



The Helmet of Salvation *Part 1 & 2*

*A Message from
Pastor Doug Riggs*

Transcribed, Illustrated and Edited by
John Mark

The Helmet of Salvation

Message by Doug Riggs, Pastor

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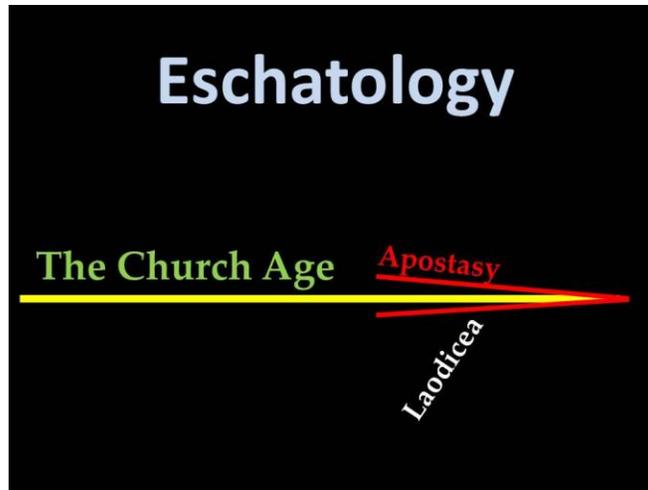
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From the audio podcast *The ByteShow with GeorgeAnn Hughes*, kept as much as practical in its spoken form.

Part 1

There's a conflict and somewhat of a debate over pre-tribulation rapture, mid-tribulation rapture, and post-tribulation rapture. When I presented [The Blessed Hope](#) series, I tried to frame the hermeneutics and the whole background as to the revelation that is given to us regarding the translation of the church through the Apostle Paul. So, I'm really not going to cover that; but I want to focus on an aspect of the 'full armor of God' that is mentioned in Ephesians 6, and to note the various ways in which this particular illustration is used for the Christian soldier to be equipped for spiritual warfare. And the reason, also, is that there are those like myself who believe in a pre-tribulation rapture that would be attacked as heretical - that which would be called 'a diabolical doctrine' - that 'it wasn't even a teaching until the mid-eighteen-hundreds,' which is completely false. The specific teaching came in with Darby in terms of its being more defined, but when you study the early church - and especially the New Testament - the concept of imminency which means that there is no unfulfilled prophecy that has to occur before the church is to be translated.

The word for *rapture* comes from the Latin term *rapturo* (or *raptus*), and in the Greek it is *harpazō* (ἁρπάζω), to be *snatched away*. I want to address those who are somewhat vitriolic and venomous to some extent about a pre-tribulation rapture. But, before I even talk about that, I want first of all to state that in my teaching on [The Day of Visitation](#), my understanding of the last days of the church will be the most challenging in that there is to be a great falling away, a great apostasy - there will be a great polarity as we approach the end. On one side you have Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22), and on the other side you'll have that which characterizes Philadelphia.



In that passage in Revelation 3:10 where there is the promise of the church being delivered from that hour of trial which is coming upon the whole inhabited earth, we notice that there are conditions - parameters - that define those who are going to be saved. There's an actual reason why they're going to be saved from the coming tribulation, and if you just read the passage in Revelation 3:8, Jesus says, 'I know your deeds,' speaking of the church of Philadelphia, 'Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.' During that particular period, to offer a pinch of incense to Caesar to demonstrate your loyalty to Rome would be a denial of the faith; and if you didn't submit to that, you could lose your life. This is for remaining loyal to God.

Not only have you 'kept My word,' but 'you have not denied My name' (verse 8). Then you come to verse 10 which says, 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance,' - *perseverance* means to *bear up under trial*. He continues, 'I also will keep you *from*,' and word *from* is *ek* (ἐκ), or *out from*, 'the hour of testing (*tribulation*), that hour which is about (or *is destined*) to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.' The term for *dwell on the earth* is a reference throughout the Book of Revelation to those who are totally outside any redemption - they have chosen against Christ - they take the *mark of the beast*. It is a term for those people whose whole focus is earth and man as they deny the hope of heaven and all that that represents.

We see that there's a promise here: 'Because you kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you...' Some who teach a pre-tribulation rapture use this as a text to attempt to prove their position. However, the passage doesn't promise that the church will be raptured before the tribulation. It promises that those that are Philadelphia will escape the particular testing. Notice the promises to the church of Philadelphia. It's not a promise to Thyatira; it's not to Pergamum; it's not to Sardis; it's not to Laodicea. It's to Philadelphia. And Philadelphia embodies that which represents the overcomer, or what would fulfill the criteria of what we understand in terms of *remnant* theology.

In the past I've discussed this in the audio series [The End of all Things is at Hand](#).

Ministry for the End Times
 Doug Riggs, Pastor, Morning Star Testimony Church

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Remnant theology simply means this: when we look for God's dealings throughout history with His people, it is a remnant that He uses to carry on His program - His purpose. We see for example in Isaiah 10 there is a statement regarding coming judgment and who is going to be saved. And when I say *saved*, I mean who's going to be *delivered* - and that's what we're looking at. The *helmet of salvation* is referring not to our *initial salvation*, but as we're going to see very clearly in the context, this is referring to *final salvation* - or *deliverance*. Most people just see the word *salvation* as a reference to being born again and being saved from eternal judgment. Of course that is included in the terminology, but *salvation* is used throughout the Old Testament as well as the New Testament to refer to a threefold aspect of salvation: *initial salvation*; *present tense salvation* (1 Corinthians 1 and 15); and *final salvation*. So, we have been saved - we are justified; we are being saved, the process of sanctification; and we shall be saved - that would be rapture and glorification.

