

Get Ready!

Jesus is Coming Again

By: Rachel Carr



Text

Acts 24:14-16; 1 Corinthians 15:12-59; Philippians 3:10, 11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Key Quest Verse

“The Lord himself will descend from heaven; first the Christian dead will rise, then we who are left alive shall join them, caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:16b, 17a, NEB).

Bible Background

The second coming of Christ to the earth is something that is promised throughout the entire Bible. Indeed, it is even mentioned more often than His first coming! Because God has promised Christ’s literal return, we can be sure it will happen. The only uncertainty is when. Matthew 24:36 says, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” Jesus himself has not been told when He will return. Only God in His infinite wisdom knows and will decide when the time is right.

What matters is our response to the waiting. Non-believers will be caught off-guard by His return. But, Christians can wait with eager anticipation living each day to His glory. We won’t merely be eyewitnesses to this historical event, but we will participate in it with Christ. We will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and we will be changed from mortal to immortal! (1 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

We await our coming King with excitement and joy, for He brings our reward with Him. “Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done” (Revelation 22:12). What a joyous day when we see our precious Savior face to face.

Get Ready!**Lesson Quest**

What I want my students to:

- Know:** The resurrection of the dead at the return of Jesus is a central theme of the Bible and a goal of Christ’s followers.
- Feel:** A blessed hope in the resurrection.
- Do:** To say each day “Jesus could come back today!” and to allow that thought to influence what they do and say.

Leader’s Devotion

Life is busy; there are so many things to occupy our time. Even with the laborsaving devices that technology has provided, it seems as if people are busier than ever with the details of living. In the midst of your day, how often do you stop and ponder the fact that Jesus is really coming back? Do you think of His return as a doctrine to teach or as an actual coming event in which you will participate?

Meditate on the words of the song, “Some Golden Daybreak,” (#476 in “Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs”) or any other “second coming” song. Visualize what that day will be like. Pray that God will make this future glorious event more real to you and to your students.

Get Set!

Option A**COMING AGAIN**

Materials: Shallow box (greeting card box), pins, nails, tacks (choose some that will cling to a magnet and others that will not), sand or dirt on top of the pins, a few stones on top to represent tombstones, magnet

Procedure: Choose a volunteer to pull the magnet through the sand. Let everyone see that some of the pins were picked up and others were not. Explain that this is a picture of the Bible truth that you will be studying today. The box represents a cemetery; the magnet stands for Jesus when He returns to the earth. When He comes He will bring the dead back to life again, but only those who have believed in Him. **Today we are going to learn what the Bible says about this wonderful event that is really going to happen.**

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!**Option B****WHAT WILL NEVER BE DESTROYED?**

Materials: 3 strips of paper 1 1/2" x 8", a colored or opaque envelope 3 1/2" x 6 1/2", pair of scissors, markers

Procedure: There are at least 3 things, besides God, which can never be totally destroyed. We know that things that are man-made, even though they may be very strong, can be destroyed by fire, storms, bombs, etc. Can you think of 3 things that cannot be destroyed?

First of all, we have the Bible. Show the first strip. **1 Peter 1:25 says that the Word of the Lord endures forever. Even though men down through the years have tried to destroy it, God has protected His Word.**

Jesus is a person who can never be destroyed. Show the second strip. **Evil men killed Him long ago, but God raised Him from the dead. Jesus is immortal; He will never die again.**

Today we will learn about how God's people can never be destroyed. Show the third strip. **Christians are in God's care.**

Place the three strips of paper inside the envelope. Do not let the children see the back of the envelope.

I have a pair of scissors that represents those who oppose God. They would like to destroy God's Word, God's Son and God's people. But, they cannot do it.

Cut through the envelope, from the bottom up, pretending that you are cutting through the strips. Be careful to keep your scissors in front of them. The slit in the envelope will make this possible. When you are finished, the envelope will be cut completely in two, but the strips will be uncut. Slide the pieces of the envelope off and let the children examine them and the strips. **CAUTION:** Always practice this type of illustration before you present it in class.

