



SAVED TO SERVE
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**THE SECRET RAPTURE:
TRUE OR FALSE DOCTRINE?**

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will study how Jesus will return to earth the second time and disprove the idea of a secret rapture.
2. What does the word "rapture" mean? **Answer:** "Rapture" means to be carried away with power/caught away/caught up (1 Thessalonians 4:17). The Bible teaches that there will be a rapture, but it will not be a secret. Before we address these false teachings, let us study how Jesus will return to earth the second time.
3. Will Jesus return to the earth a second time? John 14:1-3; Hebrews 9:28 _____
4. Why will Jesus return to earth?
 - a) Revelation 22:12 _____
 - b) John 14:3 _____
5. In what manner will Jesus come back the second time? Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 24:30

6. Will Jesus' Second Coming be visible to everyone or only a select group of people? Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:27

7. Will Jesus' Second Coming be audible? Psalm 50:3 _____
 - a) What will be heard which signals the return of Jesus? 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:31

8. Who is Jesus bringing with Him to the earth? Matthew 25:31; Matthew 24:30, 31; Luke 9:26

9. Will Jesus touch the earth when He returns? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Matthew 24:31; Psalm 50:4, 5

10. What will happen to the righteous who are dead and the righteous who are living? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17

11. What will happen to the wicked who are alive at the Second Coming? Revelation 6:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Isaiah 11:4

Rebuttals

12. The following accounts in Matthew and Luke are the primary scriptures used to teach the idea of a secret rapture. What phrases give people the false idea that there will be a secret rapture? Matthew 24:40-41; Luke 17:26-30, 34-36

13. To understand these scriptures, we must read the previous verses for context. Read Matthew 24:37-41. According to the verses, which group of people will be "taken away"?

a) **Note:** In Luke's version, not only does he compare the glorious coming of Jesus with the Flood, but he goes a step further, comparing it with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire in the days of Lot. In Luke 17:34, it brings to view two men in one bed, one is taken and the other is left. There are two kinds of people sleeping in death right now: the dead in Christ and those who are lost. When Jesus comes, the dead in Christ will rise, but the lost won't rise until the Second Resurrection (Revelation 20).

Luke 17:36 mentions two men working in the field. This points to evangelism. There are two kinds of people out there sharing two kinds of gospels, the true and the false. One is going to be saved and one will be lost. The field represents the world (Matthew 13:38). When Jesus comes again, there will be two kinds of missionaries laboring out in the field - the true and the false. This is why Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22, 23).

14. Rapturists believe that there will be a secret rapture because the Bible says that Jesus comes as a thief in the night (2 Peter 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:2). Since there will not be a secret rapture, then what do these texts mean? Matthew 24:42-51

Answer: Firstly, Jesus coming as a thief in the night means that no one knows the exact day or hour when He will return. Secondly, it means that the wicked will be found unprepared for His return because they neglected to watch and pray. Therefore, these scriptures studied in context, do not prove that there will be a secret rapturing of God's faithful people.

15. Based on the 70 weeks prophecy in Daniel 9, doesn't the Bible teach that there is going to be a seven-year period of tribulation when the antichrist will appear, but the righteous will not experience it since they will be taken to heaven?

Answer: The 70 weeks prophecy in Daniel 9 does not teach that there will be a seven-year tribulation in the last days. The seventy weeks prophecy was the probationary time God allotted Israel to end sin and to receive the Messiah. It began with the decree to restore and build Jerusalem which was given in 457 B.C. by King Artaxerxes. Daniel 9:25 says that the Messiah would be anointed after sixty-nine prophetic weeks. Using the day for a year prophetic template (Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34), that would be 483 years in the future bringing us to the year 27 AD when Jesus was baptized or "anointed" as the Messiah (*Messiah means anointed one*). The "midst of the week" that Daniel 9:27 speaks about was three and a half years after 27 AD, which brings us to 31 AD, when Jesus was crucified. Going three and a half more years into the future brings us to 34 AD when Stephen was stoned and probation closed on the Jews as a people. The gospel then went forth to the Gentiles (Acts 7:54-60). The 70 weeks prophecy was completely fulfilled and does not point to a future seven-year period of tribulation just before the end of the world. *For further study on the 70 weeks prophecy, see the study notes below.*

<https://www.prophesyagain.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Notes/2300.pdf>

16. As we learned in this lesson, rapturists believe that the righteous will be separated from the wicked before the tribulation. Based on the Bible, when will the separation between the righteous and wicked occur? Matthew 13:24, 25, 30, 39; Matthew 25:31, 32

17. **Note:** The Bible teaches that the time of tribulation takes place before the rapture, for we are saved **THROUGH** it and not **FROM** it. Here are some examples of people who were saved through tribulations and crises.

- Noah was saved through the Flood, not from it.
- Job was saved through the crisis, not from it
- Joseph was not saved from being sold into slavery, but God saved him through it.
- Daniel was saved through the lions' den, not from it.
- The Three Hebrews were saved through the fiery furnace and Jesus went through it with them, just as He will go through the great tribulation with us.
- The children of Israel were not saved from Egypt before the plagues fell, but afterward. Similarly, the righteous will be in the world when the seven last plagues fall (Revelation 16), but God will preserve them.

18. The Bible foretells that there will be a time of tribulation, even the Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7). When church and state unite to enforce unbiblical Sunday worship and persecute God's commandment keeping people, then God's people will have to depend on Him for strength to endure the test. All of this takes place prior to the Second Coming of Jesus (Revelation 14:6-19). What hope does Jesus leave with us for that time of tribulation? Revelation 2:9-10

19. Although we must go through tribulation, what is the prayer of Christ on our behalf which should encourage us? John 17:14-17

20. What will Jesus give to us so that we can endure and overcome the tribulation before us? John 16:33
