

# A Possible Old Testament Rapture Verse?

The Old Testament doesn't have very much to say about the church<sup>1</sup>. It also has little to say about the rapture. When people discuss the rapture and defend that doctrine they use passages from the New Testament. The apostles had a lot to say about that teaching, but the Old Testament prophets didn't.

The reason for this has to do with dispensations. The Jews in the Old Testament lived under the Mosaic Law. They weren't part of the church (because it didn't come into existence until the day of Pentecost), and they didn't face the possibility of being raptured. God didn't teach them about that doctrine because it didn't apply during that dispensation. However, when Christ died He ushered in a new dispensation: the church age. In this new age the Mosaic Law was ended and a new system was put in place. Since things had changed, God spoke through the apostles and told the church what it needed to know. Since the rapture *does* apply to the church, God revealed it to us and told us what to expect.

However, it's possible that the Old Testament *does* mention the rapture. There's a passage in Isaiah which might be talking about it:

**Isaiah 26: “19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.**

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1 Those who believe in “replacement theology” or “covenant theology” teach that the Israel in the Old Testament is the church. I believe that's incorrect. Israel and the church are two entirely different things (although there are saved Jews today who are part of both). However, that's a much bigger discussion which is outside the scope of this document.

**20** Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

**21** For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

This section of the book of Isaiah (chapters 24 – 26) is talking about the end times. Isaiah 24 tells us about of the Day of the Lord and Isaiah 25 teaches about a time when God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Isaiah 26:19 speaks of a resurrection, and verse 21 tells us about a time when the Lord will judge the world for its sin.

Verse 20 is the verse that might be prophesying about the rapture. If you look at the entire passage it's easy to see how this might be a rapture verse. Verse 19 speaks of a time when there will be a resurrection of the dead. After this resurrection God will take His people and hide them “until the indignation be overpast”. God wants to protect His people because He's going to punish the world for its sins, and He doesn't want His people to face His wrath.

That is the same sequence of events that we find surrounding the rapture in the New Testament! When Jesus returns He will raise the dead and then take us back to Heaven so we will be spared the tribulation. During the tribulation God will pour out His wrath upon the world for its sins, and at the end of that time He will return to this world with His church.

Given the details of the passage itself and the context of the surrounding chapters, it certainly seems like a possible fit. The similarities are remarkable.