

It is interesting that Jesus in Matthew 24, just like Daniel 8 and 9, presents a double prophecy, dealing with Jerusalem and its temple, on the one hand, and with the church of God and its future, on the other.

4. He Is Really Coming Back



Read

Matthew 24:15-31

Reflect
reflect

Ponder on the event of the second coming of Jesus. How will it occur? Can you find popular views of His coming that fit His prophetic warning that distortions and misrepresentations will be common at the time of the end?

5. Such a Generation



Read

Matthew 24:32-39



Comment

The phrase “this generation” has often been misunderstood. Jesus did not point to the people living in His day. Neither does He refer to another specific generation at a certain time. He describes the kind of generation at the end; people who see the signs, but do not care and live as if nothing will happen.

Reflect
reflect

Compare the lifestyle and ethical values of the people in the days of Noah with the people in modern Westernised society. What are the similarities—and the differences?

6. Lift Up Your Heads



Read

Luke 21:27-36

Reflect
reflect

When you think about the signs of the end and the second coming of Jesus, do you fear the day or look forward to it? Why?

7. Wait Patiently



Read

Matthew 24:42, 46; 25:13; 25:14, 15; and 25:31-36

Reflect
reflect

What are the common threads in these parables? Compare the lifestyle of those who do not care about the coming of Jesus with what Jesus expects of His followers: How are we to live while we wait? How are we to relate to other people?

Summary

Jesus knew time would pass before His return to earth. In His answer to the disciples He combined the two aspects of their question, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple with the end of the world, envisioning the whole history of the church. Instead of discouraging them by telling them straight out how long a period would pass, He encouraged them to remain alert and to spend their time spreading the gospel and serving fellow humans in need.

Produced by the Field Secretary, South Pacific Division.



Number 16. Competing Powers

ClearView

Bible study guide

Lesson 15 studied Jesus’ prophecy about His kingdom. The remaining lessons look at the book of Revelation. Its prophecies reveal that competing powers struggle with Christ for the kingdom. The study of Revelation will not be comprehensive. Space sets certain limitations, and we concentrate on the big picture and some key issues.

1. The Accuser Is Defeated



Read

Revelation 12:10-12

Background

Revelation fluctuates between heaven and earth. In Chapter 12, John and the heavenly tribunal are shown battles that involve a woman (symbolising the church), a dragon (Satan) and Michael (Christ). These scenes form a background for the judgment pronounced by the heavenly court. In the remainder of the chapter, John witnesses a review of events on earth, leading him through the history of the church to the time of the end.

Reflect
reflect

John is told that those who “dwell in heaven” will be safe. Is this to be understood literally? Are you as a Christian today a citizen of the heavenly city, even though you live on earth? What are the reasons given in verse 11 for the justification of the saints?

2. The Beastly Struggle for Power



Read

Revelation 13:1, 2, 11, and 14:1

Background

Revelation portrays a trio of beasts—the dragon, the beast from the sea, and the beast from the earth—all fighting the bleeding Lamb (Lesson 17 will contain more detail). The beast from the sea reminds us of the beasts in the prophetic vision in Daniel 7.

Reflect
reflect

What does a “beast” symbolise in these prophecies? Who will win the battle, the monsters or the Lamb?

3. The Everlasting Gospel



Read

Revelation 14:6, 7

Reflect
reflect

Do these angels represent heavenly or human beings? Who is supposed to preach the gospel to all nations (compare Matthew 24:14)?