Salvation

Initial Salvation
 We **HAVE BEEN** saved (*redemption*)

Present Salvation
 We **are BEING** saved (*sanctification*)

Final Salvation
 We **SHALL BE** saved (*rapture / glorification / redemption of our bodies*)

We're going to be looking at the hope of *final salvation* in Isaiah Chapter 10, and this is in the context of the time of Isaiah, and looking forward to the coming Babylonian invasion of Israel. But it also looks to the final *day of the Lord*, and the ultimate return of Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver Israel at the Second Advent as we will see later on in our study.

Isaiah 10:20-23 'Now in that day...' – the near view would be the coming judgment upon Judah; and then the far view, as it telescopes to the final day of the Lord that leads up to the second coming of Christ – '...the *remnant* (notice the terminology) of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped,' - a *remnant* represents people *who've escaped* – What? – Judgment! They '... will never again rely on the one who struck them,' - that is, make an alliance with Egypt or make an alliance with some other pagan power rather than trust in the Lord as we see during the time of Hezekiah – '... but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.' A *remnant* consists of those that rely on the Lord. 'A remnant will return (those who have repented and come back to God), the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant within them will return; a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.' The *overflowing with righteousness* is a reference to a *saved remnant*. This signifies them as a righteous remnant. 'For a complete destruction, one that is decreed, the Lord GOD of hosts will execute in the midst of the whole land.'

When we're talking about *the hope of salvation*, this is for the remnant. In other words, the hope of salvation is not for someone who is living in apostasy, one who is in rebellion against the Lord - and I'm referring to those who are Christians, but for whatever reason they're Laodicean. It's important to recognize that the message to Laodicea is written **to Christians**. We know that because when Jesus says, 'As many as I love, I reprove, I rebuke and I discipline... repent therefore...' Revelation 3:19 paraphrased: '...and *get hot!*' In other words, be zealous. The word *love* there is *phileō* (φιλέω); it's not *agapaō* (ἀγαπάω). God loves lost mankind – 'For God so *loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.' That's *agapaō* (ἀγαπάω); that divine love is unconditional. This *love* here in Revelation 3:19: 'as many as I *love*...' – that's *phileō* (φιλέω), a *relationship love*. God does not have a *phileō* (φιλέω) relationship love for unbelievers. This is for believers; this is a relationship love; it is a *demonstrated affection*. So we can translate this passage with *phileō* (φιλέω): 'As many as I have a *demonstrated affection* for, I reprove and I discipline.'

There's another term according to Hebrews 12 demonstrating that unbelievers are not disciplined. It says in Hebrews 12, 'If you are without discipline...' - the King James Version says, '... you are bastards...' - that is, you're illegitimate - you're not really a child of God; you don't belong to God. The whole point of Hebrews Chapter 12 is to encourage *believers* to recognize that discipline – or *child training* - is a part of 'bringing many sons to glory' (Hebrews 2:10), so that believers can come into full possession of their inheritance. That's the whole Book of Hebrews – it's about *the inheritance*; it's not about 'are you really saved?' or 'are you going to lose your salvation?' The 'so great salvation' in

Hebrews 2:3 is the fullness of salvation. By analogy, referring to the children of Israel who were saved (delivered) in Egypt, when they realized full salvation, they came into their inheritance in the land of Canaan. That involves *discipline* (child training); and if you are without discipline, that means you're not a son. 'As many as I love and I discipline...' That's evidence the Laodiceans are born again.

Now, when He says, 'I will vomit you out of My mouth' (Revelation 3:16), this is a violent rejection; this is a judgment. Whatever is *Laodicea* – and *Laodicea* means *the people's judgment* - it's kind of a democracy – 'What do you think about this?' – 'What do you think about that?' - rather than having anything that represents any authoritative teaching of the word of God; we have just the opinions of people governing particular assemblies. *Laodicea* means *the people's judgment* - like a democracy.

Well, that's not *a remnant*; it is apostasy, referring to Laodicea. 'You say that you are rich and have need of nothing - *you do not know...*' The spiritual state and condition of that which is Laodicean is being completely oblivious to one's true spiritual state - believing that you're rich, spiritually rich, and having need of nothing. Jesus says, 'You do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.' That's a complete antithesis – a complete opposite of the spiritual state and condition that we see in Philadelphia; we see a faithful remnant there.

That promise of the rapture is for *those who are Philadelphia*. Why am I saying this? In view of what we're going to be looking at, *the helmet of salvation*, it is something we put on; and you can't put that on if you're *Laodicean*; or you're *Sardis* in character; or you're *Thyatira*; or you're *Pergamum*. If you are the object of rebuke and criticism which the Lord addresses in these passages, you don't have the helmet of salvation on. There is no hope of final salvation for you as a Christian – and when I say *final salvation*, I'm not talking about losing one's salvation in terms of being justified by faith alone in Christ alone. I'm talking about being among those who are *alive and survive* that will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; it will be a remnant that'll be alive and survive. And that's the key; that's *remnant theology*.

Before we go on, I think we'll just look at a few more passages that actually indicate *the remnant*. We know from Isaiah 59 that when Jesus returns, He returns to a righteous remnant to deliver. Isaiah 59:20 says, "A Redeemer will come to Zion (that is, Zion on earth, the temple mount where He will rule and reign for 1,000 years – Isaiah 2:1-4), and **to those who turn from transgression** in Jacob," declares the LORD.' So whom does the Lord come to deliver at the second advent? ***Those who turn from transgression***. That's a righteous remnant.



