The Judgment Seat of Christ

The Child of God will not face the same judgment as the sinner. If we have sensed the horribleness of our sins and taken them to Calvary in genuine repentance, they are forgiven. We do not need to fear we will ever face them again.

As forgiven and redeemed ones, Christians still make many choices. Throughout a lifetime there are many opportunities to serve in Christ's kingdom or to live selfishly. These are the issues our Lord will judge.

Jesus Christ will be the judge. We will stand before Him and He will evaluate the deeds we have done in the body. Along with this, Christ will appropriate rewards for those who have been faithful. Apparently He will also have some way of expressing disapproval for those who have not achieved the highest Christian ideal.

Study the following verses closely because you and I will be there. Today we can do something about what Christ will say about us then, but at that scene it will be too late to change how we have lived.

1. How does knowing we will be judged some day affect how we evaluate our brother?

2. Who will judge the brothers of the church?

3. What do Christians do now to be accepted of Christ in the day of judgment?

4. What particular area of the saint's life is in focus at the judgment Seat of Christ?

Romans 14:7-12

7. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

2 Corinthians 5:7-11

7. For we walk by faith, not by sight:

8. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive

the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.



Fire Shall Try Every Man's Work

Will “Christians” who have lived with sin in their lives still be saved? The following passage has been interpreted and used to defend a defeated life style. “People may live with evil in their lives and still be saved,” it is said, “only the evil things they have done will just be burned up.”

The problem with this interpretation is that so many Scriptures teach us if a man has sin in His life he will be rejected by Christ and consigned to eternal torments. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Mt 7:22-23) There are many other Scriptures which teach this clearly and no other passage gives us the idea we may live in sin and still be saved.

What this refers to is a man's work, or the church he has labored to build. If a missionary or pastor labors to build a church and in the day of trial the people all turn back into sin, the pastor will still be saved. If he builds with proper concepts of Christ and His Church and the Holy Scriptures, the people will be saved and the pastor will receive his reward. These verses are included because this is part of what we will be judged for at the Judgment seat of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:8-18

8. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9. For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12. Now if any man build upon this founda-

5. What is man's work in focus in these verses? Is it possible to do bad things and have those things burned up and still make it to heaven?

6. What are some earth experiences which reveal how a leader has built a church?

7. What is the temple mentioned here which if we destroy, God will destroy us?

tion gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13. Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

16. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

18. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.



The Lord will Bring to Light the Hidden Things of Darkness

We need to understand what the Bible means when it discourages judging. It is not wrong to observe the evil deeds of men; i.e. inspect the evil fruit of false prophets (Matt 7:15-20), or mark the actions of those whose god is their belly (Php 3:17-20). We are commanded to be wise as serpents and part of this is to identify and avoid evil.

What we are instructed to do is to not assign evil motives to the good efforts of others or of ourselves. As humans we have so many shortcomings and failures we could write everything off as negative. But when we have lived an open life before the Lord and endeavored to do what we would believe God would have us to do, we need to refuse to second guess what has been done. Some matters will need to wait until the Judgment Seat of Christ to see what their full impact was. Sure, we might have been more tolerant in some cases, but being too tolerant encourages permissiveness. Or we could have taken a firmer stand, but we felt led to give it time in this case. Is all of what we do always wrong? We need to be able to be at peace with bygone matters where we prayed and did the best we knew how, or we will never have peace.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

1. Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

8. What is a key issue upon which the Christian will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ?

9. Do you think there will be some surprises at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Explain.



The Great White Throne Judgment

The Great White Throne Judgment appears to be an entirely different matter than the Judgment Seat of Christ. God is the Judge on the Great White Throne. The wicked are shown their lifetime of wicked deeds, but in the end the book of life is searched to see if names are entered there.

This will be a terrifying time for those who lived in pleasure and wickedness in a lifetime. It culminates with those who never repented being thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:4-15

4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death

10. What reward is given to those who refused to worship the Antichrist and were martyred for their faith?

11. Describe the Judge Who sits on the throne for this judgment.

12. What do you think is written in the books that is the basis for men's judgment? What is recorded in the book of life?

hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Daniel 7:9-14

9. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

10. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered

unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

11. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

14. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

13. Who do you think the beast is referred to in v11? What New Testament scripture does this make you think of?



Judgment of Nations

This judgment has raised some controversial interpretations because it addresses nations as being called before the Son of Man in judgment. If this is to be understood as being nations of the world, then it is likely they are being called into question as to how they related to Israel.

