

What does the BIBLE say?

As you read this study, I encourage you to study the corresponding scriptures for yourself so you can develop a personal, confident understanding of biblical truth. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Study like the Bereans, who listened to Paul but did not take his word for it. They studied the scriptures for themselves so they would know for sure.

Acts 17:11 “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” I ask that you do the same with this study. Please pray before you begin.

Revelation’s Glorious Rapture (Second Coming)

Today's study focuses on the second coming of Jesus and how He will return. We will examine relevant scriptures, starting with Matthew 24:3-5, where Jesus warns us to be cautious about deception regarding His return. He indicates that deception will be widespread, especially in Matthew 24:23-24, where these falsehoods will be very convincing. The majority of people will be deceived, but only the very elect will avoid being misled.

How will the elect escape? Read Matthew 24:25: “I have told you before.” He has already explained in His Word how He will return. By studying it, we can avoid Satan’s deceptions. Jesus further describes His return in Matthew 24:26, 27, where His coming will light up the sky like lightning stretching from horizon to horizon. Stay in Matthew 24; we will come back to it. Now, let’s see how many will witness His return since it will fill the sky. Turn to Revelation 1:7: “He comes with clouds, and every eye shall see Him.”

Go back to Matthew 24, where Jesus reiterates this point. In Matthew 24:30, it states, “All the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see Him coming in the clouds.” The question is, how will everyone on earth witness Jesus' return simultaneously? Look at the last part of Matthew 24:30. He arrives with “power and great glory.” Additionally, Matthew 25:31-32 describes His return “in His glory,” accompanied by “ALL the holy angels.” The Bible indicates that the number of angels can’t be counted (Heb. 12:22). One angel’s brilliance and majesty were so overwhelming that just 100 battle-hardened soldiers fainted (Matthew 28:2-4).

Imagine how bright and glorious it will be when the entire sky is filled with all the angels. No wonder everyone will see Him! What will these angels do? In Matthew 24:31, they gather His followers. Pay attention to the trumpet. Let’s also consider another passage mentioning a trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. Notice the trumpet again. People will not only see Jesus'

return but also hear Him. The Christians who have died will be resurrected first. Then, the living believers will be caught up with them, meeting the Lord in the air. He won't set foot on the earth at this time. Remember, Jesus warned that Satan would send false Christs appearing in different regions, causing many to follow them. We are instructed not to follow these deceivers. When Jesus returns, He will not stand on the earth.

Where will we go with Him? See John 14:1-3. Back to where He has been—heaven. What happens to those who haven't been following Jesus? Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. While Jesus is being glorified in His saints, those who haven't obeyed the gospel are destroyed by the brightness of His glory, which to them is a consuming fire. How hot is this fire? In 2 Pet. 3:10, Earth's elements all melt. Everyone will either be taken to heaven or destroyed by the brightness of Jesus' coming. There will be no middle ground.

What will Earth look like at that time? See Jer. 4:23-27: it will be desolate and ruined. In Jer. 25:30-33, even the dead are not buried, and no one is left to bury them. All the wicked have died, and the righteous are in heaven. The Bible clearly describes what happens when Jesus returns, doesn't it? Notice that nowhere in these verses is the 'secret rapture' mentioned, and in fact, the phrase isn't in the Bible. The Bible teaches that Jesus' return will be visible to everyone, that the dead in Christ will rise first, that the living saved will meet Him in the air, and that the brightness of His coming will destroy the unsaved. This cannot be a secret event. Let's examine the passages often cited to support the idea of a secret rapture and see what they truly teach.

Read Matthew 24:37-41. The concept of a secret rapture suggests that one person will be taken to heaven, while the other remains to be deceived by the antichrist and faces the tribulation. But does this interpretation match what these verses actually say? Let's compare this with Luke 17:26, 27. Notice that Luke tells the same story, but pay attention to who Luke indicates is taken and who is left when Jesus returns. In Matthew 24:39, it states, "the flood came and took them all away."

This is explained in Luke 17:27 as "the flood came and destroyed them all." In both Noah's time and the last days, there are only two groups: those who are saved alive, and the lost, who are destroyed and left dead. Jesus simplifies this when He responds to the disciples' question in Luke 17:37, saying that vultures gather around the rotting bodies of the lost, indicating they are not left alive.

Let's examine some other verses that show the rapture is not secret and occurs only after the antichrist appears and the tribulation begins. For example, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 states that the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" will not take place "except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed" (verses 1 and 3). This makes it clear: the rapture cannot happen until there is a church apostasy, a departure from the truth, and the man of sin is unveiled within the church. Paul recognized the prophetic timeline, understanding that the antichrist would appear BEFORE the rapture.

If there is any doubt about what happens to the antichrist at the rapture, continue reading in 2 Thessalonians 2:8. It states that the antichrist will be destroyed by the brightness of Jesus' coming, the same event described earlier in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. This destruction of the lost and the antichrist occurs "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints" (1:10). At Jesus' return, the fate of both the lost and the saved is permanently determined.

How can we be certain we're prepared to go to heaven with Jesus? Consider 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12. It's important to ensure that we cherish the truth. Those who are lost are misled by the antichrist because they prefer their sin and "pleasure in unrighteousness' over love for the truth. If we give our hearts to God and love Him and His truth above all else, He will keep us safe.

I want this type of love, don't you? Let's ask Jesus to give us a love for Him that supersedes anything that might hold us back from walking in His truth, so that we can be ready for His soon return? I encourage you to pray and ask Jesus for a love for His truth, amen.

It will be a glorious day when Jesus returns. All sin will be destroyed. No more evil. Loved ones will be reunited. Mothers will hold their babies in their arms, those lost to death at such a tender age. I believe Jesus is coming soon. I am looking forward to it, aren't you? I want to be ready, don't you?

As you prayerfully consider this topic, I want you to know that we are here to help answer any questions you might have. If you have questions, please get in touch with us at <https://freechristianbooks.us>.