

The Story Adult Study Guide

For the Week of May 17, 2020

Chapter 31: “The End of Time”



Key Events: the revelation of Jesus Christ given to John

Bible Reference for this Chapter: Revelation 1-5, 19-22

The book of Revelation consists of seven visions full of vivid symbols and fantastic imagery. The first three visions describe the church (believers) confronted by and contending with the powers of this world. The other four visions depict the Lord of the church opposed by the powers of darkness and triumphing over them. The purpose of Revelation is stated in the first verse: “to show his servants what must soon take place.”

Revelation was intended to strengthen believers in a time of testing (Christians were persecuted in the late 1st century), renew their hope when tempted to despair, bring them good news in tribulation, and assure them of the final victory in Christ.

Christ’s revelation to John speaks to us today. In the short amount of time available, we will highlight some important messages from Revelation. For each passage below, consider and discuss these three questions.

- What should we watch out for every day?
- What should we be doing every day?
- What does the Lord promise us that you are looking forward to most?

Revelation 3:19-20 ¹⁹ Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. ²⁰ Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Revelation 12:10-12 ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹ They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. ¹² Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.”

Revelation 20:9-10 ⁹ They (the devil and antichristian forces of this world) marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Revelation 21:1-4 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

Revelation 22:12-15 ¹² “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. ¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Revelation 22:17 ¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

Revelation 22:18-19 ¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

Prayer Suggestions

- **Pray for God’s power to overcome the devil’s attacks, and the courage to stand firm in faith and in the Word until I am taken home to heaven.**

Study Guide Helps

Revelation 3:19-20 Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation contain 7 letters written to congregations located in Asia Minor. The letters commended them, rebuked them for sins and spiritual weaknesses, and called them to repent and renew their commitment to the Lord and his Word. **Watch out** – for spiritual laziness, indifference and false teachings; don’t follow after the ways of the world. **Doing** – genuinely recognize and confess sin, trust God’s forgiveness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit live godly lives for Jesus. **Promise** – through the gospel invitation, God lovingly holds us in his forgiving arms; he heals and renews our relationship with him.

Revelation 12:10-12 These verses refer to the battle that Satan (the accuser) fought against Jesus Christ when he came to earth in the flesh to complete God’s plan of salvation. By dying on the cross, the Lamb defeated the devil and this victory is ours through faith. Satan can no longer accuse us of sin before the throne of God because the Son of God paid the wages of sin in place of all people. Although he lost the war against the Savior, the devil *is filled with fury* and is trying to take as many people as possible with him to eternal destruction. **Watch out** – for the accuser, Satan, who lures us into sin, tempts us to doubt the forgiveness Christ won, and leads us into despair and unbelief. **Doing** – take to heart the Good News of forgiveness and salvation in Christ. **Promise** – God’s plan of salvation has been fulfilled (SO REJOICE); we share in the victory Christ won on the cross and in the empty grave.

Revelation 20:9-10 **Watch out** – for the devil and the antichristian forces of this world that attack the church now in the End Times; they attack every day by spreading and promoting evil, immorality and false teachings. **Doing** – stand firm in the truth of God’s Word so the Spirit guards our faith. **Promise** – God will ultimately defeat the devil; all the church’s enemies will be put out of action and they will face God’s divine judgment.

Revelation 21:1-4 **Promise** – these words provide a wonderful illustration of heaven, God’s promise of eternal salvation; it is unlike anything we experience here on earth and it’s beyond our human imagination and understanding; it will be paradise since we will spend eternity in the presence of God without any of the consequences and spiritual barriers caused by sin.

Revelation 22:12-15 **Watch out** – for Christ’s return which can happen at any moment; keep watch – do not be spiritually unprepared or asleep. **Doing** – keep watch by staying connected to Jesus in Word and sacrament and carrying out the Lord’s work today and every day. **Promise** – Christ will award eternal life to those who have received the gift of faith in the Savior; the reference *according to what they have done* denotes good works which are the result of saving faith; *those who wash their robes* reinforces the truth that we are forgiven in Christ and are saved by faith alone and by grace alone; unfortunately and tragically, *outside are the dogs* – unbelievers will be condemned to an eternity in hell, forever separated from God and his blessings.

Revelation 22:17 The *bride* is the Church that carries Christ’s mission to go and make disciples. **Watch out** – for impenitence, indifference and rejection; don’t deny the Holy Spirit’s invitation to *come* to receive full and free forgiveness and salvation. **Doing** – *let the one who hears say, “Come!”* - every believer should pass the Spirit’s invitation to others. **Promise** – the gospel invitation is offered unconditionally to all people; all people *thirst* on account of sin.

Revelation 22:18-19 **Watch out** – for any person or message that contradicts the Word of God. **Doing** – regard Revelation and all Scripture as the true and inerrant Word of God; love and honor it by believing it as God gave it and sharing it truthfully. **Promise** – God will punish those who add to or subtract from his Word.