

ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH

TEACHING GUIDE

Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

WRITERS

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BAPTISTWAY PRESS • Dallas, Texas • baptistwaypress.org

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

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First edition: August 2016

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The entire NLV is available as a download purchase as Kindle or ePub at www.barbour.publishing (search for "New Life"). The New Testament only is available for free download as Kindle or ePub at the Barbour Publishing site.

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Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Introduction for Teachers

Welcome!

The purpose of this Teaching Guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Prior Preparation, Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Extra Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

Which Bible translation does this material use?

The Bible text printed in this curriculum uses the New Life Version (NLV), a translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious lawkeeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

The NLV is accessed free online at: www.biblegateway.com and www.studylight.org, so it is easily available to your students via their tablet or phone in class.

The entire NLV is available as a download purchase as Kindle or ePub at www.barbour.publishing (search for "New Life"). The New Testament only is available for free download as Kindle or ePub at the Barbour Publishing site.

Pray and prepare

Prayer is specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

Online Resources and Study Helps

EasyEnglish is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: www.easyenglish.info contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for you to download and use.

The **Baptist Standard** online edition provides additional commentary on current lessons at www.baptiststandard.com > Resources > Bible Study.

At **BaptistWayPress.org**, additional adult Bible study helps may be available for current lessons under Teacher Helps > Teaching Resource Items.

Picture Sequence pages for both Old/New Testaments are available free at Bible Studies for Use with ESL Students: <http://pages.suddenlink.net/eslbiblestories/index.htm>. The picture pages cover all important Bible passages and are copyright-free, so you can make handouts and posters for your students.

Jennifer Carson wrote Lessons 1-7 of the Study Guide and Teaching Guide. A graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Jennifer is a part-time English teacher, homeschool mom, and a long-time editor and writer for this curriculum series. She and her husband, Mark, and their six children attend First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas.

Margaret Gayle wrote the Study Guide and Teaching Guide for Lessons 8-13. She and her late husband, Jim, served as missionaries in Vietnam and Indonesia. She has been an ESL teacher and worker with internationals for years. Margaret is a member of First Baptist Church, Hurst.

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Suggestions for Teaching

General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word List before beginning the study. Provide Study Guide pages for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide blank paper for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse.
6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures.

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story

Focus on fluency, not just accuracy

Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar

Minimal error-correction as students tell the story

2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead transparency.

Picture Sequence pages for both Old/New Testaments are available free at Bible Studies for Use with ESL Students: <http://pages.suddenlink.net/eslbiblestories/index.htm>. The picture pages cover all important Bible passages and are copyright-free, so you can make handouts and posters for your students.

Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:

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An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.

Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become “stage prompter” at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another “semi”-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student’s turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences

—Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)

—Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)

—Cloze (supplying a written copy with every nth word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)

—Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)

—Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.

—Ask students to write the story in their own words.

Bible passage as content for reading

Procedure

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

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Checklist for Successful Classrooms*Right Kind of Input*

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
 - Realia or authentic materials
 - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
 - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
 - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

Low Anxiety Environment

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

Checklist for Real-Life Interaction

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask

each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding

8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the *EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders*.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 1:

The Revelation

Lesson Focus

In the midst of troubling and uncertain times, the person of Jesus Christ is a hope and an encouragement to all God's people, both now and in the future.

Focal Text

Revelation 1:1-18

Memory Verse

"The Lord God says, 'I am the First and the Last, the beginning and the end of all things. I am the All-powerful One Who was and Who is and Who is to come.'" (Revelation 1:8)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Bring a blindfold, a large puzzle piece, and a magnifying glass (or a cross) to class for Connect with Life #2 & #3.
- ♦ If you plan to use it, create and copy the survey for the Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life.
- ♦ If you plan to use them, find a few pictures of church buildings to use as a visual aid for Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study.

Connect with Life

1. Read aloud the introduction from today's Study Guide. Point out that the Book of Revelation evokes many strong reactions from Christians. Some become fearful, and choose to ignore this book altogether. Other people cannot stop thinking about what it means. They want to know exactly how things will happen in the future.

Summarize these two reactions by saying: *Some people are frightened and do not want to think about the words in this book at all. Other people cannot stop thinking about the future when they read the mysterious pictures that give clues about the end of time.*

2. Using the marker board or a poster, draw a long horizontal line for the class. On one end of the line write the word *IGNORE*. On the other end of the line, write the word *SOLVE*.

Emphasize that those who ignore the Book of Revelation put on a blindfold to keep away the fear they feel about it. It is likely that the need to hide from the words in this book is an attempt to control the fear they feel about the future events described in Revelation. Affix a blindfold on the poster or marker board to represent those feelings.

IGNORE

SOLVE

Next, emphasize that others feel the need to understand every little thing about the future when they read Revelation. They see the future as a puzzle that they want to solve. It is likely that the need to solve this puzzle helps them to feel they have some control over the fearful events described. Affix a large puzzle piece to the poster or marker board in order to represent those feelings.

3. Ask class members to think about how they feel. Then ask them to consider where their feelings would fall on the line. If they are willing, have them come to the marker board and place a mark on the line to represent where their feelings fall.

Then say: *The Book of Revelation is not something to hide from. Neither is it a mystery that we can solve. Only God knows the future. He alone is in control.*

Hold up a large magnifying glass for the class to see. If you cannot find one, use a cross instead. Say: *The truth is that Revelation is like a magnifying lens that helps us see more about Jesus. The images described in Revelation help us to know that Jesus is a strong hope in fearful times. We must not ignore this book out of fear. We must not try to piece together the future out of a need for control. We must ask God to reveal His Son to us through the words in this book.*

Guide the Study

4. Say: *The words in Revelation might seem frightening to us, but the Book of Revelation was a common type of writing during the time in which it was written. The churches to whom John wrote would have been familiar with this type of writing. The Greek word used to describe this kind of writing is apocalypse. This word translated into English is revelation.*

These kinds of writings had several things in common. Share this list with the class:

Writings About the Apocalypse

- There is a heavenly struggle between good and evil.
- God wins in the end.
- Dreams, symbols and pictures describe what happens at the end of time.
- The story ends with rest and peace.

5. Show the class a map of the Roman Empire around the time of John's life.



Source: <http://www.bible.ca/maps/maps-roman-empire-peak-116AD.jpg>

Explain that the early Christians lived under the cruelty of the Roman Empire. They suffered greatly under the Roman emperors Nero and Domitian. They must have felt like the world was ending. A book reminding them that cruelty and evil will not win would be a strong encouragement to them.

6. Ask several class members to help you read Revelation 1:1-11. Draw on the Study Guide section entitled “Who Is John?” to help them understand who wrote this book.

Lead the class to discuss questions #1 and #2 from Things to Think About.

7. Ask another class member to read Revelation 1:12-15a for the class. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled “Who Is Jesus?” to comment and summarize these verses. Provide a chart like the one here to help class members understand the meaning of the symbols used to describe Jesus in these verses.

Symbol	Meaning
First and Last	Jesus' eternal nature
Golden light	Jesus' power against darkness
Son of Man	Jesus' divine nature; He is God
Long coat	Jesus' royal, kingly authority
White hair	Jesus' wisdom
Blazing eyes	Jesus' purifying power
Brass feet	Jesus' strong, fixed nature

8. Read aloud Revelation 1:15b-18 for the class. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled “Hope in Jesus” to summarize and comment. Ask the class to consider question #4 from Things to Think About.

Encourage Application

9. Ask the class this question: *If you only read the first chapter of Revelation, what would you think about the book?* Allow time to discuss responses.

10. Hold up the magnifying glass from the opening activity. Remind class members that the main point of Revelation is to show us a clearer picture of who Jesus is. Close in prayer that throughout this unit, God will reveal Himself to class members through the pictures of Jesus in Revelation.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Create a survey about the Book of Revelation like the one below. Make copies and pass them out before class begins, asking class members to respond confidentially. Then, read the introduction from today's Study Guide. Open with a prayer that everyone will gain a clearer picture of Jesus by studying this unit.

Class Survey

- Have you ever studied the Book of Revelation before?
- Do you remember your church or pastor ever teaching about the Book of Revelation before?
- How do you think people feel about the Book of Revelation?

Guide the Study

♦ Provide a few pictures of church buildings for the class to see. Ask: *What is the church?* Remind class members that in John's time, there were no church buildings. Emphasize clearly, that the church of God is the people who have given their lives to Him. John's letter would have been read to many small groups of people who gathered together to worship throughout Asia.

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Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 2:

A Message to the Churches

Lesson Focus

Jesus calls the people of His church to a lifestyle of repentance and faithfulness.

Focal Text

Revelation 2:1-5, 8-10; 3:1-5

Memory Verse

"Remember how you once loved Me. Be sorry for your sin and love Me again as you did at first." (Revelation 2:5a)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Bring several types of current technology to class for Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Bring a handwritten card or letter to class for the activity in Guide the Study #2.
- ◆ Locate a map of the seven churches in Revelation to share with class members for Guide the Study #3.
- ◆ Prepare two cups of coffee for the idea in Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life if you plan to use that activity.
- ◆ Prepare the profiles of the three cities from Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study if you plan to use them.

Connect with Life

1. Have on display some popular kinds of technology for students as they come to class today. Put out a smart phone, a tablet, a laptop, a smart watch, a webcam, or any other technology that is popular with class members.

Ask class members if they recognize any of the items. Then ask them how they use the items on a daily basis. Encourage class members to talk about the ways in which technology helps them communicate with family and friends. Then, read the introduction from today's Study Guide aloud for class members.

Guide the Study

2. Bring a handwritten letter to class today. Show it to the class and ask: *How do you feel about getting letters or*

cards in the mail? Do you keep special letters? Have you ever received a letter that included words of correction? Have you ever received a letter that included words of encouragement? Give time for the class to discuss their responses to these questions.

Point out that John's letter is addressed to the churches in Asia Minor. Remind the class that these churches didn't have steeples or pews or even buildings. These were small groups of Jesus' followers who would gather together to read Scripture and pray. Likely, a designated person would have read the entire letter to the group because many couldn't read. John's letter would be taken from gathering to gathering until all the believers had heard his words.

3. Show the class a map of the churches to whom John wrote. Remind them that Jesus had specific messages that he wanted John to share with seven churches. Also point out the island of Patmos, where John lived in exile.



Source: <http://www.biblestudy.org/maps/the-seven-churches-of-revelation-map.html>

4. Divide the class into two groups. Ask them to listen while you read Revelation 2:1-5. Ask one group to listen for any criticism the church in this passage received in John's words. Ask the other group to listen for any praise they received. List the class members' responses on the marker board. Lead them to consider question #1 from Things to Think About.

5. Repeat the activity from Guide the Study #4. This time, read Revelation 2:8-10 for the class. Lead the class to consider question #2 from Things to Think About.

6. Once more, repeat the activity from Guide the Study #4, this time focusing on Revelation 3:1-5. Finally, lead the class to discuss question #3 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

Encourage Application

7. Direct the class members to look at the list of criticisms and praises for the churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, and Sardis. Ask the class to consider what praises and criticisms Jesus might have for their church today. List the responses on the board next to the others.

