

THE FUTURE

A Study of Heaven, Hell, and Eternity

Lesson Twenty

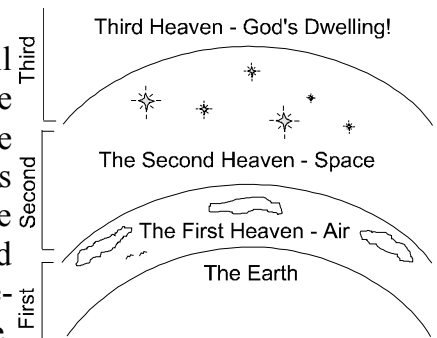
Memory Verse: *Romans 12:11*

Lesson Verse: *Isaiah 46:9,10*

"...I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" Isaiah 46:9,10

I. Introduction

As you read and study the word of God, you undoubtedly will come across many Scriptures that refer to future events. These passages are called *prophetic*, and are very precious to the Christian because they clearly demonstrate that our God has everything under control, and all things will work out just as He has planned! Nothing will surprise the Lord! He knows the end from the beginning (*Rev 22:13*). On top of that, He has revealed all of important history and future events in one unique, supernatural Book (*1Cor 2:9,10; 2Pet 1:20,21*)! In this lesson we will briefly study the incredible subjects of **heaven, hell, and the future!**



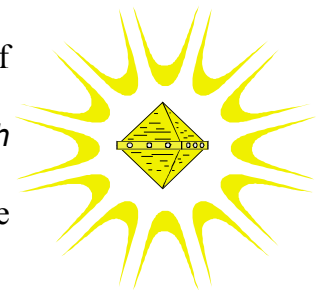
II. A Look At Heaven

A. There are **three Heavens**. See *2 Cor 12:2-4* where Paul went to the *third* heaven.

1. **First Heaven** - *Genesis 1:6-9,20* "And God called the firmament Heaven..." This firmament (the earth's atmosphere) consists of air, and the clouds. The birds fly around in this heaven.
2. **Second Heaven** - *Genesis 1:14-17*. The second heaven is filled with the planets, stars, comets, supernovas and nebulas that are outside our atmosphere, and yet do not reach to God.
3. **Third Heaven** - *This is where God dwells (Matt 6:9; Ps 113:4,5)*. It is not anywhere near this planet (*Acts 7:48-50*). It is where born again believers go when they die or are taken to at the time of the rapture (*1 Thes 4:15-17; John 14:1-3*).

B. The qualities and characteristics of Heaven

1. Heaven is a *real* place (*Rev 4:1-3; Col 3:1,2*). It is not a "state of mind," or state of "non-existence" (ie, Buddhist "nirvana")
2. It is a *holy* place (*Ps 20:6*). "Now I know that the LORD saveth his anointed; He will hear him from his _____ heaven..."
3. Heaven is a *joyful* place (*Luke 15:7,10*). There is joy among the _____ over sinners that repent.
4. Heaven is a *place of no trouble*. It has no death, sorrow or pain, "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more _____, for the former things are passed away" (*Rev 21:4*).
5. Its size is *immeasurable* (*Jer 31:37*)



6. Our place in Heaven is in *a city* (Heb 11:16) called the _____ Jerusalem (Rev 21:2,15-27). A furlong is $\frac{1}{8}$ mile. So, it is 1,500 by 1,500 by 1,500 miles! Truly, there is a lot of room there!

III. What About Hell?

Definition: The Bible defines *hell* as a place where the devil, his angels, and unbelieving persons will spend eternity. They will suffer eternal punishment and separation from the saved, and from God. There are 162 references to hell in the New Testament alone, which speaks of the doom that awaits the unbeliever and over 70 of these references were made by Jesus himself! References include: Isa 5:13,14; Mt 13:41,42; 5:29,30; 10:28; 11:23,24; 16:18; Jam 3:6; Rev 20:13,14.