It is more likely this judgment is for individual persons around the world, especially those who thought of themselves as being Christ's followers. Note the fact that neither their profession of faith nor soundness of doctrine is highlighted, but the unselfishness of their lives. This unselfishness of life expressed itself in loving deeds for others who could in no way repay what was done for them. This unselfishness is rewarded in eternity by personal approval from Christ Himself. This same concept is given frequently in Jesus' teaching on the sermon on the mount and recorded in other Gospels as well.

Matthew 25:31-46

31. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

14. What were some specific deeds Christ will be pleased with?

15. What was the righteous person's response to Christ's praise of his unselfish service?

16. Why didn't the rejected persons know they hadn't ministered to the needy?

34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36. Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38. When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39. Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40. And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45. Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.



In Your Own Words

As a saint you stood as a witness and a bystander as God judged the throngs of wicked and ungodly men. You recognized some of the ones who came through, even a former governor, the US president etc. What was it like?

❖ LESSON 9 ❖

LIFE IN THE MILLENNIAL AGE

Purpose: To compare Messianic prophecies to endeavor to discover what life will be like for those who live and reign with Christ.

The thousand year reign of Christ, otherwise known as the millennial reign, is a time unlike anything we have known on this earth. It may be very like what Adam and Eve experienced before they hearkened to Satan in the Garden of Eden. There are many scriptural descriptions which seem to give snapshots of that blessed era. Each one gives us a different view, and by piecing them together we can form somewhat of a mental image of that era.

The subject of the millennium is somewhat controversial. Some would understand the peace and tranquility should be understood figuratively, representing the peace and tranquility the disciple of Christ has through having Christ reign in his heart. It is true we are said to be reigning in life through Christ's power within us already (Rom 5:17). We are kings and priests unto God and to our Father Rev 1:6.

This study will look at the millennium as being a definite one thousand years when Christ has come to this earth and is reigning on a throne in Jerusalem. During this time Satan will be literally bound in the pit and prevented from having any influence in the world.

Humans will live in this world governed by Christ. Those who have already been resurrected will not be affected by the second death. (Rev 20:6). This means they will not have the fallen human nature to contend with. Those who had never died but lived through Armageddon or were born afterward will have the flesh and probably the Adamic nature (the perceptions Adam received through yielding to sinful temptations) to contend with. In the flesh we have a strong will to live and a keen sense of justice. We know not to choose wrong, but are open to being tempted. All of these were a part of Adam and Eve before the fall, and Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry. After Adam received his Adamic nature, his eyes were opened to evil and he became conscious of clothing and nakedness. The entire good creation God had made including the holiness of procreation became an avenue of temptation and opportunity of wrongdoing.

In the millennium man will not face the wiles of the Devil as an angel of light nor as a roaring lion, but they will still need to contend with a fallen nature. You will find evidence of this in the verses you study. At the end of the one thousand years each individual will need to make a choice to cast his lot to be a follower of the Lamb, or to rebel against God with the rebellion of Satan. This too makes sense since all men will need to decide their own fate with their free moral will.

1. How is Satan restrained during the 1,000 year reign?

2. Who assists Jesus in his rule over the nations?

3. How long will Satan be loosed aft the 1,000 years are finished?

4. Why might Satan be loosed after being bound and before his final state?

5. What is Satan's final destination for all of eternity?

Revelation 20:1-11

1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

A New Earth with a New Government

Of all the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah received and recorded more facts than any other prophet regarding the millennial kingdom. His verses teem with details that heighten our interest and make this era seem realistic.

Isaiah 9:6-7

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 11:1-10

1. And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2. And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

3. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

7. What will be Jesus' role and responsibility during the millennium?

8. Whose throne will Jesus sit upon?

9. How will the poor and downtrodden be treated in this time?

10. What change will be made to the animal kingdom?

11. What is the reason why dangerous animals and venomous creatures no longer molest humans?

8. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

10. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.



Where Sinners are During the Millennium

In our last lesson we studied the judgments. The Great White Throne Judgment actually takes place after the millennium reign. While those who never received the mark of the Beast participate in the reign with Christ (Rev 20:4), there are many of the wicked dead who have lived through all the ages who are reserved for their final judgment. These verses give some interesting details of this time.