Let's look at Isaiah Chapter 4, a reference to *the day of the Lord*. In this context, it is referring to the coming judgment, and God dealing with the apostasy of His covenant people. By way of a parenthesis: for you people who are serious students of the word of God - when you read through the prophets and you study the word of God, what you see is God speaking through His prophets in terms of the judgment of His people - whether it's the northern kingdom of Israel or the southern kingdom of Judah, these are His covenant people; in other words, they are in covenant relationship with the Lord, and He gives the reason why He is judging them - or warning them of imminent judgment. In the case of the northern kingdom, it was the Assyrians that God used as His hammer and instrument of judgment (Isaiah 10). Then we come to the southern kingdom and see that when God judges them, He used what the prophet refers to in Jeremiah, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, as 'My servant' - *My servant!* And God's servant Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan. I believe that he eventually did come to the Lord, as we see in Daniel - but he was used to discipline God's covenant people. And when you read the language of Jeremiah, it was horrific! When you read through Ezekiel, Jeremiah and the prophets, the people who did not repent – we see how God brings judgment: **Sword - famine - pestilence** – and **disease!** Those who escape are killed by the sword; those who remain in the city die by famine and pestilence. God warned in advance that this would happen *to His covenant people!*



Judgment on God's Covenant People

Northern Kingdom (Israel)

Assyria (Isaiah 10)

Southern Kingdom (Judah)

Babylon ("Nebuchadnezzar, My servant")

"... I am going to make
an end of them by the sword,
famine and pestilence." Jer. 14:12

So what does that mean? When you come to the church, the body of Christ, somehow we think, 'Well – I'm saved... and I'm justified... I believe in eternal security.' Don't mistake this as contradicting the doctrine of eternal security - that is, when we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we are pronounced and declared justified. That's in the aorist tense; it is final. Our eternity in terms of having access to heaven is secure; but our inheritance is **a reward**.

As we approach the end, and as 'judgment begins with the household of God' (1 Peter 4:17), there's going to be a sifting process so that *only a remnant survive*. In other words, the covenant people that are judged in the Old Testament - when we bring that whole theme over into the New Testament and look of the last days, we are His new covenant people - but does that spare God judging the church?

Just as an example: in 1 Corinthians 11:30, we see that the Corinthians (identified as 'saints' in 1 Corinthians 1:2) – *'saints by calling'* - very clear - you read 1 Corinthians 1 and see that they are believers; 1 Corinthians 6 – *justified, washed* - but why is it that these same believers are being addressed in 1 Corinthians 11? Paul says that because of their conduct, because they are not judging themselves rightly at the communion table, and for various forms of carnality, he says, 'For this reason many among you are *weak and sick, and a number sleep*.' In other words, *they are dying!* - **Christians dying!** 1 John 5:16-17 refers to a *'sin unto death'* – in other words, it is a sin that leads to death – there are certain sins that lead to death. If that Corinthian in 1 Corinthians 5 had not repented of illicit sexual relations with his stepmother, he would have died, because that believer was handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit might be saved in the day of Christ (1 Corinthians 5). The doctrine of the sin unto death include a number of sins – idolatry, fornication, drugs (which is sorcery). We all fall short in terms of sin – that's why we keep short accounts (1 John 1:9): 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' That returns us to fellowship.

Going back to the passage in Isaiah 4 - this is to His covenant people - he says in the context of the day of the Lord leading up to the second coming of Christ - that would be the far view – the near view would be the coming judgments of Assyria on the northern kingdom and Babylon on the southern kingdom. 'For seven women will take hold of one man in that day, saying (verse 1), "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach!" As men are being killed in battle because of judgment, there's a shortage of them. Now notice verse 2: 'In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful...' - that is a Messianic title of the coming of the Lord Jesus; He's the branch; He's the offshoot of David; He's the son of David. 'In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of **the survivors of Israel...**' - that's a remnant – 'It will come about that he who is left in Zion...' – we already saw from Isaiah 59, '... those who turned from transgression in Jacob...' - so a remnant are those who turn from transgression; they repent of a lifestyle that is offensive to the Lord and choose the fear of the Lord, like we see in Proverbs, and begin to walk in righteousness. In other words, in the 'whole armor of God' passage in Ephesians, they put on *the breastplate of righteousness*. That's not salvation; when we are born again, we are pronounced and declared righteous. To put on righteousness is *experiential*; that means in our conduct we are walking uprightly before the Lord. Therefore we are protected in our inner man; our heart is protected; our conscience is not accusing us. That righteousness is experiential.

We see here that this remnant is referred to as 'the survivors of Israel.' Verse 3: 'It will come about that *he who is left* (another term for *remnant*) in Zion and *remains* (another term for *remnant*) in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem.' This is not 'the Lamb's book of life' (Revelation 21:27). This is Malachi 3:16 where 'a book of remembrance was written,' because the remnant are thinking and esteeming the Lord, and they are promised final salvation - final deliverance there in that Malachi passage. We see that they are 'recorded for life.'

Isaiah 4:4-6 'When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy. There will be a shelter to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain.'

In other words, when Jesus Christ returns, He's going to deliver a remnant. That's the principal. I'll just note a few more examples and then we're going to get right into the passages in the New Testament to see specifically what the helmet of salvation is.

