

# Bible Reading Guide

# Week 1 He Will Come Again in Glory

Nov. 29	Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:5-9, 21:1-5, 21:22-21:5
Nov. 30	Zechariah 9:9-17; Romans 5:3-5, 8:18-30
Dec. 1	John 1:1-5, 14; Revelation 22:12-13, 20
Dec. 2	Mark 13:24-37, Luke 21:25-28

Mark 13.24-37, Luke 21.25-

**Dec. 3** 2 Peter 3:8-15

**Dec. 4** 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:2

**Dec. 5** 1 Corinthians 1:2-9

# Week 2 He Will Come Again in Glory

Dec. 6	Exodus 11-3:10
Dec. 7	Psalms 46 & 112
Dec. 8	Isaiah 2:1-5
Dec. 9	Isaiah 40:1-11
Dec. 10	Isaiah 64:1-9
Dec. 11	Isaiah 9:2
Dec. 12	Isaiah 9:6-7

# Week 3 He Will Come Again in Glory

Dec. 13	Matthew 1:1-17
Dec. 14	Luke 1:5-25
Dec. 15	Luke 1:26-38
Dec. 16	Matthew 1:18-24
Dec. 17	Luke 1:38-56
Dec. 18	Luke 1:57-80
Dec. 19	Luke 2:1-7

# Week 4 He Will Come Again in Glory

Luke 2:8-20
John 1:1-18
Luke 2:21-38
Matthew 2:1-12
Matthew 2:1-18
Isaiah 9:6-7, 1 Peter 1:3-5, Revelation 1:7

Week 1

# He Will Come Again in Glory

We live in the "in between"—
after Christ's first coming and
before his return. This week,
we reflect on the nature of
Christian hope as we await
the Second Advent.



LOOK, I AM COMING SOON! . . . I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, THE FIRST AND THE LAST, THE BEGINNING AND THE END.

Revelation 22:12-13

11/29

# IN BETWEEN

BY KELLI B. TRUJILLO

Revelation 1:4-9; 19:11-16; 21:1-5, 22-27; 22:1-5

"LOOK, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS," AND "EVERY EYE WILL SEE HIM." . . . SO SHALL IT BE! AMEN.

Revelation 1:7

Almost immediately, the opening chapter of Revelation lifts our eyes up to gaze at a glory that utterly transcends our earthly circumstances. "I am the Alpha and the Omega... who is, and who was, and who is to come' " (1:8). Our Savior "who loves us and has freed us from our sins" will return; "Look, he is coming with the clouds' and 'every eye will see him' " (1:5, 7-8). John goes on to describe a wondrous vision of Christ himself—an encounter so awesome that John "fell at his feet as though dead" (v. 17).

But right in the middle of these two glorious passages is a line we might easily miss: John's brief description of his life and the lives of his letter's recipients. John writes that he's a "companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus" (v. 9). John wrote Revelation while in exile; it was circulated among a suffering church facing pressure and persecution that would only worsen in the coming decades. Revelation's initial recipients were living in two overlapping realities: their assurance in the sovereign reign and glorious return of Christ; and their earthly, everyday experience of waiting and suffering.

Some two thousand years later, we still live amid these overlapping realities. Here, between Christ's first coming and his glorious return, our lives may also feel like a mix of kingdom and confidence alongside waiting and suffering.

It's no wonder that John's honest words about suffering and the need for patient endurance are woven in and among his visions of glory, for it is this vision of what is to come that enables and emboldens such endurance. Consider the realities portrayed in Revelation's grand finale: Christ victorious, riding on a white horse and defeating evil; "a new heaven and a new earth" without sorrow or death, where "God's dwelling place is now among the people" (21:1, 3); and a Holy City where people from all nations are gathered in the light of God's glory. With this ultimate, eternal reality in view, any temporal circumstance—no matter how dire—fades in importance.

The idea of patient endurance is repeated several times in Revelation 1–3, often paired with language of overcoming and conquering. Endurance isn't merely patient but is also tenacious, courageous, strong. And this is what God gives us as we live in the in between. In Christ, as the classic hymn puts it, we find "strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow."

## CONTEMPLATE REVELATION 1:4-9; 19:11-16; 21:1-5, 22-27 AND 22:1-5.

How does meditating on this future impact your perspective on current circumstances? Pray, inviting God to strengthen your endurance and enliven your hope for the future.

# 11/30 PROPHESY HOPE

BY DANTÉ STEWART

Zechariah 9:9-17 Romans 5:3-5, 8:18-30

I CONSIDER THAT OUR PRESENT SUFFERINGS ARE NOT WORTH COMPARING WITH THE GLORY THAT WILL BE REVEALED IN US.

Romans 8:18

"Hope begins in the dark..." I could never quite shake these words from Anne Lamott's Bird by Bird. This language of hope has recently become a theme in my life—not in the abstract sense, but as a living activity, a struggle, a commitment, a discipline.

Theologian Jürgen Moltmann rooted the language of hope in the resurrection of Jesus and the praxis of protest. Sometimes hope seems to be the only language powerful enough to counter despair. Or maybe it's, in Lamott's words, a sort of "revolutionary patience."

Whatever hope is, there is something deep within each of us that cries out in expectation. Sometimes it sounds like a whisper, but it is there. Yet, while hope springs from the depths of the soul, it often comes out of the shadows. Hope begins in chaos.

Some days it feels like we have never escaped from under that cloud that covered the face of the earth during the crucifixion of Jesus. The brokenness and weight of our world feels so much like darkness that Elie Wiesel, retelling of the horrors of Auschwitz and the Holocaust, could only call it Night. We have to tell the truth of pain and even the pain of hope.

I sat down with my grandmother some time ago and asked her to tell me about her life. At first she didn't want to. One can only imagine what deep scars her soul has borne over 80 years. Her stories were hard. It's difficult to describe what it meant for her to live in the South as a black woman. One word seemed to capture the audacity of survival in the midst of a cruel world: love. "The Lord hasn't failed me yet," she said.

Radical, life-changing, community-changing, world-changing love is, after all, the way of Jesus. He came preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing all manner of sickness and affliction. To prophesy hope is a dangerous love.

Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love." This is what it means to stand in the world as prophets of love, power, and justice or, to use the biblical language of Zechariah, to be "prisoners of hope" (9:12). Like someone once said, "I don't know what tomorrow holds, but I know who holds tomorrow." While tomorrow is on the way, I'm going to prophesy hope today.

This is adapted from a longer article titled "Why We Still Prophesy Hope," published on October 21, 2019, on ChristianityToday.com.

### READ ZECHARIAH 9:9-17 AND ROMANS 5:3-5, 8:18-30.

Reflect on what hope looks like "in the dark." How does suffering produce hope and love? How can Christ's first coming and future return enable you to prophesy hope today?