12. What is meant that the kings will be shut up for many days? (V22 Compare Rev 20:5.)

Isaiah 24:21-23

21. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

22. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.

23. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

13. What change will be noticed in our solar system for this period of time?

Lo, This is Our God; We Have Waited for Him!

It is impossible for us to imagine the emotional freedom in a world without the devil. All our lifetime we have only known his oppression. Even in our moments of sitting in heavenly places in our church service or in meditation alone upon the Word of God, we are still subject to the oppression of his evil suggestions.

When Satan and his legions have no access to the earth, humans will truly feel a tremendous time of release, of exuberant joy. Study the following verses carefully as they describe what Jesus does for mankind, and allow the desire to be there with him grow in your heart!

Isaiah 25:6-12

6. And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.

8. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.

9. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

10. For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.

11. And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

12. And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.

14. What will be the emotional condition of people on the earth when Jesus reigns?

15. What will be some of the changes in the area of agriculture during the millennium?

Isaiah 55:12-13

12. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

13. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.



The Restored Glory of Israel

Along with Jesus reigning as King in Jerusalem, the Jews will also be restored in their glory and be given a place of prominence among the nations of the world. Since Israel has turned to the Lord, she becomes a vehicle through which the rest of the world receives God's blessing. Again, since we look forward into another age where we can only see as through a glass darkly, we behold the promises and marvel what God has planned.

16. Where will Jesus' headquarters be?

Isaiah 60:1-7

1. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

2. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

5. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring

17. How will the Nations of the world relate to Israel during this time?

gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

7. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

Isaiah 65:17-25

17. For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

18. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

20. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

21. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

22. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

24. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

25. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

18. What will the life expectancy be like in this era?

19. Look up the word "accursed" v20 (#7043) and give the meaning of the sinner being accursed at 100 years.

20. How will the economy be different?

21. What animal will still bear evidence of the fall? (Gen 3:14)

The Church in the Millennium

The Millennial kingdom of Christ is actually an extension of the kingdom of Christ that is already established since Pentecost. Nebuchadnezzar, the first one world ruler, wondered at the glory of such a kingdom that would far surpass his. Today we as disciples of Christ are in the infancy stage (so to speak) of a kingdom that will one day replace all the kingdoms of the world. The Apostle Paul affirmed that all things are under Christ's feet including all principalities in heaven and on earth. In the same context he explains the Church is Christ's body of which Jesus is the Head. (Read Eph 1:20-23) Today it doesn't appear that we are over all authorities and powers including angels. Tomorrow it will be unquestioned! We should rejoice in our short term sufferings in the anticipation that we will one day reign with Him (2Tim 2:12).

22. Give some of the differences in Jesus' kingdom from all prior kingdoms.

Daniel 2:44

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

23. Who is it that will give Jesus the authority to reign over the earth?

Daniel 7:13-14

13. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

14. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

24. What is meant by the phrase "the saints possessed the kingdom"?

Daniel 7:22

Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

Daniel 7:27

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

International Relationships

One of the things that makes the millennium seem so real is the detail the Bible gives to it. In some of the following verses we will discover how Gentile nations will relate to the King of kings and Zion as His national center. One learns that because of the fallen human nature, cooperation with the King is not as automatic as one might think. But neither will rebellion succeed either. Our Jesus will rule the nations.

Micah 4:1-4

1. But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

2. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

3. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

4. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.

Habakkuk 2:14

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Zechariah 14:16-21

16. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

17. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem

25. How will peace between nations be different than any peace the world has ever known before?

26. What will be the penalty imposed upon nations that do not serve the Lord during the Millennium?

27. What evidence do we have that individuals are free to choose who they want to serve — God or Satan even during the Millennium?

to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

18. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

19. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

20. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.



We Shall Reign With Him

The New Testament is replete with references to Jesus being King and the Saints reigning on the earth. Read in their isolation scattered throughout the Scriptures they may not have the impact as they do when they are brought together into one list. Let the dynamic of these verses fill you with longing for the reality we await.

28. What is one of the duties the Christ Child would one day fulfill?

Matthew 2:2-6

2. Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6. And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out

of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Matthew 13:43

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 19:28-30

28. And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the re-generation when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

Luke 22:30

That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

1 Corinthians 6:2

Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

Revelation 2:26

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

Revelation 5:10

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

29. What will be one of the duties of those who have faithfully followed Christ in His humiliation?



In Your Own Words

You have lived in the Millennium for over one hundred years already. Write a page of one day in your life much as one would record their daily experiences in a diary.

