

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

ESCHATOLOGICAL LITERATURE IN THE BIBLE

International Sunday School Lesson for December 26

Memory Selection: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."—Revelation 11:15.

Lesson Text: Revelation 21:1-7; 22:1-5, 17.

During the past quarter we have been studying the different types of literature found in the Bible, including biography, law, history, drama, prophecy, poetry, parables, and the letters or epistles. For this lesson we study a type of literature which has received the difficult name of Apocalyptic, and the book which best illustrates this type of literature is the Book of Revelation. The first verse of this Book, in the Greek language, contains the word Apokalypse—The Book of the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ.

In the Greek, the word Apocalypse means unveiling or revealing. Our word Revelation is from the Latin equivalent, Apocalypses the characterized by certain peculiarities of form and content. They are cast in the shape of visions crowded with symbolic figures. The content of the Apocalypses centers around the end of the world, the final judgment, and the emphasis is always on the direct intervention in human history of God himself, the heavenly King, who comes to destroy the kingdoms of this world, to rescue his people from their tyranny, and to replace the sorry scheme of things in which they suffered by a new heaven and a new earth.

In the early days of the church, as reported in the Book of the Acts, the Roman government was tolerant in its attitude toward the Christian church. As you remember, Paul was proud to assert his Roman citizenship. However, with the growing strength of the new faith, this attitude of friendly tolerance changed to hostility and, during the reigns of Nero, Domitian, Diocletian, the church was severely persecuted and Christians were imprisoned and many suffered martyrdom.

The Book of Revelation arises out of this changed situation. The Emperor Domitian demanded homage on the part of all people and permitted himself to be called "the Lord God" and temples were erected to him in Rome and in the colonies. One of the Christians who refused to bow his knee to the Roman Emperor was John, the writer of the Revelation, and for his disloyalty he was banished to the island of Patmos. From his prison he wrote this mysterious book. It is written in a sort of "code," which was easily understandable by Christians, but non-Christians would not make any sense out of it. What could they do with such phrases as "The Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world" or "I saw the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven." This symbolic language is often difficult for us to follow and even scholars are baffled to interpret some of its

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Wise Men Came to Bethlehem



These are the wise men who came to Bethlehem to worship the infant Savior.

They came from far-off Persia, where they worshipped the principle of light as manifested in the sun, moon, and stars. Led by a gleaming star which shone above the Khan at Bethlehem, they brought gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

The Magi were representatives of an ancient faith—a faith which went back to the days when man first looked up at the stars and wondered and worshipped. In this adoration, the lights of an old world faded in the brightness of a new revelation.

Men no longer have to look to the stars for the light of faith. It has come down to earth and shines in human hearts. It brightens man's pathway and gives his life a meaning and a purpose. This is the significance of the wise men's journey to Bethlehem.

Wisdom, in all ages, has taught men to seek the light of life in God. We need that light now to dispel the shadows of these dark and dangerous days.

THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Sunday Matthew 2:1-12
Monday Romans 8:18-25
Tuesday John 1:1-14
Wednesday Isaiah 53:1-9
Thursday Isaiah 40:1-11
Friday Isaiah 9:1-7
Saturday Matthew 13:44-52

For schedule of yearly readings, write American Bible Society, 450 Park Ave., N. Y. 22, N. Y.

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Be a Better Citizen! Go to Some Church Next Sunday

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

A. H. Outlaw, Pastor
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Walker Perry, Pastor
Bible School 10:30 A. M., except first Sunday, at 10 A. M.
Morning worship on first Sunday at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first Sunday at 7 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

E. T. Jilson, Rector
Holy Communion, 9:00 A. M. Every Sunday except first Sunday at 9:00 A. M.
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Prayer and Sermon, 11:00 o'clock.
Holy Communion first Sunday at 11 A. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM

Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

Go To Church -- Your Church -- Any Church -- But Go

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Perquimans Church Services

HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH
C. W. Duling, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

BETHEHEM CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Harold C. Turner, Pastor
Church services first and third Sundays at 3:00 P. M.
Christian Union, 7:30 P. M.

BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. J. R. Byerly, Pastor
Church services first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.
Burgess and Bethlehem Churches hold Christian Union together on second and fourth Sundays.

PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES
E. B. Edwards, Pastor
First Sunday:
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.
Oak Grove Church, 3:00 P. M.
Second Sunday
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.
Woodland Church, 7:00 P. M.
Third Sunday
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
New Hope Church, 7:00 P. M.
Fourth Sunday
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.
Winfall Church, 7:30 P. M.
Fifth Sunday
Woodland Church, 11:00 A. M.
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church at 7:30 P. M.

WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Sunday School, 11 A. M. every Sunday except third Sunday.
Church services every third Sunday at 11 A. M.

UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH
Elizabeth White, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Church Services, 11 A. M.
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. E. G. Willis, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.

PINEY WOODS FRIENDS MEETING
Bertha V. Smith White, Minister
Bible School, 10 A. M.
Meeting for worship, 11 A. M.

WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH
G. M. Singletary, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:30 A. M. on first and third Sundays and 2:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.
Church services, 3:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.

HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
D. L. Fouts, Pastor
Church School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.