

THE RAPTURE - A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

WHAT DID JESUS PROMISE TO DO?

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again*, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. *John 14:1-3*

WHAT DID HE SAY CONCERNING HIS COMING?

But *of that day and hour knoweth no man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. *Matthew 24:36*

WHAT DID HE SAY WE SHOULD BE DOING?

Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Luke 12:37-40

WHY DID JESUS SAY WE SHOULD WATCH FOR HIS COMING?

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief*, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. *Revelation 3:3*

WHOM DID JESUS SAY WOULD BE BLESSED AT HIS COMING?

Behold, I come as a thief. *Blessed is he that watcheth*, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. *Revelation 16:15*

WILL HIS COMING BE A SURPRISE TO THOSE WATCHING?

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that *the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*.

For *when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them*, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but *let us watch and be sober. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6*

NOTE: When Jesus comes the unexpectedness of His coming brings “sudden destruction” upon those who are not ready.

DOES HIS COMING AS A THIEF MEAN IT WILL BE SECRET?

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that *all these things shall be dissolved*, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and *the elements shall melt with fervent heat?* 2 Peter 3:10-12

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY HAPPENS WHEN HE COMES?

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and *what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* Matthew 24:3

WHAT WILL HIS ANGELS DO WHEN HE RETURNS?

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send *his angels* with a great sound of a trumpet, and they *shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* Matthew 24:30, 31

WHEN ARE THE RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED SEPARATED?

So shall it be at *the end of the world*: the angels shall come forth, and *sever the wicked from among the just*,

And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 13:49, 50

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MOUNTAINS AND ISLANDS?

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and *every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? Revelation 6:14-17

WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS HAVE ON THE EARTH?

The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. Isaiah 24:20

HOW DRASTIC OF A CHANGE WILL THIS CAUSE?

And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. *Revelation 16:20*

WHAT HAPPENS TO GOD'S PEOPLE AT THIS TIME?

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and *the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17*

NOTE: All of God's people, *not just a few*, will rise to meet Him when He comes.

HOW DID PAUL DESCRIBE THIS EVENT?

Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but *we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53*

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE WICKED WHEN JESUS RETURNS?

And to you who are troubled rest with us, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9*
And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom *the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8*

HOW MANY WILL WITNESS JESUS' COMING?

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and *every eye shall see him*, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. *Revelation 1:7*

NOTE: The Bible is very clear that the coming of Jesus will be a literal, visible, audible, eminent event in which He shall be accompanied by all of His holy angels. This glorious event, which will be witnessed by everyone, shall be heralded by shouting and trumpets blowing, and as the earth convulses every island and mountain shall disappear, the righteous dead shall be raised, the wicked shall all be destroyed, the righteous living shall be changed "in the twinkling of an eye", and all of the righteous shall rise "together" to meet the Lord in the air. As can be seen the coming of Jesus will in no way be a "secret" sneaking in and out to snatch just a few Christians away.

DOESN'T THE BIBLE SAY SOME WILL BE TAKEN AND SOME LEFT?

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WICKED AT THE FLOOD?

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying

and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,
And knew not until *the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

Then shall two be in the field; *the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

Two women shall be grinding at the mill; *the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 24:37-44

NOTE: It was the wicked that were taken away at the flood, not the righteous, and Jesus said this is what will happen when He returns. Therefore, He says, watch and be ready for He will come when the world is not expecting Him to.

HOW DOES LUKE DESCRIBE THIS EVENT?

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and *the flood came, and destroyed them all.*

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. Luke 17:26-30

NOTE: Just as there was no second chance at the time of the flood or at Sodom and Gomorrah, there will be no second chance when Jesus comes. These passages clearly reveal that to be taken means to be destroyed and to be left means to be left alive. As with the flood all of the wicked were taken away or destroyed, and only the righteous were left alive. As with Sodom all of the wicked were destroyed and only Lot and his family left.

WHEN ARE THE RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED SEPARATED?

So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.... Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

The enemy that sowed them is the devil; *the harvest is the end of the world; and the*

reapers are the angels.

As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; *so shall it be in the end of this world.*

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:27-30, 36-42

ARE YOU READY FOR THIS FATEFUL PRONOUNCEMENT?

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Revelation 22:11, 12