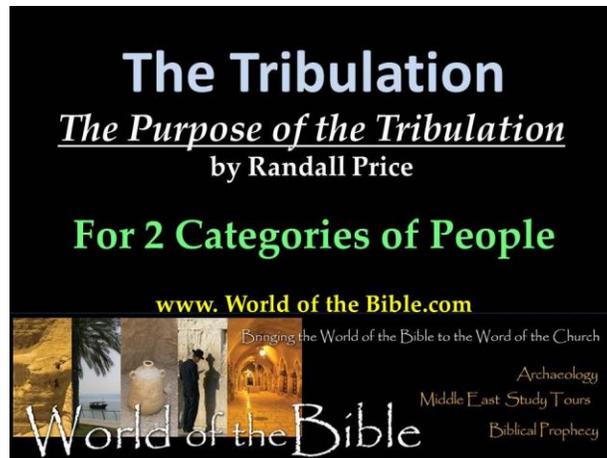
We'll look at Micah 4:6: "in that day..." - that is, *the day of the Lord*. We know from Micah 4 that he quotes from Isaiah 2:1-4 regarding Jesus Christ when He returns at the Second Advent. "In that day," - when the Lord returns to establish His kingdom – '...declares the Lord, "I will assemble the lame and gather the outcasts..."' – So, who are the remnant? They are 'the lame' - that's the opposite of Laodicea, '... you do not know that you are

wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked' - that's Laodicea. Those of Philadelphia know that apart from Christ, we are all lame - we're sick. "I will ... gather the outcasts..." - these are those that have been rejected; they're not at home in the apostate conditions of the general mass of God's covenant people. "... And gather the outcasts..." - those who've experienced rejection and suffering, "Even those whom I have afflicted." - those whom God disciplines – Verse 7: "I will make the lame a remnant..." - those who have survived judgment; and where the population has been narrowed down by judgment and a righteous remnant is delivered - "I will make the lame a remnant and the outcasts a strong nation, and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever." So God begins this thousand year reign, but *only with a remnant*. When you look at the last paragraph of Matthew 25, those Gentiles who mistreated the Jews are going to be thrown into Hades and ultimately the lake of fire at the end of the thousand year reign for their rejection of Christ. Ultimately they demonstrate their rejection of Jesus Christ by how they mistreat His Jewish brethren. In that passage, the sheep (saints) go into His kingdom. So, we see the characteristics of *the remnant*.

Let's look at just one more passage because I think I've covered this in the past - but this is just enough to give us a little framework. Let's look at Zephaniah 3. *Zephaniah* mean *those whom the Lord hides*; and it's all about *the day of the Lord*. Here we find tremendously powerful statements about the coming day of the Lord and what that period of history is going to be like especially for the Jewish people, and also for the entire world. He says in Zephaniah 3:7 "I said, 'Surely you will revere Me. Accept instruction.' So her dwelling will not be cut off according to all that I have appointed concerning her. But they were eager to corrupt all their deeds." That's the context of what Zephaniah is addressing in his own day, but he's looking primarily to *the day of the Lord*, especially in Zephaniah 1:14 and following; that's the whole context – actually it's the context of the entire book.

Zephaniah 3:8 "Therefore wait for Me," declares the LORD, "For the day when I rise up as a witness (or *rise up to the prey*). Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them (the Gentile nations) My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal." That's *the day of the Lord*.

So it's very important to understand *the purpose of the tribulation*, that is, the last seven years on the prophetic clock of Israel.



According to 1 Corinthians 10:32, mankind is divided into three categories: *the church*, *Gentile*, and *Jew*. Prior to Pentecost, it was just *Jew* and *Gentile*. Prior to Abraham becoming a Jew at ninety-nine, having a circumcised heart through the obedience of faith, there were only Gentiles. He became a Hebrew, but the human race began only with Gentiles. With Abraham we have the first Jew; and the Jewish people become the chosen seed; and then with Pentecost we have the third category, the church. When it comes to the tribulation, all through the Old Testament the church is not mentioned. When we study many other passages – I mentioned Zephaniah - we could go through all the prophets, but just to isolate a couple of passages (Isaiah 24, 34, and 59, etc.), we see judgment coming upon the nations (also Zechariah 12 – 14). Why? Because of their attitude towards Israel - and for dividing up the land of Israel (Joel 3:2). God is going to deal with the nations for their attitude and their treatment toward the Jews - that's what the prophets say.



What about the Jews? Read Ezekiel 20 and Zachariah 13:7-9. We see that the Jews are also objects of God's judgment. Why? Because they have rejected the Messiah. Ninety-nine percent of the Jews in Israel still deny Christ as their Savior. The tribulation is to purge them. It says in Zachariah 13:7-9 that two-thirds will pass through the fire; and one third will be saved. In the Holocaust, one-third passed through the fire, and two-thirds

came through. There's one more Holocaust to go. It will be a double portion – that's Isaiah 40 - they will receive double for their sins. Only one-third will survive the final Holocaust. So why are they judged? Because of their rejection of Messiah.

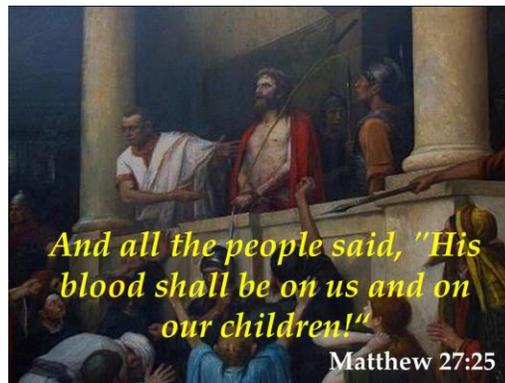
Remember in Matthew when Jesus was before the Jewish people, and Pilot was trying to find a way to set him free – and you only find it in Matthew:

'I find no fault in this man.'

'We have no king but Caesar. Give us Barabbas! *Give us Barabbas!*

'But I find no guilt in Him!'

'Let His blood be upon us and our children!'



Read 1 Thessalonians 2. Paul, who was a Jew before he became a Christian, says they are contemptible and under the wrath of God for their part in the crucifixion of Christ. Who's responsible for crucifying Christ? The Jewish Sanhedrin sentenced Him; but the Romans executed Him. That makes the entire human race complicit! It's not just a Jewish issue. He was crucified (Acts 2) at the hands of the Gentiles.

