



Questions

Study Procedure: Read the Scripture references before answering questions. Unless otherwise instructed, use the Bible only in answering questions. Some questions may be more difficult than others but try to answer as many as you can. Pray for God's wisdom and understanding as you study and don't be discouraged if some answers are not obvious at first. Do not read the study notes for this lesson until AFTER you have completed your questions.

Day One: Review

1. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word from the list provided:

abomination beget consecutively conclusively context
desolation diminished dispatched moat penitence petition superlative

- a) A failure to carefully study the Scriptures will _____ all sorts of other "failures" in your life.
- b) The seige caused the daily food portions to be greatly _____ as the months dragged on.
- c) The three time periods making up the 490 years of Daniel's vision would not run _____; there would be a gap in time before the last seven-year period.
- d) It would take forty-nine years to finish rebuilding the temple, courtyard, wall, and _____.
- e) The messenger was _____ to the king.
- f) Daniel displayed real _____ over the sins of his nation.
- g) Something which God hates is called a(n) _____.
- h) The Babylonians first, then centuries later the Romans, left Jerusalem in a state of _____.
- i) A _____ is a word used to describe something in the extreme such as "king of kings" or "war to end all wars."
- j) After praising God and confessing his sins, a person is ready for the prayer-phase called _____.
- k) It is important to study Scripture in its _____ to get its true meaning.
- l) Daniel knew _____ that God was in charge of everything.
2. What were three important components of Daniel's prayer?

3. After reading Jeremiah's prophecy about the seventy years of captivity, about what was Daniel concerned? _____

4. What did you learn that might encourage you to be more faithful in your praying to God?

5. Summarize what Daniel was told would occur during the 490 years set apart to complete God's promises to Israel. (You may refer to the notes to Daniel 9, 11, and 12.)

Day Two: The "time of trouble" for Israel will be stopped and all remaining prophetic promises to the nation of Israel will be fulfilled when Messiah returns to earth. There are actually more Bible references to the coming of Christ to earth in power as "Conquering King" than there are to His first appearance in humility as "Suffering Savior." Read some examples of these prophecies in the following passages and summarize at least one thing you learn from each one about what will happen when Christ returns to earth.

1. (Psalm 2:6-9) *"Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"*

2. (Isaiah 9:6-7) *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

3. (Isaiah 11:3-5) *His delight is in the fear of the LORD, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.* _____
4. (Isaiah 26:20-21) *Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past. For behold, the LORD comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth will also disclose her blood, and will no more cover her slain.* _____
5. (Jeremiah 23:5-6) *"Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* _____
6. (Daniel 2:44) *"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."* _____
7. (Daniel 7:13-14) *"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed."* _____

8. (Zechariah 14:1-9) *Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light; the lights will diminish. It shall be one day which is known to the LORD; neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light. And in that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the western sea; in both summer and winter it shall occur. And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be; "The LORD is one..." _____*

Day Three: Read these prophecies from the New Testament and then match them with the best summary of the facts associated with the return of Christ.

1. _____ (Matthew 24:27-30) *"For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."*
2. _____ (Matthew 24:37-39) *"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."*
3. _____ (Acts 1:11) *who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

4. _____ (Jude 1:14-15) *Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*
5. _____ (Revelation 1:7) *Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.*
6. _____ (Revelation 19:11-16) *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*
- a. Jesus will return physically and visibly from the clouds of heaven to the earth. Everyone will recognize Him.
 - b. The Lord, accompanied by His saints, will come to judge all ungodliness. Enoch, just seven generations after Adam, knew this and prophesied this to those living at that time.
 - c. The return of Jesus as King of Kings will be dramatic and spectacular. He will come on a white horse with the armies of heaven to finish the wrath of God and rule with a rod of iron.
 - d. Following a supernatural period of frightening darkness, Jesus will return in a great lightning flash, in the clouds, and with great glory.
 - e. In the same way that the eyewitnesses saw Jesus ascend to heaven in the clouds after His resurrection, eyewitnesses will also see Him return from heaven to earth.
 - f. Unfortunately, the world will be busily occupied with the normal routine of living and be unaware of and unprepared for His sudden return to judge them.
7. Challenge Question: The return of Christ is mentioned at least 318 times in the New Testament. Select a book (excluding Galatians, Philemon, and Ill John) and make a note of each reference you find in it to Christ's return or to a result of His expected return. Note that reference and then see how many more you can find. _____

Day Four:

1. Many Bible students see two distinct "stages" of the return of Christ, separated by a gap in time and accomplishing different things. Read the following passages and match the appropriate heading with the Scripture.

