

2 Thessalonians 1:4-10

This passage also points to one final coming of Jesus. Notice that the righteous are granted relief from their suffering at the same time the unrighteous are punished. Once again, there is only one day under consideration in this text. Saints will still be alive on this earth when He comes, as they will marvel at Him. They will not have been caught up in a secretive coming prior to this.

Conclusion

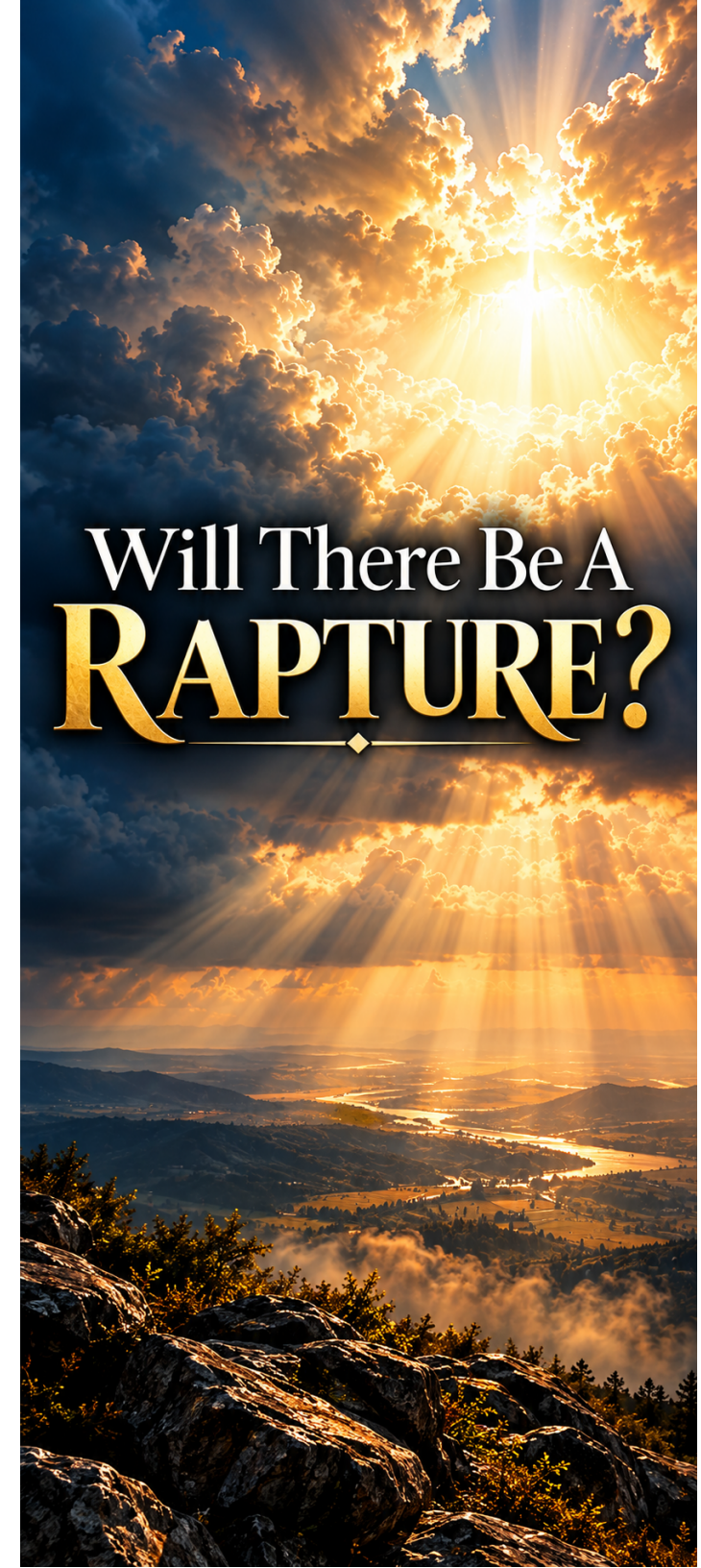
The Bible does teach that people will be caught up at Christ's coming. However, it does not teach a secret rapture of Jesus's church at a separate time from Jesus's final coming! Instead, the Scriptures teach that Jesus will come at an unknown time. At His coming, both the righteous and unrighteous will be raised and everyone (including the living) will meet the Lord in judgment. Then, the righteous will forever be with the Lord, while the unrighteous will forever be punished. There will be no future opportunity for anyone to get ready after Jesus comes!

Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

Written by Eric Krieg

Watch the video @

WWW.GODSAIDSO.COM/QA43



Bible Questions & Answers

Will There Be A “Rapture”?

Many people and churches teach the concept of a secret return of Christ wherein Jesus will “rapture” His church (saved people). At this time, Jesus will supposedly take His church away while all the unrighteous people will remain on the earth. Some teach that this will then initiate a seven-year tribulation period on the earth. After this “rapture,” it is commonly believed that Jesus will return visibly to the earth. But, while this is commonly taught today, let’s consider whether it is taught in the Bible.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

The English word “rapture” is not found in the Bible. It comes from a Latin word that means “snatching away” or “carrying off.” This passage teaches that a catching up will take place when Jesus comes. Particularly, Paul demonstrates that both those who have died in the Lord and those who are still alive in the Lord at His coming will take part in this event. Those who are alive in Christ will be caught up together with those who have been raised to meet the Lord in the air. However, notice that this is not a secret coming of Christ, as it will be accompanied by a shout, the voice of

the archangel, the trumpet of God, and the resurrection of the dead!

1 Corinthians 15:22-24, 50-54

As the apostle Paul wrote about the resurrection in this chapter, he addressed the fate of both those who had died in the Lord and those who were alive at His coming. The dead in Christ will be raised at His coming. Those who are still alive in Christ will be changed. Notice this will happen at the sounding of the last trumpet, not at a secretive coming of Christ that is distinguished from the final resurrection. Furthermore, the text indicates that this occasion then brings about the end, when all enemies are defeated and the kingdom is handed over to the Father. Therefore, a secret rapture of the saved does not fit with the teachings of this text.

Matthew 24:36-44

This passage can be understood as discussing Jesus’s final coming, at which time the heavens and earth will pass away (v. 35; 2 Peter 3:10-13). No one (except the Father) knows when this time will come. It will be as unexpected as the flood that destroyed the world in Noah’s day. Although some interpret verses 40 and 41 to mean Jesus will take the righteous to Heaven and leave behind the unrighteous in a secretive rapture, the context does not support this conclusion. Instead, it simply shows the sudden separation of the prepared and

unprepared (as was the case in the days of the flood). At Jesus’s coming, it will be too late to change your life (Matthew 24:45-51; 25:1-13, 14-30)!

Matthew 25:31-33

Rather than a secretive coming of Christ for His church and a later coming to judge everyone else, this passage teaches one final coming of Christ, when all people are judged – the righteous and the unrighteous. At this time, the righteous are welcomed to eternal life in Heaven (vv. 34-40, 46) and the unrighteous are sentenced to eternal punishment in Hell (vv. 41-46). Therefore, people must be ready for Jesus’s coming (Matthew 24:36-25:30)!

John 5:28-29

Jesus points to a time when all who have died will hear His voice and rise. Notice, however, that this will occur for both the righteous and the wicked at the same time, not two separate events! This fits with what we have seen in the other passages. Jesus will come at an unknown time and the last trumpet will sound. At this time, the resurrection of both the righteous and wicked will happen, as well as the catching up of those who are alive. All will be judged. The righteous will then experience eternal life, and the wicked will experience eternal condemnation.