A. Why did God create Hell?

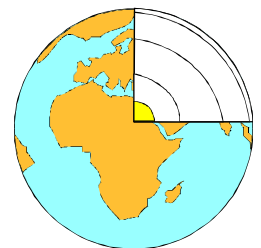
God created hell because He is a righteous and holy God and can not allow *sin* in his Heaven. Since all men are sinners, Jesus came into the world to save man from hell's punishment by living a perfect sinless life, die a substitutionary death, be buried and then raised by God. All this so that sinners could receive the free gift of eternal life (Rom 6:23) and have free access to heaven. It is by Jesus' *finished work* on the cross that sinners such as you and I are allowed into Heaven. Unfortunately, those who do not accept Christ's gift and trust completely in Him are destined to go to hell because they are still in their sins (John 3:18,36; 1 Cor 15:16,17). Therefore, hell was created for Satan, his angels, and unsaved persons (Mt 25:41; Rev 20:10).

B. Characteristics of Hell (Read Luke 16:19-31)

1. It is REAL. It has a location, and effect on all who dwell in it.
2. It is _____ (Rev 14:11) - it is for ever, like heaven
3. It is a place of _____ (Luke 16:24) - not annihilation (Mt 23:33).
4. It is a place of darkness, pain, suffering, and isolation (Jude 7).
5. It is bottomless (Rev 9:2)! It has no bottom, only sides!
6. Those who died in Sodom and Gomorra are STILL suffering the “_____ of *eternal fire*” in hell (Jude 1:7).
7. Everyone in hell is a would-be soul-winner (Lk 16:27,28)!
8. It is an unnecessary place for people if only they will put their complete faith and trust in Christ's all sufficient death on the cross - it was only made for the devil and his angels, not for any human!
9. Therefore, hell is NOT the grave, but a horrible place that no man should go to, and from which Jesus died to save people from!

C. Where is Hell?

This *lake of fire* (molten lava) is somehow below us, **IN** the earth (Isa 14:12,15; Mt 12:40). Ephesians 4:9 states that Jesus _____ into the centre of the earth before He arose.



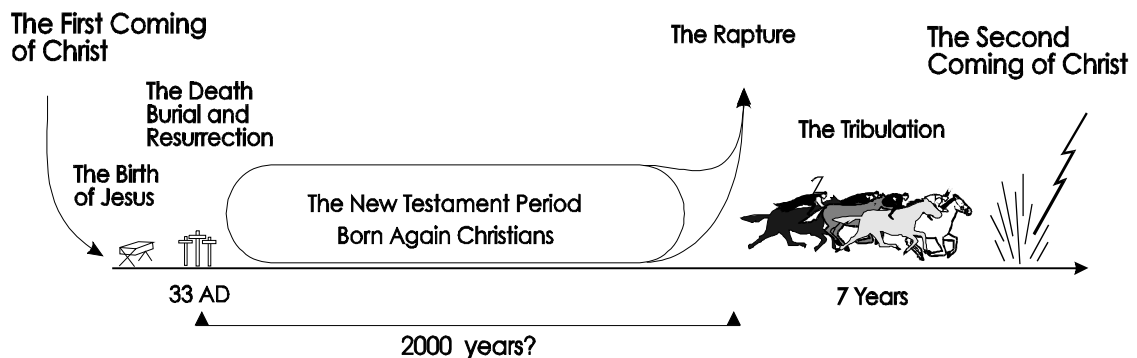
D. How Long Will The Lost Be In Hell?

1. The Bible says that all in hell will be there for _____ (Rev 20:10).
2. Will God give persons in hell an opportunity to escape; a second chance? _____ When is the opportunity for people to be saved from hell (2 Cor 6:1,2)? _____. Let us get

busy reaching the lost by preaching the gospel of salvation *now*, while people have the chance! This is God's reason for Christianity's existence - *to warn the lost!*

- E. Jesus died to save sinners from Hell!** Jesus did not come only to bring sinners to a wonderful place called Heaven, but more importantly, to save them from the real place called Hell (**John 3:16**)! A person needs to get saved TODAY because *tomorrow* may be too late (**2Cor 6:1,2**)!

IV.A Brief Outline of Coming Future Events - *What's Ahead For the Universe?* God created this universe (**Gen 1:1**) and for sure God will end it (**2Pet 3:10,11**)! The study of the future comes mainly from Revelation, Daniel and Isaiah.