I. His return for the saints

II. His return with the saints

- _____ a. (John 14:3) *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."*
- _____ b. (1 Thessalonians 3:13) *so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.*
- _____ c. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14) *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*
- _____ d. (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18) *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.*
- _____ e. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2) *Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.*
- _____ f. (Jude 1:14-15) *Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*

2. The "catching away" of the Church to meet the Lord in the air is often called the Rapture, although that word itself does not appear in Scripture. Read the following passages and then summarize what they have in common.

a) Acts 8:39 _____

b) 2 Corinthians 12:2,4 _____

c) 1 Thessalonians 4:17 _____

d) Revelation 12:5 _____

Day Five

1. There are differences of opinion about the timing of the "catching away" of the Church. Read the following passages and make a note of any pattern that can be identified in the saving of the godly from the wrath of God in these examples.

a) Noah and the flood (Read Genesis 6:6-8; 7:11-14; 8:1,13-16) _____

b) Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:15-22)

c) Children of Israel and plagues on Egypt (Exodus 8:20-23) _____

d) Paul's assurances to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9) _____

2. We have covered many “big” truths so far this year in preparation for our study of Revelation. Take time right now and summarize in outline form below some of the prophetic truths you have learned that have to do specifically with God’s plans for the nation of Israel. You will find it helpful to scan past lessons for what was covered there. _____

Notes

He Is Coming Back!

From our New Testament viewpoint, unavailable to Daniel, we know that Jesus was not defeated at the Cross.

The Messiah: King of Israel

In the previous notes on the prophecies of Daniel, it was shown how Jesus “arrived” right on schedule—to the day, but was unrecognized by the nation of Israel and crucified. From our New Testament viewpoint, unavailable to Daniel, we know that Jesus was not defeated at the Cross. He rose to live again after three days, having fulfilled all Scripture about that part of His mission and accomplishing the work that God had given Him to do. Daniel did not know about that, but he had been trusted with future details about a fierce enemy that would rise to power after Messiah’s first appearance. That enemy would cause terrible trouble for the nation of Israel—far worse than they had ever experienced. Yet, Daniel was assured that, finally, his people would be delivered. In this lesson we have begun to examine what the Scriptures have to say about the return of Christ to bring such a deliverance. Actually, there are several important events to be associated with that glorious return, and this week’s lesson offered our first look.

What Daniel Did Not Know

When Daniel received the 490-year timetable for the fulfillment of all the judgments and blessings prophesied for Israel, he most likely thought that when the “prophetic clock” began ticking, it would continue without interruption until the end. Neither he nor anyone else in the Old Testament had

any way of knowing that God intended to use the unbelief of Israel as an opportunity to take the gospel to the Gentiles. God had planned a “gap” or “pause” in the prophetic plan for Israel so that He could build His Church. “Church” comes from the Greek word **ekklesia** and literally means “the called out ones.” That is exactly what its members are: people “called out” from every race and nation because they believe the gospel message. We are in the “church-age” right now—God’s divine “pause”—and He could end it any time He chooses because it is completely under God’s control. Only He knows when the “fullness of the Gentiles” will come in and the “prophetic clock” will begin again to count down the last seven years of this present world.

ekklesia - Greek word for “church” or “assembly”; literally means “called-out ones”

Mysteries

God saved the explanation of several important truths for the New Testament writers and for us. In Scripture these are called mysteries. By definition, a **mystery** is a puzzle or problem—something not understood. In Bible-terms a mystery has these characteristics: (1) It has always been in the plan of God. (2) It was not revealed in the Old Testament. (3) It could not have been known or “figured out” unless God had chosen to reveal it in the New Testament. (4) When revealed and received, it provides a better understanding of the overall prophetic plan of God for His children. (See Ephesians 3:1-6; 1 Corinthians 2:7; and Romans 16:25.)

mystery- something hidden or not understood

Blindness in Part (Romans 11:25-27)

The first mystery that needs to be examined in order to understand one of the things that will happen at the return of Jesus was explained by Paul in Romans 11:25-27: “*For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’*” Paul had been defending God’s treatment of Israel and assuring his readers that God’s own righteousness would cause every promise to Israel yet unfulfilled to be kept. In explanation, Paul revealed this “mystery” to help explain why it appeared that God had broken His covenant with Israel: since Israel as a nation had refused to accept Jesus as their Messiah at His first coming, God had allowed the ones who failed to believe to remain spiritually “blind” as a judgment on their sin. Throughout their history, since that time, part of Israel has remained blind to the truth of the Gospel. However, when God finishes His plan for offering the gift of salvation to the non-Jews, and “*the fullness of the Gentiles has come in,*” He will remove the blindness from Israel so that they—specifically those alive at that time—will recognize Jesus as their true Messiah at His return and be saved.

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The "Catching Away" of the Saints (1 Cor. 15:51-52 & 1 Thess. 4:15-17)

harpazo- Greek word meaning "to be caught up or away"

euphemism- a substitution for a word or expression that is thought to be too strong, blunt or painful for another person (example: use "to pass away" instead of "to die")

incorruptible- not subject to decay

God let Paul reveal that there will be a day when Christ will return and all Christians, living and dead, will receive new, glorified, and incorruptible bodies.

