

## Ask The Rabbi – June 29, 2021 (Part 4)

### Question:

I feel I don't have a clear understanding of the timeline of end times. The what and when of events we can expect. Growing up I was taught about the rapture or the catching away. What is this and how should I understand the meaning of it?

How do I come back with an answer when others argue the following verses that they see as “rapture” verses?

If the Rapture is not true, how do you explain Matt 24:40-41 and Luke 17:34-37.

### Response:

The term Rapture has become synonymous in Church teaching and is understood to be a “hidden” or “secret” return of Yeshua, prior to His very public return. Unfortunately, there are no distinct verses that speak specifically to this event occurring. What has occurred is a misappropriation of verses speaking specifically of one event, that being the return of Yeshua and identified as the Resurrection...

**Joh 11:23** Yeshua said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

**Joh 11:24** Marta said, "I know that he will rise again at the Resurrection on the Last Day."

**Joh 11:25** Yeshua said to her, "I AM the Resurrection and the Life! Whoever puts his trust in me will live, even if he dies;

**Joh 11:26** and everyone living and trusting in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

**Joh 11:27** She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

Last time we looked at the first part of Matthew 24, up to verse 28 where Yeshua was in the process of answering three questions posed by His talmidim. Tonight we will conclude the rest of Matthew 24 and Yeshua's Olivet discourse as it is known by the place by which Yeshua conveyed His response.

So we resume our journey through Matthew 24 with the return of Yeshua. Here, Yeshua lays out the signs that will ultimately reveal His return.

**Mat 24:29** "But immediately following the trouble of those times, the sun will grow dark, the moon will stop shining, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in heaven will be shaken.

**Mat 24:30** "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, all the tribes of the Land will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with tremendous power and glory.

**Mat 24:31** He will send out his angels with a great shofar; and they will gather together his chosen people from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Here Yeshua provides us with pieces of information that Sha'ul does not, yet there are aspects of all three accounts that bind them together.

Yeshua conveys in an order what will transpire just prior to His return. Consider how what He conveys aligns with Torah and the Prophets.

After the troubles of the time, the very aspects Yeshua laid out in the previous verses including the Abomination that causes desolation, the following will occur:

- The Sun will grow dark
- The Moon will stop shining
- The Stars will fall from the sky

All three are very visual and unmistakable occurrences. An image that is revealed by the Prophet Yoel...

**Joe 3:3** I will show wonders in the sky and on earth—blood, fire and columns of smoke.

**Joe 3:4** The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai."

The Day of Adonai is referred to throughout the Tanakh and is identified as The Day of Judgment and for what we have come to know as the Return of Yeshua that is the Resurrection

- The sign of the Son of Man will appear

**Dan 7:13** "I kept watching the night visions, when I saw, coming with the clouds of heaven, someone like a son of man. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence.

What is the sign of the Son of Man?

In the midst of total darkness for remember the sun has become dark, the moon has stopped shining having turned blood red and the stars have fallen from the sky. The absence of all three combined has led to complete darkness. A scene that will amplify the return of Messiah for He had revealed...

**Joh 8:12** Yeshua spoke to them again: "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light which gives life."

And thus this sign is further amplified in Revelation:

**Rev 22:2** Between the main street and the river was the Tree of Life producing twelve kinds of fruit, a different kind every month; and the leaves of the tree were for healing the nations—

**Rev 22:3** no longer will there be any curses. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him;

**Rev 22:4** they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

**Rev 22:5** Night will no longer exist, so they will need neither the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because Adonai, God, will shine upon them. And they will reign as kings forever and ever.

There is but one throne and thus there is but one source of light.

- A great shofar

This one aspect connects Yeshua's account with that of Sha'ul's two accounts whereby upon the signs appearing, the sound of Adonai's Shofar will sound...

**1Th 4:16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a rousing cry, with a call from one of the ruling angels, and with God's shofar; those who died united with the Messiah will be the first to rise;

**1Co 15:52** It will take but a moment, the blink of an eye, at the final shofar. For the shofar will sound, and the dead will be raised to live forever, and we too will be changed.

All three relate to one event – the Return of Yeshua.

All signs must be present thus with a mysterious Rapture it would not be so mysterious when these signs appear first, then the sound of the shofar afterwards.

- ...they will gather together his chosen people from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The gathering together specifically of the Jewish people from all the nations. I believe it is here that the gathering of the Jewish people will bring everyone in the diaspora into the land of Israel, that is the yet to be fulfilled biblical boundaries of the nation. For Torah and the Prophets tell of this regathering:

**Deu 30:4** If one of yours was scattered to the far end of the sky, Adonai your God will gather you even from there; he will go there and get you.

**Deu 30:5** Adonai your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors.

**Isa 11:11** On that day Adonai will raise his hand again, a second time, to reclaim the remnant of his people who remain from Ashur, Egypt, Patros, Ethiopia, `Eilam, Shin`ar, Hamat and the islands in the sea.

