

22T12g 1 Thessalonians

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me @ the PUNLA coffee table. I just have to say it. I don't really like eschatology or end times theology. I always figured it was going to happen so why worry about it. I would say things like, it does not help me follow Jesus, it does not help me reach others for Jesus, then why. What's the point? And this is true.

And I still kind of feel this way but over recent years, this topic keeps coming up over and over and over again. I think Jesus is trying to tell me something. So, I'm trying to be obedient and study the word of God as Jesus wants me to, not as I would like to do it.

Anyway, here we are talking again about eschatology and prophecies. Today I want to discuss 1st Thessalonians. Specifically 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18 commonly referred to as the Rapture scripture and 1st Thessalonians 5:1-11 the Day of the Lord.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father. Thank you for your good news. Lord use me to share your message. If I say something in error, please let them remember what you wanted them to hear, not my errand words. Help us not to be confused by the many voices and opinions we hear. May we stay focused on your word Lord. Guide our discussion. We pay in your name Lord Jesus, Amen.

Okay, today we are talking about 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 commonly referred to as the Rapture scripture and 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 the Day of the Lord. I have heard so many opinions and interpretations of these verses, so I wanted to study them fresh without any preconceived ideas.

But before we get started, we need to remember the context of these scriptures. Most historians believe Paul is responding to a letter or message that he has received. Among other things, it appears the Christians in Thessalonica. Some were withdrawing from society assuming Jesus would return soon. I have heard they were quitting their jobs and waiting and waiting and waiting. Then Jesus did not come, so they began to believe they had missed it. They thought Jesus had come back and left them behind. So these issues are the underlying reason for this letter.

The simplest way is to just read it. I am going to be using the BibleHub New American Standard translation and associated Greek lexicons today.

Let's read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NAS) *¹³But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. ¹⁵For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore, comfort one another with these words."*

Okay, let's take a closer look. First what was Paul addressing with these verses. We don't have to guess, verse 13 tells us. *³But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are*

asleep,” Paul is wanting us to inform us about dead people. But what about dead people, again we don’t have to guess “so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.” So there is no question that Paul intends to reassure the Christians in Thessalonica, that followers of Jesus that have died are with Jesus and will be part of the resurrection. Next, Paul wants to assure them, “¹⁵For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep.” Let’s look at this a little closer in the original language.

What you are looking at is a Greek lexicon for the NASB as shown on BibleHub.com. The column of the left is the English version. Read top to bottom. The middle column shows the Greek symbol, Greek English equivalent spelling and in brackets I’ve added the phonetic pronunciations and last the column on the right is the literal definition of the Greek word. If no Greek word is shown then the English word has been added. But, remember the translators are trying to make these sentences readable to a English reader. So sometimes they add words and transitions. None of these additions are intended to change the message but sometimes they cause other unintended issues to pop up.

NAS (1 Th 4:15)	Greek	Meaning
For this we		
say	λέγομεν legomen ((leg'-o-men)	to say
to you by		
the word	λόγω logo (log'-o)	word
of the Lord,	Κυρίου kuriou (koo'-ree-oo)	lord, master
that we who are		
alive	ζῶντες zōntes (dzah'-nt-es)	to live
and		
remain	Περιλειπόμενοι perileipomenoi (per-ee-li'-po-men-oi)	to be left remaining
until	εἰς eis (ice)	to or into
the coming	Παρουσίαν parousian (par-oo-see'-ahn)	a presence, a coming
of the Lord,	Κυρίου kuriou (koo'-ree-oo)	lord, master
will not precede	Φθάσωμεν phthasōmen (fthas'-o-men)	to come before (another), anticipate, arrive
those	οἱ oi	the
who have		
fallen asleep.	Κοιμηθέντας koimēthentas (koy-mah'-thrn-tas)	sleep, fall asleep, die

As is common some of these added words will trouble you. So what I like to do is read the Greek definitions together, it’s very broken English sounding but sometimes a clearer understanding can arise so let’s try. To say, word, Lord, to live, remaining, to, coming, Lord, to come before, the dead. Or if I was going to paraphrase, I would say something like this. “by the word of the Lord, those who are living to or until the coming of the Lord, this last phrase is really tough. It could be come before the dead or arrive the dead or even not before the dead. I’m not a Greek expert by any means. So, I’m having to rely on the

experts here. Paul is trying to tell the Thessalonians, the dead who have believed are and will be with Jesus. Now Paul is going to give us a glimpse of this event, when Jesus will return. *16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*

Let's look at this a little closer in the original language.