Going back to Zephaniah, notice the remnant here. He's going to assemble kingdoms; He's going to pour out indignation on them. God judges the Gentiles for their attitude toward the Jews and the way they're parsing out His land; *and* He's judging the Jews for the rejection of the Messiah. Ezekiel 20 says He will bring them out in the wilderness and the rebels will pass under the rod of discipline and, it says, He will purge out the rebels - that's the Jewish people.

When He returns, those repentant Gentiles that are mentioned in Matthew 25 who do not mistreat the Jews, and those Jews who repent - that humble remnant - they will begin the Millennial (thousand year) reign of Christ.

Zephaniah 3:9-11 "For then I will give to the peoples purified lips..." - in other words, they will be speaking that which is pleasing to the Lord – (it doesn't mean that they're all speaking Hebrew) - "... That all of them may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him shoulder the shoulder. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshippers, My dispersed ones, will bring My offerings." - referring to the coming Millennial reign – "In that day you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you have rebelled against Me; for then I will remove from your midst your proud, exulting ones..." - by way of a church age

analogy, all the Laodiceans will be removed (Revelation 3:16) – “... and you will never again be haughty on my holy mountain.”

No only all the lame and the outcasts, but they'll be none who are proud; pride will be dealt with in the coming [day of visitation](#). In 1 Peter 2:12, Peter talks about a coming *day of visitation* which has never been fulfilled historically. This is in the context of the Lord coming back to the church. When I'm referring to that passage in 1 Peter 2:12 and 1 Peter 1:5 – as we will notice later – 1 Peter 4:7, 'The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.' 1 Peter 4:17, 'For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God.' This is the context. 1 Peter 1:16 'Be holy even as I am holy!' That's appealing to a remnant. We see arrogance is to be dealt with.

Notice Zephaniah 3:12: “But I will leave among you a humble and lowly people, and they will take refuge in the name of the LORD.” There's your remnant. “The remnant of Israel will do no wrong and tell no lies, nor will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouths; for they will feed and lie down with no one to make them tremble.” Then we see the celebration of God's deliverance of that remnant in the remaining verses. That's tremendous!

The key to understanding the last days of the church is to understand how God forms a remnant. Whenever He transitions in history, like we see when the remnant returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, or when Noah was delivered and a whole new world was begun through those eight that were saved through judgment - they represent a remnant. God always moves history forward with a remnant. When the church is consummated - when He moves into the age of Israel, the last seven years of Daniel's seventieth week, there is a pivot - a remnant - so when the church is removed, we have the sealing of the 144,000 and the beginning of *the day of the Lord*.



Daniel's 70th Week

Daniel 9:24-27

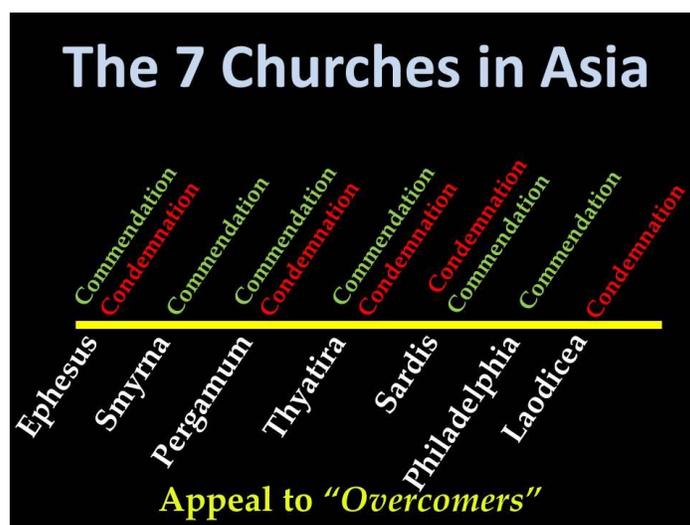
70 weeks x 360 days = 490 years

Age of Israel (Church Age) 7 Year Trib

**69 weeks x 360 days = 483 years to
1st Advent / Palm Sunday
leaving the last 7 years (70th Week)**

Let's go back to Revelation 3 and I'll recap that again. Notice, the promise is not to the entire body of Christ (that the entire church will experience pre-tribulation rapture), but only those who are a remnant – i.e.: Philadelphia. It's important for you students of the word of God to recognize what we see in the Book of Revelation in the messages to the churches. There are seven churches addressed. Jesus first begins with *commendation* and follows with *condemnation*. And then we go to Smyrna; it's only *commendation* and

encouragement; and then with Pergamum, He begins with *commendation* followed by *condemnation*; and likewise with Thyatira - begins with *commendation* followed by *condemnation* – and the appeal is to the overcomers - those who become a part of the surviving remnant, the Old Testament equivalent of a remnant. Up until Sardis, He begins with *commendation* and concludes with *condemnation*. But beginning with Sardis, which is typical of the Protestant Reformation where there was not a complete recovery of that which is apostolic truth, He begins with *condemnation* followed by *commendation*. Now the remnant comes into view with Philadelphia: *it's all commendation* - and *no condemnation*. Then with Laodicea, *it's all condemnation and no commendation*. So we see this polarity.



In the end, it will either be *commendation* - or *condemnation*. And if you're on the condemnation side - if you're on the Laodicean side - *you're not going to be included in the rapture* - you will not be there. I did not say you would lose your salvation. I just said you will not be among those who are *alive and survive* unto the coming of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:15, 17). The word *remain perileipomai* - (περιλείπομαι) is a term used along with *hupoleipomai* and *kataleipomai* for translating *remnant* words from the Hebrew in the Old Testament. Those who are '*the living ones* - namely, *the surviving ones* - shall be caught up.' The emphasis is on *the surviving remnant*. This is not new to anyone who would be listening to this in the early church. It's just that remnant theology has not been taught to the church, so this sounds foreign and may sound like something outside orthodoxy to some people. But, either you're going to see it from the word – or you're going to see it in the days ahead. If you're in apostasy, *don't expect to be preserved by the Lord*. Who are those recorded for life in Isaiah 4? *Those who are holy!* What does it say 1 Peter 1:16? '*Be holy* even as I am holy.' It takes Christ to do that; it takes a life of complete dependence upon the Lord. *He* is our holiness (1 Corinthians 1:30) and our sanctification.

