

WHEN JESUS COMES

BIBLE TEXT : I Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-24.

LESSON 412 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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.

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.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-24

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.

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

Bible References:

Notes:

Comforting Thoughts

The Lord does not want His children to be ignorant concerning important Bible truths. We read in I Thessalonians 4:13: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep." We are given words of comfort in the Bible in order that we will not be too sorrowful when a loved one is taken from us by death.

People who are not saved often mourn and weep very bitterly when a loved one is taken by death, but not so with Christians. The loss of a friend or member of the family does cause deep grief and sadness, even to a Christian; but there is comfort in the thought that if that person was saved, he is with Jesus, and we shall see him again. Although we cannot understand why these things happen, we sorrow not "as others, which have no hope."

A Christian who is called to go through death has a living hope in his heart that he will be resurrected someday. Because Jesus arose from the grave, those who believe in Him shall also be resurrected. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

When Jesus Comes

The Apostle Paul gives us a vivid description of the coming of Jesus to catch away His waiting Bride. There is no mistaking the fact that His coming shall be very real, as was foretold by the angels at His ascension: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

We read that "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." Other meanings of the word prevent are hinder or precede. "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: 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." Is not that a glorious hope and a thrilling thought?

But only those who are ready will hear the shout, the sound of the trumpet. All the other people will be left behind. In Luke 17:34-36, we read of two men in one bed: one is taken and the other is left; two women grinding at a mill: one is taken, the other is left; two men in a field: one is taken and the other is left.

Oh, the indescribable anguish that will be felt by those left behind to go through the Great Tribulation! How it causes one to tremble for fear of being left! But even as horrible as that thought might be, it is nothing compared with the torment that awaits that soul who has neglected to make preparation and will eventually be sent to that place of torment about which God's Word teaches us that the "fire is not quenched."

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.

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.

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.

As a Thief

The first part of our text is for our comfort, but the other part contains warnings. How suddenly the Lord may come! As a thief in the night! A thief may quietly pry open a window or unlock a door and enter a house without disturbing the sleeping family. But when Jesus comes He will not enter every home but we "shall be caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air." As a great magnet, Jesus will draw unto Himself those who are ready; those left behind will suddenly realise that One has come and stolen away the precious "jewels." The Lord calls those who fear Him and that think and speak of Him, His "jewels." "They shall be mine, . . . in that day when I make up my jewels" (Malachi 3:17).

At an unexpected moment, the Lord will come. In Matthew 25, we have a picture of the coming of the Lord in which ten virgins "slumbered and slept." Then at midnight there was a cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh : go ye out to meet him."

Signs

One day the disciples of Jesus asked Him: "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3-12). Jesus told them that there would be wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and false prophets (or preachers), and wickedness abounding on the earth. All these things have come to pass. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the number of earthquakes have increased greatly.

Other signs that tell us of the nearness of the coming of Jesus are: pride in the people, lying, blasphemy, disobedience to parents, covetousness, love of pleasure more than love of God. Boys and girls of junior age who are not saved are guilty of many of these things.

Watchfulness

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." This does not mean that we shall stay up all night and not get our rest. Jesus wants us to be awake concerning the importance of being ready. After we are saved, we must be sanctified wholly, and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We know that the days are evil, and we should be awake and alert to this fact; we must be watching, praying, and studying God's Word daily in order to be ready. We should search our heart to make sure that we have not let something creep in that will hinder our being ready. A careless word or deed may draw us away from the Lord.

The last part of the chapter contains instructions to help us to be ready. These instructions are not for sinners but for Christians. The message is to "brethren" -- those who are expecting to meet Jesus when He comes. Let us read them carefully; the verses are short and easily understood.

The Apostle Paul concludes by saying that his prayer to God is that we be preserved "blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." To be "blameless" is a high standard, but we should strive for it. Peter wrote concerning those who were looking for the coming of Jesus, and said, "Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (II Peter 3:14).

Prepared or Unprepared

Does the thought of Jesus' coming bring joy to your heart? As you see the signs of His coming multiplying all around you, are you eager for Him to come? Are your plans and ambitions for the future made with the thought of the soon coming of Christ?

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*.

Every plan of our life should revolved around the thought, "If the Lord wills," or, "If Jesus tarries."

Or does the thought of His coming bring a dread and terror to your heart? Do you hope He will not come just yet? Are your affections set upon things of the world? Are you so much occupied in ambitions for the future that you would rather have Jesus delay His coming?

Two classes of people are described in the text: the children of light and those of darkness. In which class are you? Are you among those who "watch" or among those who "sleep"? Remember, only those who are ready will hear the "trump of God" when He comes in the Rapture.

QUESTIONS

1. Who will hear the shout when the Lord comes?
2. Who will rise first to meet Him in the clouds?
3. What does it mean to "sleep in Jesus"?
4. How suddenly will Jesus come?
5. What is meant by "children of light"?
6. What must we do in order to be ready for Jesus' coming?
7. What does it mean to "render evil for evil"?
8. In the last part of chapter five, what five things are we told to do?
9. Name eight signs that tell us the coming of Christ is at hand.