God's people can never be destroyed! Does this mean that God's people never die? No, it can't mean that. Think of Peter, Paul, and the other disciples who loved and followed Jesus. We know that they died. Many other Christians have died since then. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. In a couple minutes we will look at this passage and see what it says about this important teaching.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!**Bible Story**

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

When Jesus lived on the earth, there were many that believed He had come to be their King, the Messiah whom God had promised to send. How sad they felt when He died. But, then He rose from the dead, and they knew for sure that He was God's Son. However, it was still not yet God's time for Jesus to set up the Kingdom of God.

Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, He was standing on the Mount of Olives with His disciples. As they watched, He was taken up from them into heaven. Two angels appeared and told the disciples that one day Jesus would come back from heaven in the same way He had gone.

As His friends went about telling others about Him, they kept watching for Him to return. Evil men (like those who killed Jesus) killed many of His followers. Others died because of sickness or old age. Some of the followers were concerned. They thought that some of Jesus' friends would not get to be in His kingdom, because they had died before He returned. So God told the Apostle Paul to write them a letter and explain how things would happen. Let's look in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, to see what he said. Have the students take turns reading from their Bibles or use the following from The New Life Bible, verses 13-18.

Christian brothers, we want you to know for sure about those who have died. You have no reason to have sorrow as those who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and then came to life again. Because we believe this, we know that God will bring to life again all those who belong to Jesus. We tell you this as it came from the Lord. Those of us who are alive when the Lord comes again will not go ahead of those who have died. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud call. The head angel will speak with a loud voice. God's horn will give its sounds. First, those who belong to Christ will come out of their graves to meet the Lord. Then, those of us who are still living here on earth will be gathered together with them in the clouds. We will meet the Lord in the sky and be with Him forever. Because of this, comfort each other with these words.

Do you remember the story of Jesus raising His friend Lazarus from death? Jesus came to his grave and shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" And, Lazarus came back to life! When Jesus comes back to earth, He will shout to dead Christians, "Come out!" And they will wake up and come out of their graves. What a wonderful day that will be!

Of course we are sad when a friend or relative dies. But, if he has loved and followed Jesus, we can be happy to know that he will live again in God's coming Kingdom.

What about those who have died, who did not love Jesus? They will not hear the trumpet when Christ comes, but will continue to sleep for awhile. Someday later God will wake them and they will stand before the throne to receive their punishment. Then they will be destroyed. But, God's people will live forever!

Go!**Dead Christians Will Live Again****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

Materials: Resource Page (with boy and girl figures), small faces of boys and girls cut from magazines or catalogs (optional), scissors, glue, markers

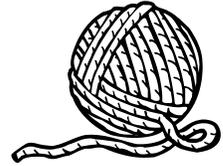
Quest Connection

As we've learned today, the Bible tells us that when Jesus comes, He will bring back to life the Christians who have died. We have a handwork activity that illustrates this wonderful coming event.

Procedure: Cut out the booklet and fold it as indicated. Cut out the boy or girl figure. Choose a face to glue on the head or draw one with markers. Fold the bottom part of the figure and glue it on the line indicated. When the booklet is folded properly, the figure will be hidden inside and will stand up when opened.

Close

Put this in your room at home as a reminder that Jesus is coming back and that He will raise the dead. Every morning as you leave say, "Jesus could come back today." Think about that as you go through your day. Live each day expecting Him to return.

Go!**Grab the Prize****GAME**

Materials: Bean bag, 2 pieces of string or yarn 3 or 4 yards long (depending on how many children you have), 1 piece of yarn 1 ½ yards long

Quest Connection

Eternal life in God’s Kingdom is the “prize” that God offers to those who follow Jesus. We are going to play a game called “Grab the Prize.” This beanbag will represent eternal life, and we all want to do what we can to get it. Eternal life is a gift, but we need to reach out and receive it.

Procedure: If you have a large room you can play the game inside. Otherwise, use the church lawn or parking lot. Use string to mark off 2 parallel lines about 12 feet apart. Divide the class into 2 teams. Have them line up behind the lines facing each other. Have one team number off. Do the same with the other team, but start at the opposite end. In the center between the teams form a circle with string and place a beanbag inside the circle. When you call a number, the person on each team who has that number will run to the center to grab the beanbag. The object is to take the beanbag and get back to his place behind the line without being tagged by the person who didn’t grab the beanbag.