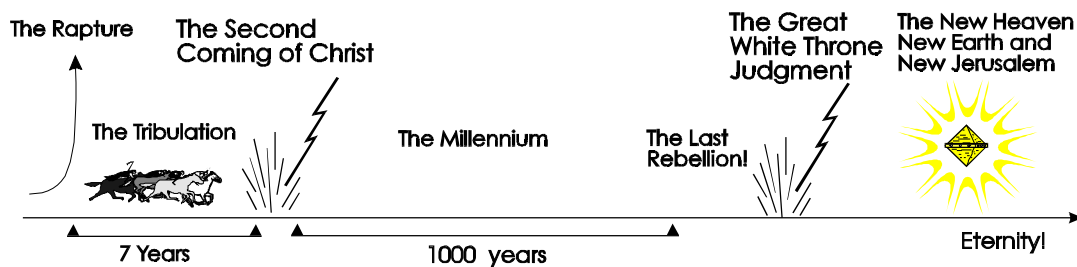
- The Soon *Rapture* (catching away) of true Christians to heaven
- The Seven Years of Tribulation (terrible trouble)
- The Second Coming of Jesus Christ - at the battle of *Armageddon*
- The Millennial Kingdom of Christ on Earth (1,000 year rule)
- The End of this World - at the battle of Gog and Magog
- The Great White Throne Judgment of all the unsaved
- The New Heaven and New Earth

V. A Brief Study of Future Events

A. The Rapture

- The Bible is full of prophecies related to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, to this world. However, His coming as a baby, born in a manger, and destined to die on a cross some 2,000 years ago, did **not** fulfill one-fourth of the prophecies. The remaining prophecies relate to a **second** coming where He, as King of Kings would reign on earth. When He comes the second time, He comes in two parts. The first part is referred to as **the Rapture**, or the "catching away" of Christians!
- Let's examine the following Scriptures:
 - 1 Thes 4:13-18** Refers to it as being "**caught-up**"
 - Philp 3:20,21** Called a "changing" of bodies
 - John 14:1-3** Called a "**receiving**" of the church
 - 1 Cor 15:51,52** It all happens "**in the _____ of an eye**"
- This is not the only *Rapture* in the Bible. Others include:
 - Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5** _____
 - 2 Kings 2:11** _____

4. There are *pictures* of the Rapture throughout Scripture:
- Gen _____ being pulled out of Sodom before
19:15,16,22 judgment fell
- Gen 7-9 _____ being protected from the judgment
of the flood
5. The Rapture involves the following components:
- Listening for a shout and the sound of a trumpet (only Christians will hear this).
 - Looking for Jesus to break through the clouds (visible only to Christians - Titus 2:11-13).
 - Holy living being impressed upon Christians (Heb 12:14; 1Jn 3:2,3)
6. *Who* and *what* shall be left behind after Christians are taken?
- All your possessions (house, clothes, money, gold, silver, investments, your car, and your job). Therefore, "*Lay up for yourselves _____ in _____.*" (Mt 6:20)
 - Your and my *unsaved* loved ones.
 - All the unsaved will be left behind under a ***one world*** government, lead by the anti-christ with a one-world religion, and a one-world currency forming a cash-less society as seen in Rev 13:11-18. (The anti-christ will be leading the world against God and Israel).



B. The Tribulation

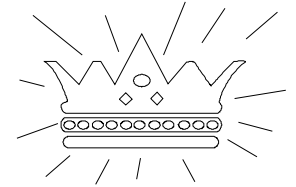
- This is a seven year period of troublesome time that will begin right after the Rapture of Christians. During this time period, the antichrist (*the Beast*) will appear and take over the world (Rev 13:1-9), at least two more world-wars will break out, the Jews will be persecuted again, and there will be plagues and sufferings like there have never been (Mt 24:21)! It is referred to as _____ trouble (Jer 30:7). It is directed at the Jews, to get them to repent, and at the world, to judge it. There are no Christians living now who will go through the Tribulation (1Thes 5:9)!
- Some Tribulation events and their Scriptures to look up:
 - The *Abomination of Desolation* (Matt 24:15-22) The antichrist will set himself up as _____ on the throne of the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies of the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem (2 Thes 2:3,4).
 - The judgments on this world during the time of the Tribulation will include: the antichrist ruling a one-world ruthless government, a great persecution of the Jews, genocide of entire races of people, a mixture of fire and hail raining down on humanity, a meteor and comet impacting the earth, the Sun and Moon darkened, a

plague of locusts, the sea and rivers becoming blood, the Sun will nova, and darkness covering the earth! Whew!

