

BibleTalk Radio



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Christ for the Philippines Mission

End Times Bible Study Part 2

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February 7, 2017

We've started a series on the end of the world, end times Bible prophecy. There is a lot of misinformation regarding the end of the world, things such as the Tribulation, things such as the Rapture, and what about Heaven, what about eternity, when is Jesus coming back. So there is a lot of misinformation, especially because in many religions each one of them thinks their own thing. Each one of them wants to tell you that they are correct. In fact, I was having a conversation with the station manager and we were talking about that very thing. Many religions come out and they all want to tell you that they have the right way and the only way. One of the things that we make sure to do here on the BibleTalk Radio Show, dear listener, is that we're not interested in what religion teaches. We're only interested in what the Bible says. So we're going to learn about end times prophecy from what the Bible teaches. Let's get started on that.

Last week, we started and we left off on the book of I Thessalonians in the New Testament. We were in Chapter 4 and we began at verse 13 and we went on until the end of the chapter which is verse 18. But I want to just remind you of a couple of things that we talked about before we go on to the next passage of Scripture, because the next part of Scripture that we're going to be on we're going to stay on for at least a week or two, maybe longer.

So I want to review with you I Thessalonians 4:13. This is the apostle Paul speaking. *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep...* and we talked about what that "asleep" meant. We talked all the way through, but the part that I want to remind everyone of, dear listener, is that part where he says, because he's saying this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. That is, God directly instructed Paul what to write to us in this passage. And what the Holy Spirit said was, *I would not have you to be ignorant.* God does not want us to be ignorant concerning the end times, concerning what's going to happen.

So, as we went on down this passage last week, we started talking about something called the Rapture, and we went down to verse 15. We talked about how Paul says that *this we say unto you by the word of the Lord.* In other words, these things are written to us directly from God. He said this excludes the religions. We are not interested in what any particular religion teaches about the end times. We are interested in what God wants us to know about the end times. So he says: *This we say unto you by the word of the Lord,* and then he talks about what we talked about last week.

There are those who have died in Christ. That is, they died, being born-again, saved children of God. They are referred to as being asleep.



God calls them asleep because they are not dead; they're alive. The Bible also says in other parts, *To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord*. It says those who are asleep in Christ, Christ will bring with Him when He comes back, because they are with Him already right now.

I talked about a dear friend of mine from a few years ago, Pastor Gaborni, who was killed in a motorcycle accident, and he's coming back with Jesus because he's already with Jesus right now. He's asleep in that his body was put in a grave, but when he comes back with Jesus, He will be reunited with that body. It doesn't matter, remember, dear listener, if a body was burned, if it was lost at sea, if it was lost in space. God is able to take every single one of those atoms wherever they are floating around in the air and God is able to put them back together into the same body. Except when He puts that body back together, it will be glorified like Christ's body, never to die again.

Then he says, those of us, in verse 17, *which are alive and remain*. What if the Lord comes back now, in five minutes from now, or tonight or tomorrow morning? Those of us who are in Christ, that is, we are born again, saved, 100% sure that if we die we're going to Heaven. Those of us who are alive and remain, we shall be caught up together with them, the ones who died in Christ. They're coming first. And the Bible tells us specifically where we're going to be when Jesus comes back to get us. It says "in the clouds." That excludes outer space. It's not going to be in outer space. It's going to be in the atmosphere.

On a rainy day like yesterday or the day before, especially Sunday, we were able to see some clouds that were touching the tops of these

mountains here from Tacloban all the way down to Babatngon. That's probably less than a thousand feet at that point when the rain clouds are really low. Beginning at more or less a thousand feet, there are clouds and those clouds go all the way up. I've been in airplanes and I've been higher than 41 or 42 thousand feet, but there are clouds all the way up to about 35 thousand feet, more or less. It's about seven miles. So, according to the Bible, we're going to be in the clouds. So anywhere between 1 and 35 thousand feet we're going to be. That's pretty thick all over the world. There'll be a lot of people up there for a split second when the Lord Jesus Christ comes and gets us.

