

Message# 135 - 4-18-2021 - Revisiting Revelation - Shortly means shortly

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Good morning everyone. From what we call America to Canada to the Philippines to the UK - and all points in between - I want to thank you again for taking the time to tune in to the message this morning. I want you to know that each and every week it is encouraging to know that so many people are listening to the messages that God has given me over the past 35+ years.

Many of you wrote in last week asking about Jeff and Chris. And I would ask you to continue praying for both of them. Jeff is healing up and hoping to be back in the swing of things in about a week or so. He had surgery to repair a whole in his lung. He has had several episodes of a collapsed lung - and he felt like his only option was to have surgery done to repair it. The doctors did tell him it was a success - but - well - we've heard that before. Let's continue to pray for Jeff and ask for healing and for wisdom on how to deal with this outside of the hospitals should it ever occur again.

Chris is now in his 9th day of fasting in a jail in Vernon county Wisconsin. I spoke with him yesterday for a little while and we ask that you continue to be in prayer concerning Chris while he is going through this fiery trial.

I am encouraged. I am, in fact, greatly encouraged - and I wish like crazy that I could pass that encouragement on to you. The message of Fulfilled Bible Prophecy and the present day reality of the Kingdom has always been such a source of comfort to me. It's a source of power and rejuvenation - but I as I said last week - I continue to hear from people who are not having that same encouragement and excitement translate into their lives as they begin to understand the implications of Fulfilled Bible Prophecy.

As I often say, what difference does it make what you believe - if your belief system - your faith - your system of belief - does not change your lifestyle?

This is what I see in futurism versus preterism. The way those two belief systems function - there is no difference in the way a futurist lives and the way a preterist lives - so who cares? Who cares if a man believes in a future kingdom and lives that way - or if a man believes that some, most or all the prophecies were fulfilled - but still lives exactly the same way the futurist lives? That being the two headed monster called "church and state" are duly authorized to rule and reign in our generation. So the two "ists" - futurists and preterists - argue about Bible interpretations - but their lives are

lived exactly the same way.

How about a Baptist and a Muslim? How about a Jew and a Muslim? Or a Jew and a Buddhist? They both have a belief system that says there is religion - which deals with the spirit realm - but there is a state - which dictates how the physical realm operates. Who cares about religion - when the lifestyles of all involved - live basically the exact same way in the physical realm - that being that the state is the quote "god of this present world." So - basically - a man's religion is only good for the after life - it's not good for the present life.

So - here's the major difference in Fulfilled Bible Prophecy and all the rest of the quote "religions" that are in existence today.

Fulfilled Bible Prophecy concludes - that because all the prophecies were fulfilled in Christ - in the first century - that means that His Kingdom and His Kingship are for right now - and the physical realm is to reflect that reality. We are freed from all the enslavements that the systems of men hold over people. We are free to live according to the Laws of God - and are free to begin to experience life and life more abundantly because of that freedom.

When I receive correspondence from people that are not sharing the excitement and encouragement that I get from Fulfilled Bible Prophecy - it is a reality check - I might even go so far as to call it a gut check. When you are preaching a message that has given you so much hope, so much comfort, so much assurance that it is the right message - and you are not seeing that message translate in the lives of those who are understanding the message - but are instead getting discouraged from it - well - that's a bit painful. And, if I were not hearing this from several of you - I'd probably just deal with it on a one-by-one basis - but I am hearing from enough of you that I need to deal with it publicly.

I think it is reasonable to think that I may not be hearing from everyone who has those thoughts.

After last week's message, Michael emailed me an observation of his as to why some people might be discouraged - and even though I had thought of this before - it never really dawned on me until he said what he said. And it was basically this. This message - the Fulfilled Bible Prophecy message - removes the rapture false theology. Absolutely it does. The rapture false theology is a lie and it has to go. But the problem is, for so many

people - that rapture false theology was a source of hope. False hope - yes - but nonetheless - it was a sense of hope. It was a sense of at any moment, in the twinkling of an eye, before the military gets to the front door for a forced vaccination - or - as the fear tactic of internment camps has been around for so long - for me - going all the way back to the 1980s when some in the quote "patriot movement" were really promoting hard the impending internment camps that were set up all over America for anyone found or even suspecting of resisting anything the quote "government" wanted.

