

UNLOCKING PROPHECY #9

A Thief in the Night

- † According to Doomsday clock, we are now 1 ½ minutes from Midnight. This is operated by a group of though leaders, scientists, and Nobel Prize winners. It is their best calculation to how close of a global catastrophe we are.
- † In John 14:1-3- Jesus said, “Let not your heart be troubled; you 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”
 - What does it mean that Christ is preparing a place for us? Is He still building mansions? No, not at all. The Bible says “There are many mansions (dwelling places).” So Jesus is doing a different work of preparation.
 - Hebrew 9:24, “For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,” Christ is in the Most Holy place of the Heavenly sanctuary for you.
 - Hebrew 7:25 says, “Therefore He [Jesus] is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” Jesus is making intercession for us in heaven. He is our mediator between us and God the Father.
 - In John 14:3- Jesus promised to come again. It’s a promise that you can take to the bank!
- † Titus 2:13, Paul describes the Second Coming as the Christian’s “Blessed hope.” When Christ comes there will be no more heartache. No more sickness, disease, or death.
- † Revelation 21:4- Eventually, on the New Earth, God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.
- † Matthew 24:37 says, “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”
 - A lot of people were alive in Noah’s day, but only 8 got on the ark and were saved.
- † Rapture literally means a snatching up or catching away.
- † So what are the characteristics of Christ’s Second Coming or Rapture?

Christ’s Coming will be Literal

- † Acts 1:9-11- Jesus was literally taken up into heaven, “and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner [ESV translated it “in the same way”] as you saw Him go into heaven.”
- † Christ went up literally into heaven in a cloud and will return literally with clouds, angels, power, and glory.
- † The Greek word for “Coming” is *Parousia*. It always refers to a literal coming, not a figurative, symbolic, or spiritual coming. See also 1 Corinthians 16:7 where Paul uses the same word to describe his friends coming to a certain place.
- † In Matthew 24-23-27--Christ warns of false Messiahs and false prophets who would deceive, if possible, even the elect with signs and wonders. Satan will seek to impersonate Christ’s coming. Jesus warns us to not watch it and listen to these false christs and false prophets, because the deception will be so great we could be led astray.
- † Mark 13:26-27 says, “And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.”
- † 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.” The righteous living will be caught up to meet the righteous dead (that have resurrected) and Christ in air! What a site that will be! Notice that Christ doesn’t come and walk and perform miracles on the earth at this time. Instead we are “caught up” to Him and meet him “in the air.” Satan will seek to counterfeit Christ’s coming and will work so called “miracles” to deceive people into thinking he’s the messiah (Matt 24:23-27, 2 Cor 11:14).

Christ's Coming will be Visible

- † Revelation 1:7 says, "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen." Every eye will see Jesus. It will be impossible to miss! Even those who pierced Jesus at His crucifixion will be raised to live to see Christ come. However, unless they had previously repented of this before their deaths, they will wail at the sight of His coming.
- † Matthew 24:30- "Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."
- † Matthew 24:27, "For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." Just as lightning is very visible, so also will be the coming of Christ.

Christ's Coming will be Audible

- † Psalm 50:3, "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, And it shall be very tempestuous all around Him." There is nothing silent or secret about the Second Coming of Christ.
- † 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 says, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord." Jesus doesn't come with a whisper, it's with a shout, the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. Trumpets are incredibly loud instruments. It will be so loud the righteous dead will be resurrected by the power of Christ.

Christ's Coming will be Glorious

- † Matthew 16:27 says, "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works." It is at the Second Coming that Jesus gives out His rewards. The righteous will receive the reward of eternal life, while the wicked will be destroyed.
- † Mark 8:38 says, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." We should not be ashamed of Christ and His Words (the Bible). Jesus wants us to unashamedly proclaim the truth of His Word, even when it isn't popular, and even in the face of persecution.

We Can Know When His Return is Near

- † Matthew 24:33 says, "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!" When we see all the signs of Christ's return with greater intensity and frequency, then we know that His coming is near!
- † Matthew 24:42-44, "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." We need to watch and be ready for Christ to come. Study, pray, and share God's truth!

The Day of the Lord Comes as a Thief in the Night

- † 1 Thessalonians 5:2- "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."
- † 2 Peter 3:10- "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."
 - These two verses emphasize that Christ's coming will be unexpected by most people. God's people, however, do not have to be surprised if they watching and always ready by daily surrendering their lives to God. However, we can't know the day or hour (Matthew 24:36).
- † Matthew 24:37- "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." So what were the day of Noah like? The "thoughts" of their hearts were "only evil continually" and the earth was filled with violence. (Gen 6:5, 11). In Noah's day the wicked were destroyed by the flood, so too at Christ's

coming, the righteous will be taken and the wicked will be left to destruction (Matt 24:38-42). Just as there was no second chance in Noah's day, there will be no second chance after the Second Coming (rapture).

One Taken, the Other Left – The Secret Rapture Theory

- † Matthew 24:40-42- One taken, one left. Righteous taken to heaven, wicked left.
- † Luke 17:34-37- "I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" [Where will the wicked be left?] So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." The wicked will be left dead on this earth, during the 1,000 year millennium in heaven.
 - Like Noah's day, one is saved and the other is lost.
 - The danger of the Secret Rapture Theory is that it gives people a false sense of security. They may think that if they aren't a part of the "secret rapture" they can just get their act together of the next 7-year tribulation and be saved.
 - However, you're second chance was today when you woke up.
 - The "secret rapture" is not Biblical. And it's a relatively recent belief. None of the protestant reformers believed in the secret rapture.
 - For more information on why the secret rapture is not Biblical see the Amazing Facts booklet by Joe Crews entitled, "The Secret Rapture." We have them available at the resource table and the article can be accessed for free online at: <https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/book/e/74/t/the-secret-rapture>
 - Dispensationalists throw the 70th week of Daniel 7 into the future and has it represent antichrist, when as we saw in Keys to Bible Prophecy Presentation 4, that the 70th week refers to Christ as well as the Gospel going to the Gentiles. See Handout #4.
- † The Antichrist comes before the Second Coming, not after a "secret rapture." (2 Thess 2:1-4)
- † In Matthew 25:32-33- Jesus shows that there are only 2 classes when he comes back: Sheep (the righteous) and goats (the wicked).
- † Before Christ comes back to give out His rewards (Matt 16:27) a final announcement will be made: "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." At this point, human probation closes and all who would have chosen Christ have made their final decision. The wicked have rejected Jesus and His Word.
- † The 7 Last Plagues (Rev 16) are then poured out but God protects His people through the tribulation, just as He was with and protected: Noah through the flood, Daniel through the lion's den, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego through the fiery furnace, the children of Israel through the plagues of Egypt.
- † Revelation 15:8- "The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed."
- † Revelation 6:14-17- At the Second Coming the wicked will want to hide their faces from the wrath of God.
- † Isaiah 25:9- But the righteous will say, "Behold this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." They will rejoice to see their Savior come!
- † John 6:37- "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." Now is the time to come to Christ, while human probation continues. Today is the day of salvation.
- † By God's grace and mercy, and by daily surrendering your life to Jesus, you can be ready for Christ's coming! Keep studying God's Word and share it with others!
- † Watch this presentation again, or share with a friend by searching for: Centralia SDA Church on Youtube or <https://tinyurl.com/unlockingprophecy>
- † Text your Bible Questions to: 360-322-1260