

END-TIME EVENTS IN PAUL'S THESSALONIAN LETTERS

This study is intended to highlight the passages in 1 and 2 Thessalonians that point to end-time events now being, or soon to be, fulfilled.

Both of these letters by Apostle Paul to the church he had founded in Thessalonica are among the first of his inspired letters that we have. They show key events of our day – and that he wanted the brethren to know what lay ahead – quite possibly because he thought fulfillment would occur in his lifetime.

The approach in this study is to list four passages of Scripture in the King James Version, and then, immediately after each passage, to repeat them in the Classic Amplified Bible – with underlining being added by me for words or phrases in the AMPC that are perhaps especially helpful in clarifying the meaning.

A few comments are offered along the way – hopefully giving a little more help.

Finally, at the end of this study, I have listed the four passages in what I believe to be the best chronological order for all four. That is why each passage below has a heading labeled “A” through “D”.

A 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-17

KJV

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.

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13 Now also we would not have you ignorant, brethren, about those who fall asleep [[g]in death], that you may not grieve [for them] as the rest do who have no hope [beyond the grave].

14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him through Jesus those who have fallen asleep [[h]in death].

15 For this we declare to you by the Lord's [own] word, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] *or* have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep [in Him [i]in death].

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!

COMMENT:

Paul here offered the second-best description of the “First Resurrection” (that some call the RAPTURE) to be found in the Bible = second only to the account in 1 Corinthians 15. We know from Revelation that there are SEVEN SEALS, then SEVEN TRUMPETS, and finally SEVEN BOWLS/VIALS,/PLAGUES (depending on the translation). So this Resurrection or Rapture occurs AFTER the SEALS – which include economic collapse, war, famine, and plagues.

B 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-10

KJV

- 1 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.
- 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.
- 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
- 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.
- 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.
- 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.
- 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.
- 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

AMPC

- 1 But as to the suitable times and the precise seasons and dates, brethren, you have no necessity for anything being written to you.
- 2 For you yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the [return of the] Lord will come [as unexpectedly and suddenly] as a thief in the night.
- 3 When people are saying, All is well and secure, *and*, There is peace and safety, then in a moment unforeseen destruction (ruin and death) will come upon them as suddenly as labor pains come upon a woman with child; and they shall by no means escape, for there will be no escape.
- 4 But you are not in [given up to the power of] darkness, brethren, for that day to overtake you by surprise like a thief.
- 5 For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we do not belong either to the night or to darkness.
- 6 Accordingly then, let us not sleep, as the rest do, but let us keep wide awake (alert, watchful, cautious, and on our guard) and let us be sober (calm, collected, and circumspect).
- 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night.
- 8 But we belong to the day; therefore, let us be sober and put on the breastplate (corslet) of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation.
- 9 For God has not appointed us to [incur His] wrath [He did not select us to condemn us], but [that we might] obtain [His] salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah)
- 10 Who died for us so that whether we are still alive or are dead [at Christ's appearing], we might live together with Him and share His life.

COMMENT:

Verse 9 says we are not appointed to incur God's wrath. God's wrath is especially (or, perhaps, finally) poured out on Satan's kingdom just after the Resurrection/Rapture, in the form of the seven vials/bowls/plagues that follow the seven trumpets.

C 2 THESSALONIANS 1:4-10

KJV

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:
5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:
6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;
7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,
8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;
10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