And before any of those things might actually happen to American quote "christians" Jesus was going to have Gabriel blow his trumpet and the rapture would take place and we would not have to go through any of the terrible things planned for anyone who might be a resistor - or even a quote "Christian" who was found to be in possession of a Bible.

So, when you take the rapture away from people - a great source of hope is also taken away.

I know this is real. I remember back in - well - had to be around 1977 - we were sitting in quote "church" one - probably Sunday evening - and the preacher was really getting after a rapture message - really preaching it hard - I mean the people were really being whipped into a frenzy - everyone was on the edge of their seat - never remember such a stirring time in a quote "church" - the preacher was preaching about the rapture and all the dramatic events that were soon coming - and he talked about people being left behind - parents taken, children left - and all that goes with it - then the preacher paused for a second - and in that pause - and he did not orchestrate this as part of his message - but there was a really really loud horn that went off outside the church building. And everyone was totally shocked. There was not a peep in that building and there would have been way over a thousand people there. And - I'm telling you - every single person in there thought they were getting ready to go through the roof and meet Jesus.

Then, when everyone looked around and saw that nothing happened, they all just started laughing - including the preacher. Every single one of the people in there - me included - I would have been about 15 years old or so - everyone that thought horn was the rapture. And when it wasn't - I don't know if the laughter was a sense of relief - or what - but that was something I'll never forget.

I remember one time I came home from somewhere - again - very young - teenager -

and I expected my mom and dad to be home - probably my brother, too - and no one was home. I couldn't find anyone. And I began to panic because I thought the rapture came and I got left behind.

So, I know, to a certain extent - even though I turned my back on it at around 20 years old or so, I know how impactful that false doctrine was. And for people who kept it going for another 40 or 50 years - wow - it has to be shocking to come to the realization that it was / is a lie.

Back to Michael's observation. Another thing about false rapture doctrine and taking it away - what it now means - is that every single one of us are going to have to come to grips with the absolute complete fact - that at some point in our lives - our life as we know it on this earth - is going to end. You aren't going to be raptured - you are going to one day close your eyes - and - if you are in Christ - and again - this is where one of the great hopes comes from - this is assurance - this is comfort - falling asleep in Christ - in the faith Once delivered to the saints - means - one second here - the next second in the presence of our Lord.

No other system of belief provides for this. The futurist system absolutely doesn't - even though they often quote "absent from the body is present with the Lord." Sorry. They can't have that. Because they believe in a future resurrection of the dead. Sorry futurists. When you die - and yes I said die - because they do not believe that death has been destroyed - when they die - they go to the grave to await some future resurrection - can't have it both ways.

It's very sad, but I am going to recount a second hand story to you. It comes from a very reliable source, someone very close to me who would not lie to me about this. The same preacher that I told you was preaching the rapture message when the horn went off - continued to get older and older and older. He eventually got sick and was on his death bed - when - after being quote "in the ministry" for some 50+ years - admitted on his death bed that he was very scared of dying.

When I first heard this story I just thought "How pitiful? How could that be?" Well, if you had spent your whole entire adult life trying to convince people of a quote "rapture at any minute" and you probably believed the same thing - then you find yourself on your death bed with all of a sudden - no confidence of being raptured - wow - if you were wrong about the quote "rapture" what else could you be wrong about? I am not speaking unkindly about this man. Even though he was dead wrong in what he

preached - he was kind and he was kind to me all my life. But, kindness doesn't get it. He preached - for his entire ministry - a false theology. He was not going to be raptured and it finally sunk in with him.

I've heard the rapture teaching my entire life - and every single one of the men who preached it to me - every single one of them are gone and not one of them lived to see a quote "rapture." If the rapture doctrine provided a sense of comfort or hope - and you've had that ingrained in you for all these many years - and you now realize that it was a lie - I can see how someone might be discouraged with the truth of Fulfilled Bible Prophecy.