Close

Were you glad when you were able to grab the prize? How wonderful it will be when Jesus comes to give the promised prize of eternal life to all that love and follow Him.

Go!**Be Prepared****BRAINSTORMING**

Materials: Blackboard, newsprint, or poster board; chalk or markers

Quest Connection

The motto of the Boy Scouts is “Be prepared.” In life we prepare for many things. For example, you do homework assignments to prepare for class. In fact, all your schooling is preparation for your life and work in the future. When we know someone is coming, we want to be prepared for that person.

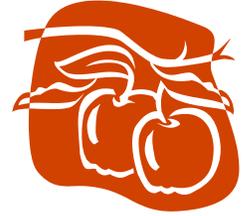
Procedure: Have the students imagine that the President of the United States is coming to their city. He has written to their family to say that he wants to come and visit in their home while he’s in town. Ask them to think of things that their family would do to prepare for the President’s visit. As a student thinks of something, have him write it on the board.

When the list is complete, continue: **The President is a VIP. Do you know what that stands for? Very important person. Of course, we would want to be ready when he came to our house. Today we have talked about a person who is much more important than our president or any other world leader. And we know for sure that Jesus is going to come. Let’s make another list. This time think of things we can do to get prepared for Jesus’ coming.**

(It is likely that the first list will be concerned with outward, physical preparations like cleaning, getting out the best things, etc. Guide the students to think of personal, inward preparations for the coming of Christ. Use the opportunity to discuss the need of each individual to make a decision to accept Christ – to believe, to be baptized, and to live for Him. Be prepared to answer any questions the students may have about this important decision.)

Close

Every day as you prepare for school say, “Jesus could come back today!” Think about how you can be prepared for that special event.

Go!**Smiling Face**

FOOD: Check for food allergies!

Materials: ½ apple (with seeds removed) for each child, creamy-style peanut butter, candies (M & Ms or something similar), mini marshmallows, plastic knives, napkins

Quest Connection

It will certainly be a happy day when Jesus comes back to the earth. Let's make some smiling face snacks and imagine all the smiles we will see when He comes through the clouds.

Procedure: Dry off the “face” of the apple and spread with peanut butter. Use the candies for eyes and the marshmallows for the smile.

Close

I want to be in that crowd of smiling people when Jesus comes, don't you?

Go!**Jesus is Coming****MUSIC****Materials:** Resource Page**Quest Connection**

There's a short little song that can help us remember to be ready for Jesus' coming. It goes like this:

Procedure: Write the words of the song on the board. Teach it to your students. If your group is large enough, divide into 2 or 3 groups and sing it as a round.

Close

Prayer: Thank You, God, for the promise of Jesus' coming. Help us to keep looking up and to be ready for Him. Amen.

Go!**Plant a Seed****OBJECT LESSON**

Materials: A plastic, metal or glass pan, for each student provide a styrofoam cup filled with potting soil, 2 lima beans, and 1 popsicle stick

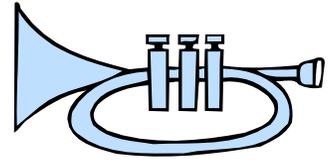
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When a seed is planted in the ground, it dies and a plant grows up from it. This is a picture of the resurrection – a person dies, but he will be raised with a new body when Jesus comes. Let's plant some seeds and watch what happens in the coming weeks.

Procedure: Have the students put their names on their cups. They can use the popsicle sticks to make holes for planting their beans. Put all the cups in the pan and give them water and sunlight. You may want to take them home to tend them during the week. (If you want the students to draw designs on their cups, give them markers to do that first. Then let them fill their cups with potting soil.)

Close

As we watch our plants grow each week, we will be reminded of the coming resurrection.