Once we're in the clouds, we're going to meet the Lord Jesus Christ. We're going to meet Him there. That's a very interesting passage. The Bible is giving us very interesting information that's easy to overlook, but it's specifically telling us where on the planet, at least in a three-dimensional way, because He's telling us it's in the clouds. So somewhere in the atmosphere, and it says we're going to be with the Lord in the air. We're going to meet Him, and I imagine it's going to be a pretty big crowd of people, because it's going to be everybody who has trusted in Christ from the time of His Resurrection until 2017 if it happens today. That's quite a few hundred million Christians all over the world. So we're going to be up in the air in the atmosphere, and we're going to meet the Lord. It's going to be one big giant church meeting.

In another program, we talked about closed communion. There are three types of communion – open communion, close communion, and closed communion. We hold to closed communion. That is the local church. We cannot accept communion from outside



members. We commune only with our members, and they have to be baptized members of our church. There is no such thing as a universal church. That's open communion. Religions believe that.

What about all of the Christians that are all over the world now? Aren't they part of the church? No. They're supposed to be members of their local church, but once the Rapture happens, we will be *eklesia*. We will be a called-out assembly finally from all over the world, assembled in one place in the atmosphere. At that point the whole entire world that is saved will be what we call the church. And it will be a local church located in the atmosphere.

The Bible says we will meet Him in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. That's a lot of hope. And that's something that we can take for sure. To the unsaved person, that is a very scary statement that millions of people are going to disappear off the face of the planet. Can you imagine the chaos that will ensue? The planes that will crash that had Christian pilots, the cars that had Christian drivers, machinery that's going to shut down. The whole planet's going to be in chaos. But for us who are saved, we can claim verse 18. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words*. That's a comfort to us. Those of us who are saved, we have no reason to be afraid of the end of the world. We have every reason to embrace it. The only reason we as Christians should want the Lord to wait is because we want to get the message of the Gospel out to as many as possible before that.

One of my favorite messages to preach, and I've preached it all over the place when I preached in the States, I preach a message called "The Last Soul." Without getting too long in it, the

gist of the message was this: One day the last soul that is scheduled in God's foreknowledge to be saved during this time is going to be saved. That last soul is going to hear the Gospel, receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and then (trumpet sound), "Come up hither." Verse 16 says, *for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*. The voice of the archangel, that's like a general's broadcast.

[Ms. Ypille:] This is going to be both shout and then the trumpet. Pastor, there are some questions as to who will hear this sound? Will it only be the redeemed or will everybody else, even that's not redeemed, hear it?

That's a very good question. I'm glad you brought that up. I want to give you an answer to that from the Bible. There are some examples for us. Now, we don't know, first of all. Let me preface that by saying we don't know if only the saved are going to hear that trumpet and voice, or if everybody is going to hear it, or if everybody is going to hear it and not understand it. Here's what I mean.

When Elijah the prophet was taken up, Elisha, who was another prophet, Elijah's protégé, was there and he saw the whole thing. That was a picture of the Rapture. Elijah was taken up alive. He was taken up in a chariot of fire. Elisha did not hear anything except the rumble of the chariot coming down, nor are we told in the Scripture that any words did come out for Elijah, but Elisha did see the chariot, because he said, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*.



How about the apostle Paul? He saw the Resurrected Christ who opened up in a light from the sky and shone upon him, but the Bible says the other men saw a light and heard a rumble, but they didn't understand it, whereas Paul heard the voice of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou me?"

Paul said, "Who art Thou, Lord."

He said, "It is I Jesus. It is hard for me to kick against the pricks."

So Paul was having a conversation. He understood clearly, but later on in the testimony in Acts Chapter 9, it says that the other men saw a light and they heard as it were like many waters, but they didn't understand any words. Neither were those men blinded like Paul was.

[Ms. Ypille:] However, do you remember the part also where there were bystanders that saw Elisha and then they were watching when Elijah was raptured up or taken up? The other people that were saying, and I'm paraphrasing, "The prophet Elijah is no more. Is God going to show up for him, too?" For Elisha, this is.