And, again, with understanding the implications of Christ being King right now - and we haven't been living that way - yeah - I get that - we are in a mess. And for a lot of grown ups out there - the concept of walking away from that mess and an advanced stage in life - might seem hopeless. But that's where Ecclesia comes in. Ecclesia is the great plane leveler. If a man thinks he has to leave the sheepfold of the world - by himself - yeah - that could be overwhelming. But it should not be that way. And thank God, even today - I heard again from another family - they are in the process of getting their place sold - they are even selling their belongings - and they are getting ready to leave the sheepfold - and they are doing it because others are doing it, too. I find great comfort, great hope in the reality that Ecclesia is at the very least - going to be attempted in my lifetime - in this generation. This is not a go it alone venture. Now listen to me. The Shepherd is the One leading us out of the sheepfold of the world. It should be enough simply to follow Him. But even in that great parable - the sheep were going out together.

The families that are talking about Ecclesia - not only are we following the Shepherd - finally - like we were supposed to long ago - but the Shepherd is leading out some very talented, smart people. We have some of the best cattlemen - probably in the whole country. We have some great gardeners. We have builders and carpenters. We aren't a handful of religious zealots and nutcases.

Plus, I believe the time is more ripe for Ecclesia in our generation maybe than at any other time since I've been talking about it. In the last year, I've seen more people come to the understanding of Fulfilled Bible Prophecy than I have in many years - many years combined - and not just coming to the understanding - I'm not impressed with that - I'm talking about the understanding AND the implications. And that is exciting.

When we do what God wants us to do - which is allow Him to use US - yes - that's how it works - I'm not of the opinion right now that God works separate from His people - maybe He does - I don't know - that's a great mystery right now - but I do know there is ample Biblical evidence to state that God works through His obedient people. When His people obey Him - do what He wants - He will protect and provide for His flock. He said the gates of Hell would not prevail against His Ecclesia. Do we serve the same God Who made that statement or not?

Do we serve the same God Who led the children of Israel out of Egypt or not? Do we serve the same God Who when Daniel got thrown into the fiery furnace - went in their with Daniel and stopped the mouths of the lions? Do we serve the same God or not? Do we serve the same God that protected and delivered Joseph? The same God that delivered Ananiah, Hazariah and Mishrael? Yes. Absolutely. Those historical accounts of the lives of those people were written for us. Add those stories to your faith - your system of belief - then trust them - trust that we serve the same God who was the God of those people.

Believe it - then trust it. He is the same God. He led those people out of the sheepfold of the world and into His fold - and He wants us to do the same thing.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

No one, who sincerely reads and studies the Word of God, can deny that it has always been the plan of God for Him to have a people - on this earth - who are not afraid to call Him Lawgiver, Judge, Magistrate and King. That's been the plan from before the foundation of the world. Even the futurists admit this - the only problem is their timetable is off really really bad. It's always for a later time. It's never for now - always later.

But we can have the blessings right now. In our generation - right now. If we will just take the steps. He opened the door of the sheepfold - but the sheep had to walk out. That's where we are today. And, seeing that men have come together and have pledge themselves, ha, their lives, their fortunes - where have we heard that before?

The godless enlightenment followers of Thomas Paine came together for that - and even those men - if you can believe history - we able to defeat one of the greatest world powers the world has ever known. And they did so without the power of God.

We have God almighty on our side. We've tried everything else in our lives - what have we got to lose? We have nothing to lose - and everything to gain.

I believe that the message of Fulfilled Bible Prophecy offers the greatest hope that the world has ever had. It is the hope that the all-conquering, all powerful, almighty reigning King of kings and Lord of lords is the commander in chief - not content with the heavenlies only - but looking toward seeing His Will on earth as it is in heaven. Yeah, His Will is ALWAYS going to be done in Heaven - but the object for us - while we are still here - is to see that His Will is done on earth. Even if it's done by only a handful. Even if it's done only by two or three gathered together - assembled - and again - that is a political term - assembled together - as a called out community - as a nation - as the people of God - citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel.

We do not have the false promise of rapture. Thank God that false teaching is being rooted out of our lives and out of our minds. Lies have no place in our lives.

Neither give place to the devil - is a generational principle. He was - he was - the father of lies - and we are to give no place to lies, deceptions in our lives. Having the knowledge that we are rooting out lies and deceptions that have held us back should also give us great comfort.