8. Guide the class to practice the Memory Verse. Start by having the men say the first sentence and the ladies say the second. Then, reverse their roles. Finally, have the group practice saying the entire verse together.

9. Remind the class that the Church is made up of individual followers of Jesus. At a basic level, the Church is a reflection of individual devotion to Jesus. Ask the class to reflect on the lists of praises and criticisms identified in today's lesson. Then ask: *What praises and criticisms would Jesus have of your own life?*

Give time for class members to silently reflect on this question. Then say: *We must be faithful and true because Jesus is faithful and true to His people.*

Close in prayer that each class member might see what Jesus sees in his or her life. Pray that class members would have a renewed strength to follow Jesus faithfully, repenting of any sins that stand in their way.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Place a cup of steaming hot coffee or tea before the class today. Place a second cup of coffee before the class that has cooled down. Say: *This cup of coffee is steaming hot. This other cup is no longer hot. Which would you want to drink? Coffee is best when it is hot. These two cups of coffee can show something about the Christian life. We can start out hot, with fire and passion in following Jesus. But if we are not careful, we can become cold. Our study today will reveal that God wants us to keep following Him the same way we start out. He does not want us to lose our strong devotion. He wants us to stay faithful and true.*

Guide the Study

♦ Be sure that class members have a clear understanding of what it means to repent. The following information might be helpful:

The Greek word for repent comes from two ideas. One idea means "going against." The other idea means "a way of thinking or understanding" When you put the two ideas together, the word repent means going against a former way of thinking. In other words, repentance is the process of thinking about something and actively choosing a new idea. It is more than just changing one's mind about something. It is more than just saying "I'm sorry." It is a complete reversal of thinking and acting. Jesus warned many churches in the Book of Revelation that they need to repent or face severe punishment.

♦ Copy and share the following profiles of the three churches mentioned in this lesson with class members.

Ephesus

Ephesus was the fourth largest city in the Roman Empire. It had a population of 250,000 people. It was the center of worshipping false gods. A temple to Caesar was built there in 29 BC. Official worship of the Roman Emperor began in AD 89. A huge temple to Artemis was built there. Artemis was the goddess of the hunt, the moon, and nature. She was also thought to be the protector of women. Her temple in Ephesus was 220 ft. by 425 ft.

Smyrna

Smyrna was the home of the famous Greek poet Homer. It was a seaport along a major trading route. It was the only other city in Asia that was as important as Ephesus. It was famous for making myrrh. A temple to the Roman Emperor Tiberius was built there. Smyrna was the site of extreme persecution for many Christians.

Sardis

This city had a population of between 60,000 and 100,000 people. It is the home of the legendary King Midas who turned things into gold. This city was at its greatest around 547 BC. Then it fell in defeat to the Persian king Cyrus the Great. Sardis became less and less great. In AD 17, an earthquake left the city in ruins.

Encourage Application

♦ Visit the Voice of the Martyr's website at:

<http://www.persecution.com/>.

Share some of the stories and information you find with your class members. Remind them that people around the world are fighting to stay faithful to Jesus in the midst of persecution, just like the church in Smyrna. Close the class today in praying for those who are being persecuted for following Jesus faithfully.

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*Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

Lesson 3: What Comes Next?

Lesson Focus

Because only Jesus is worthy to unlock God's plan for history and bring people back to God, He deserves to be worshipped and praised.

Focal Text

Revelation 4:1-7; 5:1-14

Memory Verse

"The Lamb Who was killed has the right to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and shining-greatness and thanks." (Revelation 5:12)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Find a picture sequence activity like the one in Connect with Life #2.
- ♦ Bring a prism to class for Guide the Study #4.
- ♦ Provide index cards for Encourage Application #8.
- ♦ Locate recordings and lyrics of "The Revelation Song" and "Holy, Holy, Holy" if you plan to use them.
- ♦ Prepare the side-by-side Scripture passages for Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study.
- ♦ Invite a guest to share a testimony for Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

Connect with Life

1. On the marker board, write the word *HISTORY*.

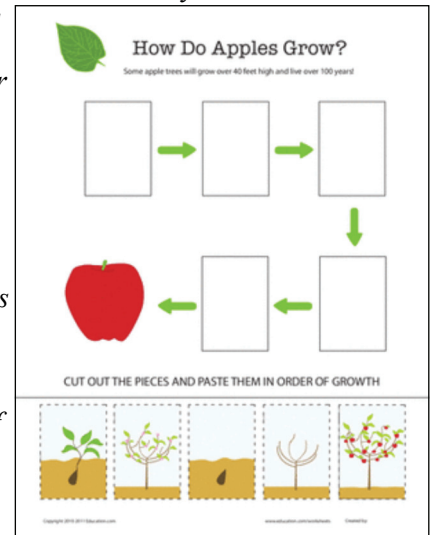
HISTORY

Ask members if they can identify two smaller words contained in this one word. Lead them to find the words *HIS* and *STORY*. Then say: *All of history belongs to God. It is His story. In today's lesson, John is about to learn about a part of God's story that has not yet happened.*

2. Locate a child's picture sequencing activity like the one mentioned in the introduction to today's lesson. The one pictured here can be downloaded for free at:

www.education.com/worksheet/article/grow-apples/.

Read aloud the introduction to today's lesson and share the activity with class members. Say: *A child's activity like this one helps teach an important concept. There is an order to every story. God is telling an important story throughout history. The Book of Revelation tells what was happening in history during the time John lived. But it also tells some things about what would happen in the future. In today's lesson, Jesus shows John some of the things which would happen later.*



Guide the Study

3. Read Revelation 4:1-7 for the class. Point out two significant images in this passage: the door and the throne. Draw from the Study Guide section "A Throne in Heaven" to talk about these things. Remind class members that the door represents an invitation from God, and the throne represents God's authority over history.

4. Bring a prism and show it to the class today. Illustrate how the clear jasper stone mentioned in Revelation would be like this prism. Demonstrate how a prism works to separate light into the colors of the rainbow. Use the prism to illustrate how the light surrounding God on His throne would have been like a brilliant rainbow.

5. Ask a class member to read aloud Revelation 5:1-7. Ask the class to consider question #3 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide. Lead a discussion of these verses by drawing comments from the Study Guide section entitled "A Worthy Lamb."

6. Ask another class member to read aloud Revelation 5:8-14. Be sure to point out that Jesus alone can unlock God's plan for history. Lead the class to discuss question #4 from Things to Think About.

Encourage Application

7. Say: *Many times we praise Jesus for what He has done. He brings salvation and life. He casts out darkness. But we should never forget that He is able to do these things because of who He is. He is sinless and righteous. He is worthy! It is right to praise God for the things He does. But we must never forget to praise God for who He is.*

8. Write the following words on the marker board.

GOD IS _____.

Next, give each class member an index card. Ask each one to write down some words that describe who God is. Lead them to focus on God's attributes. Allow time for class members to share their responses if they wish. (*Responses might include: Never-ending, Faithful, Holy, Righteous, Wise, Powerful, Gracious, Unchanging, Loving, Kind, Forgiving, Encouraging, etc.*)

9. Lead class members to hold up their index cards in praise to God and repeat today's Memory Verse. Then instruct class members to place the index card in their Bible next to today's Memory Verse. Close the class in prayer that everyone would see God clearly in their lives and offer praise to Him daily.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Ask if any class members are familiar with the legend of King Arthur. Share a summary of the legendary tale of *The Sword in the Stone*. Consider reading from a children's book or showing a clip from the Disney version of this movie to help class members know more about this story. Be sure to emphasize that in this tale, the sword Excalibur could only be removed by the one for whom it was intended. King Arthur was the chosen one. He was the only one who could use the special sword to restore peace to the kingdom.

Explain that in Revelation 4:1-7, John witnessed a similar situation. The plan of God could not be revealed to men unless the book was unlocked. Only one person was able to unlock God's plan: Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Guide the Study

♦ To accompany Guide the Study #4, play the second verse of "The Revelation Song" for class members. Explain that this song describes the scene from Revelation 4. In this song, God is described as being "clothed in rainbows of living color." Then remind class members

about the prism you just demonstrated for them. If you do not have this song, you can find the music and lyrics on YouTube at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofNBuMdrbcg>.

♦ Compare Revelation 4:1-6 with Isaiah 6:1-8. Provide a side-by-side version of these passages like the one below.

Divide the class into two groups. Ask one group to listen for the similarities between the two passages. Ask the other group to listen for any differences. Ask:

— *Why do you think John's Revelation has so many references to the Old Testament?*

— *Why is it helpful for readers to be familiar with Old Testament passages to more clearly understand Revelation 4:6-8?*

Encourage Application

♦ Close the class today by listening to and meditating on the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" with the class. Point out that this hymn draws from the scene which unfolds in Revelation 4:8 and Isaiah 6:3. Many contemporary and classic versions of this song are available for download or on YouTube. Or, consider inviting a member of your church's music ministry to perform this hymn for the class today. Be sure to provide the lyrics for this hymn for class members. End with a time of prayer and praise to God for who He is.

♦ Invite someone to come and share a time of testimony with the class. Ask your guest to share about a hard time of great difficulty they have endured. Ask your guest to tell about which characteristics of God were most meaningful to them during their struggle. Remind class members that one way to keep going in hard times is to spend time focusing on who God is. This is what it means to worship. Say: *Worship happens when we focus our minds and hearts on God's characteristics, expressing praise to Him. Whenever we go through hard times, it is important to keep worshipping God. He is worthy!*

Revelation 4:1-7

1 After this, I looked and saw a door standing open in heaven. The first voice I heard was like the loud sound of a horn. It said, "Come up here. I will show you what must happen after these things."
2 At once I was under the Spirit's power. See! The throne was in heaven, and One was sitting on it.
3 The One Who sat there looked as bright as jasper and sardius stones. The colors like those of an emerald stone were all around the throne.
4 There were twenty-four smaller thrones around the throne. And on these thrones twenty-four leaders were sitting dressed in white clothes. They had crowns of gold on their heads.
5 Lightning and noise and thunder came from the throne. Seven lights of fire were burning before the throne. These were the seven Spirits of God.
6 Before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, shining and clear. Around the throne and on each side there were four living beings that were full of eyes in front and in back.
7 The first living being was like a lion. The second one was like a young cow. The third one had a face like a man. The fourth one was like a very large bird with its wings spread.

Isaiah 6:1-8

1 In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and honored. His long clothing spread out and filled the house of God.
2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings. With two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.
3 One called out to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of All. The whole earth is full of His shining-greatness."
4 And the base of the doorways shook at the voice of him who called out, while the house of God was filled with smoke.
5 Then I said, "It is bad for me, for I am destroyed! Because I am a man whose lips are unclean. And I live among a people whose lips are unclean. For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of All."
6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal which he had taken from the altar using a special tool.
7 He touched my mouth with it, and said, "See, this has touched your lips, and your guilt is taken away. Your sin is forgiven."
8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom should I send? Who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 4:

Evil Will Not Last

Lesson Focus

In the end, God will finally defeat all evil when He unleashes punishment on His enemies and brings justice to His people.