Now we're going to begin to look at passages that specifically talk about *the helmet of salvation*. I want to get that out of the way so people can't say, 'Well, I believe in a rapture - so we can just kind of go along – glide along - it doesn't matter what kind of lives we're

living; the rapture is going to save us.' *No! It's going to save a remnant!* It's going to save those who are Philadelphian (Revelation 3:7-13). There's no promise the rapture will save Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22). When I say *save*, I mean *deliver as a final deliverance*; I'm not talking about the issue of eternal salvation vs. losing salvation. We're talking about historical judgments that separate out the righteous from the unrighteous in terms of their experiential condition.

Let's turn to Ephesians 6. I want to focus on both the order and the significance of *the helmet of salvation*. Beginning with the Ephesians 6:10: 'Finally be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might...' - habitually allow yourselves to be empowered from within in your union with the Lord; *be strong* is a present passive imperative of *endynamoō* (ἐνδυναμώω) - to receive power from within where Christ lives by the Holy Spirit. Verse 11: 'Put on (*plural*) the full armor (*singular*) of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil...' - this is not to *advance*; this is *standing*.

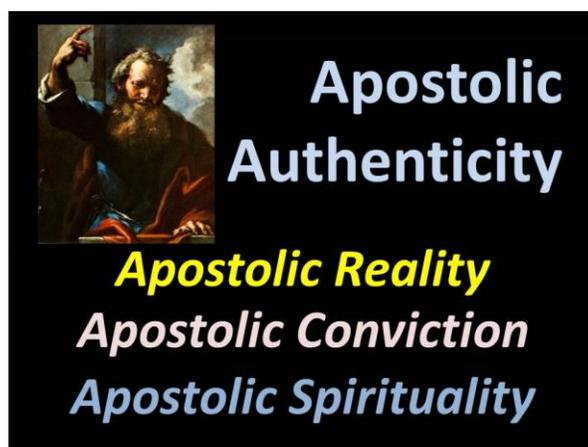
Verse 12: 'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces (*kosmokratōrs* - κοσμοκράτωρ) of this darkness, against spiritual forces (*spiritual hosts of wickedness*) in the heavenlies...' - that is, where we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28 cp. Ephesians 1:3, 20; 2:6); it's where we live - it's not in the atmosphere. It's where we have our relationship with God in the spiritual realm - the heavenly spheres or dimensions.

Verse 13: 'Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day...' - that is, *the day that is specifically evil* - it's *the day, the evil* in the Greek - it's *the day* followed by the adjective with the definite article - *the day that is specifically evil*.

The *day of visitation* for those that are Laodicean is an evil day; but for those that are Philadelphia it is (1 Peter 5:6) *a day of exultation!* 'Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that *He may exalt you* at the proper time...' - that eschatological day - *kairos* (καίρος) *time*. This is a tremendous thing to get ahold of because I believe this is a part of the apostolic recovery; this is what they understood when they heard these messages originally - but we've been so dumbed down spiritually, our pulpits are so anemic - twenty minutes sermonettes for '*Christianettes*' - it's appalling; it's disgusting. And all the entertainment and the 'seeker-friendly' approaches - 'We don't want to offend anybody; we want to make sure that we're seeker-friendly.'



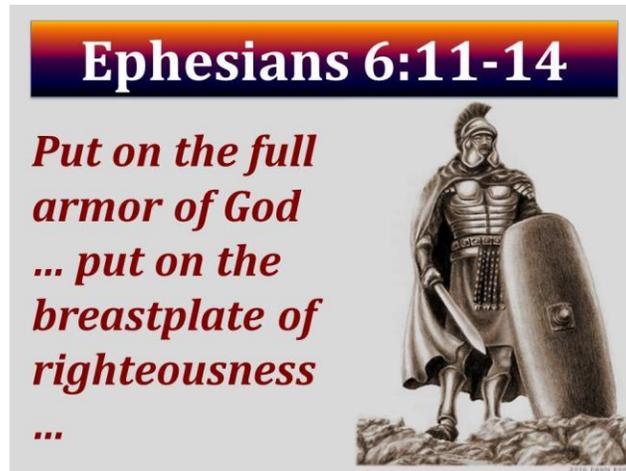
Where is the word of God? Where is: 'Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation!' (2 Corinthians 6:2) 'You must be born again!' (John 3:7) "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, *but the wrath of God abides on him.*" (John 3:36) - *where's that?* Where's the Whitfield's and the Wesley's preaching the word of God? People go *down* when they walk in; they go *flat on the ground* - and they're not 'slain in the spirit' - they're overcome with conviction: 'What must I do to be saved?' We have completely departed, generally speaking, from anything that represents apostolic authenticity, apostolic reality, apostolic conviction, apostolic spirituality.



This is the context (Ephesians 6:13) '... standing firm...' in this 'evil day.' Jesus says in John 9:4, 'Work ... as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.' Near view: the apostles, when they were scattered before Pentecost; final view: just leading up to the rapture, 'having done all' (Ephesians 6:13). We're not advancing anymore (Philippians 3:7-17), we're just *having done all* ... standing in the day that is uniquely and specifically evil. This is prophetic.

