

# 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

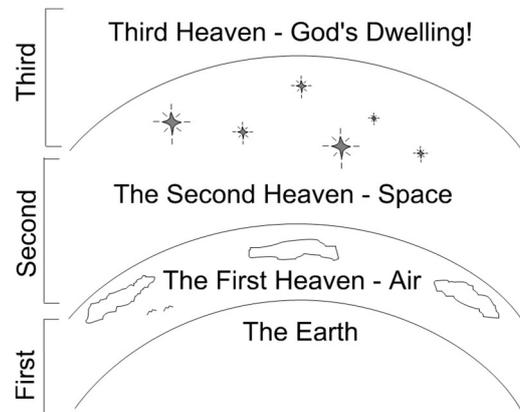
### I. Introduction

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, the Bible (**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 actually *three* Heavens.** The word 'heaven' means, the open space above you. The word 'firmament' means the sky.

1. **The First Heaven - Genesis 1:6-9,20** "*And God called the firmament Heaven...*" This 'heaven' refers to the earth's atmosphere, and is just above us and around us. It consists of air, and the clouds. The birds fly around in this heaven. It does not extend very far up above the earth's surface.
2. **The Second Heaven - Genesis 1:14-17.** The second heaven is filled with the planets, stars, comets, galaxies, supernovas and nebulas that are beyond our atmosphere, and yet do not reach to God. The second heaven is the Universe itself. What we call "outer space."
3. **The 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 outside of this universe, and separate. 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. What is Heaven Like?

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...*" There is no sin nor sinner there.
3. Heaven is a *joyful* place (**Luke 15:7,10**). There is joy among the \_\_\_\_\_ over sinners that repent here on earth.
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). It is bigger than this universe, because it is actually outside of this universe – and this universe is immeasurable!
6. Our home in Heaven is in *an entire 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 in God's heaven!



### III. What About Hell?

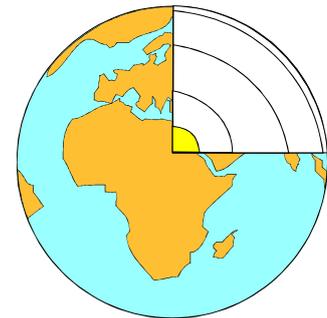
A. **Definition:** The Bible says *hell* is a place where the devil, his angels, and unbelieving people will spend eternity without God. They will suffer eternal punishment and separation from God.

1. 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: Mt 13:41,42; 5:29,30; 10:28; 11:23,24; 16:18; Jam 3:6; Rev 20:13,14.
2. Old Testament references include: Deut 32:22; Ps 9:17; Ps 55:15; 86:13; Prov 9:13-18; 15:24; Isa 5:13,14; 14:12-15.

#### B. Why did God create Hell?

1. God created hell because He is holy and cannot allow *sin* in His Heaven.
2. 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; 1Cor 15:16,17).
3. Therefore, hell was created for Satan, his angels, and all unbelieving persons (Mt 25:41; Rev 20:10).

C. **Where is Hell?** This *lake of fire* is a fire that exists in another dimension, and is located 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. **Characteristics of Hell** (Read Luke 16:19-31)

1. It is REAL. It has a location (centre of the earth), and an eternal effect on all who dwell in it.
2. It is not volcanic lava, but is much like it. Lava shows us that there is something burning just a few miles under our feet.
3. It is \_\_\_\_\_ (Rev 14:11) - it is for ever, like heaven
4. It is a place of \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 16:24) - not annihilation (Mt 23:33).
5. It is a place of darkness, pain, suffering, and isolation (Jude 7).
6. It is bottomless (Rev 9:2)! It has no bottom, only sides (because it is at the centre of a sphere)!
7. Those who died in Sodom and Gomorra are STILL suffering God's "\_\_\_\_\_ of eternal fire" in hell (Jude 1:7).
8. Everyone in hell is a would-be soul-winner (Lk 16:27,28)!
9. Hell 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!
10. 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!

