

Lesson
10

The Future

Everyone is interested in the future. Books, both good and bad, have been written about what people think is going to happen. Scientists and government leaders are asked for their ideas about what lies ahead for their nation.

People have always been anxious about the future, consulting tea leaves, horoscopes, crystal balls and other forms of “fortune-telling.” One day a lady came running to me, asking if she could read my palm and tell me my future. She was quite surprised when I told her that I had a little book that told me my future—and it told her future too! Then I gave her a copy of the New Testament.

The Bible is the one source of true predictions. Through His Word God gives us all that we need to know. There is no need to “read” tea leaves, or tarot cards. In fact, these and other forms of “magic” are forbidden by God.

If you have wondered about your future and about what will happen when Jesus comes again, you will be interested in studying this lesson. We



will study about future judgments and the time of the Lord’s coming. Even the angels we studied about in the last lesson are interested in knowing when the Lord will return to earth. Let’s look into the Bible and see what it says about our future!

In this lesson you will study...

The Rapture of Believers
The Earthly Rule of Jesus
The Judgment of Unbelievers

This lesson will help you...

- Explain when and for whom the Rapture will occur.
- Define Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment.
- Look forward with expectation to an eternity with Christ.

THE RAPTURE OF BELIEVERS

Objective 1. *Describe and identify events surrounding the Rapture.*

In Lesson 5 we studied the meaning of the word *Rapture*. It refers to the future coming of the Lord when He will meet His church in the air. No one can tell us when the Rapture will take place because only God the Father knows.

“No one knows, however, when that day and hour will come—neither the angels in heaven nor the Son; the Father alone knows” (Matthew 24:36).

But there are signs telling us that the Rapture is drawing near. Jesus said that just before His return there would be an increase in worldliness, wickedness, and violence. False christs and false prophets would arise; there would be earthquakes, famine, and pestilence. There would be wars and rumors of wars. All these signs spoken of in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 are happening in our day.

Not everything, however, is negative. In spite of terrible times many people will seek the Lord and find Him. Joel 2:28-29 tells us about it!

Afterward I will pour out my spirit on everyone: your sons and daughters will proclaim my message; your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions. At that time I will pour out my spirit even on servants, both men and women.

Christians look forward to the Rapture with joy. Those who have died will be resurrected and those who are alive will be changed. All will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

Listen to this secret truth: we shall not all die, but when the last trumpet sounds, we shall all be changed in an instant, as quickly as the blinking of an eye. For when the trumpet sounds, the dead will be raised, never to die again, and we shall all be changed. For what is mortal must be changed into what is immortal; what will die must be changed into what cannot die (1 Corinthians 15:51-53).

After the Rapture Christians will be judged and rewarded according to their faithfulness to Christ. Then they will go to the marriage supper of the Lamb when Christ, the Lamb of God, welcomes the church as His bride.

For all of us must appear before Christ, to be judged by him. Each one will receive what he deserves, according to everything he has done, good or bad, in his bodily life (2 Corinthians 5:10).

We know that the blood of Jesus has removed our sins and we will not have to answer for them. But we will be rewarded according to our faithfulness. When trials come our way it is good to remind ourselves that the Lord sees everything.

Let us rejoice and be glad; let us praise his greatness! For the time has come for the wedding of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself for it. She has been given clean shining linen to wear. (The linen is the good deeds of God’s people.) Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Happy are those who have been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And the angel added, “These are the true words of God” (Revelation 19:7-9).



For You To Do

- 1 According to 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 which of the following statements are TRUE?
 - a When the trumpet sounds all the dead shall rise.
 - b The Lord will come to earth to judge sinners at this time.
 - c Those who died believing will be raised to life.
 - d All believers, dead and living, will be caught up to be with the Lord forever.
- 2 What sign do you see in the world today that encourages you to believe for the soon coming of the Lord?

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THE EARTHLY RULE OF JESUS

Objective 2. *Recognize events that define the Christian term “millennium.”*

The Lord will return with His people to rule over the earth a thousand years. This period of time has been called the *millennium* (taken from the Latin *mille* meaning a thousand).

The Bible talks of this era as a time of great joy and peace on earth. Jude 14 says, “The Lord will come with many thousands of his holy angels.”

Happy and greatly blessed are those who are included in this first raising of the dead. The second death has no power over them; they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they will rule with him for a thousand years (Revelation 20:6).

Wolves and sheep will live together in peace, and leopards will lie down with young goats. Calves and lion cubs will feed together, and little children will take care of them (Isaiah 11:6).



For You To Do

- 3 Circle the letter before each statement which completes the sentence correctly. The millennium in the Bible refers to
 - a) the Lord’s thousand year rule on earth.
 - b) a time of peace and happiness.
 - c) all believers ruling with Christ on earth.

THE JUDGMENT OF UNBELIEVERS

Objective 3. *Define Great White Throne Judgment.*

After Jesus has ruled a thousand years, the wicked dead will be raised to stand before God in Judgment. Then Satan, his angels, and all the wicked will be cast into hell. This judgment is called the Great White Throne Judgment. Several verses from Revelation 20 tells us why it is called by this name.

Then I saw a great white throne and the one who sits on it. Earth and heaven fled from his presence and were seen no more. And I saw the dead, great and small alike, standing before the throne. Books were opened, and then another book was opened, the book of the living. The dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. Then the sea gave

up its dead. Death and the world of the dead also gave up the dead they held. And all were judged according to what they had done. Then death and the world of the dead were thrown into the lake of fire. (This lake of fire is the second death.) Whoever did not have his name written in the book of the living was thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

Those whose names are written in the book of the living are the believers in Christ. They have nothing to fear because they will be with Christ forever. Revelation 21:2-3 tells us what John saw in a vision.

And I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared and ready, like a bride dressed to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne: ‘Now God’s home is with mankind! He will live with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them and he will be their God.’

After the Great White Throne Judgment, God’s children will be with Him. He will prepare for them in a new heaven and a new earth.

He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. The old things have disappeared (Revelation 21:4).



For You To Do

4 Read Revelation 22:20 and fill in the spaces.

He who gives his to all this says, “! I am soon! ”So be it....., Lord Jesus!

5 Complete the following sentence. Eternity with God will be

- a) a time of remembering our past sins on earth and repenting of them.
- b) a time of joy and living with God forever.



Check Your Answers

- 1 c True.
d True.

4 testimony, Yes indeed, coming, Come

2 Your answer. It might be the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, many people turning to the Lord, or the gospel being preached to the ends of the earth.

5 b) a time of joy and living with God forever.

3 You should have circled all the letters because every answer is correct.