As I've mentioned before, Paul is quoting a passage from Isaiah 59 and also a short section from Isaiah 11 with reference to Jesus Christ putting on the full armor of God when He returns at the Second Advent. He can't come in full armor until the church is in heaven and that characterological aspect of this armor has been appropriated. This is

looking at the corporate cumulative characterological conformity to the image of Christ in terms of Ephesians 6:14, 'having girded your loins with truth.' What are *loins*? That's the strongest part of the body; it is also reproductive. When you're going to move out for action, your loins need to be girded up so you don't trip. Notice: 'loins girt about with truth ...' - I'd say, 'the inner man saturated with truth' – 'and having on the breastplate of righteousness ...' - you put it on. It's not *imputed* righteousness (as at salvation); this is something that you do; this is like Paul says to Timothy, 'Pursue righteousness' (1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22). You *pursue righteousness* - you *pursue eternal life*; this is characterological.



Putting on the breastplate of righteousness is protecting the heart; because you have a clear conscience - you're not living in immorality - you're not surfing the net and watching all that which is an abomination to God - you're not living in illicit relationships - you're not on drugs - you're walking uprightly. *Righteousness* in the Greek means *that which conforms to the revealed will of God in thought, word and deed*. So, 'put on the breastplate of righteousness...' - that means you *do something* about your conduct - you turn from unrighteousness to righteousness to that which pleases God.

Verse 15: 'And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace ...' - *preparation* there represents *a firm foundation*. Remember, the context is 'having done all, to stand.' If your feet are 'shod with the preparation of peace' - that doesn't mean you're advancing. If you're going to stand, you have to be standing on 'the gospel of peace.' What is *the gospel of peace* for a Christian? The gospel of peace is the good news that you are reconciled to God *by faith alone - in Christ alone - He is our peace*; it's the gospel of peace. We're standing on the fact, once saved - *always saved*. If you put your faith in Jesus Christ, you're standing on Romans 5:1-2 is a standing in grace, because we are reconciled to God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. 'Having done all, to stand ...' - you have to stand on the fact that the basis of our reconciliation to God is solely grace.

So as we're standing in the middle of the battle, we know that no matter what the accusations are – 'You've done something - You committed the unpardonable sin...' - if you're

standing is on the gospel of peace, you can rebuke the liar and say, 'There is no such a thing as an unpardonable sin for a Christian!' 'Having done all, to stand - gospel of peace ...' - your feet are fitted out in 'the preparation of the gospel of peace.' In other words, if we're going to stand in that final day, you have to know the basis of your salvation, and that *faith in Christ* secures you for eternity! It doesn't necessarily mean it's going to secure you as a part of the remnant in the end; that has to do with righteous conduct - 'putting on the breastplate of righteousness ... having our loins girt about with truth.'

Now, notice the next one - Verse 16: 'In addition to all, taking up ...' - literally '*... the broad shield of faith*' - it covers the entire body - '... taking up the (broad) shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows (missiles) of the evil one.' Satan firing all these thoughts in your mind - accusations - he's the accuser of the brethren, bringing in atmospheres; he's the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2). He brings in all these kinds of atmospheres that want to swamp us with hopelessness, despair, and condemnation. But what does it say? 'The shield of faith.' 'This is the victory that overcomes the world - even our faith,' 1 John 5:4. We're able to extinguish the missiles of the evil one - Satan firing his thoughts in our mind and hiding behind our thoughts.

Notice then what it says that comes at the end, so this is not initial salvation - it is something *you do*; he's not talking to unbelievers: 'Take the helmet of the salvation ...' - that is, he's not telling unbelievers to 'Get saved!' Why does it come at the end? It's the last mention of defensive weapons - and then the only offensive weapon is mentioned: '... and the sword of the spirit, which is the *word (rhema - ῥῆμα)* of God' - that's being on the offensive - notice: it's '*the sword of the spirit.*' We have to have the word hidden in our hearts, having the helmet of salvation, in order for the Holy Spirit to take that word and use it as a specific weapon against the enemy.

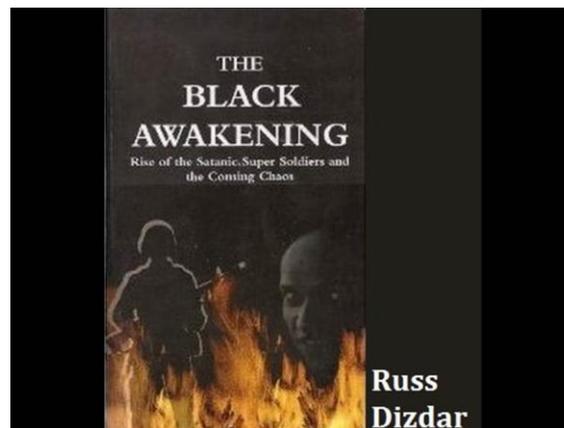
Going back to *the helmet of salvation* - let's go back to Isaiah 59. Notice, this is the last description of the defensive weaponry for the body of Christ that Jesus Christ is going to don when He returns at the Second Advent. He comes back *to be glorified in His saints* (2 Thessalonians 1:10) - *in His saints* - all those that receive full reward, He *in the saints* will be manifesting these characterological traits as *full armor*. We see Jesus Christ here putting on *the whole armor of God*, and we see in Isaiah 59:17 the Messiah, Jesus Christ, returning at the Second Advent: 'He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head ...' - what is that? Look at the context: He is coming with the glorious hope to deliver His remnant. *He's putting on the helmet of salvation*. Jesus does not need to get saved. So what's the *helmet of salvation*? *Final deliverance* for His people; He's bringing *final deliverance! It's the hope of final deliverance*.

