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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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### QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

Have you ever looked forward to something with great anticipation only to be let down by the reality? How might God use our disillusionment to stir up a desire for joy that only He can give?

How does God's promise of future restoration give us hope in our present realities? In what ways does God's promise urge us to action?

Why is it often difficult to live in light of the promise of God's presence and peace? How does contemporary culture and media depict those who live with hope in God's promised future?

How does reconciliation between people point to the reality of God's kingdom? How do we demonstrate to the world both our dissatisfaction with the world as it is in the present and our belief in the world God will bring about in the future?

**SERIES: God's Story - Part 1**

**NEXT WEEK**

**God's Story Part 2 -  
New Testament**

***The Incarnation: The Coming of the Messiah-King***

- John 1:1-18

## The Return: Further Deliverance Awaited

Ezra 3:10-13; Zech 8:1-8; Mal 4:4-6

### God's people rejoiced in their return from exile yet longed for full restoration (Ezra 3:10-13)

#### Scriptural Cross-References

**(Rom 8:18-25)** 18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 9 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

**(Rev 21:1-7)** 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

### God's people lived in light of the promise of God's presence and peace (Zech. 8:1-8)

#### Scriptural Cross-References

**(John 4:21)** 21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

### God's people looked to the kingdom that would reconcile us to God and others (Mal. 4:4-6)

#### Scriptural Cross-References

**(2 Cor 5:17-21)** 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**(Eph 2:11-18)** 11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- 12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

*(Adapted from "The Gospel Project"™: LifeWay Christian Resources Volume 1, Number 2 Winter 2012-13)*