NAS (1 Th 4:16)	Greek	Meaning
For the Lord,	κύριος kurios (koo'-ree-os)	lord, master
Himself	αὐτός autos (ow-tos')	self
will descend	Καταβήσεται katabēsetai (kat-ab-es-et-ai)	to go down
from		
heaven	οὐρανοῦ ouranou (oo-ran-oo)	heaven
with a shout,	Κελεύσματι keleusmati (kel'-yoo-mah-ti)	a shout of command
with the voice	φωνῆ ρηθῆῃ (fo-nay')	a voice, sound
of [the] archangel	ἀρχαγγέλου archangelou (ar-khang'-el-ou)	ruler of angels
and with the trumpet	Σάλπιγγι salpingi (sal'-pin-gi)	trumpet
of God,	θεοῦ theou (theh'-o)	God
and the dead	νεκροὶ nekroi (nek-roi')	dead
in Christ	Χριστῷ christō (khris-to)	the Anointed One, Messiah, Christ
will rise	ἀναστήσονται anastēsontai (an-is'-tay-son- tai)	to raise up, to rise
first.		

As is common some of these added words will trouble you. So let's do the broken English with the definitions only to see if we can get a clearer understanding. Lord, himself, to go down, heaven, a commanding shout of the ruler of the angels, a trumpet, God, dead, Christ to raise up. Or if I was going to paraphrase, I would say something like this. "The Lord, himself will come from heaven with a load shout and trumpet, He will raise the dead in Christ. Like most Greek, there are lots of ways to interpret and translate it. I do not see anything to indicate this idea of first, but the previous verse did say something about before. Paul is trying to tell the Thessalonians; Jesus is coming with a big announcement no one will miss it and Christ will raise the dead in Christ. Paul then says this, *17Then we who are alive, who remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18Therefore, comfort one another with these words.*" This is the rapture scripture we hear so much about. The concept of rapture which means caught up in the air, is actually a Latin phrase. The Greek has this idea, but it is not the primary concept. Let's look at the Lexicon again.

NAS (1 Th 4:17)	Greek	Meaning
Then	ἔπειτα epeita (ep'-i-tah)	thereafter
we who are alive	ζῶντες zōntes	to live

and remain	Περιλειπόμενοι perileipomenoi (per-ee-li'-ro-men-oi)	to be left remaining
will be caught	ἀρπαγησόμεθα arpagēsometha (har-pag'-es-o-mah-tha)	to seize, catch up, snatch away
up together	ἅμα ama (ham'-ah)	at once
with them in the clouds	νεφέλαις nephelais (nef-el'-ays)	a cloud
to meet	ἀπάντησιν apantēsin (ap-an'-tay-sisn)	a meeting
the Lord	κυρίου kuriou (koo'-ree-ou)	lord, master
in the air,	ἀέρα aera (ah-ayr')	air
and so	οὕτως outōs (hoo'-to)	in this way, thus
we shall always	Πάντοτε pantote (pan'-tot-eh)	at all times
be with the Lord.	κυριῷ kuriō (koo'-ree-oo)	lord, master

As is common some of these added words will trouble you. So let's do the broken English with the definitions only to see if we can get a clearer understanding. thereafter, live, remaining, caught, at once, a cloud, meeting, the Lord, air, in this way, at all times, Lord. I don't know if you have even read alternative views of this scripture. Obviously, most believed this is the rapture of the living, along with the dead to meet Jesus in the clouds. And it could be. An alternative is this is a continuation of verse 16, not a separate sentence at all. Verse 16 basically says Jesus will raise the dead in Christ and verse 17 continues that thought with "thereafter" to with Lord forever. It is possible the rapture is only talking about the dead. Very interesting perspective for sure. Either way, this scripture does not really give us any information about endtimes. It does appear to be speaking about the 2nd coming of Jesus. But honestly, it does not have to be. Again. This might be endtimes but even if its not, no real impact on how we follow Jesus. But I can see how this would have been very encouraging to the Christians in Thessalonica.

The other scripture in 1 Thessalonians, is 5:1-11 the Day of the Lord. Let's read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (NAS) *¹Now as to the periods and times, brothers and sisters, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ²For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night. ³While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶so then, let's not sleep as others do, but let's be alert and sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we are of the day, let's be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. ¹¹Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing.*

Now I'm not going to spend much time on this scripture. This is commonly called the Armor of God, but I really just want to focus on the end times aspects quickly. Paul is telling us plainly, Jesus is coming back, so be ready. The godless will be surprised, but we "should not be. We should be ready, eager to see Jesus face to face. Paul says, "therefore" encourage one another. Jesus is coming get ready. Amen

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father. Thank you for your good news. Thank you are every story, every message in the Bible. Help us understand your purpose for giving them. Help us to understand how you intend us to view them. Help us not to be confused by the many voices and opinions we hear. May we stay focused on your word Lord. Help me Lord to let your word lead the way so we can see your message. Thank you, Jesus, for what you did for me or all of us. We pray in your name Lord Jesus, Amen.

So okay, we looked at two passages from this letter from Paul to the Thessalonians. The first 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 is the so called rapture scripture. I was quite surprised to find so many different perspectives, but it appears that it's not as simple as caught up into the air with Jesus. But no doubt we that die as a follower of Jesus will be raised by Jesus to eternal life. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 the armor of God passage has clear messages about the "day of the Lord". Be ready. Christian be ready, be prepared.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope you will join me as we study and learn about different ways to view these end times scriptures.

If you liked the message, please click like. And share the link with your friends. Leave comments here, or our website or email me. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.