Focal Text

Revelation 6:1-17

Memory Verse

"For God did not send His Son into the world to say it is guilty. He sent His Son so the world might be saved from the punishment of sin by Him." (John 3:17)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Make sure you have a coin in your pocket or purse for today's opening activity in Connect with Life #1.
- ♦ Gather newspapers and magazines containing current events and bring them to class today. Also remember to locate a few articles to share for Encourage Application #6.
- ♦ Pour a small glass of water as an illustration for the activity in Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.
- ♦ Prepare bookmarks for the Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

Connect with Life

1. Begin class today with a game of "Heads or Tails." Flip a coin for the class, allowing the class to guess how it will land each time. Track the results of the coin flips on the marker board. Repeat this several times while it holds the class' interest. Then ask: *How can you know which way the coin will land? Is there any way to predict the results?*

Allow time for the class to respond, then say: *The results of a coin flip are completely random. They cannot be predicted. There is no way to know for sure how it will come out. Thankfully, this is not true with God. All of history rests firmly in God's control. It will end the way He says it will. It is not up to chance. Today's lesson will show us that God will not let evil stand forever. There is no chance of evil winning. In the end, God will judge His enemies. God will make a way for goodness and rightness to come and stay forever. He is in control.*

2. Read the introduction for today's lesson from the Study Guide. Ask class members to practice today's Memory Verse aloud with you and go over the Word List.

Guide the Study

3. Read aloud Revelation 6:1-8. Comment by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "War and Power, Famine and Death." Help class members understand this passage by beginning a chart like the one below on the marker board. Then lead class members to discuss question #2 from Things to Think About.

1ST LOCK	<i>White horse and rider with bow</i>	Military power
2ND LOCK	<i>Red horse and rider with sword</i>	Fighting and war
3RD LOCK	<i>Black horse and rider with scales</i>	Famine
4TH LOCK	<i>Light horse and rider named Death</i>	Death and sickness

4. Read aloud Revelation 6:9-11. Comment by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "Those Killed for Telling of Jesus." Add to your chart in the following way. Then lead class members to discuss question #3 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

5TH LOCK	<i>Altar to those killed for telling of Jesus</i>	Suffering and persecution of Christians throughout history
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5. Finally, read aloud Revelation 6:12-17. Comment by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled "The Earth and the Stars." Add to your chart in the following way. Then lead class members to discuss question #4 from Things to Think About.

6TH LOCK	<i>Shaking earth, dark sun, blood moon, and crashing stars</i>	Natural disasters throughout all creation
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Encourage Application

6. Point out that many of the things named in the chart are already happening in the world today. Pass out an assortment of current newspapers and current event magazines to class. Divide the class into groups. Instruct them to look for examples of events like the ones described in Revelation 6:1-17.

Be sure to have selected in advance a few articles that you can share as examples of these things. Explain that at the end of time these types of problems will occur even more than ever.

7. Next, read aloud the Study Guide section entitled “Things to Remember.” Point out that God wants to pave the way for good. He wants to remove evil so His creation can be free from pain and suffering and evil.

8. Lead the class to discuss question #5 from Things to Think About. Invite the class to consider 2 Peter 3:9 and John 3:16–17. Have two good readers read these verses out loud for the class. Make it clear that God wants to save people from the punishment of sin. Even in His anger against sin, God wants to save people. Ask:

— *Do you understand that living apart from God’s authority makes you an enemy of God?*

— *Have you repented of your sinful life and turned to God for forgiveness?*

— *Have you asked God to save you from the punishment of sin?*

Assure class members that you are available to talk with them about these questions. Invite them to see you after class or contact you this week if they need to talk about these things.

Say: *God will not let evil stand forever. But He will protect from punishment the people who belong to Him.*

9. Call attention to the unit title. Close in prayer that class members will remember that God is in control. Pray that they will run to Him as a strong hope in fearful times.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Ask class members if any of them watch detective shows or courtroom dramas on television or in movies. Ask if anyone has ever seen a courtroom scene in real life. Enlist class members to help you name people who are part of a courtroom. List their responses on the board. (*Bailiff, jury members, lawyers, the accused defendant, witnesses, court reporters, judge, security guards*) Then ask: *Who is the most important person in a courtroom?*

Help class members to identify the judge as the most important person in a courtroom. Say: *The scene from today’s lesson is like a courtroom. It is a scene of judgment and punishment. God is the judge. And He is the most important person at the center of our passage today. We will discover something important about Him in today’s lesson. Because God is good, He will not let evil stand forever.*

Finish by reading the introduction from today’s Study Guide.

Encourage Application

♦ Pour a small glass of water and set it out in front of the class. Ask: *What would happen if I poured this water out of the glass?* Affirm that not much would happen. The glass is small and the amount of water is not much.

Then say: *Now imagine that this water represents God’s anger against evil. Image that this glass is big enough to contain all the water in the ocean. What would happen, then?* Affirm that so much water could cause

massive destruction. Remind class members that water is powerful. Point out the example of a tsunami or a flash flood. These are destructive forces.

Say: *God’s anger against evil is like a destructive flood that will be poured out on the earth. It is like a strong wall of water against which no one can stand. Only Jesus is strong enough and good enough to stand against the power of such punishment. Only those who hide themselves in Jesus through repentance and forgiveness will be protected from the punishment of sin.*

Lead class members to recite the Memory Verse from today’s lesson. Then close the class in prayer that class members will turn to Jesus with all their hearts to find forgiveness and be saved from the punishment of sin.

♦ Along with Encourage Application #8, share a bookmark like the ones below with class members. (These verses are among the Memory Verses in this unit. John 3:17 is for this lesson, and 2 Peter 3:9 is the Memory Verse for Lesson 6.)

**The Lord is not
slow about
keeping
His promise
as some
people think.
He is waiting
for you.**

**The Lord does
not want any
person to be
punished
forever. He
wants all people
to be sorry for
their sins and
turn from them.**

2 Peter 3:9

**For God did
not send His
Son
into the world
to say it is
guilty.
He sent His
Son so the
world might be
saved
from the
punishment
of sin
by Him.**

John 3:17

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 5:

God Saves His People

Lesson Focus

At the end of time, God will identify His people and protect them from the punishment of sin and evil.

Focal Text

Revelation 7:1-12

Memory Verse

"They said, 'Let it be so!' May our God have worship and shining-greatness and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength forever. Let it be so!" (Revelation 7:17)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ Bring a small safe, some bubble wrap, a bike helmet, and an infant car seat to class for Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Prepare and copy the chart for Guide the Study #2.
- ◆ Bring a sheet of paper, a candle warmer, some wax cubes, and a coin to class today for the illustration in Guide the Study #4.
- ◆ Bring a map or globe and a small prize to class for Guide the Study #7.
- ◆ Prepare a brief testimony for Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life.
- ◆ Invite someone to share about ministry to the nations in your local area for Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.
- ◆ Locate a recording and lyrics to the song "Strong Tower" for Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

Connect with Life

1. Bring to class today some bubble wrap, a small safe, a bike helmet, and an infant car seat. Set these items out on a table for class members to view as they enter. Make sure class members can identify each one and demonstrate how each works if needed. As class begins, ask class members if they can figure out what these items have in common. Lead them to discover that these items all keep things safe.

Say: *Today we will see how God keeps His people safe from the punishment of sin, even in the end of time.*

Then choose some volunteers to help you read the introduction from today's lesson in the Study Guide.

Guide the Study

2. Call on a volunteer to read aloud Revelation 7:1-3. Remind the class of the chart you constructed on the marker board during last week's lesson. Consider making copies to hand out to the class.

1ST LOCK	<i>White horse and rider with bow</i>	Military power
2ND LOCK	<i>Red horse and rider with sword</i>	Fighting and war
3RD LOCK	<i>Black horse and rider with scales</i>	Famine
4TH LOCK	<i>Light horse and rider named Death</i>	Death and sickness
5TH LOCK	<i>Altar to those killed for telling about Jesus</i>	Suffering and persecution of Christians throughout history
6TH LOCK	<i>Shaking earth, dark sun, blood moon, and crashing stars</i>	Natural disasters throughout all creation
7TH LOCK		

3. Point out that the 7th lock has not yet been broken. Explain that something must happen before the 7th lock is broken. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "God Marks His People" to comment on these verses.

4. Point out that throughout history, kings have used a special kind of mark to show their ownership. A letter from the king would have carried such a mark. Use some paper, a coin, and some warm wax to illustrate this for class members. Fold a single piece of paper like a letter (tri-fold). Dribble a little warm wax along the edge of the front flap to seal the letter. Then press a coin into the warm wax.

Explain that every king had his own unique mark. Point out that this is a good picture of the image in these verses. God would place His own unique mark on the people who belonged to Him. Then, they would be set apart so that they would be safe from God's punishment against His enemies.

5. Read Revelation 7:4-8 aloud. Then read the Study Guide section entitled "God's Faithful Are Safe."

6. Next, read Revelation 7:9-12 aloud. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "God's Many People" to comment on these verses.

7. Place a map on the marker board or hold up a globe for the class to see. Ask: *Can anyone guess how many nations are in the world today?*

Allow students to each make a guess. Award a small prize like a candy bar for the member whose guess is closest to the answer. According to *Worldatlas.com*, there are between 189-196 distinct nations in the world today.

Explain that nations may rise and fall, but God knows all the different people groups of the world. Assure members that in heaven, every one of them will be represented, regardless of how the boundaries of nations may change through the generations. Say: *God's people are many. They are not limited by the nations of the earth. Every group and nation of people is important to God.*

Lead the class to discuss question #4 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

Encourage Application

8. Ask the class to look one more time at the items on display from Connect with Life #1. Lead them to consider what kinds of items we try to protect. Point out that we work hardest to protect things that are the most valuable. Explain that God goes to great lengths to protect His people, because they are precious to Him.

Lead the class to discuss question #3 from Things to Think About.

9. Write Proverbs 18:10 and Nahum 1:7 on the marker board for all to read.

Explain that the man who does what is right repents from his sin with his whole heart and asks for God's forgiveness.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower.
The man who does what is right runs
into it and is safe.

Proverbs 18:10

The Lord is good, a safe place in times
of trouble. And He knows those who
come to Him to be safe.

Nahum 1:7

10. Ask: *Do you know the Lord is a safe place? Have you come to Him in repentance for forgiveness?*

Close the class in prayer that each class member would turn to God for forgiveness and to be free from the punishment of sin.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Begin class today by discussing question #1 from Things to Think About. Allow time for class members to respond. Be prepared to give a brief testimony to the class in response to this question.

Guide the Study

♦ While discussing Revelation 7:1-3, point out that this is not the only time when God marked His people out for protection. Read Exodus 12:21-28 for class members. Summarize the events surrounding these verses. Then say: *When God's people were slaves in Egypt, He marked them out for salvation with the blood of a Lamb. At the end of time, it will be the blood of Jesus, who is the Lamb of God, who will mark His people out to be saved from the punishment of sin.*

Encourage Application

♦ Say: *Have you noticed that the nations of the world have come to the United States of America?*

Take note of the nations represented in your class today. Ask class members to think of their neighbors and co-workers. Then ask what other nations are represented among them. Ask: *What are you doing to share Jesus with the people from other nations whom you see daily? What is our church doing?*

Invite someone from your church or a neighboring church to come and share about any ministries that are engaging people from the nations of the world who live in your local area. Brainstorm to identify ways your class members might be able to participate in these ministries.