Actually, it's not said. You're talking about the other prophets. The Scripture does not say whether they saw him taken up, but what they saw was Elisha coming back by himself. And undoubtedly, Elisha was relaying what happened and then they said to him, "Can we look for him?"

And Elisha said, "Go," and they all went and looked for Elijah but they couldn't find him.

And then, interestingly, later on as Elisha's heading back to wherever the Lord's calling him, there was a group of children, about forty of them, that came up and said, "Go up, thou bald head." And what happened was they had heard the story of that Rapture and they were mocking Elisha and they said, "Why don't you go up? The Lord took your boss. Ha, ha, ha! Why don't you go up if you're so close to God?" And, yes, a she-bear came out and killed them, killed those little children.

[Ms. Ypille:] What were they saying? The prophets that were following them right before Elijah was translated up.

Actually, there is no dialogue given to us. The dialogue was between Elijah and Elisha, because Elijah was telling Elisha, "I have to go there. Why don't you stay here." He said, "As the Lord liveth, I will not leave you." And Elijah tried that about three times.

[Ms. Ypille:] Yes, and the part, Pastor, where Elisha said he put the mantel down on the River of Jordan and said, "Where is the God of Elijah?" And then the river parted hither and thither. Was that witnessed by the other prophets following them about?

We're not told in the Scriptures, but we can only assume that it's implied that they did, because the other prophets obviously began to follow Elisha as their new leader.

Now, none of those things have really much to do with the Rapture but I was using that as an example that the Scripture seems to show that the bystanders may see something, but, of course, because they are lost, they will not understand what it is that they're seeing. Remember that the moment the Rapture



happens, from that moment we don't know how long, how many days, weeks, or months, but from that moment there will not be one saved person on the face of the Earth.

[Ms. Ypille:] And then that's the time when the grand delusion, the great delusion will come down.

Exactly, II Thessalonians chapter 2 talks about the delusion that's going to come down to those who did not love the truth. And that's talking about the Antichrist and things like that, which we are going to get into in this lesson later on, maybe a couple more weeks from now.

The world is going to experience a cataclysmic event in that most likely at least we could probably say comfortably maybe 50 to 100 million people are going to disappear off the face of the Earth. It could be as much as 700 million people, so 10% of the population of the Earth.

But whatever the case may be, if you have several tens of millions of people disappearing off the face of the Earth, that's going to be catastrophic because, as I said, there are millions of Christians, pilots, drivers, computer programmers, soccer moms driving their vans, heavy machinery operators, specialists, doctors, and they're going to disappear off the face of the Earth. Everybody's going to notice that somebody's just gone. What the world will come up with is they're going to have to come up with some kind of explanation – most likely a UFO, a spaceship came, a virus, or it could be something like a zombie apocalypse because that's very popular now. But the world will come up with an explanation and most of the world will be fooled by that, because the Lord will send them a delusion because most of them did not believe the truth.

There's something else that's very scary. We're going to get into that at another time, but I'll just point out II Thessalonians. The Lord talks about in Chapter 2 how they will receive a strong delusion, those that did not love the truth, meaning they had heard the Gospel but rejected it. What people today or what nation or set of nations can you think of off the top of your head that have most likely gotten the Gospel more than any of the other nations on the Earth?

[Ms. Ypille:] The United States.

America, the United States, and most of the western countries have been recipients of the message of the Gospel over and over and over and over again for the last how many hundreds of years. But there are people in China; there are billions. There are 1.2 billion people in China and many of them have never heard the Gospel once, India with all their Hinduism and all that stuff, Eastern religions.

So the strong delusion will most likely, probably, be present in those western nations, and there are going to be millions of people saved during the Tribulation time, but those are probably going to be all the other people, what we call forgotten peoples, because they haven't even had a chance to hear the Gospel, whereas the others, many of them have heard it and rejected it. Interesting stuff, dear listener.

We are out of time, but Lord willing, we will pick up again next week as we continue our study on end times prophecy.