- c. The 144,000 witnesses (Rev 7:1-8; 14:1-5) who will boldly testify of the Gospel during the Tribulation. Note that these are *male, virgin Jews*, and not people from the Jehovah's Witnesses!

3. While all that is happening on the earth, the following events up in heaven are occurring:

- a. Christians are receiving their **rewards** for service (2Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 3:10-15). This is called *the Judgment Seat of Christ*.
- b. Then follows a grand feast called the Marriage Supper when Christians will be united with Jesus Christ in heaven (Rev 19:1-9)



C. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Rev 19:11-15) - Armageddon

As far as sinners are concerned, the most important subject in the Bible is that of Salvation, and Jesus Christ's *first* coming as Saviour to die on the cross. Yet, as far as God is concerned, the most important subject is Jesus Christ's *second* coming as Sovereign King to literally rule and reign on earth for 1000 years with Satan defeated, and paradise RESTORED.

This "*day*" is THE MOST discussed topic in the Bible. It is the day when good finally wins over evil; when everything that is wrong is made right; when God personally takes care of the Devil! This "day" is always referred to in the Bible as a BATTLE with great devastation and calamity. It is called, *the day of the Lord* (Joel 1:15; 2:1,2)!

1. This battle takes no more that 24 hours to complete!
2. The battle involves *burning up the* _____ (Mal 4:1-3)
3. The battle will be fought in Armageddon, the Valley of Jehosephat (Rev 16:16; Joel 3:9-16; see also Micah 4:3).
4. The battle is in reaction to Jerusalem being taken over by the antichrist (Zech 14:1-9).
5. The "deceiver" of the world (the antichrist) will be captured and "*cast alive into a* _____" (Rev 19:20), Satan himself will follow later.

PRINCIPLE: THERE WILL BE NO PEACE ON EARTH UNTIL THE PRINCE OF PEACE COMES AND BY A FINAL DECISIVE BATTLE, BRINGS REAL PEACE!!!

- D. **The Millennial (1,000 year) Kingdom** (Rev 20:1-4). Christ will rule and reign on the earth for 1,000 years. There will be real peace on this earth. Paradise (Isaiah 11:4-9)! Satan will be bound in Hell for the duration (Rev 20:1,2). The saints will rule and reign *with* Christ on the earth at this time (Luke 19:12-27; 1 Cor 6:1-3).
- E. **The End of this World** - Battle of Gog and Magog (Rev 20:7-11). In the Millennium, man has been allowed to return to paradise, and yet, he will desire to go back to his "old ways", just as the children of Israel wanted to "go back to Egypt!" It is here that Satan will do his finalé by leading a final rebellion at the end of the 1,000 years. He will fail, and then will finally, and completely be cut off from ever "infecting" this universe again.
- F. **The Great White Throne Judgment** (Rev 20:11-15). It is here that all of humanity, from wicked Cain (Gen 4:8; 1John 3:12) up through those born in the Millennium who rejected God's salvation, will stand before God. At this judgment, all the unsaved will give an account of their "works" to see how well they match up with Christ's work on the cross. They

will realize that there is no comparison, and will then be cast into the Lake of Fire to join *their god*, while Christians will spend all eternity with *their* God! A person's eternal end is determined by *who* their God is (Eph 2:1-7).

- G. **The New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem** (Rev 21:1-3, 22:1-5)! No longer will God be separated from man because of sin! The barriers between heaven and earth are done away, and God and man will forever be together in a new universe not infected with sin! The new earth will be perfect and eternal, and the New Jerusalem will be the Christian's home for ever, full of mansions with room for everyone (John 14:2,3)!

VI. What Should We Do While We Are Waiting For Jesus to Come Back?

- A. Realize that Jesus could return right now! So we should live for him 100%.
- B. Ask God to use you to save your relatives, and to make you a soul winner!
- C. Look forward to Christ's Return!
 1. Paul said in 2 Tim 4:8 "*Henceforth there is laid up for me a _____ 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 _____.*"
 2. Jesus says in Rev 22:20, "*...Surely I come _____; Amen. Even so, _____ Lord _____.*" Make that your prayer as well!

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