♦ As you complete Encourage Application #9, play the contemporary Christian song "Strong Tower" for class members as you close the lesson today. Make sure you provide the lyrics for class members as they listen. You can find a video and lyrics for this song on YouTube at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hc5fqU0Owo4>

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 6:

Trumpets of Judgment

Lesson Focus

God is faithful to bring justice to those who are waiting for Him to rightly judge sin and evil in the world.

Focal Text

Revelation 8:1-6; 9:20-21

Memory Verse

"The Lord is not slow about keeping His promise as some people think. He is waiting for you. The Lord does not want any person to be punished forever. He wants all people to be sorry for their sins and turn from them." (2 Peter 3:9)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Locate the chart referenced in Guide the Study #2.
- ♦ Bring a stopwatch or clock for Guide the Study #3.
- ♦ Locate a picture for Guide the Study #6.
- ♦ Purchase a small flashlight for each class member for Encourage Application #10.
- ♦ Find black and white hats for Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life.

Connect with Life

1. Use the marker board to list a series of words like the ones here. As class begins today, ask members if they can identify the opposites for each word listed on the marker board. Say: *Opposite means something that is completely different from something else.*

Affirm that *Dark, Happy, Black, Night, Down, and Right* are the opposite of the words on the board. Ask: *What is the opposite of good?* Affirm that evil is the opposite of good.

Say: *We know evil exists in the world. Sometimes we might wonder if it can be stopped. Today's lesson continues our study of Revelation with a clear picture of how God's goodness will triumph over evil in the world.*

Light
Sad
White
Day
Up
Left

Guide the Study

2. Remind class members of the chart from Guide the Study #2 in Lesson 5. Help them remember that John was still watching and waiting for the Lamb to open the 7th lock on God's special book. Say: *God's people had been marked out to be saved from the punishment of sin. But God was still waiting to release the strongest judgment on earth.*

3. Ask a class member to read aloud Revelation 8:1. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "No Sound" to comment on this verse. Then say: *We are going to experiment to see if we can remain completely silent for a minute.* Let class members know when you are starting and time the sixty seconds with a stopwatch or clock.

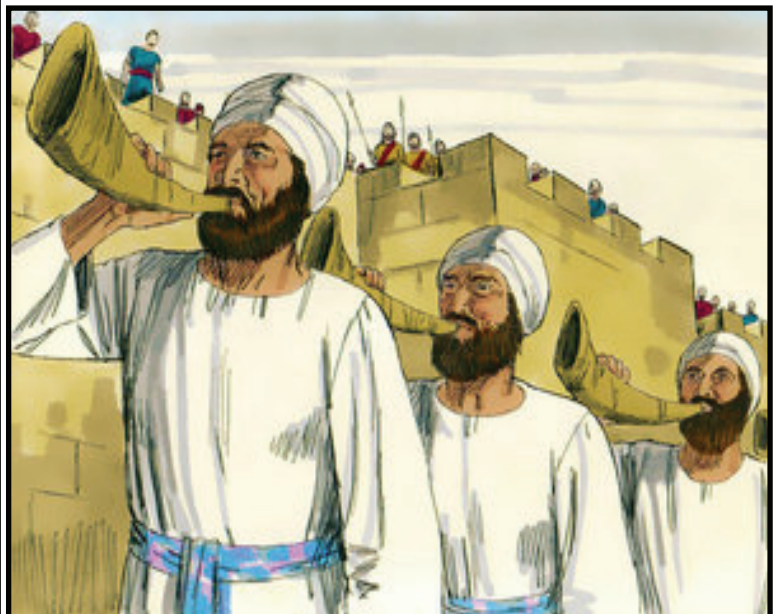
After a minute, ask: *How did you feel trying to stay quiet? What thoughts went through your mind?* Discuss their responses.

Say: *We felt strange after just one minute. Can you imagine how John felt during the time of silence He witnessed in heaven?*

4. Remind class members that all of heaven was waiting for God to act. They were waiting expectantly for God to bring right judgment against evil. Then lead the class to discuss Things to Think About #2.

5. Ask a class member to read Revelation 8:2-4. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "Prayers of the People" to comment on this passage. Lead the class to discuss Things to Think About #3.

6. Talk specifically about the use of trumpets throughout history. Examine 1 Samuel 13:3, Numbers 10:10, Leviticus 23:24, and Exodus 19:16 as examples for the class. Share a picture like the one here to help class members gain a better understanding of this concept. This picture and others like it can be found at freebibleimages.org.



Source: <http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/joshua-jericho/>

7. Ask a class member to read aloud Revelation 8:5-6. Draw comments from the Study Guide section entitled “Thunder from Heaven.” Lead the class in a discussion of question #4 from Things to Think About.

8. Be sure to briefly summarize Revelation 8:7-9:19 for class members before moving on. Point out that one-third of God’s creation is affected by the horns of judgment. Read the first paragraph from the Study Guide section entitled “Foolish Men.” Help the class see that God wants to save. He does not delight in punishment. Remind the class of John 3:17 and 2 Peter 3:9. These two verses are mentioned in Encourage Application #8 from Lesson 4. Ask volunteers to help you find and read these verses. (If you made the bookmarks in Lesson 4, refer to them now.)

9. Read aloud Revelation 9:20-21 for the class. Comment on these verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled “Foolish Men.” Lead the class to discuss question #5 from Things to Think About.

Encourage Application

10. Conclude by summarizing “Things to Remember” from the Study Guide. Give each class member a small flashlight purchased from a dollar store. Say: *Light is often a symbol of hope. Along with strong words of judgment, today’s Bible text gives us two reasons to have strong hope. First, God will not let evil stand forever. He will bring right judgment and justice for His people. Second, He is waiting to give another chance for men and women to turn to Him and escape the punishment of sin.*

Encourage class members to keep the flashlight on their keychain, in their purse, or in their pocket. Explain that the flashlights should serve as a reminder of the hope we have in God through His son, Jesus.

11. Turn off the classroom lights and ask class members to turn on their small flashlights. Then, lead the class in a closing prayer that members who do not yet belong to God would not be like the foolish men in today’s lesson. Pray that they would instead turn to God in humble repentance. Pray, too, that class members who already belong to God would live the kind of lives which brightly shine in this dark world so they can point others to Jesus.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Show class members a white hat and a black hat. Comment that in many movies, especially old westerns, good guys wear white and bad guys wear black. Further explain that these colors are often symbols for good (white) and evil (black). Ask if any class members have seen television shows or movies where this is true. Allow time for discussion. Say: *Every day, we see evil in the world, and we may wonder if the bad guys are going to win. But today’s verses remind us God is in control, and He will be victorious against evil.*

Guide the Study

♦ Make sure every class member has a copy of the Bible text page from today’s Study Guide. Divide the class into three groups. Say: *The Book of Revelation is full of vivid descriptions which engage all our senses. Today’s passage is no exception.*

Assign each group of members a different task as you read Revelation 8:1-6 aloud. Ask the first group to listen and underline any descriptions that relate to what John saw. Ask the second group to listen and underline any descriptions that relate to what John heard. Ask the third group to listen and underline any descriptions that relate to what John smelled.

Allow the groups to share their findings with the class. Take time to explain the meanings behind each of these sensory images and details.

Lesson 6 • Page 33	
Revelation 8:1-6	Revelation 9:20-21
1 When the Lamb broke the seventh lock, <u>there was not a sound in heaven for about one-half hour.</u>	20 The men that were still living after these troubles were past would not turn away from worshipping demons. They would not turn away from false gods made from gold and silver and brass and stone and wood. None of these false gods can see or hear or walk.
2 Then I <u>saw the seven angels standing before God. They were given seven horns.</u>	21 These men were not sorry for their sins and would not turn away from all their killing and their witchcraft. They would not stop their sex sins and their stealing.
3 Another angel <u>came and stood at the altar. He held a cup made of gold full of special perfume. He was given much perfume so he could mix it in with the prayers of those who belonged to God. Their prayers were put on the altar made of gold before the throne.</u>	
4 <u>Smoke from burning the special perfume and the prayers of those who belong to God went up before God out of the angel’s hand.</u>	
5 Then the angel <u>took the cup of gold. He filled it with fire from the altar and threw it down on the earth. There was thunder and noise and lightning and the earth shook.</u>	
6 <u>The seven angels that had the seven horns got ready to blow them.</u>	

Encourage Application

♦ Direct attention back to the black and white hats from Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life. Ask: *In movies and television, do the bad guys ever become good guys?* Agree that this does happen sometimes. Emphasize again that it is God’s desire for all people to be His people.

Say: *God is always ready to help people switch hats if they come to Him seeking forgiveness. And God wants to use Christians to share that message everywhere they go.* Encourage class members to look for chances to share God’s message with someone this week. Close the class with prayer.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 7:

Telling About Jesus

Lesson Focus

God's servants will continue to tell about Him even in the middle of persecution and suffering.

Focal Text

Revelation 11:1-14

Memory Verse

"You will tell about Me in the city of Jerusalem and over all the countries of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Prior Preparation

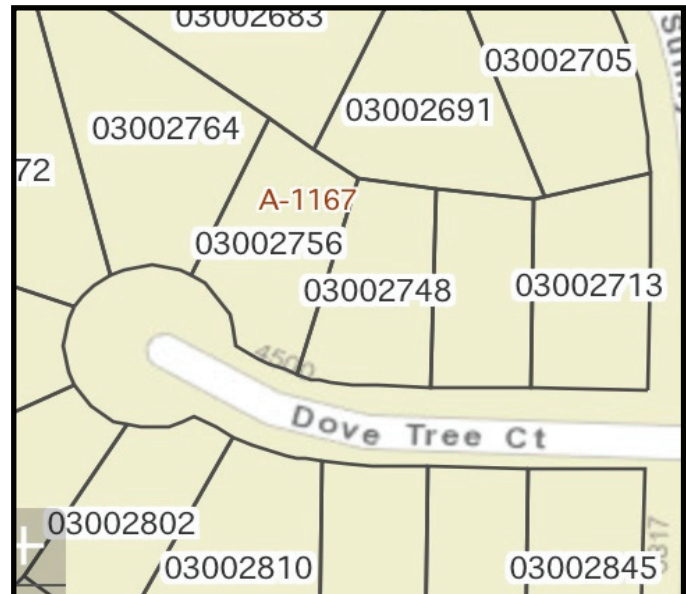
- ◆ Bing a history book, a magazine, a horoscope, and a Bible for to class Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Locate an example of a property line map to show in Guide the Study #2.
- ◆ Bring a welcome mat for Guide the Study #5.
- ◆ Have poster board and markers available for Guide the Study #7.
- ◆ Have index cards for Encourage Application #9.
- ◆ Bring a ruler, tape measure, and yardstick for Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life.
- ◆ Locate and copy a picture for Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study.
- ◆ Prepare and copy the vocabulary worksheet for Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

Connect with Life

1. As class members enter today, have on display a history book, a celebrity magazine, and a horoscope. Ask: *Which one of these items contains the most accurate information?* Take responses from the class. Affirm that the history book is the most reliable source of information. Then, hold up a Bible. Ask: *What about this book? How reliable is the Bible? As Christians, we believe that all of God's Word is true. It tells us who Jesus is. We are responsible for sharing this truth with the world. Today's lesson reminds us to be faithful in telling about Jesus.*

Guide the Study

2. Visit the website for your local county's tax appraisal district. Navigate through the website to find a map of some property lines like the one here. Show this or a similar map to class members. Help them identify the lines which have been measured off. Say: *When we measure out land, we are measuring property boundaries. Boundary lines like these help to identify ownership of a specific area.*



3. Read aloud Revelation 11:1-2 for class members. Refer back to the map of local property lines. Explain that this is like the picture described in Revelation 11:1-2. Say: *John was measuring out the boundary lines of God's people. He was drawing lines to mark out the people who are owned by God and belong to Him. God's people would be marked out for protection from the punishment of sin.*

4. Read aloud Revelation 11:3-6. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "Speaking for God" to comment. Call attention the word *witness* from today's Word List. Explain that this is a legal term. Remind class members that this term is fitting because this is a scene of judgment where God is the rightful judge.

