

17 -- When the Day of Atonement Ends (Jesus' Second Coming)

The return of Jesus to earth at the end of time is the glorious climax of the plan of salvation, and the blessed hope of the redeemed. This subject is mentioned more than 2500 times in God's Word. As we have discovered, it is when the work of the investigative judgment closes, and the destiny of all has been decided, that Jesus comes for those who love Him. That "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues" (Revelation 7:9), is waiting for Jesus. "With power and great glory" the Son of man will come in the "glory of His father" (Matthew 16:27), in His own glory (Matthew 24:30), and in the glory of all the holy angels (Matthew 25:31). This is "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Unfortunately, there is much confusion among today's Christians about this subject. This lesson will be most helpful in clearing up any misconceptions concerning the events surrounding the return of the King of Kings.

1. Who is soon the King who will soon emerge from the temple in heaven?

Revelation 14:14 And 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

Note: When Christ's work as High Priest is completed He will remove His priestly clothing (Leviticus 16:24) and dawn His Kingly garb when He comes to gather His children.

2. Will Jesus come quietly when He returns?

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. ...

Jeremiah 25:30 ... The LORD will roar from on high, And utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will give a shout. ...

Psalms 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.

Note: "Tempestuous" means "turbulent and stormy." The second coming of Jesus will clearly be noisy beyond description. There will be nothing secret about it!

3. What other physical evidence will accompany Jesus' return?

Revelation 16:18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake

4. Who will see Jesus when He returns?

Matthew 24:30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, 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.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him

Note: This is too clear to misunderstand. Every person alive, wicked or righteous, will see Jesus return to earth. A secret gathering, or "rapture," of God's people is not described in the Bible.

5. Who will be with Jesus when He returns in the clouds?

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Note: The brightness of the Lord's return will, by comparison, make the brightness of a hydrogen bomb pale into insignificance. At Jesus' tomb, the brightness of one angel caused all the Roman guards to fall to the ground as dead men (Matthew 28:2-4). The brightness of all heaven's angels will make Jesus' second coming too bright for anyone to miss. Added to this will be the fantastic glory of Jesus and the Father (Luke 9:26). Jesus' second coming will be like lightning flashing from one horizon to the other (Matthew 24:27).

6. What will the brightness of Jesus' coming do to the living wicked?

2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8 ... and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming."

7. What will happen to the righteous who are dead at Jesus' coming?

1 Thessalonians 4:16 ... And the dead in Christ will rise first.

8. At this point, what will happen to the living and resurrected saints?

1 Corinthians 15:52, 53 ... the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Note: No one except God has immortality now (1 Timothy 6:15, 16). But it will be given as a free gift to the righteous at Jesus' second coming. Their bodies also will be changed into heavenly, incorruptible bodies, like that of Jesus (Philippians 3:20, 21).

9. After being changed, what will happen to the righteous?

1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. ...

Note: God's saints will meet the Lord in the air. Jesus does not touch the earth at His second coming, so He will not appear on the earth, as many believe. His second coming will be a sky appearance, not an earth appearance.

10. What solemn warning does Jesus give about His second coming?

Matthew 24:5 For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will deceive many.

Matthew 24:24, 26 For false christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ... Therefore if they say to you, "Look, He is in the desert!" do not go out; or "Look, He is in the inner rooms!" do not believe it.

Note: Satan will impersonate Christ's second coming by appearing upon the earth as a glorious being, and he will deceive billions. Jesus has warned us that He will not touch the earth at all at His second coming, but rather will remain in the air. The dazzling deceptions of Satan will be so convincing that most people will be deceived.

11. What will prevent the righteous from being deceived?

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Note: God's people will not be deceived, because they will know from a study of God's Word just how Jesus will come (Acts 17:11). Any appearing that is not in agreement with Scripture is a counterfeit and must be rejected. Jesus forewarned us. "Behold, I have told you before." (Matthew 24:25)

12. Would it be safe to go see a false Christ?

Matthew 24:26 Therefore if they say to you, "Look, He is in the desert!" do not go out; ...

13. What can we know about the time of Jesus' return?

Matthew 24:33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the doors.

Matthew 24:36 But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Note: Only God knows the exact time of the second coming. All date-setting is out of harmony with the Bible. But Jesus made it clear that when we see the signs of His coming fulfilled (Matthew 24:4-51; Luke 21:8-33; and 2 Timothy 3:1-8), we can know that His coming is very near--even at the doors.

