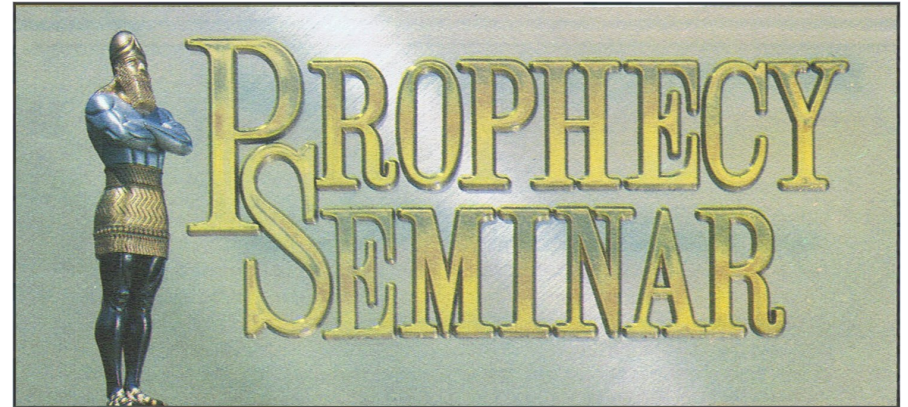


Notes, Questions & Prayer Requests

Handwriting lines for notes, questions, and prayer requests.

DS-023



LESSON TWENTY-THREE THE DAY OF DELIVERENCE

QUIZ QUESTIONS

- 1. The term "Israel" in Scripture refers exclusively to the ethnic descendants of Abraham. False
2. All prophecy in Scripture will be fulfilled unconditionally. False
3. The New Testament indicates that the term "Israel" refers to Christians who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. True
4. The Bible predicted the return of the Jews to Palestine in 1948. False
5. There is only one body through which Christ will work in the last days. That body is the church of Jesus Christ. True

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Things to Review:

1. The concept of Israel in the Old Testament is a spiritual term.
2. All prophecy involving human choice is conditional upon obedience.
3. In the New Testament Jesus clearly indicates that ethnic Israel is about to be replaced as the covenant people and a new Israel that accepts Christ is about to be established.
4. The apostle Paul indicates that the new Israel has come into being, that all who have accepted Jesus Christ are now the inheritors of the promises to Abraham.
5. The Bible does not mention the usage of ethnic Israel in the last days to be the evangelizing agency of God; the church remains God's evangelizing agency to the end of time.
6. The church is the fulfilment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament referring to Israel; they were unfulfilled in ethnic Israel.
7. The action of last-day events is on the remnant of Revelation 12:17 and not on the people of the Middle East.

Purpose of this Lesson:

In this lesson the whole question of the rapture will be dealt with.

Normally we would stick to a positive presentation of the truth of Scripture; however, the falsehood of the secret rapture is so widespread today that it necessitates taking the time to fully expose the fallacy of this system which has so distorted Scripture.

The teacher will need to be cautious and loving as he presents the truth of the Bible regarding the second coming of Christ and at the same time exposes the fallacy of the rapture theory.

This lesson must not be passed over lightly. Your students need to see this very clearly, for it is one of the major deceptions that they face today.

Notes, Questions & Prayer Requests

Christ and gives further information about the darkening of the sun and the falling of the stars.

The point that is to be made on the dark day and the falling of the stars is that these signs inaugurated the time of the end, and that since that time we have been living in the predicted “time of the end.”

Question 26

Hopefully the expectations of your students are high at this point as they think about the second coming of Christ. They are longing for that day as the wonderful day of deliverance, just as Daniel and his people longed for the day of deliverance in his day. The only question remaining is, Are we ready for that coming? Be sure to give a beautiful appeal for your students to be ready for the coming of the Lord.

Response Questions:

1. If it is clear to you from Scripture that Christ is coming visibly, personally, and not secretly, place a check mark in Box #1.
2. If it is your desire to be ready to meet your Lord on that wonderful morning of the resurrection, place a check mark in Box #2.

You have already laid the foundation for this lesson in many previous lessons, and especially in Lesson 22. Therefore it should not be too difficult for most of your students to accept at this stage of their experience.

Questions 1 & 2

Since we are dealing with Daniel 12 it is necessary to introduce Michael at this point. You do not need to be too dogmatic here.

Do not spend a lot of time on this question.

In some people's minds, a reference to Christ as Michael means that you believe Christ is a created being.

Please be certain to make it clear to your students that you fully believe in the divinity of Christ as we taught in Lesson 2. Earlier in the series this may have been a difficult concept for people to accept, but at this stage of the lessons it should not create too much of a problem.