Turn with me again this morning to Revelation chapter 4. We are going to spend just a little more time here to drive the point home we were looking at last week before we ran out of time. Verse 1, chapter 4.

[1] After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

[2] And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

Alright, again, "After this." After what? We know the chapter divisions were added later after the text was written and this is a good example of a proper division, a proper transition of thought, a new paragraph, if you will. The first three chapters of the book

of Revelation are to be taken literally. There is nothing in those first three chapters where the language is symbolic. Yes, there is lots and lots of symbolism in the book of Revelation. There is a lot of descriptive language that is clearly not to be taken literally.

But there is no reason at all, not to take the first three chapters literally. I'm specifically, once again, talking about the time-stamp - as in verse 1 - the things which must shortly come to pass. If John had written those things after he said he had been called up into heaven and after he had said that he was quote "in the spirit" - then sure - we would need to reconsider the whole meaning of the things which must shortly come to pass, the time is at hand - and the clearly literal meanings those statements make.

But he didn't. We talked about the 7 Ecclesias that were in place in Asia in the first century. They existed - if you want to believe the history books - even they will tell you that those places existed in the first century. Today, they do not. On that basis alone, we should have confidence concerning the time stamp of the book.

This week, as I was studying I read a futurist account of the dating of the book of Revelation. I thought this was important and I want to read a brief excerpt for you this morning. As I was saying, I am saying that the first three books of Revelation are clearly to be taken literally - and by the context of what is said - particularly - the things which must shortly come to pass. But listen to what this other preacher provides as quote "internal evidence" as to why the later date of 96 ad is a better choice for the book of Revelation - which is the basis for futurism, and of course, why not, he uses the word "church" in his article, so I'll quote it as is:

Internal Evidence

The contents of the book of Revelation also suggest a late date, as the following observations indicate.

The spiritual conditions of the churches described in Revelation chapters two and three more readily harmonize with the late date.

The church in Ephesus, for instance, was not founded by Paul until the latter part of Claudius's reign: and when he wrote to them from Rome, A.D. 61, instead of reproving them for any want of love, he commends their love and faith (Eph. 1:15) (Horne 1841, 382).

Yet, when Revelation was written, in spite of the fact that the Ephesians had been patient (2:2), they had also left their first love (v. 4), and this would seem to require a greater length of time than seven or eight years, as suggested by the early date.

Another internal evidence of a late date is that this book was penned while John was banished to Patmos (1:9). It is well known that Domitian had a fondness for this type of persecution. If, however, this persecution is dated in the time of Nero, how does one account for the fact that Peter and Paul are murdered, yet John is only exiled to an island? (Eusebius III.18; II.25).

Then consider this fact. The church at Laodicea is represented as existing under conditions of great wealth. She was rich and had need of nothing (3:17). In A.D. 60, though, Laodicea had been almost entirely destroyed by an earthquake. Surely it would have required more than eight or nine years for that city to have risen again to the state of affluence described in Revelation.

The doctrinal departures described in Revelation would appear to better fit the later dating. For example, the Nicolaitans (2:6, 15) were a full-fledged sect at the time of John's writing, whereas they had only been hinted at in general terms in 2 Peter and Jude, which were written possibly around A.D. 65-66.

Persecution for professing the Christian faith is evidenced in those early letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor. For instance, Antipas had been killed in Pergamum (2:13). It is generally agreed among scholars, however, that Nero's persecution was mostly confined to Rome; further, it was not for religious reasons (Harrison 1964, 446). End quote.

Now, do you see anything blatantly missing from his attempt at trying to make the book of Revelation's date 96ad as opposed to prior to the destruction of Jerusalem? Just like Hal Lindsey did when he talked about the dating of the book - he made not one - not even a passing attempt at discussing the very first verse. How can you say that the Internal Evidence found in the first three chapters of the book of Revelation are the basis for futurism - and not even mention the things which must shortly come to pass, and the time is at hand?

