



Adult Bible Class

For Adults Ages 18 and Up

“Let him
take
the water
of life
freely”

Revelation 22:17

Spring Quarter

March | April | May
2025

Adult Bible Class

SPRING QUARTER

March, April, May 2025

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Waiting for His Return

BY ANDREW RUDOLF

This quarter, we consider “The Climax of History.” In our lessons, we cover key passages from the New Testament letters and selections from Revelation as we survey the biblical view of the end times. Regrettably, many Christians today struggle to distinguish between biblical and extrabiblical teaching on the subject. Our study walks through difficult texts concerning the last things and helps readers dispel misconceptions about history’s conclusion.

Throughout the quarter, the theme of hope persists. Despite the sin and death of our world, Christians have the unwavering assurance that Christ will return and set all things right. All that is evil and wicked will face judgment, and Christ’s church will receive the uncontainable joy of eternity with Him. God will create a new heaven and a new earth, in which we will dwell with Him. He will wipe away our tears and dismiss death forever. Joining with all creation, we will worship our Creator and Redeemer.

The promise of the Second Coming should frame how Christians perceive the world. Our anticipation of a restored creation helps us endure present trials and struggles. With the first light of eternity already shining from the empty tomb, even the darkest circumstances lose their strength. Dawn is coming.

Our first unit takes us through Jude, the Bible’s penultimate book. Lesson 1 (Jude 1:1-13) focuses on Jude’s warning against false teachers. Although the church has faced different chal-

lenges throughout history, the presence of false teachers has persisted. Many of the warnings and exhortations Jude gives in these verses are applicable to the contemporary church. Those who teach false things should consider Jude’s warnings.

In the second half of the letter (1:17-25), Jude shifts his focus to the faithful among his audience, exhorting them to build up their faith. This is the focus of lesson 2. In these verses, Jude details three types of people with whom we should be familiar. Each requires a different approach. As these categories existed in the first century, they remain today. We should learn to identify and minister to each one.

Our second unit attends to “The Revelation of Jesus.” Lesson 3 focuses on II Peter 3:3-15a. Peter anticipates Jesus’ return and addresses those who deny the Second Coming. Peter assures his audience the Lord is not slow; rather, He is patient, desiring all to repent. One day, Christ will come and exercise judgment upon the wicked, and God will create a new heaven and a new earth.

In lesson 4, we turn to Revelation, which occupies much of our remaining lessons. Here, we consider chapter 4. In this passage, John captures the ceaseless praise before the throne of God. The four living creatures, who resemble the cherubim in Ezekiel 1 and 10, proclaim God’s holiness and eternity. Even now, these creatures worship God before His eternal throne.

Lesson 5 explores the next scene in Revelation 5:1-5, 11-14. The vision

begins with a sealed scroll that cannot be opened, prompting John to weep. His despair, however, is overcome by Christ's arrival, who is worthy to open the seven seals and the scroll. In response, the twenty-four elders before the throne and a multitude of angels sing a new song of praise to Christ.

Lesson 6 considers our third text concerning God's eternal worship. In Revelation 7:9-17, an innumerable multitude stands before the throne and the Lamb. The crowd consists of members of every nation and language, representing the grand diversity of God's people. They praise God for the salvation He provided through Christ in a resounding voice. In response, the four living creatures, angels, and elders bow before the throne and offer their own worship.

After considering the unending praise before the throne of God, we turn to Revelation 14:6-13. Here, three angels offer their messages. The first exhorts his listeners and informs them that the judgment has arrived. The second proclaims judgment against Babylon—a symbolic city representing the corrupt empires of history. The third declares God's wrath upon those who have followed evil leaders instead of Christ.

In lesson 8, we pause our study of Revelation to reflect on Easter. Luke 24:32-49 describes the risen Lord's interactions with His followers and the lessons He gives. Christ explains that He is the fulfillment of the Scriptures. Christ's death was necessary for salvation. Now that He has risen into new life, Christians live with the assurance of a coming resurrection and eternity with God.

We return to Revelation with our third unit, "The Final Victory," which covers the final chapters of Revelation. Lesson 9 considers the Lamb's wedding feast, capturing the final consummation of Christ and His church.



In lessons 10-12, different aspects of the new heaven and new earth earn our attention. These vivid images provide hope for Christians suffering in the world today. Revelation 21:1-8 (lesson 10) captures the new heaven and the new earth in beautiful imagery.

Verses 9-14 and 22-27 (lesson 11) depict the arrival of the New Jerusalem. In the holy city, God will forever dwell with His people. There is no need of a temple or luminaries, for God's presence will radiate forever.

In lesson 12, we consider the river of life, which flows from the throne through the middle of the city. Recalling the Garden of Eden, Revelation 22:1-9 wonderfully captures the future restoration.

Lastly, we conclude the quarter by exploring the final verses of the Bible. In John's epilogue and benediction, he writes the words that should always remain on our hearts and lips: "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

JUDE 1:1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to forni-

cation, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

NOTES

Beware of False Teachers

Lesson Text: Jude 1:1-13

Related Scriptures: II Thessalonians 1:1-10; II Timothy 3:1-9; II Peter 2:1-22

TIME: about A.D. 70

PLACE: unknown

GOLDEN TEXT—“It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3b).

Lesson Exposition

INTRODUCTION—Jude 1:1-2

Resembling many of the letters found in the New Testament, the book of Jude begins by identifying the letter's sender: “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.” That Jude identifies simply as the “brother of James” is of particular interest. Both names were extremely common in first-century Judea. Referring to oneself as “Jude, . . . the brother of James” in the first century is like calling oneself “Bob, the brother of Bill” in the twenty-first century. Thus, we may assume that both figures in verse 1—Jude and James—were so well known in the early church that such basic designations would be sufficient.

Considering what the New Testament informs us about figures with these names, it is likely that these are the half brothers of Jesus, children of Mary and Joseph.

Why, then, would Jude, with his unique relationship to Jesus, not identify first as *Jesus’* half brother? Although we cannot say anything definitively, Jude’s decision was certainly impactful. He clearly does not consid-

er his familial relationship to Jesus as something to use to his advantage. Rather, he counts himself a “servant of Jesus Christ.” In what follows, Jude warns against false teachers not as Jesus’ half brother but as a fellow servant of Christ.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH— Jude 1:3-4

A common salvation (Jude 1:3). Jude referred to God’s people with the affection term “Beloved.” It seems that his original intention was to pen a letter in which he would speak of the “common salvation” they had in Christ. The word for “common” denotes something that is shared in common—in this case, the salvation believers share through Jesus Christ.

Though Jude would have preferred to write about that common salvation, he felt it necessary to deal with a more pressing problem. It seems that false teachers were infiltrating the ranks of the faithful and attempting to lead people astray.

The phrase “earnestly contend” in verse 3 depicts combat or a contest. Those defending the gospel are in-