

LESSON PLAN

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT HIS RETURN

Matthew 24:27-25:30

Lesson Verse: Matthew 24:42 - "Watch therefore: for you know not what hour your Lord will come."

Lesson Aim: To teach the children to be ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Have you ever waited a long time for someone to come to your house to see you? Maybe it was someone you loved very much. Maybe it was your grandfather or grandmother. Maybe it was an aunt or uncle that lived far away. (You might give the class a short time to relate their experiences of waiting for someone. It will greatly prepare their hearts and minds for the lesson.)

While you were waiting for these special people to come, do you remember how long it seemed before they actually came? It seemed as if they would never come. Maybe you waited for Christmas in the same way. It seemed as if it would never come. Why do you think that special days take so long to come while work days and school days come so quickly? (Older grades might discuss this question.) The answer is found in our hearts. If we love certain people, if we love certain days, we cannot wait for them to come. But if we do not love work or school, then it comes too quickly because we would rather it never came at all.

In today's Bible lesson, we are going to talk about a special Person Who will come on a special day and we must be ready for His coming. You are probably wondering, "Who is coming?" Jesus is coming! He is coming back to this earth. We must be ready for His return. Are you excited about His return? Probably you are now wondering, "When will He come?" Our memory verse gives us the answer. Let's look at it.

HE (for Authority): Have your students find Matthew 24:42 in their Bibles and read it together; Jesus told His disciples that no one on earth knows when He is coming back to earth. So we have to watch for His coming. That means we have to be ready for His return. Now read Matthew 24:36 together. Jesus said that the angels in Heaven do not know when He will return, but only His Father knows that day. Later on God revealed to the Apostle Paul that Jesus would first come in the clouds and call for all those who love Him to gather with Him in the clouds and then He will take them to Heaven (1 Cor 15:51-54; 1 Th 4:13-17). No one knows when that day will happen either. Then when Jesus returns to earth, all believers will return with Him to be in His Kingdom on earth. So there are two days when Jesus Christ will come: first, He will come in the clouds for the believers; and second, He will come with all the believers in Heaven to rule the earth for 1000 years. No one knows when either of these days will happen, so we must be ready for the coming of Jesus Christ. Are you ready? Our Bible lesson will tell us some things about His coming to earth, which will happen after He comes in the clouds. So if you are ready for His coming in the clouds, you will be ready for His coming to earth.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. Our lesson from Matthew 24-25 is about Jesus' coming to earth to rule all nations for His Father.

I. Who knows when Christ will return? No one knows when He will come in the clouds of the sky or return to the land of Israel (Mt 24:36, 42).

WE: We will not know either time when the Lord will come, so Jesus told us to be ready all the time.

II. How quickly will the Lord come back? He will come in the clouds quicker than you can blink your eye (1 Cor 15:52) and He will come to earth as fast as a flash of lightning (Mt 24:27).

WE: We must be ready before He comes because there will be no time to get ready when He comes.

III. What will happen on the earth just before Christ comes back to earth to rule the nations? There will be a great war called the Tribulation (Mt 24:29; Rev 19:11-21) when many unbelievers will be killed and taken from the earth to Hell like it happened during the flood in Noah's day (Mt 24:37-41); the heavens will be darkened (Mt 24:29; Rev 8:12); the stars (meteors) will fall on the earth (Mt 24:29; Rev 8:8-11); and then Jesus Christ will come to earth (Mt 24:30).

An explanation of Matt 24:40-41: Some interpret the ones taken are saved and taken to Heaven; the ones left are the unsaved. This is true if Jesus were talking about His coming in the clouds, but here He is talking about His coming to earth to rule the nations. When Christ comes to earth the opposite will happen: the unsaved are taken to judgment and sent to Hell; the saved are left on earth (like Noah) to enter Christ's Millennial Kingdom.

WE: We must tell sinners that Jesus is coming so they will receive Him as their Savior while there is time.

IV. What will happen to the people living on the earth after the Tribulation wars? Christ will judge the Israelites (Jews) and the nations (or Gentiles - same word in the Greek text).