14. What will the angels do at Jesus' second coming?

Matthew 24:31 ... His angels...will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Note: Your guardian angel (Matthew 18:10) will probably be the first to greet you at Jesus' return. What a blessed thought! No wonder the Bible calls the second coming the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13)!

15. Since we are living just before Jesus' second coming, how should we relate to this solemn, glorious event?

Matthew 24:44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him.

16. How will people be rewarded at Jesus' second coming?

Revelation 22:12 And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

Note: People will be saved by grace but rewarded based on their conduct, not on their profession (Matthew 7:21-23).

17. What will the wicked say when Jesus returns?

Revelation 6:15-17 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man ... said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne ... For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Note: During this horrendous final earthquake, the wicked--petrified with fear--will prefer for the rocks and mountains to fall on them rather than to face King Jesus unprepared.

18. What will the righteous say when Jesus appears?

Isaiah 25:9 ... Behold, this is our God; We have waited for Him, and He will save us. ... We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

19. What is the prime purpose of Jesus' second coming?

John 14:3 ... I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Note: Jesus' most thrilling purpose in returning to earth is to take His children to the glorious home He has prepared for them. No more tears, woes, heartaches, or illness forever. But rather, joy and peace unspeakable forever.

Your Response

Jesus is coming in the clouds very soon. Won't you plan now to be ready to meet Him?

ANSWER: _____

The Secret Rapture Theory

The secret rapture theory is based on eight premises that have been so widely embraced that most people accept them as fact without pausing to investigate. However, our only safety is to search the Scriptures daily to determine whether those things are so (Acts 17:11). The eight points of the secret rapture theory are as follows:

1. The rapture is silent.
2. The rapture is invisible.
3. The rapture leaves the wicked alive.
4. God removes the righteous to protect them from the tribulation.
5. Christ's second coming will be in two stages: (1) the secret rapture, and (2) the actual coming.
6. These two stages of the second coming will be seven years apart.
7. The rapture will take place before the revelation of the antichrist, who then will bring about the tribulation.
8. The wicked will at this point have a second chance to be converted and to serve Christ.

To examine these points fully is beyond the scope of this limited supplement, but we will briefly cover each point here. Points one and two were covered in this lesson, but they are mentioned again for emphasis. Prepare for some surprises!

1. The rapture is not silent, but rather is extremely noisy. The Scriptures say Jesus will descend "*with a SHOUT, with the VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL, and with the TRUMP OF GOD.*" 1 Thessalonians 4:16, emphasis added. David says, "*Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: ... it shall be very tempestuous [violent, whirling] round about him.*" Psalm 50:3. And Jeremiah says, "*The Lord shall roar from on high, ... he shall mightily roar ...; he shall give a shout. ... A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth.*" Jeremiah 25:30, 31. Nothing about it is quiet! Christ will come with a noise heard around the world. Mark this well. If you are living when Jesus returns, you will hear Him come. Your ears will ring with catastrophic noise.

2. The rapture is not invisible; it will be seen by all. All of the angels will come with Jesus (Matthew 25:31). One lone angel appeared at Jesus' resurrection, and his brightness was so overpowering that the entire Roman guard fell to the ground as dead men (Matthew 28:2-4). Consider the staggering brightness of all the angels of heaven! Added to the glory of the angels will be Jesus' own glory (Matthew 25:31) and the glory of His Father (Matthew 16:27). The brightness will be overwhelming. Jesus added, "*For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*" Matthew 24:27. Secret? By no stretch of the imagination. In fact, the Bible forever settled this by saying, "*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him.*" Revelation 1:7. Rest assured, if you are living at Jesus' second coming, you will see Him come!

3. The rapture does not leave the wicked alive. They are slain at the Lord's coming (Isaiah 11:4; Malachi 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:8).

4. God does not remove the righteous from the tribulation, but rather protects them through it (Psalm 91:5-12).

5. Christ's second coming will not be in two stages--one secret and the other seen by all. There is only one Second Coming, and it will be seen by every living person on earth. There is no Scripture to support a two-phase second coming.

6. The secret rapture teachers claim that there is a seven-year period between the two second comings of Christ. This is not scriptural.

7. Antichrist does not appear three and one-half years after the second coming of Jesus. He has been active for centuries (1 John 4:3) and is doing his nefarious work even now.

8. The wicked will not have a second opportunity to be saved after the Second Coming. All sinners will be destroyed at the Second Coming. There is no second opportunity for anyone after Jesus' second coming.