

They That be Drunken

1 Thessalonians 5:1 – 11

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~ Our Spiritual Safari is looking for our Blessed Hope – the Lord Jesus Christ – on every page of Scripture in our expedition through the entire Word of God. In order to do that, we must be awake, sober and vigilant. Frankly, and most unfortunately, we have a whole bunch of spiritually drunk “*saints*” today who cannot see straight; and eventually pass-out in a stupor and fall sleep. We call them Christian Tragedies – because that’s what they are. They want to argue about the rapture and deny that it is taught in the Bible. They want to fight the devil and put him behind them in rebuke; and they only seem to need Jesus as a back up. They never give God the glory, they usurp His glory for themselves. They bicker over what election according to the foreknowledge of God means. They incessantly identify with the nation Israel; when the nation Israel denies the Lord Jesus Christ as the True and Living God. What they *REFUSE* to do is actually study the Bible – although they claim to be Bible scholars of some sort. Well, that’s what drunks do, friends – they lie about who they are and they argue without factual reason. Their tact is to create a distraction from any meaningful, cohesive worship in Spirit and Truth.

This fifth chapter of first Thessalonians concerns a Christian’s actions in view of the return of Christ Jesus for His church. Up until now in this epistle, we have examined the appropriate attitude of the Christian regarding the return of Christ for His church; and if that attitude does not lead to action, then something is radically wrong with your walk in Christ – and that something is: you aren’t walking with Him. As we have painstakingly learned, the rapture of the church is a purifying hope that alerts us and leads to a labor of love. The hope we have is that, as believers, we won’t be led into the blackness of darkness; known as the Great Tribulation period – the day of the Lord – the great day of wrath. Remember, the Day of the Lord begins at night – just as the Jewish calendar day began at sundown. In Genesis, the evening and the morning were a particular day during creation. God’s way of marking time begins with darkness and moves into the light....

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.

~ So, the Great Tribulation period is the darkness that eventually yields to the light of the Millennial Kingdom; as the Son of Righteousness arrives with healing in His wings. That is precisely what the prophets refer to when they say “... *the Day of the Lord*” – and it relates to the nation Israel exclusively. Now, times and seasons are not connected with the church; because the church is looking for a Person – not a time or season. Times and seasons belong exclusively to this earth — to the inhabitants of the world — both Jew and Gentile who will be saved *in that day*. Frankly, since Paul saw no need to write unto them about these things – I don’t see the need, either.

What I do feel compelled to comment on is that the Lord Jesus isn’t coming for the church like a thief in the night! No, we’re looking for Jesus – people do not look for a thief. We will welcome Jesus to call us into the air and to be with Him forevermore — a thief is not only not welcome — but we’re not going away willingly with a thief. We’re probably going to try to kill the thief. When we leave our homes, we don’t put a note on the door that says “... *dear thieves, I have left the back door unlocked and the silver is in the China cabinet right third drawer – help yourself.*” No, a reasonable person locks the door, sets the alarm, and asks the neighbors to keep an eye on the place while they’re away. Well, after the church is taken to Heaven, the earth will think they are in peace and safety – and then the Lord Jesus will return in His second advent to establish His earthly Kingdom by dashing the rebellion with a rod of iron like a potter’s vessel, and treading the winepress....

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.

~ Notice the change in the personal pronoun in verse three as compared to verses one and two. Paul now says, “they” and “them.” The world will think they are entering the Millennial Kingdom but they are really entering the Great Tribulation period and their false peace will be caused by antichrist! Our safari just learned all about that in the prophecy of Isaiah when Isaiah said, “the Day of the Lord shall be upon all that are proud and lofty and they shall be brought low!” That’s Isaiah chapter two verse twelve, by the way. The true and living church consisting of genuine believers won’t be around when that time arrives. The judgment of society, commerce, art, education, governments and militaries – and religion – all follow immediately afterward!

Isaiah 13:9 behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. 10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. 11 And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible ~

It doesn’t get much more frightful than that, friends. In the prophecy of Joel, which our safari will come to shortly, Joel says, “.... alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.” Joel speaks of it as a day of terrible thick darkness, gloominess and black clouds. That’s the Old Testament picture of the Day of the Lord. So, again, the “Day of the Lord” — beginning with the Great Tribulation period, and continuing all the way through the Millennial Kingdom — is a prophetic theme that we *MUST* get straight in our thinking before we can proceed properly in prophecy; which constitutes almost the entirety of the remainder of the Word of God for our Spiritual Safari!

The rapture, the church and the removal of a company of people out of the world to meet Christ in the air aren’t even remotely alluded to in the Old Testament. We can vaguely see it in type by the accounts of Enoch and Elijah – and some other areas – but it is not taught or developed as a doctrine — and it was not understood in any capacity by the Old Testament

saints. The rapture is a glorious truth that was first revealed by the Lord Jesus Himself in the Upper Room when He said, *“I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you again unto Myself.”* That’s the first time the rapture is taught or referred to in the teaching of the Word of God. Here, in Thessalonians, Paul develops this idea. If you have not read our last several reports from this Spiritual Safari, I suggest you go back and do so now.

The second advent of Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth *IS* a theme of the Old Testament, and *IS* taught in this passage and throughout. In fact, the Old Testament is *ALL* about the kingdom. Well, that event is sure going to be a huge surprise to the world. They won’t be expecting it; because they won’t be looking for Him – at all. When we get to second Thessalonians, Paul will expose the big lie that antichrist will profess – and it will be that of world peace and safety. They’re going to be severely disappointed bunch of people that have placed all their trust and hope in a huge lie....

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.

~ The rapture of the church actually does two things: it ends the calling out of a people to His Name — which God is doing today — and it begins the Day of the Lord. The relationship of the coming of Christ to call His church to meet Him in the air and the Day of the Lord are the times and seasons that Paul said he didn’t need to talk to them about – because they already knew. They knew it is a day of wrath; and they knew the myriad ways in which it was described by the Old Testament prophets – but they still weren’t clear about the relationship of the coming of Christ to call His church to meet Him in the air preceding the Day of the Lord. So, Paul graciously explains that the translation of the church will mark the end of the age of grace. The rapture indicates that a new age has arrived. That new age will be a dark day, my friends; make no mistake about that.

These people who are constantly talking about wanting the Lord to come again are ignorant of their ignorance. The church won't be in darkness in that day, because we won't be in the world. We do not belong to that dispensation – we belong to the dispensation of grace. I cannot stress the criticality of that fact enough; because, until we learn to make these distinctions in Scripture, you're simply going to remain confused. Frankly, I know of no one as dazed and confused about these things as pastors in the pulpit, and theologians in seminaries. Most theologians simply give up on prophecy, and begin to make up whatever they think sounds good. They do so because they're just not really willing to invest the time and energy that it takes to study the Bible properly, correctly and completely....

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.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do ~

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