

“THE COMING OF THE LORD”

INTRODUCTION

- I. In point of time, the first book of the New Testament was **not** “Matthew” (the first named book of the N.T.), but 1 Thessalonians, which was written before any other book in the N.T.
 - A. Paul had established the church in Thessalonica, as recorded in Acts 17.
 1. The basis for Paul’s work was the “scriptures”. Acts 17:2
 2. His use of the scripture was to prove that Jesus died, rose again, and is therefore the Messiah, or the Christ who had been promised in the Old Testament.
 - B. The results were mixed.
 1. Some believed, with a sufficient number to establish a small congregation in Thessalonica.
 2. Others did NOT believe, and caused great opposition to Paul and the brethren there. vs. 5-10
 - a. Paul was not too discouraged and moved on to Berea, where he had a favorable reception.
 - b. Obviously, he kept on contact with the church in Thessalonica, for he later learned of some concerns they were having about the coming of the Lord.
- II. In the first letter, he wrote about the second coming of Christ, and the state of those who died before He would come. 1 Thess. 4:13-18
 - A. From this text, we find the words, “The Coming of the Lord”, which becomes the title of today’s sermon.
 - B. What can we learn from this great passage??

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, we learn of the CONCERN OF DEATH.

- A. The figure of speech for death is called “sleep”. Cf John 11:11-14; 1 Cor. 15:18, 51; cf 1 Thess. 4:13-14
 1. Some are asleep “in Jesus,” which gives “hope” for the events for the coming of Christ in the last day.
 2. Others are also dead, but have no hope, as based on the scripture. v. 13; cf Eph. 2:12
 - a. Undoubtedly, some in Thessalonica **were** sorrowing to lose loved ones, which is natural, as some were sorrowful at the deaths of Stephen and Lazarus.
 - b. BUT, they were **not** to sorrow AS those who have no hope, because saints will meet again when Jesus comes.
- B. The point of the apostle Paul was that those believers who had died or fallen asleep in Jesus, were NOT in any way disadvantaged to those ALIVE at the coming of the Lord. 1 Thess. 4:15 (Explain)

II. 2nd, we learn that Christ WILL COME AGAIN.

- A. Paul had already told the Thessalonians that Jesus had DIED and was RAISED from the dead. Acts 17:3
 1. The hope of believers being raised is based upon the resurrection of Jesus, showing that we too will be raised. 1 Cor. 15:20-23
 2. Paul linked Jesus’ death and resurrection TO the return of Jesus.
- B. The return of Jesus is promised throughout the New Testament. John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11

III. 3rd, we learn that when Jesus comes again THINGS WILL HAPPEN.

- A. **First**, Jesus will bring the saints with him, obviously referring to the spirits of the righteous, for them to be reunited with their resurrected physical bodies to an incorruptible state.

B. **Second**, “the Lord Himself” shall come again, though angels will assist in the resurrection and reuniting of the spirit with the resurrected bodies. Matt. 13:41; 1 Thess. 4:14

1. He shall come with a “**shout**”. v. 16; cf John 11:34
2. He will come with the “**voice of the archangel**”. v. 16
3. He shall come with the “**last trump of God.**” v. 16; 1 Cor. 15:52
 - a. God used a loud trump to sound before the giving of the law of Moses, which caused great trembling of the Israelites. Exo. 19:16
 - b. This trump will undoubtedly bring joy and shouting in a great gathering, as saints will be together to meet the Lord.

C. **Third**, the dead shall arise from the grave.

1. The text says the dead in Christ shall rise “first.” v. 16
2. This does not mean that the dead “not in Christ” shall rise second or last, but the dead shall arise “**first**” THEN (second) the living will be “caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.” v. 17
3. We learn elsewhere that when the dead are raised, that the living will be “changed” at that point. 1 Cor. 15:52

D. **Fourth**, the kingdom (all faithful in the church) will be taken into heaven. 1 Cor. 15:23-24

E. **Fifth**, the earth will be destroyed. 2 Pet. 3:10

F. **Sixth**, we shall ever be with the Lord. 1 Thess. 4:17

CONCLUSION

I. There are 2 things that are not mentioned directly by Paul in our text: **(1)** the resurrection of the **wicked** dead, or the lost, and, **(2)** the judgment day.

A. Obviously, the reason would be that he was attempting to “comfort” them with “words” because of their concern about those “asleep in Jesus” dying before the Lord comes. v. 18

B. Elsewhere in scripture, these matters are made clear for us today.

1. The wicked dead will be raised as well as the righteous. John 5:28-29
2. ALL, the righteous and the wicked, will stand before the Lord in judgment. 2 Thess. 1:5-7

II. Are you ready to sleep in Jesus, and be awakened to everlasting life?

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