

Lesson One – God’s Word on the Future: Jesus is Coming!

(*End Times*, pages 7-40)

Goals

1. To acknowledge God as the only reliable source of information about the future
2. To understand that everything God reveals about the future focuses on one big event

Opening Prayer – Blessed Jesus, we are gathered to hear what you have to say today. Open our ears and hearts to listen to your message alone about the End Times, so that we could further trust in you and be strengthened by your Word. Bless our study of your Scriptures today and in the weeks to come. Amen.

Introduction

1. At your tables, discuss the following: which future events, if any, would you like to know are coming? What kind of information would you want? Explain your answers.

2. For what reasons are we so enamored with wanting to predict or know the future?

For those who want to use fancy words in regular conversation, the technical term for this area of study is *eschatology*, which comes from the Greek word *eschata*, meaning “last things.” Among many Christians today, eschatology is a hot topic, especially given the events of 2020.

3. Consider the words of **1 Corinthians 2:2** – “For I had no intention of knowing anything among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” While the Bible’s teaching about the “last things” is certainly important, in what ways can a preoccupation with eschatology become unhealthy?

How can we know what will happen?

4. Open your Bibles to the following verses – **2 Chronicles 33:6** and **Isaiah 47:13-14**. In these verses, what practices that are still used by many in the world to “look into the future,” does God condemn?
 - a. What other things not mentioned above do people use to try to predict the future?

5. Turn to **Psalm 139:1-4**, **Isaiah 14:24**, and **Isaiah 41:22-23**. Who alone knows the future?
 - a. To what degree does he know the future?

6. How has God chosen to reveal anything about the future to us today? Read **2 Peter 1:20-21**.

God predicted many things that have already been fulfilled in human history. Just to name a few:

- Isaiah named Cyrus as the one who would send Israel back to Jerusalem (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1,13)
- Ezekiel said that the city of Tyre would be destroyed and never inhabited again (Ezekiel 26:7-14)
- Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in AD 70 at Rome's hand

He also (obviously) predicted, with astounding detail, what would happen with regard to the coming Messiah.

7. What are some of the Old Testament prophecies that specifically pointed to Jesus as the Messiah? In other words, what are we told about Jesus in the Old Testament?
 - a. How do these prophecies affect our level of trust in God's prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled?
8. Read **Deuteronomy 18:21-22**. When someone claims to know what is going to happen (or, more specifically, claims to be a prophet with a new revelation from God), what two things can we do?
 - a.
 - b.

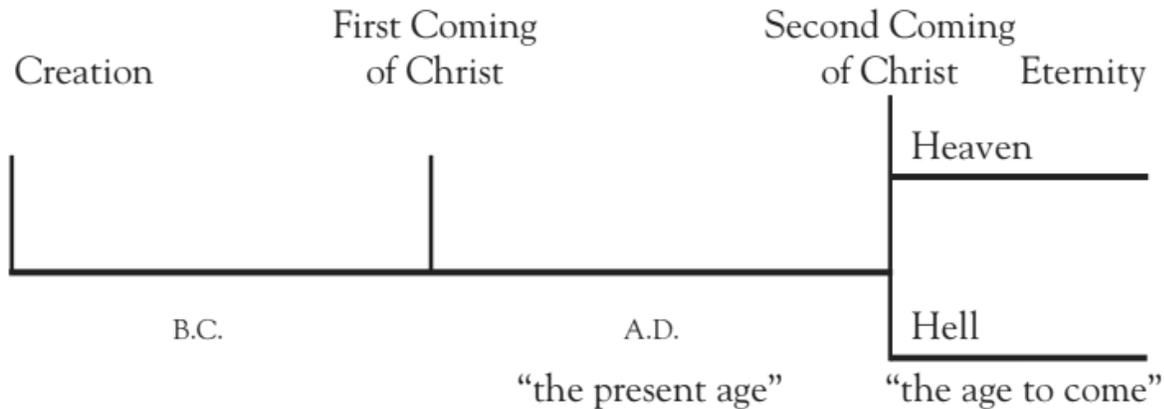
At this point, what additional thoughts, questions, and comments do you have?

What do all the prophecies focus on?

9. Look up **Acts 1:10-11**. Perhaps we can put this in the "obvious" category, but what is the one, big future event to which all the yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecies of the Bible point?
10. Looking at **2 Peter 3:10**, how do we know this will be a single event and not a series of events that are strung out over a long period of time?
11. Agree or disagree and explain: God has not revealed the future of our lives or of the nations in the world because it is not important for us to have this information.

12. It's important to remember that all of history is framed by Jesus and his comings (first in Bethlehem; second on the Last Day). Even with some newer designations, into what two periods has Jesus' first coming divided human history?
- a. Into which two periods will Jesus' second coming divide history?

So then, a simple biblical timeline of all time would be as follows:



Summary

The almighty God is the only reliable source of information about the future because he alone knows the future. In his remarkable grace, God has chosen to reveal certain future events to us through his inspired Word, the Bible. Everything God has revealed about the future focuses on one great event: the visible return of our Lord Jesus on the Last Day. History is moving toward that one moment.

What questions, comments, or thoughts do you have?

Closing Prayer (CW 406 v. 1 and 5)

**This is the threefold truth on which our faith depends;
And with this joyful cry worship begins and ends:
Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

**This is the threefold truth which, if we hold it fast,
Changes the world and us and brings us home at last:
Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

During the week, feel free to read Revelation 1:1-20, noting specifically what the purpose of Revelation is.

Next week: The Unknown Day and Hour of Jesus' Return