**Isa 11:12** He will hoist a banner for the Goyim, assemble the dispersed of Isra'el, and gather the scattered of Y'hudah from the four corners of the earth.

**Isa 49:18** Raise your eyes, and look around: they are all gathering and coming to you. Adonai swears: "As surely as I am alive, you will wear them all like jewels, adorn yourself with them like a bride."

Those of the nations will be gathered as well, believers in Yeshua of the nations will be gathered for they too will be responsible to Adonai's Torah...

**Zec 14:16** Finally, everyone remaining from all the nations that came to attack Yerushalayim will go up every year to worship the king, Adonai-Tzva'ot, and to keep the festival of Sukkot.

**Isa 66:23** "Every month on Rosh-Hodesh and every week on Shabbat, everyone living will come to worship in my presence," says Adonai.

**Psa 86:9** All the nations you have made will come and bow before you, Adonai; they will honor your name.

Everything Yeshua outlined pertaining to the troubles of the time and the signs of His return must occur. Every aspect points to one occurrence – The Return of Yeshua that is also known as the Resurrection. Thus if Yeshua's teaching is about one thing and one thing only, His Return, then the subject of this passage does not change as mysteriously as the “Rapture”

For Yeshua continues with yet another sign pointing to His return and that is of the fig tree:

**Mat 24:32** "Now let the fig tree teach you its lesson: when its branches begin to sprout and leaves appear, you know that summer is approaching.

**Mat 24:33** In the same way, when you see all these things, you are to know that the time is near, right at the door.

**Mat 24:34** Yes! I tell you that this people will certainly not pass away before all these things happen.

**Mat 24:35** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Yeshua conveys yet another parable, this time pertaining to the fig tree for which is a representation of the Jewish people. Considering everything that Yeshua has revealed including the destruction of the Temple, a rebuilt Temple and another version of Antiochus Epiphanes, an oppressor of the Jewish people, not to mention the current Roman occupation, Yeshua is reassuring His talmidim that no matter what happens the Jewish people will not perish from the face of the earth.

In verse 34, some translations use generation where as Stern uses people in that the context of the passage relates to the Jewish people as represented by the fig tree. Thus this verse is often mischaracterized by generation as pertaining to everything that must occur. Yet when people referring to the Jewish people as the fig tree conveys an entirely different context. It isn't that the a generation as defined by a period of time will not perish thus creating a very narrow window of time, but rather a people, the Jewish people aligns with another often misrepresented and misapplied verse...

**2Ch 7:14** then, if my people, who bear my name, will humble themselves, pray, seek my face and turn from their evil ways, I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land.

Thus, the Jewish people, Adonai's people will not be destroyed, but will remain, in essence a faithful remnant has always remained...

**Rom 11:3** "Adonai, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars, and I'm the only one left, and now they want to kill me too!"

**Rom 11:4** But what is God's answer to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not knelt down to Ba'al."

**Rom 11:5** It's the same way in the present age: there is a remnant, chosen by grace.

Yeshua's narrative pertaining to His return continues, having not changed in subject matter, He now focuses on the when pertaining to His return. Each of the following scenarios offer different bits of information.

**Mat 24:36** "But when that day and hour will come, no one knows—not the angels in heaven, not the Son, only the Father.

**Mat 24:37** For the Son of Man's coming will be just as it was in the days of Noah.

**Mat 24:38** Back then, before the Flood, people went on eating and drinking, taking wives and becoming wives, right up till the day Noah entered the ark;

**Mat 24:39** and they didn't know what was happening until the Flood came and swept them all away. It will be just like that when the Son of Man comes.

This first aspect as to the when takes us back to the time of Noah just prior to the flood. Many tend to focus on the Godlessness of the time where the focus should be on the nature of the flood occurring. There was no warning, no sign for those who were not informed by Adonai. If you remember, Noah was mocked for building such a vessel considering it had never rained. A dynamic pertaining to the return of Yeshua that Sha'ul also conveys:

**1Th 5:1** But you have no need to have anything written to you, brothers, about the times and dates when this will happen;

**1Th 5:2** because you yourselves well know that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

**1Th 5:3** When people are saying, "Everything is so peaceful and secure," then destruction will suddenly come upon them, the way labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there is no way they will escape.

**1Th 5:4** But you, brothers, are not in the dark, so that the Day should take you by surprise like a thief;

1Th 5:5 for you are all people who belong to the light, who belong to the day. We don't belong to the night or to darkness,

1Th 5:6 so let's not be asleep, like the rest are; on the contrary, let us stay alert and sober.

We as believers and therefore followers are in the know and thus have been informed as to what to look for, what to pay attention to.

The next warning by Yeshua as to what will occur when He returns is often associated with the Rapture specifically...

Mat 24:40 Then there will be two men in a field—one will be taken and the other left behind.

Mat 24:41 There will be two women grinding flour at the mill—one will be taken and the other left behind.