LESSON PLAN

A. Parable of the ten virgins (Mt 25:1-13).

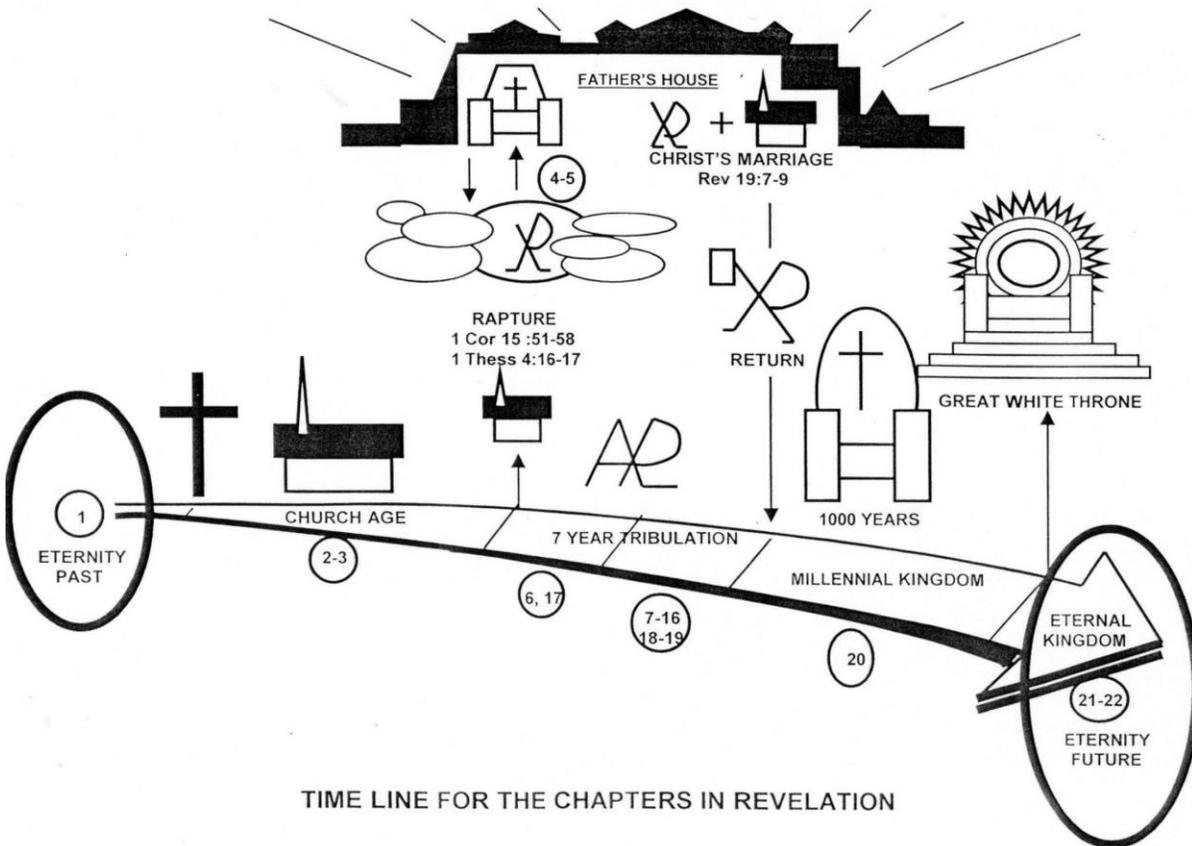
The ten virgins represent Israel; they were privileged to have the lamps representing the Word of God to give them light. However, the five foolish virgins did not have enough oil to give them light until Christ returned. The oil represents the Holy Spirit who gave all Israelites the Old Testament, but He only gave the believers understanding of these words. The foolish virgins had God's words, but they did not understand them, so they were not ready for Christ to come. The five wise virgins had both the lamps and plenty of oil. They were saved and ready for Christ to come.

B. Christ's judgment of the nations/Gentiles (Mt 25:31-46)

Jesus will gather all the Gentiles and divide them into two groups, the sheep and the goats. Those that treated the Israelite believers with kindness during the Tribulation wars showed that they were true believers in Christ; they are the sheep. Those that mistreated the Israelite believers showed that they were not true believers in Christ; they are the goats. Whatever they did to the believing Israelites is what they did to Christ, because they are His people. The sheep have eternal life and will enter His Kingdom; the goats have eternal punishment and will be sent to Hell.

WE: If we have received Jesus as our Savior, we will treat other believers kindly; they are His people, too. If you do not treat them kindly, you are in trouble with the Lord. Either you are saved and need to repent of your sin, or you are not a true believer and need to be saved. You must make sure that Jesus is your Savior, so you can enter His Kingdom.

BE (for Action): Are you ready for the Lord to come back today? If you are not ready for Jesus to come, I want to help you to be ready for His coming. He may come today. (Have them close their eyes for prayer and invite any of them to raise their hand, if they want you to help them after class is dismissed. Then pray for them to be ready for the coming of Jesus Christ.)



TIME LINE FOR THE CHAPTERS IN REVELATION

X Symbol for Christ

AR Symbol for Antichrist