

For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them

1 Thess 5:2-3

² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

NKJV

The Lord will come for His church when we least expect it. No one expects a thief to come at a precise time. We know He will come as the Bride Groom of His Church. The word 'church' here is special in that it is not just any ekklesia - congregation. She is a 'new creation' and a composition of Jew and Gentile.

Now some have considered these verses to represent the Second Coming, but when the Lord comes as the Lion of Judah, it will not be in secret - as we know 'every eye will see Him...' Revelation.

ekklesia

[NT:1577](#) ἐκκλησία **ekklesia** (ek-klay-see'-ah); from a compound of [NT:1537](#) and a derivative of [NT:2564](#); a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both):

KJV - assembly, **church**.

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Rev 1:7-8

⁷ Behold, **He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him**, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

NKJV

The 'Pierced One,' as He is depicted in ancient rabbinical literature, comes back to the earth and He is the Alpha and Omega.

Who is God ...?

*Who was ordained before the foundations of the earth?
Who is upon the throne seated at the right hand of God?
Who is to come – our blessed hope?*

One of the aspects of the **Jewish wedding** is the betrothal, which is something like our engagement. The groom had to pay a price and this was negotiated beforehand.

What price did the Groom of the Church have to pay? Jesus is the Groom of the Church and we know He paid for her with His life.

1 Peter 1:18-19

¹⁸ knowing that **you were not redeemed with corruptible things**, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers,

¹⁹ **but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**

NKJV

And when was this price negotiated..?

1 Peter 1:20

²⁰ **He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you

NKJV

Once the groom paid the price for his bride's purchase, a marriage covenant was established.

Jesus tells us at the Last Supper, the Passover, that He is making a New Covenant with mankind.

Matt 26:27-29

²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "**Drink from it, all of you.**

²⁸ **For this is My blood of the new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

²⁹ But I say to you, **I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.**"

NKJV

From the time the purchase price was made the bride was considered set apart – consecrated for the groom. Sounds familiar?

We know we are set apart for Christ by His work for us.

Heb 10:19-20

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,
²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His
flesh,
NKJV

What really makes this interesting at this point in the Jewish wedding, the groom leaves his bride for a time which gave the bride time to prepare her for married life.

The similarity is Jesus left us and we are told by two angels at the tomb that He will return as we have seen Him leave through the clouds. Also, we are being prepared. More people come to know the Lord and are being renewed ... made ready for the Groom's return to the earth.

Thus, we enter into the presence of God by a new and living way. The Way is Jesus as He claims Himself to be. As a bride must prepare herself, so we must do the same and set our hands to the plow and not turn back. If we fail, we have a High Priest who prays for us. But we must keep on the course ... the consecrated way.

The similarities continue!!!

During the time the groom leaves the bride, he goes to prepare a place in his father's house! This spot is for his bride and she will be brought there later when he comes to get her.

Now the bride knows that the groom will come to get her but she does not know the time of his coming. Our Lord comes like a thief in the night as we just read on the first page.

This is why we believe at Calvary Chapel that the 'Day of the Lord' starts after the rapture. He comes as it were in secret ... a thief in the night. But the Day of the Lord comes with all eyes upon Him and men crying that the rocks should fall on them than have to deal with our King.

Now, as the groom is coming for his bride there is a 'shout.' This signified that her departure is near due. We know from scripture that the Lord descends with a shout.

1 Thess 4:16-18

¹⁶ 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.

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. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

NKJV

The text below is a prophecy of the first coming.

Zech 9:9

The Coming King ° "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He *is* just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

NKJV

Let us look at the context of these verses.

1 Thess 4:13-5:10

The Comfort of Christ's Coming

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

¹⁶ 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.

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. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The day of the LORD is seen throughout the Old Testament and it signifies God's wrath being poured out upon the earth and the unjust.

The movie series 'Left Behind' signify those who were not living for the Lord but for the things this world. They were not caught up in the rapture '... dead shall rise...'

The Day of the Lord

5 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober.

⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

NKJV