



Written by  
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## “Like A Thief” A Choral Reading of “End Times” Scriptures

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5: 2; Matthew 24: 36, 37; Matthew 24: 40-42; 1 Corinthians 15: 51-58

**Dramatic Category:** Choral Reading

### What is “Choral Reading”?

Choral Reading is “literature in vocal dimension,” which means that multiple voices interpret literature, thus giving it dimension that a single voice-oral interpretation cannot give.

### NOTE:

Please consult the “Choral Reading Guidelines” that follow this reading. There, you will find helpful hints to maximize this beautiful art form that uses the syncopated reading of scripture to communicate the truth of God’s Word.

**Topic:** The rapture

**Performance Time:** 2 minutes

**Number of Readers:** 6 readers (3 men (M), 3 women (F))

### Suggested Configuration:

1 (M)            2 (M)            3 (M)  
4 (F)            5 (F)            6 (F)

### Background Music:

An instrumental version of a song like “Do Lord, Do You Remember Me?”  
Music is played down and under throughout.

**Sound Needs:** Six standing microphones. The readers must have their hands free.

**Lighting Notes:** Even light across the group of readers

**Props:**

Small black notebooks in which readers keep their scripts.

*(The notebooks are held waist-high, in the left hand, leaving the right hand free for gestures that “physicalize” the meaning of the words.)*

**Costume Suggestions:** Black and white, with the addition of one other color, shared by all readers

**Music:** Begin the background music while the readers get into place.

**The Script:**

**4:** For you yourselves know well

**Women:** that the day of the Lord will come

**All:** like a thief in the night.

**Men:** But of that day and hour

**Women:** no one knows,

**1, 4:** not even the angels of heaven,

**2, 5:** nor the Son,

**3, 6:** but the Father only.

**1:** As were the days of Noah,

**All:** so will be the coming of the Son of man.

**2, 3:** Then two men will be in the field;

**2:** one is taken

**3:** and one is left.

**5, 6:** Two women will be grinding at the mill;

**5:** one is taken

**6:** and one is left.

**All:** Watch therefore,

**Men:** for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

**4:** Lo!

**Women:** I tell you a mystery.

**Men:** We shall not all sleep,

**All:** but we shall all be changed,

**3, 6:** in a moment,

**2, 5:** in the twinkling of an eye,

**1, 4:** at the last trumpet.

**All:** For the trumpet will sound

**Men:** and the dead will be raised

**Women:** imperishable,

**6:** and we shall be changed. ...

**1:** For when this perishable nature puts on the imperishable,

**4:** and this mortal nature puts on immortality,

**2:** then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

**5:** "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**3:** "Oh death, where is thy victory?"

**6:** "Oh death, where is thy sting?"

**Men:** The sting of death is sin,

**Women:** and the power of sin is the law.

**5:** But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory

**All:** through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Women:** Therefore,

**Men:** my beloved brethren,

**4:** be steadfast,

**5:** immovable,

**6:** always abounding in the work of the Lord,

**Men:** knowing that in the lord

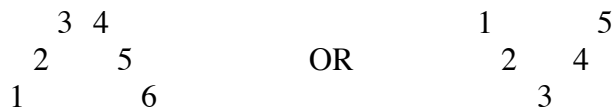
**Women:** your labor is not in vain.

**Music:** *REPRISE “Do Lord.” Consider having the congregation join in.*

**The End**

## Choral Reading Guidelines

1. Select literature that is **lyrical** such as: songs, poems, stories with repetitious dialogue, odes, or ballads.
2. Analyze the literature to determine the **theme**. Divide it into phrases that deserve more emphatic treatment, such as a single voice for effect or all voices for effect.
3. Assign each member of the choral reading team a **number**.
4. **Divide the literature up by phrases** and decide which number or numbers will read which lines.
5. Create **“phonal”** (dominant/deeper voices) and **“anti-phonal”** (softer/higher voices) effects by assigning lines to voices that come from opposite places on the team. These voices will create the same relationship as “melody” has with “harmony” in music. This keeps the audience entertained.
6. **Choreograph** the arrangement of the readers, for example:



7. Assign **gestures** to various members of the team to emphasize the lines they will read.
8. **Costume** the readers for effect if it is appropriate. Generally, readers wear black and white. It is very effective to dress the ladies in floor-length black skirts and white blouses, and the men in black slacks, white shirts, and a colored tie. Sometimes, the addition of one other color is appropriate as long as all readers use the same additional color. This uniform effect helps tie the visual image together to create the illusion of this being “one” reading with multiple voices.
9. **Props** are used sparingly if it would add to the effect of the reading. The only constant prop used is the small black notebook in which each reader keeps his/her script. It is held at waist-height in the left hand, leaving the right hand free for gestures.
10. **Rehearse** the reading over and over so that the readers are **syncopated** and there is no interruption or hesitation in the **vocal unison**.