

GOD'S DIVINE ESCAPE PLAN

Dear Prayer Partners,

This **Sunday (10/13)** we continue our study of Jesus' teaching on the "**Last Days**". Please read **Luke 21:36-38**, and plan on inviting your family and friends. It's important that we are equipped and prepared to tell everyone we know that Jesus is coming soon.

Jesus had been sharing with His disciples the "*signs of the times*" that pointed to the destruction of Jerusalem, the scattering and persecution of the Jewish people, and the nation's eventual regathering back to the land.

In light of all that Jesus said would take place on earth, preceding His return, He told the disciples to "*Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these that that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man*" (Luke 21:36).

Jesus was giving His followers an escape plan. He was telling them there was a way they could avoid what the Bible calls the "Great Tribulation". A time on earth that will be so devastating, "*Unless those days were cut short, no flesh would survive*" (Matthew 24:22).

Think how encouraged the disciples must have been, after hearing about the devastation that would take place during the Tribulation, that there was a way to escape.

That's the kind of news that brings hope. It was a great motivator. It galvanized them to make sure life's priorities were in order.

In one summary statement, Jesus was telling His disciples (throughout the entire church age), what was and continues to be an imperative command. An exhortation for each one to keep their eyes continually on Him, looking and waiting with expectation for His return.

The return of Jesus for His church is known at the “Rapture”. It’s when “*Jesus comes and receives the church to Himself, to take her to His Father’s House*” (John 14:1-3).

The Bible describes the Rapture with three important terms. The first is imminence. It means Jesus can return at any moment. Jesus said, “*Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect*” (Luke 12:35-40)

Second, the Rapture is sign less. There are no signs that must be fulfilled for Jesus to come for His church. Every sign given in the Old and New Testament concern His Second Coming, when He will return to rule and reign on Earth.

The Rapture is Jesus coming like a “*thief in the night*”. In one moment, believers will disappear from the earth. The world will be in shock, frantically searching for an answer. That is why the Bible says, “*Behold, today is the day of salvation*” (1 Cor. 6:2). It is imperative every person examine their life to make sure they are “*counted worthy*” to escape what is coming.

Finally, the Rapture is quick. Paul told the Corinthians when Jesus comes, *“We shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed”* (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

Please invite as many as you can (Sunday, 10:00 am). **Time is short. Jesus is coming** and the **harvest is plentiful**.

Hope to see you,

BE BLESSED,
Pastor