5. Ask a class member to read aloud Revelation 11:7-10. Then, display a welcome mat for class members. Explain that these mats are usually found at the front door of a house and are decorated with some type of warm greeting message. Point out the Study Guide section entitled "An Unwelcome Message." Explain that many people do not welcome the message that they should turn away from living life their own way. They do not want to ask God for forgiveness through Jesus.

6. Lead the class to consider the fact that many witnesses throughout history have suffered greatly in order to share this message. Point out the story of Polycarp from the introduction to today's lesson. Then, discuss question #5 from Things to Think About.

7. Read aloud Revelation 11:11-14. When you are done, divide the class into teams. Give each team a small poster and some markers. Ask each group to illustrate the events that have been pictured in the entire passage from today's lesson. After a bit of time, allow the teams to share their posters. Lead the class to recognize that the scenes from today's lesson all show God's power. Say: *God shows His power over evil through His punishment of sin. God also gives His power to the two witnesses. Finally, God shows His power over death.*

Encourage Application

8. Summarize "Things to Remember" for class members. Lead them to discuss questions #1 and #3 from Things to Think About.

9. Pass out index cards to each class member. Ask each class member to write down in one sentence the main idea from today's lesson. After a few minutes, encourage members to share what they have written. Emphasize that God's servants have God's power to faithfully tell about Jesus, even in the worst circumstances.

10. Instruct class members to flip their index cards over. Then lead the class to consider question #4 from Things to Think About. Direct class members to write their responses on the flip side of their index cards. Then close the class in prayer asking for class members to act in God's power to be faithful witnesses to the people they have identified.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Display a ruler, tape measure, and yardstick for the class. Ask: *What do these things have in common?* Lead the class to recognize that all these things are used to measure things. Choose a volunteer to measure the

dimensions of the room. Emphasize that when we measure things, we are marking out the boundaries of something.

Say: *The opening picture in today's Bible passage revolves around the idea of measuring. Let's read what happens next in John's vision.*

Guide the Study

♦ Explain about the Jewish tradition of wearing clothes made from animal hair (v. 3). These special clothes are called *sackcloth*. Show a picture like the one here.

Say: *Sackcloth was an outward sign of a heart that was sorry for sin. It was not the act of putting on sackcloth that brought God's forgiveness. It was a heart that was so sorry over sin that it would cause a person to humbly dress like this in public. David celebrates God's forgiveness in Psalm 30:11 when he says, "You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy."*



<http://www.smp.org/resourcecenter/resource/1637/>

Encourage Application

♦ Use the following vocabulary worksheet to summarize today's lesson. Instruct class members to work together to fill in the blanks using words from the Word List. (Answers: *revolt, witnesses, deny, bold*)

Revelation 11:1-14

The world is full of men and women who _____ against God. They fight against Him in every way possible. They do not welcome the message of Jesus. But God calls His servants to be faithful _____ to all people until the end of time. It is easy to be fearful of telling others about Jesus. The danger of persecution and suffering is very real. In many parts of the world, a Christian can be killed or imprisoned just for telling about Jesus. Even in the United States, Christians can be criticized or treated unfairly. Christians might be tempted to _____ their faith in Jesus because they are afraid. But through God's power, Christians can be _____.

Word List:

bold

deny

revolt

witnesses

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 8: Saints vs. the Serpent

Lesson Focus

As Christians face opposition from the powers of evil, we are to endure in faith, confident of God's victory.

Focal Text

Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17; 13:1-4, 11-18

Memory Verse

"Since God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31b)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Enlist a class member to tell the story of Tony Dungy's Super Bowl Victory from the introduction in the Study Guide. If you like, create a banner for the 2007 Super Bowl game of Indianapolis Colts vs. Chicago Bears.
- ♦ For Guide the Study #5, prepare a small "clue card" and make copies for a handout.
- ♦ For Guide the Study #6, enlist a member to prepare and present a short report about Satan, using the information in the Study Guide.
- ♦ For Guide the Study #7, prepare questions as a handout.

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *What does "Dallas Cowboys vs. Cleveland Browns" mean?* (Use the example of any sports competition, e.g., soccer, tennis, etc., that would interest your class.) Write the abbreviation "vs." on the markerboard. Ask: *What does vs. mean?* As members call out words, such as *game, battle, conflict, opponent, opposition*, etc., jot them on the markerboard. Explain that *vs.* is the abbreviation for *versus*. The word comes from Latin and means "against."

2. Call attention to today's lesson title: "Saints vs. the Serpent." Ask: *In this competition, who are the saints? Who is the serpent?* Explain that Satan appeared in the form of a serpent in the Garden of Eden. And from the beginning of time a battle has been going on on the world stage. It is a battle between good and evil, between the people who follow God and Satan's evil forces who are against God.

3. Say: *In today's lesson, through strange images, John shows us that we are in a battle with Satan. Satan is and always has been against followers of Christ. John's vision let the early Christians know that though they were facing persecution, Jesus has already won the greatest battle. Believing in the final victory will help them (and us) endure present circumstances. Having confidence in Christ's final victory gives us hope today.*

Guide the Study

4. Remind the class of the circumstances in which John wrote the book of Revelation. (Under Roman rule, Christians were being persecuted, tortured, and faced economic privation.) Lead the class to read aloud the paragraph in the Study Guide "Things to Remember" as an introduction to today's study. Take time to review the new words in this paragraph: opponent, rage.

5. Explain that in Revelation John used symbols. That is, he used one word but meant something different. The first readers of the book probably understood what the symbols meant, but to us they may seem like code. However, the Old Testament gives many clues to their meanings. Say: *Before reading, to better understand the passages, let's look at the meaning of the symbols John used.* Write these on the markerboard, or prepare a small "clue card" as a handout.

Symbols and Meanings

- woman – the nation of Israel, the church
- serpent – Satan
- Child – Jesus
- first wild animal (or beast) – Roman empire
- second wild animal (or beast) – False prophet

6. Comment that the scene in these verses depicts the two forces in our world: the force for good (God) and the force for evil (Satan). To give members an understanding of Satan and where he came from, refer to the information about Satan found in the Study Guide. Alternatively, ask a member to prepare ahead of time to present the information.

7. Invite a member to read Revelation 12:1–6 aloud. Divide members into groups of three. Instruct each group to pretend they are a newspaper reporting team assigned to cover the story of a battle in heaven. Give each group a pen and prepared handout with these questions as a guide:

- Who was involved in the battle?
- What took place in the battle?
- What was the outcome of the battle?

Instruct the groups to review verses 1–6 and the background material from the Study Guide "Guide the Study" and prepare their report. Allow time for study, but do not call for reports at this time.

Invite another member to read Revelation 12:13–17. Comment that in this scene the battle in heaven continued. Instruct the groups to review these verses and the material in the Study Guide for additional information for their report. After a time for study, call for the groups to report.

8. After receiving the reports, lead members to discuss the passage further, using questions like these:

- Why is the battle with evil ongoing?
- When will the final victory be won?
- Are you among the faithful ones who obey the teachings of Jesus?
- How have you experienced God's protection against evil?
- How does knowing the future help you endure present-day battles?

9. Inform the class that in Revelation 13 two strange beasts, one from the sea and one from the land, opposed God and tried to defeat the faithful followers of God. Invite a member to read aloud Revelation 13:1–4 and another member to read aloud Revelation 13:11–18. Present a summary of the passages, using material from the Study Guide, emphasizing the roles the Roman empire and the false prophet played in carrying out Satan's goal of destroying God's people.

10. Say: *The Bible calls Satan a deceiver. Ask: In what way does the beast in this passage fool people?* (By doing powerful signs and by leading people to worship something other than God.) Call members to a moment of reflection. Ask: *Are there "beasts" in your life that you are worshiping, rather than God Who alone is worthy?* Alternatively, ask members to suggest things that people (or they personally) are tempted to idolize or worship more than God. (Consider such things as good jobs, good children, good grades, fun activities, convenience, etc.)

Encourage Application

11. Ask: *What are some things you see as evil in our world today?* (Responses may include: slave trade, genocide, gang violence, government corruption, prostitution, etc.) Lead members to consider how we as Christians might contribute to this evil—by our complacency, our selfishness, and our cowardice. Invite members to determine one thing they could do to battle evil in their own circumstances. Is there something the class could do as a whole? Lead members to brainstorm, pray, and develop a plan to follow as the Holy Spirit leads.

12. Lead members to respond to "Things to Think About," Questions 1 and 3, from the Study Guide: "When has Satan seemed real to you? How did you resist him?" and "What do you know about Jesus that gives you confidence He is the victor?"

13. Comment that many Christians today face persecution much like the early Christians did. But as followers of Christ, we don't live in fear of what the future holds. In

the face of opposition, we are encouraged because our confidence is in Christ's ultimate victory.

14. Close in prayer thanking God for the assurance we have of ultimate victory in Christ.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Ahead of class time, enlist a member to prepare to tell the story (from the Study Guide Introduction) of Tony Dungy's Super Bowl victory. For effect, display a banner announcing the 2007 Super Bowl game: Indianapolis Colts vs. Chicago Bears. Instruct the storyteller to emphasize Tony's winning mantra: "Believe you will win and you will win!"

♦ Comment that today's Bible passages, with a serpent, strange beasts, and a mysterious number, are meant to assure Christians that we will win. Our faith in Christ's ultimate victory over Satan and evil gives us confidence to face every battle this world brings.

Guide the Study

♦ Note that for centuries, people have come up with suggestions of exactly what or who John meant by the "wild beasts" described here. Suggestions have included Napoleon, Hitler, and many others. Ask: *Do you think this passage was meant to point to specific people? Why or why not? Can you think of a reason it remains difficult to determine who, if anyone, these wild beasts are?* Explain that the passage and its warnings remind Christians of all generations to be on the alert for evil forces and people.