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

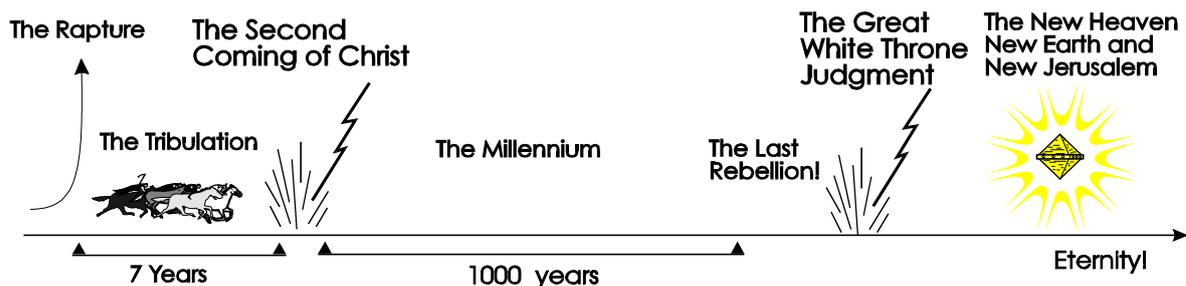
called Hell ([John 3:16](#))! A person needs to get saved TODAY because *tomorrow* may be too late ([2Cor 6:1,2](#))!

#### F. 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? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When is the opportunity for people to be saved from hell ([2Cor 6:1,2](#))? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Let us be busy reaching the lost by preaching the gospel of salvation *now*, while people have the chance!
5. This is God’s reason for Christianity's existence - *to warn people of hell!*

**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. Here is a brief outline...***

- A. The Soon *Rapture* (catching away) of true Christians to heaven
- B. The Seven Years of Tribulation (Tribulation means, terrible trouble)
- C. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ - at the battle of *Armageddon*
- D. The Millennial Kingdom of Christ on Earth (His 1,000 year rule here)
- E. The Final End of this World - at the battle of Gog and Magog
- F. The Great White Throne Judgment of all the unsaved of history
- G. The New Heaven and New Earth that will never pass away!



#### V. A Brief Study of Future Events

##### A. Some Background Facts

1. The Bible is full of prophecies related to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, to this world. Jesus has already come once – as a baby, born in a manger, and destined to die on a cross 2,000 years ago.
2. However, that **FIRST** coming did **not** fulfil one-fourth of the prophecies about the Messiah. The remaining prophecies relate to a **second** coming where He, as King of Kings will yet reign on earth.
3. The Jewish people are God’s people – whether they believe or not. They, as descendants of Abraham, are special to God. That does not mean they are saved, but that they are special to God and are always part of His plans in this world.
4. Christians are neither Jews, nor Gentiles ([Gal 3:11](#)). No matter what we were before conversion, we are now totally new creatures in God’s kingdom.
5. We do not replace Israel, but have a special relationship with Jesus as His BRIDE.
6. Ever since the time of Abraham, the Jewish people have been the main focus of God’s work in this world.
7. When Jesus was born, He preached to and ministered to the Jews first ([Matt 15:22-24](#); [Rom 1:16](#)). Since the Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah, the Gospel has extended into all the world, and to all people.

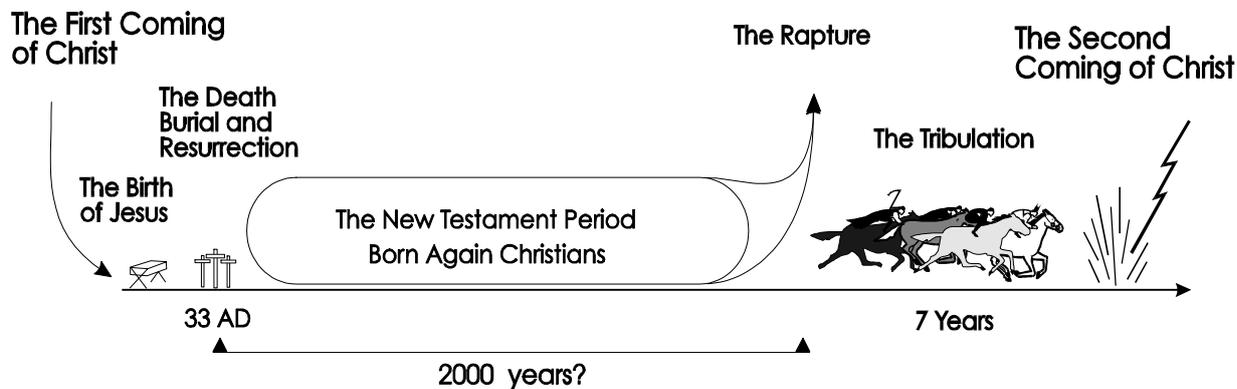
8. But someday soon, Christians will disappear in an event called the Rapture, and God will focus once again on the Jewish people, and save them during the Tribulation.