Go!**The Trumpet Will Sound****DRAMA**

Materials: Toy trumpet or a real one (and someone who can play it), a towel for each student, a piece of cardboard with the word “cemetery” printed on it

Quest Connection

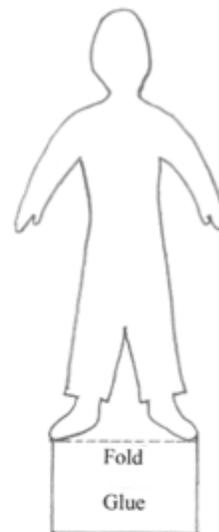
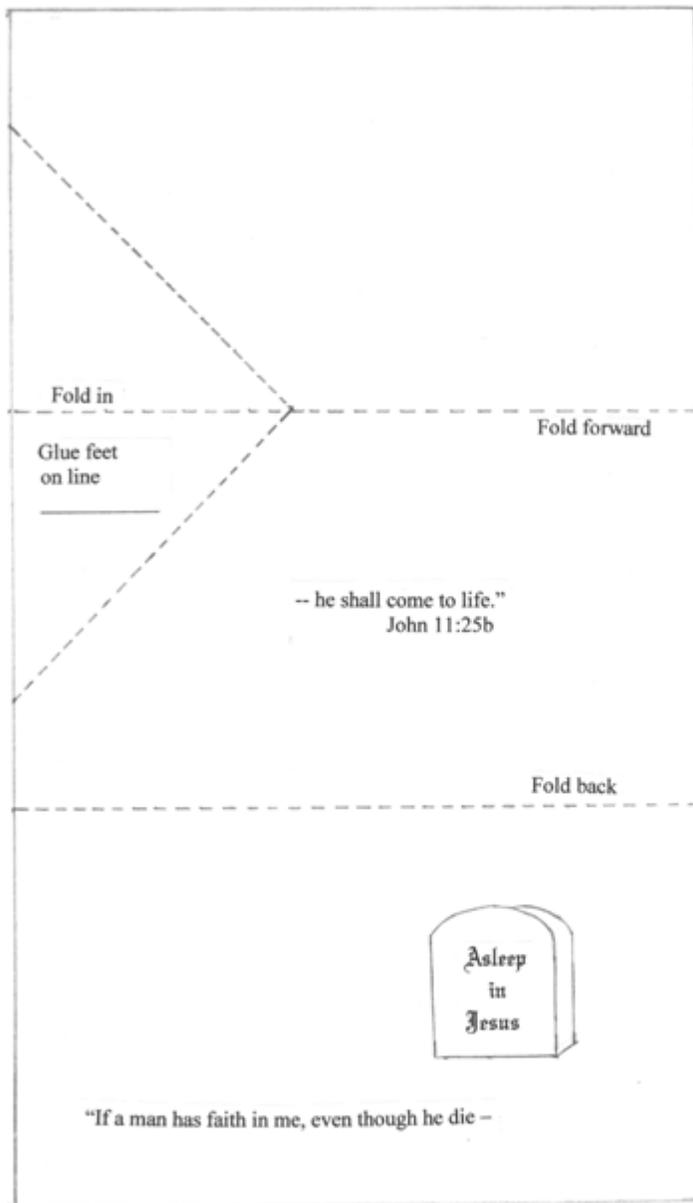
Let’s act out what it might be like when Jesus comes.

Procedure: Place the “cemetery” sign in a prominent place. Have each student lie on his towel on the floor. They represent those who have died. Decide which ones will be Christians. Have the trumpet player blast out a note or two (or a fanfare). The Christians will get up and raise their arms in the air. They may shout appropriate phrases such as: “Hallelujah!” “Jesus is here!” “Praise the Lord.” The non-Christians will continue to lie in place. You may want to do this another time so each student gets the chance to be a resurrected Christian.

Close

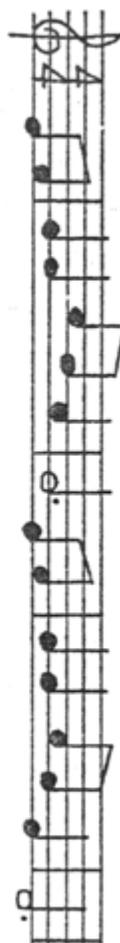
Prayer: Dear God, Thank You for the promise that Your Son will come back and raise the dead. We look forward to that exciting day! May it come quickly! In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Resource Page—Dead Christians Will Live Again