Questions 3 to 5

The rapturists believe that they will not be here for the time of trouble. This has been a great consolation to many people. They have felt that God is not going to allow them to go through this time of trouble, so it is very disturbing for them to realize that they will be going through the time of trouble. Therefore, it is important that you make it clear that while they go through the time of trouble, Christ goes through it with them, just as He went through the fire with the three Hebrew worthies. The parallels of Daniel 3 and 6 reveal that God goes with us as we go through troublous times.

Questions 6 & 7

Read John 14:1-3 to your students. Talk with excitement about this glorious, wondrous hope that we have that Jesus Christ will come again.

Questions 8 to 13

These six questions deal with the manner of Christ's coming. Obviously, this is hitting directly at the rapture theory, which says that Christ is coming secretly to snatch the church out of the world. Give good emphasis to each of the points raised in each of these questions. Indicate that when Christ comes, there is a lot of noise.

Everybody sees Him—not just the righteous, but also the wicked. Pay particular attention to Questions 11 and 12, where Jesus has warned us against those who would suggest that He will come secretly. Jesus said His coming would be like **lightning!**

The teacher should also be aware that the rapturists get around these texts by dividing the second coming into two parts: an invisible and a visible return. The invisible return takes place at the rapture; seven years later the visible return occurs. The rapturist applies all of the texts that mention noise and visibility to the second phase of the second coming, at the end of the seven years. That is why further evidence needs to be given to undermine the rapture theory.

The whole question of the nation of Israel is fundamental to a destruction of the rapturist doctrine. Having destroyed the foundation, these texts then show clearly that the coming of Christ is visible, personal and literal. There is no indication in Scripture of any division in the coming of Christ into two parts. It is an arbitrary division made by the rapturists with no Biblical precedent or warranty.

You will want to stress when you read 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 that the coming of Christ spoken of here is the one when He comes to resurrect the saints. It is at this time that the righteous are caught up, which the rapturists would agree to be the rapture. Paul emphatically states that this time when He comes to rapture the saints and resurrect the righteous is accompanied by a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God.

In other words, here is a lot of noise associated with that coming. Therefore, even in the rapturist theology this text has to refer to the so-called rapture and not to the visible return at the end of the seven years. The point is that even here there is evidence of a lot of noise and visibility

1 Thessalonians 2:1-3 is to show that Paul has warned strongly against anyone who would suggest that Christ's second coming would occur before the “man of sin” is revealed.

The “man of sin” is the antichrist. Paul's point is that the antichrist comes first and is totally revealed before the second coming of Christ occurs.

Verse 1 makes it clear that the passage is referring to the gathering of the saints to Christ, which in rapturist terminology would be the rapture.

This passage clearly states that the “rapture” must take place after the coming of the antichrist, not before. This is exactly the opposite of what the rapturists teach and this is a strong text to use in refuting rapturist teaching.

Question 20

Obviously, the wicked see Christ coming. According to the rapturists, the wicked do not even know Christ has come.

Question 21 & 22

You will want to talk very positively about the second coming. By the time you've reached Question 21 you will have thoroughly destroyed the rapturists teaching.

You now need to build a positive, exciting experience of longing and looking for the second coming of Christ.

Talk about the blessed hope, share what it means to you to believe that Jesus is coming soon—that it's the great hope of your heart.

Questions 23 to 25

These questions deal with some of the signs of Christ's return. Obviously, you will not have a lot of time to deal with this in your class, but you will want to mention several of the signs briefly and subsequently refer your students to Exhibit 2 which lists all of the various signs of the coming of

Please refer to Exhibit 1 during this period, where you will answer the question that rapturists often raise about “one shall be taken and the other left.”

Question 15

One of the main points that the rapturists believe is that the saints will not be here during the time of trouble. Questions 15 and 16 try to distinctly show that the saints will be here during the time of trouble.

The whole premise of the book of Daniel has been that God provides deliverance in trouble, not from trouble. Thus the three Hebrew worthies went through the fiery furnace, but God delivered them.

Daniel went into the den of lions; nevertheless, God was with him and delivered him from the lions. The stories in the book of Daniel illustrate the struggles through which the people of God are going to pass in the last days (which is a major premise you have been building throughout this series).

The teaching of the book of Daniel makes it very clear that God's people will go through trouble yet will be protected by God during this troublous time.

Question 16

This passage would be meaningless if God's people were not going to be here during the plagues. God did not deliver the Israelites in Egypt before the plagues were poured out, but through most of the plagues He provided them with protection from harm. So it will be with God's people in the time of the end.