## B. The Rapture of Christians

1. When Jesus comes the second time, He comes in two parts.
  - a. The first part is referred to as *the Rapture*, or the "catching away" of Christians to heaven!
  - b. The second part (of the second coming) is His actual physical return to earth to rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords
  - c. This may sound complicated, but that is because it is! But be patient! It is part of an awesome future that is just ahead of us!
2. Let's examine the following Scriptures that describe a catching away of God's people BEFORE God's judgment:
  - a. **1Thes 4:13-18** refers to Christ's people someday soon being "caught up" into the air and taken to heaven with Jesus.
  - b. **Philp 3:20,21** describes is a "changing" of our bodies for heaven as we go up.
  - c. **John 14:1-3** Jesus says He will come back to "receive" His church to heaven like a Groom comes for His Bride at a wedding.
  - d. **1Cor 15:51,52** describes it as all happening "in the \_\_\_\_\_ of an eye".
3. There are several example of "Raptures" in the Bible. Including:
  - a. **Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5** Who was "taken up"? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. **2 Kings 2:11** Who went UP? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. **Gen 19:15,16,22** Who was pulled out of Sodom before judgment fell? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. **Gen 7-9** Who was protected from the judgment of the flood?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Each time, God "took" someone out of the way, so He could judge
4. Only a few signs will give any kind of signal that the Rapture is about to happen:
  - a. Israel has to be in her land again – and they have been since May 14, 1948!
  - b. Europe (Rome) will take control of the land of Israel "for their safety and peace", just like Rome was in control at Christ's first coming.
  - c. The world will *start* experiencing all the troubles of the coming tribulation, in an ever increasing manner (**Mark 13:3-10**).
5. We are NOT in the Tribulation yet. It is only the preparation for it
  - a. Jesus said in **Mat 24:6** "... see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not \_\_\_\_\_." And in **Mat 24:8** "All these are the \_\_\_\_\_ of sorrows."
    - 1) When Jesus uses the word SORROW, He is talking about the sorrow and pain of a woman who is about to give birth to a child!
    - 2) In the same way, the world is having the beginning pains before the coming Tribulation
    - 3) Obviously the world has always had wars
    - 4) And always battled diseases, and earthquakes and famines
    - 5) And that is why so many people constantly mock at Jesus' words
    - 6) But Jesus is saying MUCH more than just a list of normal troubles and disasters...