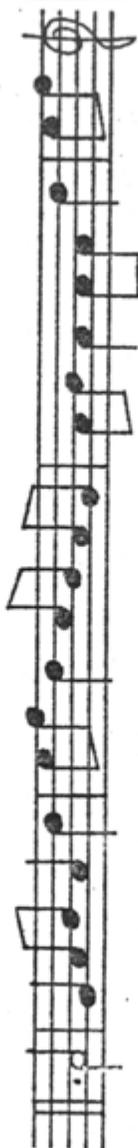


Resource Page—Jesus is Coming

As the Waters Cover the Sea

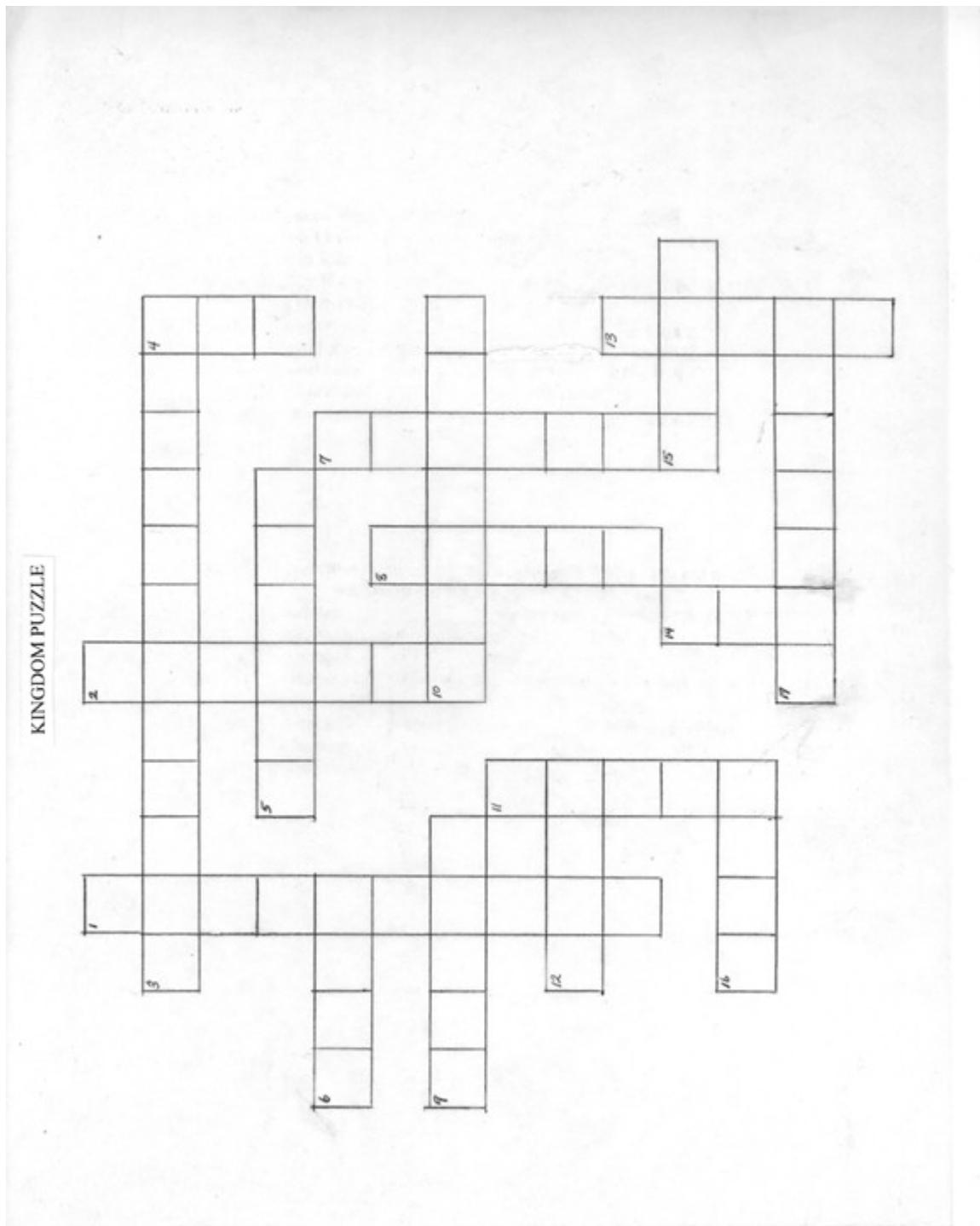


As the waters cover the sea, as the waters cover the sea;



