



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

I Thessalonians (Part-5) (Chapter 4:13-18)

JESUS CHRIST IS COMING BACK SOON

Why? | When? | How? | Who? | Where?

Are you ready ?

I Thessalonians

Chapter 4

Sanctification (1-8)✓

Love for Others (9-10) ✓

Personal conduct (11-12) ✓

Return of Christ (13-18)

4:13-18

Ignorance to Comfort

¹³ But I would not have you to be **ignorant**, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

¹⁸ **Wherefore, comfort one another with these 🙌 words.**

4:13-18

Return of
Christ

Rapture

Second
Coming

RAPTURE:

Jesus is
Coming Back

- WHY:
- WHEN:
- HOW:
- WHO:
- WHERE:

RAPTURE

Jesus is Coming Back

WHY

Because He Promised to return

WHEN

No one knows, except the Father

HOW

With the voice of a trumpet

WHO

CHURCH only

WHERE

In the Air

Conclusion:

What does the Bible say about the Return of Christ?

Bible has much to say ... but details are not always clear and sometimes, subject to alternate interpretations.

But **IMPORTANT FACTS** are clear:

1. **JESUS will RETURN** for Believers
and
2. Unbelievers will be condemned for eternity.

Details do not matter much ...

Let us be Ready to meet the Lord!

The Context

Jesus was supposed to come back soon and take the believers

Thessalonica believers needed to be comforted because of their anxiety about the fate of believers who have died.

Ignorance (13)

¹³ But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

“What happens after our physical death?”

is an important question

We must not be ignorant about the “future” of dead believers

Ignorance of future

leads to sorrow & hopelessness after death of loved one,

leads to short-term perspective in this life

We mourn the loss of our loved ones, but

it is not like the sorrow of unbelievers who have no hope.

Sleep (13,14,15)

Sleep = death

Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep (John 11:11)

Only physical body dies (not our soul or spirit)

(Cemetery means “sleeping place” in Greek)

Death is not a permanent sleep.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2)

What happens At death?

Believers

enter into the presence of the Lord
(II Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:21,23)

Unbelievers

in Hades (Luke 16:22,23)
called Sheol in OT (place for all, or just the sinners?)

Believer's living hope (14) ... Resurrection of Christ

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Jesus died and rose again, and so will we

I Corinthians 15:20-23

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. ²¹ For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Those who died will return with Christ at second coming ... how? because God will resurrect them (as seen in future verses)

Rapture (The coming of Christ for His church)

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1. **A personal return:** Lord returns personally to take back the believers ... not his angels
2. **An audible invitation:** With a shout, with a voice of archangel, and trump of God (Revelation 1:10, voice of Jesus like a trumpet) (maybe only believers hear the voice; like Lazarus)
3. **An orderly rapture:** Dead in Christ shall rise first, followed by living believers
4. **Meeting place:** in the air (Jesus does not set foot on the earth) (**Glorious Reunion**)
4. **Duration:** We shall be for ever with the Lord

* Rapture is not the same as the Second Coming of Christ (discussed later)

Why is this
knowledge a
source of
comfort &
sorrow?

Comfort: ?

Sorrow: ?

Why is this
knowledge a
source of
comfort &
sorrow?

Comfort: We will spend eternity with our loved ones (if they were born-again in their lifetime)

Distress: We will not meet our family & loved ones who died without Christ

When will rapture take place?

We Believe

Church will be raptured before Tribulation starts

Other Beliefs

After Tribulation or mid-way through the tribulation

Paul's desire and hope ... Earthly home to eternal home

II Corinthians 5:1-2

For we know that if our **earthly house of this tabernacle** were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, **earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:**

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Chapter 4 ends here

A life of Holiness, Love, good Conduct leads to Rapture

What must Believers do?

¹¹ For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, ¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; ¹³ **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;** ¹⁴ Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:11-14)

Are you ready?

Our eternal destiny is decided before we are buried in the grave ... our last breath is our last opportunity to be born-again. Since the last breath will occur without warning, we must be born-again NOW

Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, Hebrews 3:15

Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, II Corinthians 6:2

**Believest thou
this?**

JOHN 11:25-26

²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. **Believest thou this?**

What if there was no rapture or resurrection of believers?

I CORINTHIANS 15:19

If in this life only we have hope in Christ,
we are of all men most miserable.



Post-Rapture events

POST RAPTURE KEY EVENTS

Judgement Seat of Christ

Believers rewarded

II Corinthians 5:10;

I Corinthians 3:13-15

- 7-year **Tribulation** begins

Second Coming of Christ

AntiChrist thrown into the lake of fire and Satan bound for 1,000 years

7-years after rapture

Messianic rule ends.

Satan thrown into the lake of fire
(Revelation 20:7-10)

All unbelievers resurrected and face White Throne Judgement

cast into lake of fire
(Revelation 20:15)

New Jerusalem
Revelation 21

The amazing change (I Corinthians 15:50-53)

⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

⁵¹ Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

* Not every believer dies, but everyone changed!

Judgement Seat of Christ for Believers

&

Great White Throne Judgement for Unbelievers

Judgement Seat of Christ (after Rapture)

For we must all appear before the **judgment seat of Christ**; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. **II Corinthians 5:10**

Great White Throne Judgement (after Millennium rule))

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Resurrection of Unbelievers and OT saints

Old Testament saints resurrected after tribulation and before 1,000 year rule (Revelation 20:5, first resurrection)

Unbelievers will be resurrected after the 1,000 year rule (Revelation 20:5, second resurrection)

The First Resurrection of believers (after tribulation, but before 1000-year rule)

- Resurrection of tribulation believers, martyrs, and Old Testament saints

REVELATION 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. **This is the first resurrection** Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousand years.**

The Second resurrection (after 1,000 years)

- Resurrection of the sinners

REVELATION 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Jesus warned
of **great
tribulation**,
and promised
His **second
coming**
(Mathew 24)

²¹ For then shall be **great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

²⁹ **Immediately after the tribulation** of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the **Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

Church saved from Tribulation

REVELATION 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Rapture

Vs

Second Coming

RAPTURE (I Thessalonians 4:16-17)

1. Before Tribulation
2. Church age believers (living and dead) raptured
3. Jesus in the air (does not touch earth)
4. Time unknown
5. Christ comes alone
6. Only believers see/hear
7. One time rapture

SECOND COMING (Revelation 19:11-16, Mathew 24:30)

1. After Tribulation
2. Fights & executes judgement for Israel. All resurrected (sinners and dead saints)
3. Christ returns to earth (mount Olives, Zechariah 14:4)
4. Timing: 7-years after tribulation
5. Christ returns with church/saints
6. Every eye shall see Him (Revelation 1:7)

When will the Lord return?

Acts 1:6-7

⁶ When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? ⁷ And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Mathew 24:36-44

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. ⁴² Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. ⁴⁴ **Therefore be ye also ready:** for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

I Thessalonians 5:1-2

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. ² For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.



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