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4 And this is a cause of our mentioning you with pride among the churches (assemblies) of God for your steadfastness (your unflinching endurance and patience) and your firm faith in the midst of all the persecutions and crushing distresses *and* afflictions under which you are holding up.
5 This is positive proof of the just *and* right judgment of God to the end that you may be deemed deserving of His kingdom [a plain token of His fair verdict which designs that you should be made *and* counted worthy of the kingdom of God], for the sake of which you are also suffering.
6 [It is a fair decision] since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with distress *and* affliction those who distress *and* afflict you.
7 And to [[a]recompense] you who are so distressed *and* afflicted [by granting you] relief *and* rest along with us [your fellow sufferers] when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in a flame of fire,
8 To deal out retribution (chastisement and vengeance) upon those who do not know *or* perceive *or* become acquainted with God, and [upon those] who ignore *and* refuse to obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus *Christ*.
9 Such people will pay the penalty *and* suffer the punishment of everlasting ruin (destruction and perdition) *and* eternal exclusion and banishment from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,
10 When He comes to be glorified in His saints [on that day He will be made more glorious in His consecrated people], and [He will] be marveled at *and* admired [in His glory reflected] in all who have believed [who have adhered to, trusted in, and relied on Him], because our witnessing among you was confidently accepted *and* believed [and confirmed in your lives].

D 2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-14

KJV

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,
2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.
3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.
5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?
6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.
7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

AMPC

1 But relative to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah) and our gathering together to [meet] Him, we beg you, brethren,

2 Not to allow your minds to be quickly unsettled or disturbed or kept excited or alarmed, whether it be by some [pretended] revelation of [the] Spirit or by word or by letter [alleged to be] from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has [already] arrived and is here.

3 Let no one deceive or beguile you in any way, for that day will not come except the [a]apostasy comes first [unless the predicted great [b]falling away of those who have professed to be Christians has come], and the man of lawlessness (sin) is revealed, who is the son of doom (of perdition),

4 Who opposes and exalts himself so proudly and insolently against and over all that is called God or that is worshiped, [even to his actually] taking his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming that he himself is God.

5 Do you not recollect that when I was still with you, I told you these things?

6 And now you know what is restraining him [from being revealed at this time]; it is so that he may be manifested (revealed) in his own [appointed] time.

7 For the mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority) is already at work in the world, [but it is] restrained only until [c]he who restrains is taken out of the way.

8 And then the lawless one (the antichrist) will be revealed and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming.

9 The coming [of the lawless one, the antichrist] is through the activity and working of Satan and will be attended by great power and with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders—

10 And by unlimited seduction to evil and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing (going to perdition) because they did not welcome the Truth but refused to love it that they might be saved.

11 Therefore God sends upon them a misleading influence, a working of error and a strong delusion to make them believe what is false.

12 In order that all may be judged and condemned who did not believe in [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely on] the Truth, but [instead] took pleasure in unrighteousness.

13 But we, brethren beloved by the Lord, ought and are obligated [as those who are in debt] to give thanks always to God for you, because God chose you from the beginning [d]as His firstfruits (first converts) for salvation through the sanctifying work of the [Holy] Spirit and [your] belief in (adherence to, trust in, and reliance on) the Truth.

14 [It was] to this end that He called you through our Gospel, so that you may obtain and share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

COMMENT:

Verse 7 is sometimes interpreted as saying God will remove His Holy Spirit from the earth during the time of His wrath, but God has told His modern-day prophet(s) that it is HIS HAND OF PROTECTION that He will remove.

FINAL COMMENTS;

It appears to me that the general order of events explained by Paul in the two letters to the Thessalonians (using the letters introducing each of the four passages of Scripture, above), is: D, B, A, C

Let us also ask: "What about the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25? --When does the Lord come for them?" My OPINION (based on much study and reflection, including reading what some modern-day prophets and/or watchmen/women have been told) is ... that event does NOT include the "every eye shall see Him" of 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15, NOR does it "fit" with His coming to totally put down satan and his armies and start His 1000-year reign (in Revelation 19 and Zechariah 14). It SEEMS to me to be a "SECRET" coming for a relatively FEW Christians alive today who are living "ALL IN" for Jesus ... "right now"! THEY will then be active from then on in doing "GREATER WORKS" here on earth BEFORE the Resurrection/Rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15.

Take all things to the Lord in prayer for Holy Spirit to confirm or lead you to the truth!