

The Thessalonians Church

All Scripture is KJV: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY

The Book of 1 and 2 Thessalonians will challenge you to what you have been told before, but now you are going to see the truth for yourself, and you will have to either accept it or reject it.

What does the 2 books of Thessalonians tell us? – it teaches on

1. Jesus return, and his timing for his return? – (2 Thessalonians 2:4)
2. How Jesus will return, and in what way or manner?
3. Who are the elect, and how can we know who the elect are?
4. To whom is this book written, and for what purpose?
5. How Thessalonians fits in with other scriptures on the return of Christ?

After Paul had delivered the message in chapter 3 to the church, that was not the end of his instruction to the Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 3:¹³To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

The chapter 4 picks up directly where Paul left off giving instruction to them. So this proves that again that all the chapters need to be read with that in mind that it is one continuous letter that Paul had written to them to not only instruct the in certain matters but also to encourage them on their walk with the Lord, and to let them know of the Lords return.

So Chapter 4 verses 13-18, continues the thought pattern of Paul.

1 Thessalonians 4 King James Version (KJV)

So much time was spent by Paul to prepare them for the return of the Lord. These new converted Pagan Gentiles, had demonstrated the power of God in them and Paul received it as a blessing and continued to encourage them in many ways as we have seen

1. But unlike the Pagans belief. The true God of the bible would return. And this is something that Paul took the time to teach to them.

✚ By the time we get to verse 13, Paul switches to the promises of God through Jesus Christ. It is here that Paul speaks about what was told about the return of Jesus in the OT by the Prophet Joel 2, and Zechariah, Isaiah 13 and others, and also what Jesus himself had said when asked by the disciples about what the end of the world and his return would be.

✚ So don't be alarmed by what takes place in the next few verses from 13-18 as Paul speaks about the Lords second coming.

1. This is the greatest passage of all passages in the bible in which no theologian will disagree is talking about the rapture of the saints. They all agree on this is the rapture.
2. But clearly this passage of scripture has been misused many times by those same people and they fail to continue to read through to 1Thessalonians 5.
3. So today we are going to make every effort to concentrate on the scriptures and have them reference other clear scriptures in the bible.

✚ Remember for doctrine, we have to get clear scriptures from the bible which are either spoken by the Lord God, or his prophets or Apostles.

✚ It also has to be a clear statement.

4. The Bible also has to be its own dictionary to define its own words and meanings.
5. The Bible also has to agree with itself to create and define a doctrine.

✚ Clever interpretation by man will not make doctrine. – Jesus warned in Matthew 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, **teaching for doctrines** the commandments of men.

❖ Therefore Paul is gearing this next portion of his message as a message of “comfort” to all those who have had loved ones who have died in the Lord.

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. (OT & NT and all people to the time of the rapture)(Matthew 24:30-31)

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.

✚ **Very often** I hear verse 18 translated to mean:- Well you see this verse 18 proves that there is a pre-tribulation rapture because he is comforting us here, and does not want us to go through the tribulation? – does this verse actually teach that. No it does not.

✚ **And the reason they say that:** Is because they don't know the difference between the tribulation and when God is pouring out his wrath which only starts

in revelation 9, although the great day of his wrath arrives only at the end of Revelation 6:17.

- ✚ Also according to this verse 14 when Jesus returns for the current believing brethren he will also bring all those other believing saints with him which had died before in him, beginning from Adam. (1Thessalonians 4:14) **even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.**
- ✚ (so this also proves that when we die our body is in the grave, but our soul is in heaven).
- ✚ When Jesus returns he comes with the souls of them who are righteous, and they are united with their bodies which sleep in the dust of the earth into a glorified body.
- ✚ This also proves the 144,000 righteous souls of the saints are in heaven right now waiting for that day also. (Revelation 7 & 14). And these 144,000 will have a new body prepared for them to go forth and minister before the time that God's wrath is poured out upon the earth in Revelation 8, in which they would have been sealed in their foreheads first after having received their glorified bodies.

Revelation 7:4 And I heard **the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.**

Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion (*the heavenly Jerusalem*), and with him **an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.**

- ✚ So twice here in Revelation 7:4 and Revelation 14:1 the 144,000 are mentioned as being sealed in their foreheads with his Father's name. In revelation 7:4 he even refers to the number of them as being sealed as 144,000. "The word them" is referring to the 144,000 of the tribes of Israel and not just to anyone.
- ✚ Remember that – these 144,000 were Israelites and not "Jews" who could only have come out of "Israel" before their tribes were split in 1 Kings 16.
- ❖ At the return of Jesus he brings all his OT & NT saints with him to be changed in the twinkling of an eye into their glorified bodies. The dead in Christ which shall rise, the bible says in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. These are those which sleep in Jesus.
- ❖ The souls that will come with Jesus will unit with the new body in the air.
- ❖ Then we which are alive and remain will be caught up together with them.