Encourage Application

♦ Invite members to consider opposition from evil forces that is closer to home—in their daily lives. Receive responses. Be prepared to share your personal struggles with such things as worldliness, hunger for power, praise seeking, me-first attitudes, etc. Point out that these things are like "beasts" that demand our worship. Lead members to share how the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible study, and meditation help in combating evil forces in their lives.

♦ Practice today's Memory Verse: "Since God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31b). Suggest members remember this verse as they face spiritual battles during the coming week.

♦ Close in prayer, thanking God that He is always for us.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

Revelation: *Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

Lesson 9: The Forces of Evil Receive Judgment

Lesson Focus

God's followers can live in assurance that God will bring fierce judgment on all opposition.

Focal Text

Revelation 14:1-13

Memory Verse

"This is why God's people need to keep true to God's Word and stay faithful to Jesus." (Revelation 14:12)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ For Guide the Study #3, prepare the handout as described.
- ♦ For Guide the Study #9, you may want to write out Revelation 14:13 as a three-person dialog.
- ♦ For the Connect with Life extra teaching idea, invite a member to prepare to tell the story of Simon Weisenthal from the Study Guide Introduction.

Connect with Life

1. Write the word "democide" on the markerboard. Explain that what happened in Germany with the rise of Hitler is an example of democide. Explain that democide means "death by government." It is the murder of people by their government. Invite members to recall other cases of democide that have received world attention. (Cambodian killing fields and Rwandan genocide are two examples.)

2. Comment that during the time of John's visions the Roman government was practicing democide. They were persecuting and killing Christians. But Rome, like all evil empires fell. Satan may rule in this world now, but, in the end, he will face eternal punishment. Today's lesson gives a picture of the end times when all people will face the judgment. People who have accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and had their sins forgiven will be blessed. But people who have committed the ultimate evil deed—rejecting Christ's

offer of forgiveness—will receive eternal punishment. In the end, no one will get away with doing evil.

Guide the Study

3. Remind the class that John used symbols in describing his visions. Have a member read Revelation 14:1–5 aloud while the class listens for the description of the 144,000. Comment that though we don't know for sure who these 144,000 are, there are many things we do know about them. Pass out a prepared handout with information about the 144,000 people. Invite a member to read aloud the information.

What We Know About The 144,000

- They are with Jesus on Mount Zion.
- They have the names of Christ and God on their foreheads.
- They are singing a new song, loudly.
- Only they could learn this new song.
- They are bought by the blood of Christ.
- They are pure.
- They are the first ones to be given to God and to the Lamb.
- They speak the truth.

4. Lead the class to discuss the passage and the handout with questions like these:

- At what point in time is this happening?
- What do the names of Christ and God on their foreheads mean?
- What song might they be singing?
- John tells us they were pure and spoke the truth. Why do you think this is important?
- How would you feel if you were the first to be with Christ at the end of time?

5. Enlist a member to read aloud what the first angel proclaimed in Revelation 14:6–7. Enlist a second member to read what the second angel proclaimed in verse 8. Write the words "Who, What, When, Why" on the markerboard. Then lead the class to answer the following questions:

- Who is in this scene?
- What is he carrying?
- What is he preaching?
- To whom is he giving the message?
- What is his message?
- When is the time to respond to the message?
- Why is the message urgent?

6. Lead members to consider how the Good News is being proclaimed today. Ask: *Who is preaching to people from every nation, people group, language, and people? What part does every Christian have in proclaiming the message? Why is it even more urgent that people hear the message today?*

7. Using material from the Study Guide, "The Angel and

the Gospel,” briefly explain the significance of the second angel’s proclamation that Babylon has fallen. Large evil institutions or forces, such as Babylon and Rome, influenced other peoples and nations to follow their immoral ways. This passage compares the influence to sexual sin and misuse of wine. Emphasize that the message both angels want unbelievers to hear is that now is the time to turn to God. Now is the opportune time!

8. Instruct the class to listen for the word “worship” as a member reads Revelation 14:9–12 aloud. Write the definition of worship on the markerboard: “The act of showing respect and love for a god.” Comment that these verses tell the reason people will receive God’s anger in the end time. They worshiped a false god. They will suffer because they gave their respect and love to a god who is false. Not worshiping God is the greatest evil deed. Christians are spared punishment in the end because Christ has taken the punishment we deserve. People who keep true to God’s word and stay faithful to Jesus are spared the judgment.

9. Choose three members to read and dramatize Revelation 13:14. Voice 1 speaks for John, Voice 2 (God’s voice) speaks the words from heaven, and Voice 3 speaks for the Spirit. Lead the chosen speakers to find the words they are to read. Repeat the dramatization a couple of times. Afterwards, ask members to name the three blessings Christians who endure trials on earth will have at the end time. Jot responses on the markerboard, such as “They will be happy; they will be at rest; their good deeds will follow them.”

Encourage Application

10. Ask: *If you were a believer facing persecution or death, would you be encouraged knowing there is a promise of reward for your faithfulness?* Receive responses.

11. Ask: *In light of the fact that no evil goes unpunished and unbelievers will face judgment at the end time, what kind of Christ-follower should we be? Is it enough to be content in our well-being?* Emphasize that our unbelieving neighbors and friends are in need of the message the angels proclaimed. We are the ones to proclaim the message of God’s grace and His judgment today. We can do this through the way we live and by speaking the message with our words. Lead the class to describe some specific ways they can live and speak the message in their circumstances.

12. Close in prayer, thanking Christ for taking the judgment we deserve. Thank Him, too, that everything will be made right in the end when all evil doers will receive justice.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Ahead of class, invite a member to prepare to tell the story of Simon Weisenthal from the Study Guide introduction. After the story, call attention to today’s lesson title: “The Forces of Evil Receive Judgment.” Point out that the Good News is a message of grace—Christ graciously took the punishment we deserve. But God’s message is also one of judgment. In the end, people and empires who do evil will receive justice. In God’s kingdom, no one gets away with doing evil.

Guide the Study

♦ Ask members to tell of some issues or events that seem to be a battle between good and evil. Be cautious in leading this discussion. There are many social issues on which sincere Christians disagree, such as gun rights/gun control. Be sure that members listen to one another with respect.

♦ Comment that the battle between good and evil is ongoing. In the midst of difficulties and struggles, it is easy to think evil is winning. But God wants Christians to live in hope and not in fear. Our hope is in Christ’s final victory when faithfulness will be rewarded and evil will be punished.

Encourage Application

♦ Ask: *How do you feel about the evil done by the Nazis in light of the Bible’s teachings about the judgment? How strong is Satan’s power to lead people into evil? How often are you tempted to follow his ways rather than God’s?* Receive responses.

♦ Referring to questions 4 and 5 from the Study Guide “Things to Think About,” call members to a moment of reflection. Ask: *How much would you be willing to suffer for your faith? Are you faithfully proclaiming the message of salvation to others?*

♦ Close in prayer, asking God to strengthen the faith of all who live under persecution from evil governments. Thank Him for the hope we have that, in the end, His justice is sure.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 10:

Songs of Victory and Scenes of Destruction

Lesson Focus

God's suffering people can rejoice in the certain vindication of God's way.

Focal Text

Revelation 15:1-8; 16:12-21

Memory Verse

"The joy of being saved is being heard in the tents of those who are right and good. The right hand of the Lord does powerful things." (Psalm 118:15)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Ahead of class, ask a member to prepare to tell the story of the Batak tribe of Sumatra from the Study Guide Introduction.
- ♦ For Guide the Study #6, gather sheets of paper and colored pencils or markers for each class member.
- ♦ For Guide the Study extra teaching ideas, make a list of the 10 plagues (or troubles) in Exodus 7-10.
- ♦ Obtain a map of the Middle East that shows the location of Jerusalem, ancient Babylon, the Euphrates River, and Megiddo in Israel.

Connect with Life

1. Display today's lesson title on the markerboard. Underline the phrase "Songs of Victory." Invite members to tell their favorite Christian song and why it is their favorite. Ask: *When do you hum or sing the song? When you're alone? In the car? Throughout the day?* Invite volunteers to share the lyrics to their favorite song. Be prepared to share your favorite song. Quote some of the words of the song for the group.
2. Comment that the nature of Christians is to sing. Explain that today's lesson continues John's visions of the end times. At that time, the faithful saints who follow Christ

will be singing. It will be a time of great celebration. But, sadly, people who refuse the salvation offered by Christ will face destruction. These are the people who choose to follow Satan and do evil. They refuse to worship Christ.

Guide the Study

3. Direct members' attention to Revelation 15. State that in this vision John saw two things: One thing was happening and another thing was about to happen. Instruct members to read silently verses 1-4 to discover what is happening. Allow time for reading, then ask the following questions and receive responses.

- How many people were standing on the sea of glass? (many)
- Who were they? (the faithful who did not follow the serpent Satan)
- What were they doing? (holding harps and singing)
- Who was Moses? Who was the Lamb? (Moses led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, a time when God protected His people but destroyed the Egyptians. Jesus, like a lamb, gave Himself as an offering for sin.)

4. Call attention to the words of the song in verses 3 and 4. Present information about the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb from the Study Guide. Explain that the song is a celebration song honoring God. It says God's judgment at the end of time is right.

5. Point out that these verses tell about God. Invite members to review the song and call out things it says about God.

- God does great and powerful things.
- He is all-powerful Lord.
- He is always right and true.
- He is King of all nations.
- He is the only One Who is holy.

6. Invite a member to read verses 5-8 aloud while the class listens for the thing that is about to happen. Hand each member a sheet of paper and some colored pencils. Tell them to illustrate the scene with drawings/pictures of the things told about in the verses—the temple, seven angels, white clothing, belts of gold, jars of gold, and smoke. Encourage members to do their best but that perfection is not expected. After a time for work, invite members to display their illustrations and explain what was happening in the scene.

7. Select a member to read the section in the Study Guide "Jars of Trouble" (Revelation 16:1-11) aloud to the class. Point out that Pharaoh refused to let the children of Israel leave Egypt even after the plagues came on his people. In the same way, evil people at the end time will also refuse to worship Christ even after the troubles are poured out.

8. List the troubles on the markerboard: sores, blood, heat,

darkness. Ask members to tell which trouble they think would be the worst, and why. Invite anyone who has experienced a bad earthquake or similar troubles to share their story. Ask: *When bad things happen, do you turn to God? Why do people refuse to turn to God?*

9. Tell the class that there were still two more jars of trouble to be poured on the earth. Invite a member to read verses 12–16 while the class listens for the target of the sixth jar. Review the passage with questions like these:

- What was the target of the sixth jar of God’s anger? (the Euphrates River)
- What happened? (The water dried up.)
- What were the kings of the east crossing over to do? (to fight in the final battle)
- What did the demons do? (bring the kings of the earth together for war)
- What was the final battle called? (Armageddon)
- What does Christ’s return “like a robber” mean to you?
- What can you do to “keep your clothes ready” for Christ’s return?