So the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Worksheet



Worksheet

Kingdom Puzzle

Across:

3. When Jesus comes, there will be a _____ of the dead. (Rev. 20:6)
5. Though we don't know when, Jesus is really _____ back. (Acts 1:11)
6. The last word in John 3:16.
9. "I know that My Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the _____" (Job 19:25).
10. "This is what he promised us – even _____ life" (1 John 2:25).
12. "This is how God showed his _____ among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9).
15. According to Matthew 5:5 who will inherit the earth?
16. The appearing of Jesus is called the blessed _____. (Titus 2:13)
17. The righteous will _____ the land. (Psalm 37:29)

Down:

1. When the Kingdom of God is established, the earth will be restored to the p_____n it had in the beginning when God created it.
2. "In keeping with his _____ we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13).
4. "I am making everything _____" (Rev. 21:5).
7. In the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:10) we pray for something to come. What is it?
8. He is our coming King.
11. When Jesus comes, there will be true _____ in Jerusalem. (Psalm 122:6)
13. There will be no more _____ in the Kingdom of God. (Rev. 21:4)
14. This will be absent in God's Kingdom.

Worksheet

ACTIVITY IN GREEK

The New Testament was originally written in Greek. Translate the Greek into English to read the secret message.

Α	Β	Δ	Ε	Γ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ
α	β	δ	ε	γ	ι	κ	λ	μ	ν	ο	π	ρ	σ	τ	υ

Τ ἡ ἐ τ ρ υ μ π ε τ w ι λ λ

σ ο υ ν δ , τ ἡ ε δ ε α δ

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ι μ π ε ρ ι σ ἡ α β λ ε , α ν δ

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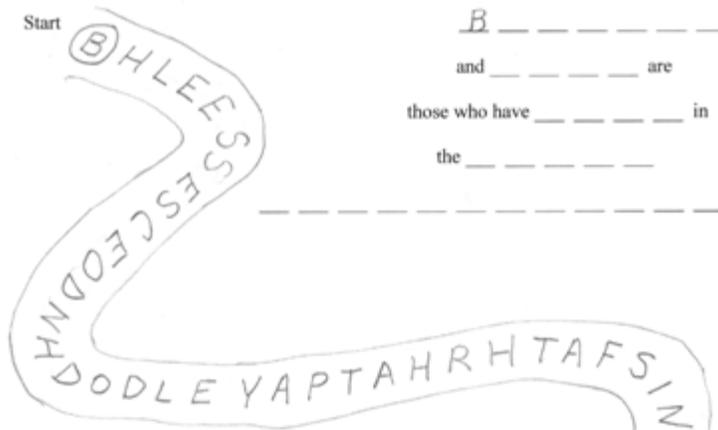
c ἡ α ν γ ε δ

Note to editor: Please print the answer upside down here at the bottom of the page (or preferably elsewhere) for the teacher. Answer: The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Journal Page

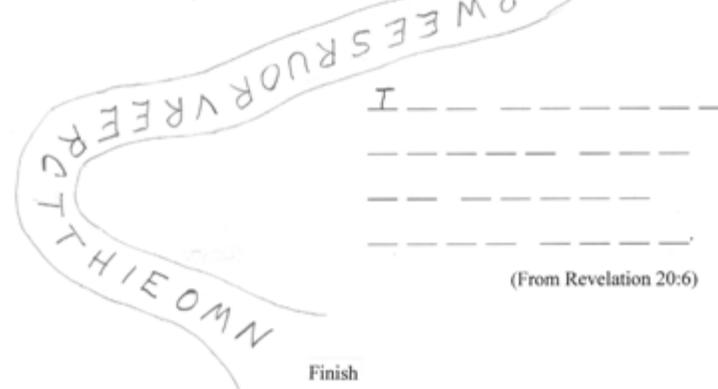
Resurrection Road

Cross out every other letter on the path. The first one is already done. Put the circled letters in the blanks.

Start  _____

_____ and _____ are
those who have _____ in
the _____

Fill in the blanks below with the letters that were not circled. (Begin at "Start" again.)

 _____

(From Revelation 20:6)

Finish

“The Lord himself will descend from heaven; first the Christian dead will rise, then we who are left alive shall join them, caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:16b, 17a, NEB).