That is either just very very poor teaching, or it's a purposeful deception. I believe it's on purpose. I believe they have done everything they can to try to discredit the truth

that the book of Revelation was about the things which must shortly come to pass - because among those things shortly to come to pass - was the greatest event to occur since the Resurrection of Christ - and that was the return of Christ - to the people - the generation that He promised He would return to - and at that time - He simultaneously brought an end to the Old Covenant World - He brought an end to the divine right of earthly kings, He brought an end to the days where God allowed the nations to walk in their own ways, and He was Revealed to all those who had rejected Him in that generation - the ones who rejected His Kingship - He was Revealed in flaming fire as the King of kings and Lord of lords. He brought an end to the days where God allowed men to have their own governments and men who continue on in rebellion to the One True King have done everything in their power to hide this truth from sincere seekers of God, His Son and His Kingdom.

Plain and simple. That's what was done. It's the wizard of Oz doing everything he can do to keep the charade going. The time is up. The time is over. Men do not have the Authority from God to rule over each other any longer. Men and women, boys and girls are to submit to the Only King, the Only Potentate and allow His reign in their lives today - exclusive of all others. You can't tax labor any longer. You can't make slaves out of people. You can't force people to obey men instead of God. You can't force people into submitting to dictatorships or republics or democracies - there's One Government in the New World and that is the Government of Christ - the Kingdom of God. There's One Nation - and that's the Commonwealth of Israel - and all men everywhere are to bow their knees to King Jesus and join the Nation. That's the Gospel. That's the Gospel of the Kingdom. That's what Christ preached. That's what the apostles preached. That's the Gospel. And any one or anything that preaches anything else - any gospel other than this - let him be accursed.

This week I had another great email come in and I want to talk about it this morning because it goes hand in hand - again - with the shortly come to pass - the this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled - the timing of the second coming of Christ.

I want you to turn to Matthew 24. In our series on Matthew 24, we basically ended it at verse 34, though I did touch on some other verses after that briefly. But this is very important that we look at this and maybe spend some more time on it.

This will be Matthew 24, beginning in verse 35:

Now, as you recall, Matthew 24 is all about the second coming of Christ. The second coming of Christ is synonymous with the temple being destroyed - not one stone left standing. It is the same thing as the meaning of the "end of the world" - the end of the Old Covenant age. Now watch verse 35, the Words of Christ:

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Of course heaven and earth shall pass away. This is by no means the first time He used those Words. Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled. And, verse 35 needs to be comprehended within the scope of the chapter - which is again -

Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

"Okay, Lord, when will the heaven and earth pass away?"

It's all consistent, it's all talking about the same things. Now verse 36.

[36] But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

Of the day and hour of what?

Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

The problem with the futurists using the phrase "No man knows the day or the hour" is the same problem they have with just about everything else they teach - they take it out of context. They tear it from their Bibles, lay it on the table, and then develop some sort of theology that fits their futuristic perspective and before you know it - they've developed an entire theology that when compared to the actual Bible itself - it resembles nothing of what was intended.

So no man was to know the day or the hour. That's what He said. Verse 37.

[37] But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Concerning

Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

and so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

No man knew the day or the hour.

Alright. Turn with me to I Thessalonians chapter 4. And let's begin reading in verse 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.

Now again. Who is doing the talking here? This is Paul. Paul is writing to the saints at Thessalonica. This is clear as can be. Just look at the first verse again. When he says

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,

...he is the "I" and the "brethren" are the first century saints that received the letter. Verse 14.

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

Once again - and yes - let's belabour the point. Let's drive this home. This has to be our faith - this has to be our system of belief - because this is the faith - this is the belief system once delivered to the saints. My goodness, brothers and sisters - talk about the faith once delivered to the saints - if this isn't it - I don't know what is. Are we going to believe the Bible or not? Can we trust this written Word? I believe Fulfilled Bible Prophecy - once again - provides great great hope - because we can read the faith once delivered to the saints - we can believe the same thing - then have full confidence we can put our trust in it. This is great. This is so exciting for me and gives me great comfort. Verse 15.

[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.

Read it again and again and again until it fully, finally sinks in. We say unto you. That's Paul to them in the first century and he's telling them this came directly from the Lord. Again, this is the faith once delivered to the saints. Did these people believe what Paul said to them. Was this their faith? Was this Paul's faith. He continually says we, I, you - we which are alive and remain - did they believe this?

There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom.

The things that Paul was telling those first century saints is exactly the same thing that Christ told His disciples before He ascended to Heaven.