1 Corinthians 15:52

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: **for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

QUESTION:

- ✚ So the question is asked: Is this the rapture? Or simply the return of Jesus?
- ✚ And if you say that it is only the rapture, then why is he coming with all his saints?

ANSWER:

The answer simply is, that this is both the rapture and the return of Christ. In other words the second coming of Jesus is the rapture. He is coming with ALL his Saints.

- ✚ Does not the scripture say in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 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.
- ✚ So either you believe what the scripture says that this is the return of Christ and the rapture, or you will have to make up another lie about this event.

1 Thessalonias4: 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.

- ✚ This return of Jesus is exactly what is described for us in Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Mark 13. (& Luke 17).

Matthew 24: 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.

- ✚ The order of events match perfectly with Matthew 24, and the other gospels as I have just mentioned, and they match perfectly also with Revelation 6 and Revelation 7 and 8 which also deals with the coming of the Lord.
- ✚ This passage is also dealt with by Acts 2 as he quotes Joel 2 of the OT.

Acts 2:¹⁹ But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

¹⁹ And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: ²⁰ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: ²¹ And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Joel 2: 1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;

² A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. ³ A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

⁴ The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. ⁵ Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they

leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

⁶ Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

⁷ They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

⁸ Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and **when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.**

⁹ They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

¹⁰ The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

¹¹ And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: **for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?**

²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: ²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

³⁰ And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.

³² And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

✚ This passage of Joel 2 is seen again Revelation 9:1-11

Revelation 9 ¹ And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. ² And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

³ And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

1. Let me ask you this question now before we go any further: Is this God pouring out his wrath upon the earth?
2. And if you say yes, because it is, then surely this must be God who is in control of his own wrath being poured out?
3. Or is he letting Satan or the devil, or the dragon pour out his own wrath for him upon the earth?

4. If this is the fifth angel sounding the judgements of the wrath of God upon the earth just like the 1st, 2nd and 3rd and 4th angel, then this is obviously the 5th Angel sounding the trumpet judgement of God upon the earth.
5. So is this angel of the bottomless pit Gods angel or Satan's angel?
6. If you say Satan, then that means it is Satan who is pouring out the wrath of God, and it means that Satan gave the angel of the bottomless pit the key to do so?

[Revelation 1:18](#) I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the **keys of hell and of death**.

- ❖ Since when would God give the key to Satan to test drive the bottomless pit, when Satan himself in Revelation 20 is cast into the bottomless pit.
- ❖ Would Jesus just take one of the keys off his key ring (hell & death) and give it to his angel to give to Satan?
- ❖ No!.

Revelation 20:¹ And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, ³ And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

- So as we get back into Revelation 9, speaking about who has the key to hell, it cannot be Satan.
- Lets continue as we read further in Revelation 9:4-10.

Revelation 9:4-10.

⁴ And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

- If the angel of the bottomless pit was Satan, then why would he hurt those who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads?
- And again from the verse 4 I have just read, who is it that is commanding these locusts from Hell?
- It can't be Satan, because he has not even been to hell yet, and he is only sent there in Revelation 20 by God.
- If it was Satan who has the key, then that would mean that Satan has a key to let himself out in Revelation 20 when he is cast into the bottomless pit? – Or if the king over the bottomless pit is his minion then that means Satan could ask him to let himself out of the bottomless pit in Revelation 20 when he is cast in their for 1000 years.
- You see how it does not make sense – if Satan has the keys to hell.

⁵ And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

⁶ And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

⁷ And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

⁸ And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

⁹ And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

¹⁰ And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. ¹¹ And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. *(by the way Satan has never been to hell up to this point)*

- ✚ So even Joel covered the great and terrible day of the Lord. So I guess the sun and the moon being darkened is a significant event to do with the ushering in of that great and terrible day of the Lord. Which is the second coming of Jesus Christ, also mentioned in Matthew 24:30-31 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
- ✓ Even Jude covered this same event in his writings.

Jude: ¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

- ✓ Even the book of Revelation 6, 7 and 8 ties in perfectly with these scriptures about the return of Christ being that great and terrible day of the Lord.