The next mystery has to do with "phase one" of Christ's return: the Rapture. As noted in the question-section, the word "rapture" does not occur in the Bible. That was taken from the Latin translation of the original Greek word **harpazo** which meant "caught up" or "caught away." This phenomenon was described in the Old Testament as having been experienced by Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11) and in the New Testament by Philip (Acts 8:39), Paul (2 Corinthians 12:1-4), Jesus (Acts 1:9), and prophesied for the Church at Christ's return. Paul explained it in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: "*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*" "Sleep" was a New Testament **euphemism** for "die." Paul, who had been privately taught by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 1:15-19), was God's chosen vessel for explaining many things to the world. As a special blessing and surprise, God let Paul reveal that there will be a day when Christ will return and all Christians, living and dead, will receive new, glorified, and **incorruptible** bodies. What will they be like? We can assume that they will have the same characteristics as Jesus' resurrected body: recognizable as belonging to the same person as before; unlimited by physical barriers, time, or space; but still having a physical form that can be seen, touched, and even fed (1 John 3:2). In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he again described this mystery, adding a few more details. He told them that God intended for it to be a comfort to His people: "*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.*" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Timing Debated

There is a great deal of debate among very sincere Christians as to just when this "catching away" will occur in relation to the last "week" or seven years of Daniel's prophecy. Because of several verses that promise help in and through trouble or danger, some believe that the Rapture will occur at the 3 ½ year point, after the sixth "seal" judgment. Others believe that the Church will not be "caught up" to meet Christ until the end of the seven year tribulation period. A biblical

example of this would be the Children of Israel during the plagues in Egypt. They were not removed from Egypt, but endured some of the plagues, were spared from others, but were protected throughout and ultimately delivered by God's power. However, the outline given in Revelation (to be discussed later) as well as the examples of God's treatment of Noah and Lot, lend support to those who believe the Lord will return for His saints before the trouble or tribulation begins. In addition, several of Jesus's parables and the customs for Jewish weddings so often included in His teachings emphasized a surprising suddenness to His appearance. Furthermore, because no sign is given to be watched for before that event, while several are given before Christ will return to the earth to finish off the enemies of God, there seems to be much in favor of the saints meeting the Lord in the air before the tribulation period, going to heaven with Him, and then returning with Him at the final moment of victory, from heaven and to the earth. Nevertheless, the timing of the "catching away" should not be allowed to cause contention among well-meaning Bible students. The promise of meeting the Lord in the air, exchanging old bodies for new glorious ones, and never again being separated from Him or our Christian loved ones is worth waiting for whenever it occurs!

An Important Comment

After reading so many verses placed in the questions-section describing the unmistakable return of Christ in the clouds with His saints, to defeat the enemies of Israel, to set up an eternal worldwide kingdom, and to act as righteous Judge over the guilty men and angels, it might seem unusual that some people still do not believe that Jesus will really return one day. In the first three centuries after the Ascension of Christ, it was universally taught, accepted, and expected that He would return as He promised. However, as the life of the Church began blending more with the powers of the world, some leaders began to misuse and abuse the Scriptures. So, off and on ever since, there have been many who have overlooked or neglected the literally hundreds of references to the return of Christ in power and glory.

There were (and still are) differing views among those who refused to believe He would return. Some taught that the prophecies should be taken only symbolically—as examples of the struggle of good against evil. Some taught that all the prophecies had already been fulfilled at some time in the past history of the world. Others, discouraged by the long absence of Israel as an identifiable nation, began to teach that the Church had replaced Israel in God's plan and that God was finished with Israel. In contrast, the view followed in this study is that the Scriptures should be taken at their simplest and most basic meaning, letting them mean what they say. The Bible is made up of history, poetry, proverb, parable, and prophecy. From the text and context, the

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meaning of each passage must be discerned. The Holy Spirit, of course, promises to help us. This return to the careful study of Scripture as the inspired and protected Word of God began several centuries ago at the time of the Reformation. Then men and women literally lost their lives while defending their belief that God meant what He had said in His Word and that that Word should be available to every person, in his own language, to be studied for himself. They refused to accept the substitute meanings, man-made customs, or church laws that attempted to replace God's clear Word with the desires of men. It is just as important in this day and age that we bravely stand to defend Scripture, being carefully trained to “rightly divide the Word of truth.”

The Return of Christ Involves Several Things

Introduced in this lesson was the “catching away” of the Church to meet the Lord “in the air.” However there are several events preceding and accompanying Christ's return to the earth, and each of these will be studied in future lessons. Most will be treated fully as they are mentioned in the book of Revelation, which will be examined chapter by chapter.

Notes