

The Mystery Of The Second Coming

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fevert heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."

2 Peter 3:10

There are seven specific references in the New Testament to Jesus coming as a thief in the night. Two are found in the gospels (Mt 24:43; Lk 12:39); Two are found in 1 Thessalonian 5:2,4, one is found in 2 Peter 3:10, and two are found in Revelation 3:3 and 16:15. Both Paul and Peter associated this coming of the Lord like a thief with the Day of the Lord. Jesus told the apostle that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake (Mt 24:42).

As you examined Revelation 3:3, it has a clear indication that the church at Sardis needed to repent and be watchful so that the coming of Christ does not come upon them like a thief. Paul exhorts with this similar instructions in 1 Thessalonian 5:2-4. If they lived as saints in the light then the day of the Lord will not surprise them like a thief. Only those who are not watching or are in the darkness are surprised.

The Apostles asked in Matthew 24:3, "What will be the signs of your coming and the close of the age?" In close examination the word of Revelation 16:15, the very next verse gives a particular reference to the Battle of Armageddon which is understood by all premillennialists as the battle that occurs at the end of the 7 years of tribulation. The intentional placement of this warning from Christ that He is coming like a thief after the sixth bowl of God's wrath precludes any suggestion that references to Christ's coming 'as a thief' should be understood to occur before the tribulation. If happens after God's wrath are poured out upon the antichrist and his Babylonian system and those who took the mark of the beast.

Awaits His Glorious Return