

# UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF REVELATION THROUGH BIBLE PROPHECY

## 16 Revelation's Finale – The Great Hope

Revelation pictures **the Event** that brings human history to a climax: **Revelation 14:14**. John writes: “I looked, and behold, a white cloud and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle.” This pictures Jesus coming in glory, coming to a world ripe for the harvest. **Revelation 19:11-14**: “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True. . . . And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.” This is Jesus Christ riding down like a triumphant general, leading the hosts of heaven, coming to rescue His people from a doomed planet.

Some have misinterpreted a few Scripture texts and built up the picture of a Secret Rapture, where individuals are whisked away to heaven while others go about their business. The Secret Rapture theory relies primarily on a few texts that speak of Christ coming like a thief in the night. We're told to watch and be ready for the unexpected event. On the surface this seems to imply a secret, perhaps invisible, event. But all the Bible passages which discuss Jesus' coming as a thief discuss not a *secret* coming but an *unexpected* one. Jesus is not coming secretly to a chosen few—He's coming suddenly when millions don't expect Him.

The problem is, texts about Jesus coming like a thief stand side by side with texts about Jesus coming in a blaze of glory. Peter in fact mentions the two in the same breath: “The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire. . . .” **2 Peter 3:10, NIV**. Obviously, the Lord comes like a thief in the sense that His Return will be a great *surprise* to those who aren't ready—it catches them off guard. But it's NOT silent or invisible. There's nothing quiet about the heavens disappearing with a roar.

Christ Himself pictures His coming in **Matthew 24:27 & 30, NIV**: “As the lightning comes from the east and *flashes* to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man . . . the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.” God has laid out His end-time plan very carefully in His Word. Specific events will take place:

1. Seismic upheavals. **Revelation 6:14; 16:18-20** There'll be stupendous seismic upheavals. The heavens roll back like a scroll; mountains and islands are moved; and a great earthquake shakes the planet.
2. The righteous dead are resurrected. **1 Thessalonians 4:16; John 5:28-29** “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” The faithful asleep in their graves will hear Christ's voice and rise up to eternal life.
3. The righteous living are translated. **1 Thessalonians 4:17** The righteous who are alive will be caught up together with the resurrected and ascend toward Christ, their Redeemer.
4. Immortality is bestowed. **1 Corinthians 15:53** Both the resurrected dead and the translated living receive the gift of immortality for their faith in Christ. “This mortal must put on immortality.”

5. The wicked are destroyed. **2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:11-21** Those who deliberately and persistently rejected God's mercy will finally be destroyed.
6. The righteous welcome the returning Christ. **Isaiah 25:9** The redeemed exclaim, "This is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. . . . We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."
7. The righteous journey to heaven. **John 14:2-3** The righteous are welcomed into the divine procession and journey with Christ toward their heavenly home.

What will you feel during those last moments of Earth's history? Joy? Or terror? You may feel indifferent about God right now, may not think faith is important. But one day soon it will make all the difference and will divide humanity into two groups. One group sees Christ's Coming as a horrifying surprise. **Revelation 6:15-17** says they'll pray for the mountains and rocks to fall on them! The other group sees it as a wonderful deliverance, a fulfillment of all they've lived for. Open your heart and make your commitment to Christ right now.

- John 14:1-3** Like a promissory note, Jesus said He would return—and we can bank on it!
- Acts 1:9-11** Angels confirmed His promise and testified to its truthfulness.
- Jude 14** Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of our Lord's return.
- Revelation 1:7** It will be a visible event. When Jesus returns, every eye shall see Him.
- Matthew 24:27** Jesus taught that His return shall be like *lightning* flashing across the sky.
- Matthew 24:30** The wicked also "will see the Son of Man coming...with power and great glory," but they "will mourn" their lost opportunity.
- 1 Thess. 4:15-17** It will be an audible event. The Lord Himself will *shout*, and the trumpet—the noisiest of instruments—shall *sound*.
- Psalm 50:3-5** David declares, "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent...He shall call...gather my saints together to me."
- Matthew 16:27, 25:31** It will be a glorious event, in His own glory and the glory of His Father. He comes with "all the holy angels", which Revelation 5:11 says are trillions.
- Revelation 19:11-16** As King of kings leading the armies of heaven, He returns as triumphant Lord.
- Isaiah 25:9** The righteous, delighted to see Christ, joyfully exclaim, "Lo, this is our God!"
- Revelation 6:14-17** The unsaved wicked fear His coming and cry for the rocks to fall upon them.
- 1 Thess. 4:15-17** The faithful *dead* will first be resurrected and rise to meet the Lord; then the faithful *living* will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.
- 1 Cor. 15:51-54** God will clothe His faithful people with immortality.
- 2 Thess. 2:8** The wicked are struck dead by the brightness of His coming.
- Matthew 13:37-43** The evil are purged out of His kingdom, and the righteous are saved through all eternity.
- Titus 2:13** Christ's coming is called the "blessed hope" of a lost mankind.
- Revelation 22:11-12, 17 & 20** Jesus offers His final invitation to prepare for His soon return.