❖ LESSON 10 ❖

THE GLORIES OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH

Purpose: To reflect upon Bible descriptions of Heaven in order to gain an idea of the glory of the eternal home of the redeemed.

It seems strange to describe some place or era by highlighting what it is not. We rather usually compare a place by describing a different commonly known place and then describing it being more or less the same to what we want imagined.

Heaven is a place of opposites in so many ways to what we know now. We will touch on just a few of them.

Heaven is forever new. We measure how old we are, how old our possessions are. Imagine all things new and the longer they are around, the newer they are. It doesn't make any sense to us from a perspective of time. Nevertheless the Bible asserts it.

Jerusalem is a pre-built city. Fully constructed and apparently fully furnished it comes down from heaven to rest on the pristine earth. It is dressed like a bride, a woman in her day of glory. What does that mean?

And so forth. We could continue to highlight the difference in this beautiful place and form a mental impression because it is opposite from what we know. For example, gold is as plentiful as dirt, and dirty things are not ever known!

But for many of us heaven is not real enough. We may live our lives for days and not even think of what Christ has prepared for us eternally. We mull over our problems and brood over our hurts. As we wallow in them, they get bigger and bigger and we feel more and more like we need some carnal pleasure or some tranquilizing agent to help us cope.

The Bible urges us to meditate on the exceeding great and precious promises of the Word so we may be partakers of the divine nature (2Pe 1:4). The more we keep heaven in our thoughts the better we can cope with our temporary pain. This otherworldly anesthesia has caused opponents to sneer, but it is our heritage, our right and it will see us through. Rejoice that your names are written in heaven means that the worst day for the Christian on earth is his worst day forever. While the best day for the sinner is his best day forever!



1. Where will the blessed live in eternity, in heaven or on earth?

2. Where does God live for eternity?

3. What evidence is there that there may initially be some sorrow on the part of the redeemed?

4. Who are some specifically said to be outside the city?

5. What did John see when he was taken to see the Church, the Bride of Christ?

Revelation 21:1-27

1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4. 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: for the former things are passed away.

5. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

11. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

12. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

13. On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

6. Give some idea as to the size of New Jerusalem in terms and comparisons which would be understood today. (A furlong is equal to one-eighth of a mile or 660 feet or 201.168 metres.)

7. Various universal laws as we know them will no longer be in effect in eternity. How do you know:

a. Power of gravity will be greatly altered from its present state?

b. The law that all things age will no longer be in effect?

c. The properties of gold will be greatly altered?

d. The structure of our solar system will be greatly changed?

8. What similarities do seem to exist with our political world today?

And They Shall See His Face

The desire of God since the creation has been to fellowship with mankind. When Adam and Eve were still in the Garden of Eden, God would walk with them daily in the cool of the day. This seems to have been His pleasure, His motivation for making the universe in general and mankind specifically. The loss God experienced when man chose to obey Satan and when men today choose to disobey Him frustrates His eternal purposes.

In making the spirit of man God created the ability of man to reciprocate fellowship. Here seems to lie the reason for us having feelings. When we sense His love we find security and freedom from fear. When we give our love back to God and know that it is meaningful to Him, that He finds pleasure in our love and obedience, then we find purpose and significance in life.

Fellowship is restored when believers come to the cross of Christ and receive forgiveness of sin. Through meditation and prayer, through Bible reading and obedience, disciples of Christ can have a little foretaste of heavenly experience.

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1Jo 1:3)

9. What are some signs of the meaningful fellowship God finds with man and vice versa?

10. Some things will remain the same. How do you know?

- a. Time will be measured in months even though there is no day nor night?
- b. People will still be able to eat food?

Revelation 22:1-21

1. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

5. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

7. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

8. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell

down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

10. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

13. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

15. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

11. What are some requirements to be able to enter into everlasting life?

12. Why did the angel resist John's homage?

13. What indication do we have that death seals the fate of every individual and afterwards it is impossible to change?

14. What privilege is assured those who are obedient to Christ today?



Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah,
the Root of David, hath prevailed to
open the book, and to loose the
seven seals thereof.

Behold, I come quickly...

Jesus