Questions 17 & 18

The rapturists teach that the antichrist does not come until after the rapture. That is when the mark of the beast is inflicted. The point raised in

at the return of Christ.

Question 14

Here is an opportunity to briefly review the millennial teaching on the return of Christ. This, too, has undermined the rapture.

To refer back to it at this point will help your students to understand that the rapture theory does not fit in with the millennial concept.

Is There A Secret Rapture?

This section will help the teacher to really zero in on the whole rapture question at this point. In fact, the teacher may want to read through this part of the lesson with the students. Here is additional background material about the rapture that may help you in this section.

In Lesson 1 we indicated that there were three ways people have interpreted prophecy:

1. The Preterist view, which views the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation as primarily fulfilled in the past—Daniel in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and Revelation in the time of the Romans—therefore none of the prophecies have much value for us today.
2. The Futurist view, which places all prophecy in the future; hence most of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation have not yet been fulfilled. Rapturists are futurists. According to rapturists, Revelation 1-3 is historical, but in Revelation 4:1, when John is told “come up hither,” the rapture occurs.

Subsequently everything else in the book of Revelation occurs after the rapture. Obviously, Revelation 4:1 is merely a statement in which John in vision is told to come up to heaven and see what's coming. There is nothing in that text whatsoever about the rapture.

3. Historist. This method of interpretation, which the Prophecy Seminar has followed, sees the prophecies beginning in the

prophet's day, expanding down through history, and climaxing in the time of the end.

It would be helpful to review these three methods of interpretation with your student now and to remind them that Historicism has been the traditional interpretation of the church for well over 2000 years. The Preterist and Futurist schools of interpretation are relatively new. It would also be helpful at this time to share the history of the Preterist and Futurist views.

The great reformers—Martin Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, etc.—all believed and utilized the Historist view of prophetic interpretation. That view saw the Papacy as the major oppressor of God's people during the Dark Ages. It was their understanding of prophecy that gave them the courage to step out and begin the Reformation as they saw the Papacy described in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

Obviously, the Roman Church did not like it when the Reformers referred to her as the harlot and the beast, etc. The Roman Church then commissioned two Jesuits, Alcazar and Ribera, to find alternate views of prophecy that could take the blame off the Catholic Church. They each came up with an alternate view of prophetic interpretation. Alcazar devised the Preterist method, while Ribera came up with the Futurist view.

Note the following:

“So great a hold did the conviction that the Papacy was the Antichrist gain upon the minds of men, that Rome at last saw she must bestir herself, and try, by putting forth other systems of interpretation, to counteract the identification of the Papacy with the Antichrist.

“Accordingly, toward the close of the century of the Reformation, two of the most learned doctors set themselves to the task, each endeavouring by different means to accomplish the same end, namely, that of diverting men's minds from perceiving the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Antichrist in the papal system.

The Jesuit Alcazar devoted himself to bring into prominence the

preterist method of interpretation, . . . and thus endeavoured to show that the prophecies of Antichrist were fulfilled before the popes ever ruled in Rome, and therefore could not apply to the Papacy.

“On the other hand, the Jesuit Ribera tried to set aside the application of these prophecies to the papal power by bringing out the futurist system, which asserts that these prophecies refer properly, not to the career of the Papacy, but to some future supernatural individual, who is yet to appear, and continue in power for three and a half years. Thus, as Alford says, the Jesuit Ribera, about A.D. 1580, may be regarded as the founder of the futurist system of modern times.

“. . . It is a matter for deep regret that those who advocate the futurist system at the present day, Protestants as they are for the most part, are really playing into the hands of Rome, and helping to screen the Papacy from detection as the Antichrist.”

--Rev. Joseph Tanner, Daniel and the Revelation, pp. 16,17

Thus the origins of the Futurist System date back to the counter-reformation. Many rapturists are not aware of the roots of this teaching.

It re-emerged in the late 19th century among the Plymouth Brethren when a woman by the name of Margaret McDonald had a revelation which she claimed to receive in a “tongues” experience. She revealed that there would be a secret rapture.

For many years this teaching was propounded mainly among the extreme fundamentalist groups of Protestantism, especially the tongues-speakers. However, when the Scofield Reference Bible was made, the notes placed in that Bible supported the rapturist position. That Bible became well respected and gained wide acceptance for the rapturist doctrine. However, it was not until Hal Lindsay wrote his book, **The Late Great Planet Earth**, that the rapture doctrine became almost universally accepted.

While originally all Protestants were historicists, today Seventh-day Adventists are about the only ones left still teaching historicism. Most churches have either accepted the Catholic Preterist or Futurist view of prophecy.