Revelation 6:5-7 King James Version (KJV)

¹² And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

¹⁴ And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (Isaiah 13:13)

¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

¹⁶ And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: *(Jesus said this in Luke 23:30)(Isaiah 13:6-11)*

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

- ✚ And we see in Revelation 6:17 that the great day of his wrath has only just arrived – (*is come meaning it has only just come right now*).
- ✚ And then in Revelation 7 we see the raptured saints taken to heaven.

Revelation 7:1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

² And I saw another angel ascending from the east, **having the seal of the living God:** and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, ³ **Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.**

⁴ And I heard the number of them which were sealed: **and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.**

⁹ **After this I beheld,** and, lo, **a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;**

¹⁰ And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. ¹¹ And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, ¹² Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

¹³ **And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?**

¹⁴ **And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.** And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation,** and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ **Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple:** and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

- ✚ So according to Revelation 7:15 the saints (*in glorified bodies*) when they are raptured they are before the throne of God serving him day and night and he is there among them.

1. And it's not until Revelation Chapter 8 that we see God pouring out his wrath upon the earth and the wicked which is **after the tribulation, and after the rapture**.....
2. This means that judgment has only now come upon the earth. This then proves again that the Tribulation is not God pouring out his wrath upon his people.
3. This also proves that the rapture is after the tribulation, and that God only starts pouring out his wrath after the tribulation once the 144,000 have been sealed and it also proves that the trumpets come after the seals and not before.

4. And the trumpets come only after the saints or believers have been raptured and are in heaven.

Even Zephaniah covered the great day of the Lord.

Zephaniah 1:¹⁴ **The great day of the LORD is near**, it is near, and hasteth greatly, **even the voice of the day of the LORD**: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

¹⁵ **That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,** ¹⁶ **A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities,** and against the high towers.

- ✚ Even in the OT Malachi spoke of the coming of the Lord, and that great and terrible day.

Malachi 4:1 **For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven;** and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: **and the day that cometh shall burn them up**, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

² **But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;** and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.³ And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts. ⁴ Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

⁵ **Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming** of **the great and dreadful day of the LORD:** ⁶ **And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers,** lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

- ✚ What Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 24, is what Paul told the Thessalonian church?

Matthew 24:31 **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 13:27 **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 17 is the culmination of the disciples asking Jesus about when will the kingdom of God come.....look what Jesus said.....

Luke 17:²² **And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.**²³ **And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.** (Jesus said this in 2 Thess 2:3-5 as Paul recorded it).

²⁴ For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

²⁵ But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. **²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. ²⁷ They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.** (the same day judgement came)

²⁸ Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; **²⁹ But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.** (the same day judgement came)

³⁰ Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. (judgement day)

³¹ In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. ³² Remember Lot's wife. ³³ Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

³⁴ I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. ³⁵ Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. ³⁶ Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. **³⁷ And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.** (Matt 24:27-28)

- ✚ The same day when these events took place, Jesus said it would be the same day when he would pour out his wrath upon the wicked.
 - ✚ In other words in the same day as the saints are raptured then in (about the space of a half hour in heaven) Jesus will then begin to pour out his wrath upon the wicked on the earth. (Rev 8:1).
1. The timing of the events and the events themselves described in Revelation 6, 7 and 8 are the exactly the same as in Matthew 24. (read and explain the chapter).
 2. And when we look at this after the tribulation period, there is still a chance that people can be saved before God pours out his wrath and even those who survive the wrath of God who did not take the Mark of the beast still can believe on God.
 3. These are scriptures that have been brought into the book of Acts as from Joel 2:32 and this is the same scripture quoted by Paul in Romans 10:13.
- ✚ So it is possible for someone to still get saved and raptured even after the tribulation for a short period but, those after the rapture who did not believe on Jesus will go through the wrath of God; and if they don't take the mark of the beast they can still get saved before and during the millennium. These saints will not be part of the 1st resurrection but will be part of the 2nd resurrection after the 1000 year millennium. (Joel 2:30)

Acts 2:21

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Joel 2:32 **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the**

Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

Romans 10:13 **For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

Joel 2: ³⁰ And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come. ³² **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered:** for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Acts 2: ¹⁹ And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: ²⁰ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: ²¹ **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

- ✚ But once the Rapture takes place then it is too late to get saved in the 1st resurrection.
- ✚ But there will be those who will later get saved who did not take the Mark of the beast and who turned to Jesus after the rapture and those that were born afterwards in the millennium who turned to Jesus who survived the wrath of God.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.....

Note:

Instead, the tribe of Levi is substituted for Dan, and Joseph (Ephraim's father) is substituted for Ephraim.

The tribe of Dan is excluded (Revelation 7:6) and Manasseh who is one of the sons of Joseph takes his place.)