**Mat 24:42** So stay alert, because you don't know on what day your Lord will come.

When Yeshua returns as is revealed by all three passages we have studied, all speak of some aspect of gathering of Adonai's chosen specifically and believers from all nations in general. The context of Yeshua's teaching does not mysteriously change here either.

Upon Yeshua's return only those who have put their trust in Yeshua will be gathered which then implies that those do not believe will not be gathered, thus they remain. “Two women grinding flour, one taken, one left behind” Refers to the very dynamic of what will occur at the time of Yeshua's return, not this mysterious Rapture that mysteriously appears in Yeshua's teaching without any reference. The subject from Matthew 24:3 on focuses on the three questions His Talmidim asked, one of which being the signs of His return.

Mat 24:43 But you do know this: had the owner of the house known when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not allowed his house to be broken into.

Mat 24:44 Therefore you too must always be ready, for the Son of Man will come when you are not expecting him.

We read of another reference to a thief and that of the home owner being alert to being robbed. The emphasis here is directed to the believer and Yeshua's instruction to remain alert, for Yeshua concludes His teaching with the following warning and thus promise to believers pertaining to Yeshua's return:

Mat 24:45 "Who is the faithful and sensible servant whose master puts him in charge of the household staff, to give them their food at the proper time?

Mat 24:46 It will go well with that servant if he is found doing his job when his master comes.

Mat 24:47 Yes, I tell you that he will put him in charge of all he owns.

Mat 24:48 But if that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is taking his time';

Mat 24:49 and he starts beating up his fellow servants and spends his time eating and drinking with drunkards;

**Mat 24:50** then his master will come on a day the servant does not expect, at a time he doesn't know;

Mat 24:51 and he will cut him in two and put him with the hypocrites, where people will wail and grind their teeth!

As documented in Matthew 24, the entire passage focuses on answering His Talmidim's three questions:

1. When will all these things happen? Pertaining to Matthew 24:2

2. What will be the sign of your coming? (That is His return)
3. What will be the sign of the end of the olam hazeh (the end of this age)?

Every word Yeshua has uttered pertained to responding to His Talmidim's questions. Thus any inference towards another subject, such as a mysterious Rapture is not supported by what has been presented by Yeshua nor is it supported by Torah and the Prophets. Thus if there is no Scriptural basis for the Rapture then it is a fabrication based on a theological premise that is in error. The Prophets allude to two occurrences of Messiah and two only:

### **His first coming:**

**Zec 9:9** Rejoice with all your heart, daughter of Tziyon! Shout out loud, daughter of Yerushalayim! Look! Your king is coming to you. He is righteous, and he is victorious. Yet he is humble—he's riding on a donkey, yes, on a lowly donkey's colt.

We see this come to pass...

**Mat 21:1** As they were approaching Yerushalayim, they came to Beit-Pagei on the Mount of Olives. Yeshua sent two talmidim

**Mat 21:2** with these instructions: "Go into the village ahead of you, and you will immediately find a donkey tethered there with its colt. Untie them and bring them to me.

**Mat 21:3** If anyone says anything to you, tell him, 'The Lord needs them'; and he will let them go at once."

**Mat 21:4** This happened in order to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet,

**Mat 21:5** "Say to the daughter of Tziyon, 'Look! Your King is coming to you, riding humbly on a donkey, and on a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden!'

**Mat 21:6** So the talmidim went and did as Yeshua had directed them.

### **His second coming:**

**Dan 7:13** "I kept watching the night visions, when I saw, coming with the clouds of heaven, someone like a son of man. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence.

**Dan 7:14** To him was given rulership, glory and a kingdom, so that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him. His rulership is an eternal rulership that will not pass away; and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

And thus we will see this come to pass upon Yeshua's return at some point in the future, for He is waiting on the cloud:

**Rev 14:14** Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud. Sitting on the cloud was someone like a Son of Man with a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.

**Rev 14:15** Another angel came out of the Temple and shouted to the one sitting on the cloud, "Start using your sickle to reap, because the time to reap has come—the earth's harvest is ripe!"

**Rev 14:16** The one sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

Preparing to return...

**Rev 19:11** Next I saw heaven opened, and there before me was a white horse. Sitting on it was the one called

Faithful and True, and it is in righteousness that he passes judgment and goes to battle.

Rev 19:12 His eyes were like a fiery flame, and on his head were many royal crowns. And he had a name written which no one knew but himself.

Rev 19:13 He was wearing a robe that had been soaked in blood, and the name by which he is called is, "THE WORD OF GOD."

Rev 19:14 The armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

Rev 19:15 And out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down nations—"He will rule them with a staff of iron." It is he who treads the winepress from which flows the wine of the furious rage of Adonai, God of heaven's armies.

Rev 19:16 And on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Anything else is in error.

Next time we will begin assembling all the signs associated with Yeshua's return and thus establish an order that we as believers have been instructed to pay attention to.