- 7) Jesus is saying that these events and about 100 more will grow in number EXPONENTIALLY – like the pains leading up to a birth!
  - 8) Jesus said these signs would appear like birth pains ([Matthew 24:3-8](#)).
  - 9) Birth pains, or labour contractions, are sharp pains which INCREASE in intensity and frequency in the moments leading up to birth.
  - 10) They become MORE frequent and have greater strength leading up to the big moment.
  - 11) So it is with world events leading up the coming judgment of God!
- b. What is so different about today?
  - c. We, right now, are experiencing an increase in:
    - 1) **Wars and rumours of wars** – there have been more wars in the past century than in all of history combined
    - 2) **Famines** – they will continue to increase, no matter how hard people try and protect crops
    - 3) **Diseases/Pestilences** – more and more epidemics and pandemics (HIV, H1N1, SARS, Covid19, etc).
    - 4) **Earthquakes** – ALL OVER THE WORLD, not just in normal hot spots
    - 5) **Persecution of Christians** - the most persecuted people group today are Christians – and it is going to get worse
    - 6) **The Rise of a United Europe** - a revived Roman Empire will come to power in the end times ([Daniel 2:36-45](#), [Daniel 7](#), [Revelation 17](#)).
    - 7) **The Rise of a Global Government** ([Rev 13:1-7](#)) that will rule over “*ALL kindreds, tongues [languages], and nations*” on the face of the earth.
    - 8) **The imposition of ONE Religion** on the entire world ([Rev 13:8](#))
    - 9) **And the control of everyone economically** ([Rev 13:16-17](#)) through a numbering system called the “Mark of the Beast” ([Rev 13:16-18](#)).
    - 10) All of this is in place right NOW!
  - d. So, things will not get better and better like politicians keep promising – they will only “\_\_\_\_\_ worse and \_\_\_\_\_” ([2Tim 3:13](#))
  - e. Christianity itself will start to fall apart, and become almost powerless in the world ([2Thes 2:3](#); [Luke 18:8](#))
  - f. Do YOU see any of the above happening? **Yes / No?**
6. Does anyone know when the Rapture will happen? ([Matthew 25:13](#)). **Yes / No**
  7. So, What happens AT the moment of the Rapture?
    - a. Without any real warning, Jesus will break through the clouds from heaven and be visible only to Christians ([1Thes 4:16](#); [Titus 2:11-13](#))
    - b. Born again Christians will hear the sound of a trumpet, a **shout** from heaven saying “*come \_\_\_\_ hither*” ([Rev 4:1](#)) (only Christians will hear this).
    - c. All the bodies of Christians who have died since Jesus’ resurrection, will break out of their graves (no matter how long they have been dead and decayed) , and they will come back to life, and fly straight to Jesus as a resurrection of the New Testament believers ([1Thes 4:16](#)).
    - d. All the Christians who are alive at that moment, no matter where they are, will ascend straight to Jesus, being changed in an instant on their way up, leaving everything behind them ([1Thes 4:17](#)).
    - e. And so shall we “\_\_\_\_\_ *be with the Lord.*”
    - f. The whole world will just continue as it always has.
    - g. They probably won’t even wonder what happened to us!

8. *Who* and *what* shall be left behind after Christians are taken home to heaven?
- All your possessions (house, clothes, money, gold, silver, investments, car, your job). So, "*Lay up for yourselves \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.*" (Mt 6:20)
  - Your and my *unsaved* family and friends will be left behind.
  - 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).



### C. The Tribulation

- This is a **seven year** period of troublesome time that will begin right after the Rapture of Christians to heaven.
  - During this time, the antichrist (also called *the Beast*) will actually take over the entire world (Rev 13:1-9).
  - There will be at least two more world wars that will be fought during this time.
  - The Jewish people will be severely persecuted again and have to run for their lives to escape the anti-christ's wrath.
  - And there will be plagues and sufferings like there have never been (Mt 24:21)!
  - The time of the Tribulation is referred to as "*\_\_\_\_\_ trouble*" (Jer 30:7).
    - The Tribulation is directed at the Jews, to get them to repent. Not at Christians.
    - The Tribulation is directed at the world, to judge it with God's wrath.
    - There are no Christians living now who will go through the Tribulation (1Thes 5:9)!
- The Great Deception (2Thess 2:1-12)
  - At the time of the Rapture, God will send "*strong \_\_\_\_\_*" into the world to make people believe only lies.
  - No one left here on earth will believe the Bible, or Jesus at all.
  - They will ALL start to follow the antichrist, believing HE is the promised Messiah, and that Jesus was a fraud.
- How Long will the Tribulation last? Seven years
  - Daniel's last week of Man's History, each day a year
  - Seven years of ever increasing Hell on Earth
  - Until the day of Christ's Second Coming! Called Armageddon!
- There are Actually Two Tribulations (Mat 24:29, 21)
  - The seven years are divided into two halves of 42 months each (3 ½ years)