10. Comment that after the seventh angel poured out the jar of God’s anger on the air, God spoke. He said “It is done!” Invite a member to read verses 17–21 while the class listens for what happened next. Add the words drought, and earthquake and hail to the list of troubles. Explain that Babylon represents all nations and peoples who have followed Satan. Every person who bears the mark of Satan will experience God’s anger. But all who bear the mark of Christ will be saved.

Encourage Application

11. Present this case study. Lead members in discussion. *In the hospital waiting room Jodi nervously awaited the doctor’s assessment of her son’s condition. He was in surgery after a horrific car accident. Jodi feared her son might die. Friends had gathered to give her support. They began to sing. The singing turned Jodi’s mind to Jesus. The singing comforted her. She knew she could trust Jesus whatever the outcome.*

12. Use the questions in the Study Guide “Things to Think About” to draw out responses to today’s lesson. Read the memory verse. Lead members to say it from memory. Point out that we don’t live in tents but we can make our homes a place where joy and victory are heard. Close in prayer, thanking God for the joy and victory we have in Him.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Ahead of class, ask a member to prepare to tell the story of the Batak tribe of Sumatra from the Study Guide Introduction. Ask members if they think singing is unique

for Christians. Invite members with a knowledge of other religions, like Buddhism or Islam, to share. Point out that singing has always been a part of Christian worship. Say: *Today’s lesson assures us that there is an ultimate victory in Jesus. He will protect His people in the end. But He will judge those who reject Him.*

Guide the Study

♦ Make a list of the 10 plagues (or troubles) in Exodus 7–10: Water turned to blood, frogs, gnats, flies, death of Egyptian livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, death of Egyptian firstborn. Lead the class to compare this list with the list of troubles in today’s passage.

♦ Display a map of the Middle East that shows Jerusalem, ancient Babylon, the Euphrates River and Megiddo in Israel. Note that Babylon used to be a huge city in what is now Iraq, but it does not exist anymore. Also explain that scholars think Megiddo is the location John had in mind for Armageddon. Ask: *How does the point that these places are (or were) actual, physical locations affect your understanding of these passages?*

Encourage Application

♦ Comment that often we feel removed from the Bible’s first-century Christians. Yet in some ways our culture is like the first century. There is still evil in the world. People still refuse to worship Christ. Many nations and societies are anti-Christian. Sometime people in our homes are against Christ.

♦ Tell this story as an example: *Belinda is a mother of a grown son who walked away from the Lord. He chose to marry an unbeliever. Belinda’s daughter-in-law has forbidden her from telling Bible stories or even singing about Jesus to her grandchildren. Belinda wants to be faithful to the Lord. She wants her grandchildren to know that God loves them.*

Ask: *What advice would you give Belinda?*

♦ Invite members to pray silently for family members and friends who refuse to worship Christ. Close in prayer, thanking God for His faithfulness to us in the midst of troubles in this life.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation: *Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

Lesson 11: Babylon Falls

Lesson Focus

The improper use of wealth and power results in punishment rather than protection.

Focal Text

Revelation 17:1-6; 18:1-8

Memory Verse

"The love of money is the beginning of all kinds of sin." (1 Timothy 6:10a)

Prior Preparation

♦ For Connect with Life #1, shop for some Fair Trade label items. Enlist members to research Fair Trade online.

Connect with Life

1. Display an item (or several) with the Fair Trade label. Possible items would include coffee, tea, chocolate, produce, or apparel. Ahead of class assign a member to research Fair Trade on the internet. In class, have a member read the information about Fair Trade found in the Study Guide Introduction. Then allow the member who did the research to give additional facts.

2. Point out that that wealth and power can be used to help others. Or it can be used to oppress and destroy others. Say: *In our lesson today, John describes Babylon's fall. She had wealth and power, but she used her influence to oppress others, and faced destruction in the end.*

3. Have the class read today's memory verse together. Tell them that at the end of class they will practice saying the verse by memory. Point out that the love of money (greed) leads to all kinds of sin. Ask: *How is this different from saying that money—rather than the love of money—leads to all kinds of sin?*

Guide the Study

4. To aid in understanding today's passage remind the class

of the special nature of Revelation. A brief lecture might include facts like these: Revelation is difficult to understand because it is written in code language. It connects Israel's past history with the actual history of first-century Christians. It pronounces a message of judgment on Satan and all who follow him, and also proclaims Christ's ultimate victory in the end time. Revelation is a letter, written to real people who were facing fear, hopelessness, and oppression. John wrote to give hope to the persecuted Christians. They lived under the power and control of the Roman emperors, many of whom killed Christians for sport. John wrote to assure Christians of victory in Jesus and His strength.

5. Write the first subtitle in today's lesson on the markerboard: "A Corrupt Empire." Review the meaning of the word "corrupt" from the new word list in the Study Guide. Invite a member to read Revelation 17:1-6 aloud while the class listens for who the angel says is corrupt. Explain that the woman described in these verses is Rome. The name Babylon as John used it is a symbol for Rome.

6. Create a word web on the markerboard. In a circle, write the three words "woman, Babylon, Rome." Ask members to review the verses and call out words or phrase associated with the woman. As members respond, write the words or phrases in a circular fashion around the center like spokes on a wheel. As an alternate exercise, distribute a handout sheet on which you have drawn the center circle. Tell members to work in pairs to create a web of words that describe the woman and her deeds. Allow time for work. Then invite one group to summarize the passage using the words they wrote on the web. Allow other groups to add words and phrase.

7. Explain that the imagery used in this passage describes the woman as "someone who sells her body," that is, a prostitute. John's readers would understand this imagery. The Old Testament describes the nation of Israel as a woman. The New Testament describes the church as the bride of Christ. When ancient Israel was unfaithful to follow God, her actions were like an unfaithful bride or a prostitute.

8. Explain that the woman Babylon, a symbol for Rome, was guilty of much evil. She was guilty of immorality, oppression, and pride. Roman emperors demanded worship from the citizenry. Rome oppressed people under its control, especially Christians. They often killed Christians for sport. The Roman Empire was vast, with much wealth and power. She exported her sinful behavior throughout her empire. She misused her wealth and power to bring evil on others. She was the mother of all evil.

9. Call attention to today's lesson focus: "The improper use of wealth and power results in punishment rather than protection." Say: *Today's lesson shows that even a vast and mighty empire like Rome must face God's judgment*

in the end. There are nations and governments in our world today who are using their wealth and power to oppress Christians. Revelation teaches that they will not go unpunished.

10. Write the second subtitle in today's lesson on the markerboard: "Come Out, My People." Invite a member to read 18:1–4 while the class listens for the proclamation by the angel. Ask: *What happened to Babylon?* (She is destroyed.) *How is the way she is described in these verses different from the way she is described in verses 17:1–6?* (Before: adorned with fine clothes and jewelry, riding high, big and powerful, drunk with blood from killing God's people, a prostitute; Now, a place where evil spirits live and scavenger birds eat on waste.)

11. Point out John's use of the past tense in the angel's pronouncement about Babylon. Explain that the judgment of the world and all the world's systems of power that oppose God is in the future. All peoples and empires that use their power and wealth to oppress others in the end will be judged. Babylon's greatest sin was refusing to worship God and persecuting those who did.

12. Lead the class to discuss the passage using these questions:

- In verse 4, what is God's command to His people?
- Why does God give this command?
- What would it mean for first century Christians to follow this command?
- What does it mean for Christians today?

13. Write the third subtitle in today's lesson on the markerboard: "Judgment on Babylon's Pride." Invite a member to read verses 5–8 aloud while members listen for the judgment God said Babylon would receive. Ask:

- *How does God describe Babylon's sin?* (high as heaven)
- *In verse 5, what is God ready to do?* (punish Babylon)
- *What does this say about God?*
- *How might this encourage Christians who are under oppression today?*
- *How would you describe Babylon's pride in verse 7b?*

Encourage Application

14. Read the memory verse aloud together. Practice saying it by memory. Lead the class to discuss how the love of money leads to sin. Ask them to name sins that are related to love of money. As needed, mention sins such as gambling, accepting bribes, tax evasion, and so on.

15. Challenge members to reflect on their own use of wealth and power and to consider how they might better use their wealth and influence for the benefit of others. Lead members in a prayer of commitment to follow God's way.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Comment that today's lesson teaches that there are dangers in using power and wealth wrongly. Ask members to name examples of governments that have used power and wealth wrongly. State that the Book of Revelation pronounced judgment on Rome for her misuse of wealth and power. It warns Christians not to participate in Rome's sin. Today's lesson calls us to examine our own use of power and wealth. Ask: *Are we, our church, our nation using our power and wealth well, or are we more like Rome?*

You may want to jot answers on the markerboard under columns entitled "Wise Use of Power and Wealth" and "Wicked Use of Power and Wealth."

Guide the Study

♦ Ask the class what are the characteristics of Babylon. Note that Babylon in this passage was a symbol for the Roman empire. Comment that some people believe that today's culture is similar to that of Babylon as described in Revelation. Ask the class to think of similarities between today's culture and that of "Babylon." Stress that God promises to punish Babylon for sins of pride, greed and oppression. Ask: *Does this promised punishment of today's "Babylon" make you feel fearful? Does it make you feel hopeful or satisfied?*

Encourage Application

♦ Lead the class to discuss ways they might apply this lesson. Offer the following guidelines for consideration:

Practice simplicity by going on a spending fast. Involve your family in a goal of only buying food and essential items for a month. Lead a discussion of wants and needs at family dinner time.

Consider having a media fast. Limit use of cell phones and TV during certain hours of the day.

Encourage family members to consider ways they can use their power, wealth, and influence to encourage and give support to others.

♦ Lead members in a prayer of commitment to use their wealth and power for good in God's kingdom.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 12:

The Return of the King

Lesson Focus

Jesus will defeat Satan completely.

Focal Text

Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-10

Memory Verse

"Thanks to our God. For the Lord our God is King. He is the All-powerful One." (Revelation 19:6b)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ Arrange to play a recording of the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah*.
- ♦ Gather markers and large sheets of paper for Guide the Study #6.

Connect with Life

1. As class begins, have a recording of the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah* playing. Various renditions can be found on You-Tube or elsewhere on the internet. Point out that the "Hallelujah Chorus," first performed in the 1740s, is one of the best-known and frequently performed choral works in Western music. It is most often performed at Christmas or Easter. The custom of rising for the "Hallelujah Chorus" began with King George II of England who rose from his seat during a performance. Because the King was royalty, everyone else rose too. Today, people still stand when the "Hallelujah Chorus" is performed.

2. Make these additional comments: The lyrics from the "Hallelujah Chorus" come from the Book of Revelation. The music is majestic and the lyrics proclaim that Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus came first as a baby in humility. He will come again as a triumphant King. Our lesson today reminds us that this great day is coming. One day Christ will return to defeat Satan completely. He will reign as victorious King forever and ever. The message of Revelation gives us encouragement because we know that while we live in an evil world today, one day Christ will defeat evil completely.

Guide the Study

3. Write the following on the markerboard as a guide. Ask a member to read Revelation 19:11–13 aloud while the class listens for the seven descriptions (attributes) of Jesus. Invite members to look back over the passage and find the descriptions that would fit in the blanks on the markerboard. Jot their responses in the blanks.