“Well, you say they may have believed it, but where's the proof that it happened?” That's the proof. That's all the proof you need. They believed what Paul said. That's the faith - that's the system of belief - that's what they believed - that's the faith once delivered to the saints - and if we want the saving common faith that Jude talked about - we better believe the same things they did.

But that's what they *thought*. Okay. Then that needs to be what we think. We better have the same faith they did. Verse 16.

[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.

Someone is going to have to give me a good reason why Paul did not tell these people - “now, listen, I'm going to say these things to you, and I want you to get comfort from them - especially since you are going through great trials and tribulations - but the Lord really wants you to just think these things are for you - but in the end - they are really going to be for people thousands of years later.”

How ridiculous? Why tell these people these things? And not only that, tell them that it came from the Word of the Lord? Are you kidding? Is he using the Words of the Lord to deceive these people? There is no way any sincere follower of Christ can conclude such a thing.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Wow. Comfort these people with Words that you know full well are not going to be true for them? That is amazing that we ever thought that way.

You want to know why we are in the mess we are in today? Here it is. We have listened to people tell us that the faith once delivered to the saints was a deception. We are to read I Thessalonians chapter 4 and reason and argue and twist and contort the Scriptures into a way that better fits the futuristic agenda. And friends, this is not like all the other religions where ultimately it doesn't make any difference what they believe because their lives don't change anyway.

When you conclude that this is saying exactly what it says and it means exactly what it meant to the people who first had it said to them - then you are going to understand that the second coming of Christ occurred in the first century - you are going to understand that it means that Christ was revealed as King of kings and Lord of lords in the first century - and our lives had better start changing to line up with the teaching of the Scripture. If we do not have the faith once delivered to the saints - we are in a lot bigger trouble than we thought. Having the rapture - the false doctrine of the rapture taken away from us - is not the biggest issue we face.

Remembering now back to Matthew 24:35-37 - talking about the coming of the Lord. Word for Word what we just read in I Thessalonians 4, Word for Word from Matthew 24 - there is no doubt - absolutely no doubt these passages are talking about the same things. When Paul said, "We know this by the Word of the Lord" he is talking about Matthew 24. Now, continue to I Thessalonians chapter 5. Revelation 4 was a good division - this was is not. I Thessalonians 5, verse 1.

[1] But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

This is just a really bad place to divide chapter 4 and 5. The times and the seasons of what? Everything we just read from I Thessalonians 4. And the consistency is absolutely fantastic. Paul says the times and the seasons. He didn't say the day and the hour. This is another reason we can have total confidence that the Word of the Lord he was referring to was from Matthew 24. Now verse 2, this is great.

[2] For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Again, Paul is repeating the Words of Christ. Go back to Matthew 24. Look at verse 39, well, just start again at verse 35:

[35] Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

[36] But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

[37] But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

[38] For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

[39] And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

[40] Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

[41] Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

[42] Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

[43] But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

[44] Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Now go back to I Thessalonians 5. Read verse 1 again:

[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.

This is absolutely fantastic. It's just beautiful the harmony. You can't do this with futurism. It doesn't work.

[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.

Christ said, they wouldn't know the day or the hour. But He absolutely told them they would know the times and the seasons. When you see these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Just like when you see the fig tree budding, you know that summer is nigh. Getting close. This is all talking about the coming of the Lord. The Revelation of Christ - the Revealing as King of kings and Lord of lords - that's what this is all talking about. This is about the kingdoms of this world - being brought down - and being brought back under the foot of Christ. This is about US - ruling and reigning with Christ as joint-heirs - sons of God - ambassadors for the King. This is the Kingdom. This is the Ecclesia - this is the ONLY thing we haven't tried in our generation. What a novel concept. Obey the King? How about let's try this?

But we haven't because we've been held back by false doctrine - some of us - for our entire lives. Let's shed that false doctrine. Let's take to ourselves the faith once delivered to the saints - let's put our trust in the King of kings and Lord of lords and let's just see how big our God is.

[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.

