

Today we discuss a subject found in 1 Thessalonians 4 – The coming of the Lord. This subject has been one of much controversy throughout the years. There have been many views on this subject.

While the main theme of the subject is that we are to find comfort in the return of Christ and our union with one another in Christ, this verse has been used to indicate what will happen when Christ returns. Let's read:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 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.

Today we will look at this verse as not only a verse of comfort but discuss also what this even will be and when this event will happen. When will the Lord descend, with the voice of the Archangel, with the trumpet of God?

First of all it is important and that we do not take 1 Thessalonians 4 as the starting point of our eschatological. We must first look at the Words of Christ and figure out where this event is and if Christ confirms this event. I mean Paul had to have received it from somewhere.

I believe that Christ has given us a foundation and a form of a timeline and order of events. This foundation is found in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

As we read the verses let us notice a few of the common denominators found in them and in what we just read. I will go over them again...

Matthew 24:29-31 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. (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his

elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Mark 13:24-27 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, (25) And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. **(26) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. (27) And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.**

Luke 21:25-28 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; (26) Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. **(27) And**

then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (28)

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

We find the common denominators on this:

Son of Man coming down in the clouds (Matt, Luke, Mark)

Angels Present (Matt & Luke)

Sound of trumpet (Matthew)

Gathering of Saints (Matt, Luke, & Mark)

Is what Paul said in 1 Thessalonians the same event found in the Gospels? Now that we know what the Gospel says let us read that again,

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 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.

Here are the following words found in this verse:

The Lord Himself shall descend. (Matt, Luke, Mark)

Voice of the Archangel (Matt & Luke)

Trumpet of God (Matt)

Saints gathering to be with the Lord (Matt, Luke, Mark)

The next question is when will this occur. I do not believe anyone disputes the rapture which means the catching up of those who are still alive. No one disputes that during the rapture is the resurrection of the dead. “For the dead in Christ will rise first.” I believe the disputes have been when will this happen? Before the tribulation, middle tribulation, or after tribulation. We are told in the gospels the following words:

Matthew 24:29 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:

Mark 13:24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

This event that Jesus speaks about happens after the Tribulation.

If the Rapture and the Resurrection happen at the same time, and we know that there is 1 resurrection of the just and 1 for the unjust, then we are left only with a post tribulation rapture and resurrection.

1 Thessalonians 4 and the Gospels record the 1 and same event. To believe otherwise we would then have to believe there is 2 descensions, 2 trumpets, 2 angel presence, 2 gatherings or resurrections. The one that Jesus speaks about and the one that Paul speaks about in which Jesus never mentions.

Today churches everywhere are looking for a Rapture. Yet, the early Church, the ante-Nicene writers, and bishops were never looking for the Rapture but the Anti-Christ. Even Jesus writing of the end times says,

Matthew 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)

Mark 13:14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

The Apostles and Gospel writers knew that the Anti-Christ would come much after them. In so much they inserted, (those who are reading this, you need to understand and look for this.) Why should we look for this if we are not hear.

Even early church wrote

DIDACHE: 60-110 A.D.

Chapter 16. Watchfulness; the Coming of the Lord. Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ready, for you know not the hour in which our Lord will come. But come together often, seeking the things which are befitting to your souls: for the whole time of your faith will not profit you, if you are not made perfect in the last time. For in the last days false prophets and corrupters shall be multiplied, and the sheep shall be turned into wolves, and love shall be turned into hate; for when lawlessness increases, they shall hate and persecute and betray one another, and then shall appear the world-deceiver as Son of God, and shall do signs and wonders, and the earth shall be delivered into his hands, and he shall do iniquitous things which have never yet come to pass since the beginning. Then shall the creation of men come

into the fire of trial, and many shall be made to stumble and shall perish; but those who endure in their faith shall be saved from under the curse itself. And then shall appear the signs of the truth: first, the sign of an outspreading in heaven, then the sign of the **sound of the trumpet**. And **third**, the resurrection of the dead -- yet not of all, but as it is said: "The Lord shall come and all His saints with Him." Then shall the world see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven.

Hippolytus – 200-212 A.D.

Chapter 36 – End of the World

As these things, therefore, of which we have spoken before are in the future, beloved, when the one week is divided into parts,

(1 week equals 7 years. So the above verse means the abomination happens at 3.5 years as indicated in Revelation.)

and the **abomination of desolation** has arisen then, and the forerunners of the Lord have finished their proper course,

(The forerunners of the Lord are the 2 witnesses who will preach for 42 months after the abominations.)

and the whole world, in fine, comes to the consummation,

what remains but the manifestation of **our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**, the **Son of God**, from heaven, **for whom we have hoped**; who shall **bring forth fire** and all just judgment against those who have refused to **believe** in Him? (2 Peter 3)

For the Lord says, *For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west, so*

*shall also the coming of the **Son of man** be; for wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. **Matthew 24:27-28***

(Same event as indicated earlier)

For the **sign of the cross** shall arise from the east even unto the west, in brightness exceeding that of the sun, and shall announce the advent and manifestation of the Judge, to give to every one according to his works. For concerning the general resurrection and the kingdom of the **saints**, Daniel says: *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.* And Isaiah says: *The dead shall rise, and those in the tombs shall awake, and those in the earth shall **rejoice**.* And our Lord says: *Many in that day shall hear the voice of the **Son of God**, and they that hear shall live.*

Not to mention Irenaeus and other writers who all recorded events of the end times which indicate that believers alive will be Raptured and the Dead resurrected at the end of the tribulation.

In conclusion,

I am sure that there will be many now and in the future, after listening to this message, who will be saddened because they have come to the stark reality that they will be here for the tribulation. Yet, I want to comfort you and remind you that the tribulation is not for us but for the world. Listen, many of our brothers and sisters in Christ have died prior to us under the hands of tyrants and people. That the plagues described in the Tribulation are against the Kingdom of the Anti-Christ and his followers. Against those who have taken the mark and apostates of the Lord. You have one job, look

and keep your eyes on the Lord and do not take
the mark or follow the world.