Descriptions of Christ

1. Faithful and _____ (true)
2. Righteous and _____ (just)
3. Eyes are flame of _____ (fire)
4. Many _____ (crowns)
5. Name no one _____ (knows)
6. Robe put in _____ (blood)
7. Word of _____ (God)

4. Using material from the Study Guide, explain the meaning of each attribute. Ask: *How do these attributes show that Jesus has authority?*

5. Lead the class to read aloud together 19:14–16. Ask questions such as these, allowing members to refer to the Study Guide material as needed:

- Who were dressed in clean, white linen following Jesus?
- Who were these people?
- What do you think the sharp sword represents?
- What weapon did the rider use?
- Whom will God's anger crush, like crushing grapes?
- How do the attributes of Christ show Him to be King of kings and Lord of lords?

6. Tell the class that the next passage is filled with drama. One scene is a sickening description of a bad meal, and the other is a picture of a bad ending for some of Jesus' enemies. Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a large sheet of drawing paper and some markers. Assign one group to read verses 19:17–18, the other group verses 19–21. Instruct the groups to choose their best artist and, working as a group, illustrate the scene in their assigned verses. Allow time for work. Then let each group display their drawing and explain their illustrations.

7. Point out that birds eating the flesh of the dead would be especially humiliating during ancient times. Back then, people considered dead bodies being left unburied a disgrace. Mention, too, that the kings, their armies, and the beast will gather forces together to fight against Jesus. But the battle will never happen. Jesus will defeat them and decide their fate.

8. Before reading Revelation 20:1–10, comment that today's lesson brings us to the end when Satan is destroyed forever. Divide the passage into three parts. Assign three members to read the parts dramatically.

After the reading, lead the class to discuss the passage with questions like these:

- What did the angel do to Satan?
- What will Satan do during the 1,000 years?
- Who will be leaders with Christ during the 1,000 years?
- Why do you think God will allow Satan to deceive the nations a second time?
- Why would many nations and people still follow Satan?
- What will happen to Satan's evil forces?
- What will be the end of Satan?

9. As members consider the questions above, guide their understanding by explaining that for 1,000 years, Satan is to be locked away and not able to deceive people or do evil. During that time, people on earth will only know Christ's goodness. But as soon as Satan is released, people again are fooled into following him. Time does not improve the sinful condition of man. Since the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, people have rebelled against God. Time is not enough to change our heart. We need God's mercy. Because of God's mercy, we are saved from the judgment.

10. Lead the class to read aloud together "Things to Remember" from the Study Guide. Ask members to tell which picture of Jesus gives them the most comfort: Merciful Savior, Righteous Judge, or Warrior King. Emphasize the main points of today's lesson: Christ's return is certain. His judgment is right. His mercy is real.

Encourage Application

11. Return to the seven attributes of Christ listed on the markerboard. Invite members to choose one attribute and tell what that attribute of Christ means in their life. For example, someone choosing "Eyes as Flaming Fire" might say that knowing God sees everything helps her at a time of temptation to resist Satan. Be prepared to choose an attribute and share an example from your own life.

12. Direct attention to "Things to Think About" in the Study Guide. Invite members to respond to questions 1, 2, and 3. Point out question 5 and suggest they consider how they might share truths from today's lesson with an unbelieving family member or friend. Close in prayer, asking God for opportunities to share about the mercy of Christ with the lost.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- ♦ Ask members to recall recent news stories of evil acts reported on the TV. Receive responses. Be prepared, if needed, to name several. List them on the markerboard. Ask: *When you hear about bad things like these happening, what goes through your mind? What emotion do you have?* (Anger, discouragement, a feeling that Satan is winning)
- ♦ Tell the class that today's lesson offers encouragement.

It reminds us that Satan and evil forces will not always be in control. One day, Christ will return. He will defeat Satan completely and He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords forever.

Guide the Study

♦ Read the description of Christ as warrior king in Revelation 19:11-13. Ask if this description reminds them of images from books or movies. Ask: *Do these images make you feel hopeful or frightened? Why?*

♦ Lead the class to brainstorm what "King of kings and Lord of lords" means. Write words and phrases on the markerboard. Then ask: *Have you allowed Christ to be King of kings and Lord of lords in every area of your life?* Help the class identify various areas of their lives, such as work, school, family, church, prayer, leisure time, sports, computer time, etc.

♦ Pass out index cards and pens to each person. Instruct members to write down "King of kings and Lord of lords" at the top of the card. Then have them write down the areas of their lives where they need to work on letting Christ be Lord and King.

Encourage Application

♦ Point out that history is filled with stories of Christians being treated harshly. Today believers in many places in our world are being persecuted. Still, Christ-followers faithfully witness for Christ even in the face of oppression. The certainty of Christ's return and His judgment on evil encourages us to want to tell others.

♦ Call members to a time of reflection. Ask: *What are ways you can naturally share Christ as you go about your day? How can you share the difference Christ has made in your life with an unbelieving person?* Close in prayer asking God to help members to be faithful witnesses of Christ's mercy.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Revelation:
Strong Hope for Fearful Times

Lesson 13: A New Heaven and a New Earth

Lesson Focus

God will make all things new and good for those who place their faith in Jesus.

Focal Text

Revelation 21:1-8; 22:1-7, 16-17

Memory Verse

"Then the One sitting on the throne said, 'See! I am making all things new. Write, for these words are true and faithful.'" (Revelation 21:5)

Prior Preparation

- ♦ In a small cardboard box, prepare a small garden (a shoebox size is fine) with one or two little plants and some weeds growing.
- ♦ Gather paper and pens or small cards for Guide the Study #10.

Connect with Life

1. Display the garden before the class. Invite a member to read aloud the Introduction from the Study Guide in today's lesson. Briefly tell the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, explaining how sin, caused by their disobedience, has resulted in not just weeds, but evil of all kinds in our world.

2. Call attention to today's lesson title and lesson focus. Explain that God has promised to bring a new heaven and a new earth. He has promised to make all things new and good for those who place their faith in Him. The message from the Book of Revelation is one of hope. The hope of enjoying fresh tomatoes and beans kept the writer of today's lesson pulling weeds. The words of hope in Revelation keep believers facing the future with confidence.

Guide the Study

3. Have a member read Revelation 21: 1–8 aloud. Referring to verse 1, ask the class to name the three things that have passed away. Explain that the sea represents everything that has opposed God.

4. Make assignments to four members or to four groups.

Group 1

Describe the New Jerusalem (verses 1–3).

Group 2

Describe the message from the voice from heaven (verses 3–4).

Group 3

Describe the message from the voice from heaven (verses 3–4).

Group 4

Describe the kinds of people who will be judged by Christ.

Provide paper and pens for each group to make notes. Ask each group to share their report.

5. Point out that in the new heaven and new earth everything will be new. Life will be filled with the presence of God. Christ, as the beginning and the end, will create a new order of things. Those who have faith will enjoy the blessings of heaven. God will give them the water of life as a free gift. But, in contrast, unbelievers and evil people will face God's judgment.

6. Invite someone to read Revelation 22:1–2 aloud while the class listens for the provisions of God in the New Jerusalem. Ask: *What does God provide for His people in the New Jerusalem?* (water, food, and health) Comment that these provisions are a reminder of the very first garden, the Garden of Eden. There were rivers in that garden, trees with good fruit, and health, until disobedience brought sin into the garden. In the New Jerusalem, the river flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb provides the essentials for life. God is making new and good what was ruined and broken in the first garden.

7. Invite another member to read Revelation 22:3–5 aloud while the class listens for other descriptions of the Holy City. Lead members to discuss the verses, using questions like these:

- What are two things that are not there? (sin and night)

- Whose face will the inhabitants see? (God and the Lamb's)
- Who are the servants? What will they be doing?
- Who will be leaders forever?
- Why is there no need for the sun?

8. Select someone who reads well to read Revelation 22:16–17 dramatically. Instruct members to look back over verse 16 to find the “I Am” sayings of Jesus. Help them to find other “I Am” statements of Jesus:

- I am the bread of life (John 6:48).
- I am the light of the world (John 8:12).
- I am the door (John 10:9).
- I am the good shepherd (John 10:11).
- I am the resurrection and life (John 11:25).
- I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6);
- I am the true vine (John 15:1)

Point out that Revelation closes with Jesus' statement: “I am coming soon!” (Revelation 22:20)

9. Referring to verse 17, ask: *What is repeated in the invitation? What does this invitation tell about God's heart?*

10. Give each member a small blank card and pen. Instruct them to design a “Come to Jesus” invitation card. Suggest that they think back over their Revelation studies and choose a message to write as an invitation. What message would an unbelieving friend respond to—a message about God's love, eternal life, death, the judgment, the new heaven and new earth, eternal blessings, hope, etc.? Allow time for writing, then invite members to read their invitation to the class.

Encourage Application

11. For reflection, ask members to imagine what life in the new heaven will be like without darkness. Next, ask members to imagine what life today would be like without the darkness of sin. Remind the class of Jesus' words in John 8:12: “I am the Light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will not walk in darkness. He will have the light of life.” Allow time for sharing, then make these comments: The Holy City will be a city of light. There will be no need for the light of a lamp or the light of the sun. The Lord will give light.

12. Refer to Jesus' statement: “I am the bright morning star.” Ask: *What does a bright star in the morning sky signal? (The beginning of a new day) What does Jesus as the bright morning star signal? (A new day for the entire world. The dawn of eternal hope and joy)* Comment that in the new heaven and new earth, there will be no night. Jesus is the eternal morning star.

13. Direct attention to “Things to Think About” in the Study Guide. Lead members to discuss the questions. Encourage each member to contribute to the discussion. Close in prayer, expressing gratitude for the glimpse of

eternity Revelation gives and for the hope we have in Jesus Who is faithful and true.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

♦ Write the word “Heaven” on the markerboard. Ask: *When you think of heaven, what do you think it will be like? What images come to your mind?* (Besides descriptive words, responses may include being reunited with loved ones, meeting Jesus, enjoying physical health, etc.)

Say: *Today's Bible passage gives a beautiful picture of heaven. Even so, heaven will be more wonderful than we can imagine. The Bible says that eye has not seen, nor ear heard...the things God has prepared for those who love Him. (2 Corinthians 2:9)*

Guide the Study

♦ Explain that the Bible begins and ends with a scene in a garden. Read Genesis 2:8-9. Ask: *Do you think John put this description of a garden at the end of Revelation for a specific purpose? If so, what do you think that purpose might have been?*

♦ Have class members read Revelation 21:6, 22:1, and 22:17. Ask: *Why do you think the image or symbol of water is used in these three places? Why do you think water would be an important symbol for John's readers? For readers today?*

Encourage Application

♦ Lead members to share their thoughts about Revelation's description of the new heaven and new earth. Ask questions such as these:

- What about it do you find most comforting?
- What about it gives you the most hope?
- Is there anything about it that is disturbing?
- What are you most looking forward to having God make new?

In closing, remind the class that new blessings from the Lord are available every day. As they faithfully follow Christ, they will experience new understanding, new joy, new trust, and new hope. Lead in a prayer of thanks for the newness of life Christ gives.