

“One Will be Taken, the Other Left”

The *Left Behind* series that we mentioned earlier derives its name from Luke 17:36. The claim is made that the righteous will be “whisked away” in a secret rapture. We have seen that this imaginative scenario simply cannot be harmonized with the teaching of Scripture. What’s more, it utterly fails to grapple with the issue of who is _____ and who is _____!

Watch carefully as the picture unfolds from the Bible...

In Matthew 24:36-42, Jesus compares the Second Coming to the days of Noah. He also says that in the flood scenario, “the flood came and took them all away”. One group remained and one group was “taken away”. In Noah’s day, who was “taken away” by the flood? The wicked! See Genesis 7:21-23, note especially verse 23, where it says that “Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained *alive*.” Notice that “alive” is in italics meaning that it was supplied by the translators. The verse actually reads: “Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained.” Wow! Noah wasn’t taken. He remained; the wicked were taken, swept away by the flood.

Compare Luke 17: 26, 27. Here again there are two groups, those that were in the ark, and those that were “destroyed”. It is even clearer here. Those that were “destroyed” were not in the ark; they are the same group as those who were “taken away” in Matthew 24. Now see Luke 17:34-37. These verses are the logical climax of the passage. They make it clear that those who are “taken” are “taken” to destruction to be eaten by the vultures and eagles. Compare Revelation 19:17, 18. When it comes to understanding these passages in context, it becomes very clear that you don’t want to be in that class that is “taken”, for in Jesus’ use of the language, these are those that were taken to destruction!

Let’s be sure that we are looking for the right thing to come in the right way. Let’s be sure that our beliefs about the Second Coming come from the Bible! Let’s be ready to meet Him soon. Amen and amen!

—Discover Prophecy—

with David Asscherick, DP Speaker

Discover: How Jesus Christ Will Defy
the Skeptics and Return to Earth

No. 11

The word “rapture” does not appear in the Bible. Yet, correctly understood, it is a Biblical teaching. Like the words “trinity” or “millennium”, which also do not appear in the Bible, some words essentially become synonymous with certain Bible teachings. There is nothing wrong with this, per se, but we must labor to be sure that our beliefs and teachings *all* come from the Bible. The purpose of this lesson will be to demonstrate, from the Bible, how and when the “rapture” will take place in relation to other end-time events. It will be a great lesson!

The Rapture in the Book of Revelation

As mentioned above, the word “rapture” is not found in the Bible. What, then, does this word actually mean? The answer is: _____

This theme of the _____ of God’s people to Himself is found throughout the book of Revelation. Consider, for example, the following texts:

- Revelation 1:7
- Revelation 6:15-17
- Revelation 22:7, 12, 20
- Revelation 14:14, 15
- Revelation 19:11, 14
- Revelation 11:15

Second Coming Essentials

In seeking to correctly understand the rapture and the second coming, we must address 6 essentials surrounding the Second Coming:

1. Who, _____
2. What, _____
3. Where, _____
4. When, _____
5. Why, _____
6. How, _____

One reason that it is so essential that we start from the very basics is that our forebears, the _____, provide a sober example for us to consider. Think of it. The _____ preached and anticipated the coming of the Deliverer, the Messiah, for more than a thousand years. They longed for His coming. They prayed for His coming. They trusted in His coming. They knew many of the details about His coming. They taught, promoted, and heralded His coming. Yet, amazingly, on the whole they _____ His coming! It almost defies reason! How could it have happened? The answer, to a great degree, lies in the fact that they missed the “_____”, that is the _____ of His first coming. Could the Christian church be poised to do the very same thing today with His _____? The _____ looked for a coming military deliverer who would rescue them from their humiliating subservience to Rome. They understood many things about the Messiah’s first coming, but they missed the “_____”. We must ensure that we do not commit the same folly, as there are millions of dear people today, most of them _____, still looking for the Messiah’s first coming, while you and I await His second coming!

So then, How Will It Happen

We will answer this question from the Bible text by text. We will discover that the second coming will be characterized by 6 important elements. Be sure to list each one with notes and Bible verses for support. This is important stuff!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

The Secret Rapture

The concept of the “secret rapture”, as we have seen, is very difficult to harmonize with the Biblical picture presented above. There is simply nothing secretive or clandestine about it. In fact it will be the most non-secret event that this world has ever seen. “Every _____ will see Him”, says Revelation 1:7. Some kind of secret that is! A secret that everybody sees and knows! It defies both grammar and logic. Yet this idea is rather popular in this day and age. It has been made so, in no small part, by a series of fictitious scenarios depicted in the novel-series *Left Behind*. While this series may make for exciting reading and gripping adventure-fiction, it makes for poor theology. If you want to know what the Bible says, be sure to spend time actually reading the _____, not just books about the _____.

“A Thief in the Night”

The Bible does, in fact, teach that the Second Coming will resemble, in some sense, a thief in the night. But what does this mean, that it is a secret that no one knows? Let us see...

- Matthew 24:36, 43, 44
- 2 Peter 3:10

Notice what it is that comes like a thief. It’s not the Messiah, but the _____ and the _____. That is to say that the _____ is like a thief. No good thief calls ahead to alert you of his arrival. He times his coming so that you won’t expect it. Only in this sense is the Second Coming like “a thief”.

A word of caution is in order here. God is not out to “get” us or “surprise” us so that we will be lost. No, no, no! In fact, as we remember our presentation on the Signs of the Times, we see that He is trying to do the very opposite! Remember what Jesus, Peter, Paul, and John urged us to do? They said _____! Why? So we would be aware of the lateness of the hour. So that we would be prepared. This highlights an important point: the Second Coming is a surprise only to the _____, not to the committed, watchful believer. This makes the “thief in the night” texts so very easy to understand. It is the *timing* that comes like a thief, not the *event*.