Sure, I get it, this was written to those first century saints. But the principles remains. The principles are for us. This was written for us, too. We believe that the prophecies of Paul were fulfilled in their lives just like Paul told them they would be - so let's add that to our faith - then let's look at the principles for life that Paul told them - by the Word of the Lord - and let's add that to our faith - our system of belief and trust that we will reap the same benefits they did! Come on now, that has to make you say "Amen." That has to give you hope and joy and peace and confidence that we are on to something big here. We are in the valley of decision - with the Promised Land in view. Verse 7.

[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.

[12] And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

[13] And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

[14] Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

[15] See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

[16] Rejoice evermore.

[17] Pray without ceasing.

[18] In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

[19] Quench not the Spirit.

[20] Despise not prophesyings.

Alright now, let's remember to keep everything we read here in context. There are principles for us - there are facts that are not for us. Read and study with discernment.

In verse 9, when he says to them, they are not appointed to wrath but to salvation - that is specifically talking about the wrath of God that was soon coming on that generation - the generation that had murdered the very Son of God. Turn back a couple chapters to chapter 2 so that we can stay in context while we read the rest of I Thessalonians. Chapter 2, beginning in verse 14.

[14] For ye, brethren, became followers of the ecclesias of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

[15] Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

[16] Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

This is all perfectly consistent again - with the Words of Christ when He told the unbelievers in His day - that their house had been left unto them desolate. Because of their rejection of Christ as their King - they would be destroyed. You can't get any more

wrath than the uttermost. This is what happened to those who conspired against, lied against, defamed, and then murdered the very Son of God - the King of kings and Lord of lords. This is what the husbandman of the vineyard did to those miserable men who murdered His Son to try to take away His inheritance.

These are the facts concerning the people living at that time.

The prophesying and the prophecies were limited to the Old Covenant World. I want you to turn to I Corinthians 13. I want to deal with this this morning because it came up as a question in an email this past week. The prophecies and prophesying - those days are over. They were limited to the Old Covenant World. I Corinthians 13: begin in verse 8.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

[9] For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

[10] But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

Notice particularly the language here as to when the prophecies would fail, the tongues would cease, the direct revelation from God would stop - that's what the knowledge means - it shall vanish away. That's the same language that the writer of Hebrews uses when he talks about the passing of the Old Covenant World. If we can assume that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews - he uses the same language in I Corinthians 13 and in Hebrews chapter 8:

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Once again, the consistency of the written Word is something amazing. Someone asked me this week if we can trust the written Word. Sure we can. When we are reading and studying it from the proper perspective - Fulfilled Bible Prophecy and the present day reality of King and Kingdom - when we have seen the purposeful deception of substituting the word "church" and the reason why they did it - when we have those things ingrained in us - sure - the spirit of God - will lead us into the truth. Knowing all the things that men have tried to do to destroy His Word - thinking they can hide His Will - yes - we can STILL have confidence in the written Word and these are great examples of that this morning.

Knowing that prophecy and prophesying is not for today. That can keep us from a lot of

problems. It keeps us from being deceived. It keeps us from following what clearly are - false prophets. Anyone that tells you - even hints at you - that we are in the quote "last days" - false prophet. The prophecies are over. Prophesying is done. That ended with the Old Covenant World. But Paul said in I Thessalonians 5 - yes - keep it in context. There are facts that only apply to people that received the letter. Discern those facts. Know that we must separate the facts without losing the principles.

And in this case, the principle do be kept is that the prophecies are not for today!

Continue back with I Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 17:

[17] But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

[18] Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

[19] For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

[20] For ye are our glory and joy.

What a great hope they had. Yes! They had the hope of the coming of Christ. Are not even YOU in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For the life of me, I don't understand how people cannot see this. Was this all a big lie to these people? Was their faith - their system of belief - just one big deception?

That's what futurism does. It makes the whole Bible - every single bit of it - a lie and a deception. They teach people that the first century saints were deceived. Then, because that's a complete lie - they teach their people that the words are for them - and that's a complete lie.

Knowing these truths should give us great comfort! Believing the truth is the first step in acting upon it. Let's rejoice in this!

Go back now and let's end with the rest of I Thessalonians chapter 5:

[21] Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

[22] Abstain from all appearance of evil.

[23] And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[24] Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

[25] Brethren, pray for us.

[26] Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

[27] I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

[28] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.