- b. The first half is the build-up to the crowning of the antichrist in a rebuilt Jewish temple, in Jerusalem. It is simply called the Tribulation when an antichrist shall rise to political power
  - c. Right until the Middle of the week of years comes the *Abomination of Desolation* (Mt 24:15-22) when the antichrist will set himself up as "\_\_\_\_\_" on the throne of the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem (2Thes 2:3,4).
  - d. The second half is the wrath of God, mixed with the wrath of Satan, and poured out on the entire world. This is the beginning of the GREAT Tribulation!
5. Right in the middle of the seven years, *144,000 Jewish Gospel witnesses* will boldly testify of the Gospel during the last half of the Tribulation, and will turn many people to repentance (Rev 7:1-8; 14:1-5). Note that these are *male, virgin Jews*, and not people from the Jehovah's Witnesses!
  6. While all that is happening on the earth, here is what's occurring in heaven:
    - a. Christians are receiving their **rewards** for serving Him (2Cor 5:10; 1Cor 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).

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

1. 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.
2. 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)!
  - a. This battle takes no more that 24 hours to complete!
  - b. The battle involves *burning up the \_\_\_\_\_* (Mal 4:1-3)
  - c. The battle will be fought in *Armageddon*, the Valley of Jehosephat (Rev 16:16; Joel 3:9-16; see also Micah 4:3).
  - d. The battle is in reaction to Jerusalem being taken over by the antichrist (Zech 14:1-9).
  - e. 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 BACK, AND BY A FINAL DECISIVE BATTLE, BRINGS REAL PEACE!!!

3. Thank God none of us will have to endure such an event – all because of GRACE!

#### E. The Millennial (1,000 year) Kingdom of Heaven on Earth (Rev 20:1-4).

1. This is a time that Christ will rule and reign on the earth for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
2. During this time, there will be real peace on this earth.
3. The entire earth will be like, Paradise restored (Isaiah 11:4-9)!
4. Satan will be bound in Hell for the duration of Christ's kingdom (Rev 20:1,2).

5. And all the saints will rule and reign *with* Christ on the earth at this time (Luke 19:12-27; 1Cor 6:1-3).
6. What will YOU probably be doing during Christ's kingdom?
7. Your reward will be based upon your efforts NOW!

#### F. The End of this World

1. There is one final battle, bigger than Armageddon even. It is called the Battle of "\_\_\_\_\_ and Magog" (Rev 20:7-11).
2. During the Millennium, man has been allowed to return to paradise, and yet, he will still desire to go back to his "old sinful ways", just as the children of Israel wanted to "go back to Egypt!"
3. It is at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ that Satan will do his finalé by leading a final rebellion.
4. He will fail, and will finally, and completely be cut off from ever "infecting" this universe again, by being thrown into the "*lake of \_\_\_\_\_*", where he will be tormented for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

#### G. The Great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11-15).

1. It is at this judgment that all of humanity, from wicked Cain to those born in the Millennium who rejected God's salvation, will stand before God (Gen 4:8; 1John 3:12) to be judged according to their works.
2. At this judgment, all the unsaved people will give an account of their "works" to see how well they match up with Christ's work on the cross. God will allow everyone to have their say, and try and justify their sins. But of their name is not written in the Lamb's Book of "\_\_\_\_\_", they will face God's righteous judgment for ever!
3. They will realize that there is no comparison, and will then be cast into the Lake of Fire to join *their god, Satan*, 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).

#### H. The New Heaven, New Earth, and the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:1-3, 22:1-5)!

1. 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!
2. The new earth will be perfect and eternal – it will never pass away.
3. 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. We should live holy and godly
- C. We should be expecting Him to come for us any minute
- D. We should be listening for His shout, and the sound of a loud trumpet from the sky
- E. Ask God to use you to save your relatives, and to make you a soul winner!
- F. Paul said in 2Tim 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 \_\_\_\_\_.*"
- G. Jesus says in Rev 22:20, "*...Surely I come \_\_\_\_\_.* Amen. Even so, \_\_\_\_\_ Lord \_\_\_\_\_." Make that your prayer as well!

Date Lesson Completed \_\_\_\_\_

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