Notice what comes next: '... And He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing ...' - the last thing mentioned, the *helmet of salvation - garments of vengeance*. He comes to execute judgment against the nations (Zechariah 12 - 14; Joel 3 - many passages). You see? So right there - right there in that context, the *helmet of salvation* is followed by *the day of the Lord*. 'And he wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. According to their deeds, so He will repay' (Verse 18). So when He comes back to be glorified in His church (2

Thessalonians 1:10), this is how He's going to manifest Himself: *through His body corporate*, 'the church which is the fulness of Him who fills all in all - the church which is His body, the fullness of Him' (Ephesians 1:22-23); absolutely a phenomenal thing!

'Put on the helmet of *final salvation* ...' when *the evil day comes*, as we approach the end and it gets darker and darker. Then for the righteous remnant (Isaiah 60:1-3): 'They shine brighter and brighter.' The greater the darkness, God will compensate with a righteous remnant - that morning star rising in the heart of that prepared remnant. When He returns, it is the body corporate that He fills as His armor. The church age represents believers corporately and personally coming into the characterological representation of what this armor means. Notice again the last thing mentioned before the offensive weapon: *the helmet of salvation* – that's *final salvation*.

As Russ Dizdar stated in his book, [The Black Awakening](#), there's going to be a 'black awakening' - that's how the occult refers to it - when the legions of hell are released.



But there is going to be a righteousness remnant; God always has a righteous remnant. That doesn't mean there won't be martyrs. But God will give grace to those who are martyrs. And those who for whatever reason don't fit the Philadelphia category, there's no promise that they are going to be alive and survive until the coming of the Lord - there's no promise! *It's only going to be Philadelphia*. The promise of the rapture (Revelation 3:10) is for you who are Philadelphia. If you're Laodicean, you can't claim the rapture as your salvation - that is, *your final salvation*.

Some may want to argue this and say, 'Well, you know, I don't believe that!' It doesn't matter whether you believe it or not! The word of God teaches that *only a remnant will survive*. All throughout history it's been that way, and it's going to be true of the Jews at the Second Advent. God is not going to deal with the church any differently, though we are a separate category – 'Judgment begins at the household of God' (1 Peter 4:17) - it starts with us first - and then He turns to Israel and the nations. When Jesus was being crucified – they were all weeping and wailing because Jesus was going to cross. (Luke 23:31) He said, "For if they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?" Judgment begins with what? That which is righteous. What will happen in the dry? Jesus used that analogy right there in Luke; *Judgment!*

Let's look at 1 Thessalonians. This follows the promise of the Lord coming for the church. By the way, remember that Thessalonians was written to Greeks, and the Thessalonian epistles were circulating prior to the Gospels. So when we are looking at Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, we know from Matthew 10 and 15 that Jesus came only 'to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' (Matthew 15:24) 'for salvation is from the Jews' (John 4:22). There were no Gentiles saved until Acts 10. They were either Jews or proselytes. (In fact, at Pentecost, they were only Jews or proselytes.) What does that mean? When you look at the prophecies of Jesus in Matthew 24, the Olivet Discourse (and Mark 13 and Luke 21 precedes the Olivet Discourse) - it's the Temple Discourse - what we see there is the second coming of Christ. That's not the rapture. Those that are 'in the field' - 'one will be taken - one will be left' - who are taken? Go back - use sound hermeneutics! Who are taken? Matthew 13 - the harvest imagery there - who's taken? *The tares!* Who remains behind? *The wheat!* They go to the garner. It's *the unrighteous* who are taken - just like in the days of Noah. The unrighteous were taken out through the flood - and who remained? Noah, and those in the ark! The whole imagery is based on Old Testament hermeneutics and the people of Israel - 'When will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?' - What age? There's no knowledge of a church age. It's the age of Israel, not the church age.

Eschatology for Israel

Matthew 24 - Olivet Discourse

Mark 13

Luke 21 - Temple Discourse

(precedes Olivet Discourse)

2nd Coming of Christ

Not the Rapture of the Church

So, when Paul was writing to the Thessalonians, they were Greeks - they knew nothing of the eschatology of Israel at this time. The Gospels hadn't been circulated yet; so we have two eschatologies. The first is primarily in the context of 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matthew 10 and 15) pertaining to the Second Advent. The second eschatology in 1 Thessalonians is not about the Second Advent; it's about the Lord coming for His church - and there's no reference of any judgments - there's no reference to any wrath at all.

1 Thessalonians	2 Eschatologies
promise of Christ coming for the church	1.) For Israel (Matt 10; 15) 2nd Advent
written to Greeks - circulated prior to the Gospels	2.) For the church (1 Thess.) The Rapture
Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21	"Therefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:18

As we're going to see, he talks about the rapture and says, 'Therefore comfort one another with these words.' The Thessalonians, when read 1 Thessalonians 1 and 2, are Philadelphian through and through. So, they're encouraged - those who are alive and survive - they fit in that category of Philadelphia. As you read Paul's testimony - his accolade, and his commendation of them in the first chapters of Thessalonians. 'Comfort one another with the hope of Him coming for the church - to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.'

By the way, there's no 'partial rapture,' because 'caught up to meet the Lord in the air' (1 Thessalonians 4:17) is *together (hama syn - ἅμα σὺν) - at the same time*. That means the dead in Christ first, then we who are *alive and remain* shall be caught up. The body of Christ will, in one sense, be divided. If at the end you're Laodicean, and God 'vomits you out of His mouth' (Revelation 3:16) and you die - you just won't be a part of that righteous remnant that Jesus comes to deliver. God will use those who are alive and survive to be glorified in during the soon approaching darkest time of church history - but it will also be the brightest for those that make up His remnant.

1 Thessalonians 5:1, 'Now as to the times and epochs ...' – *times*, chronological time; *epochs*, the strategic nature of the time – '... brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you ...' and he was only with them three weeks – Verse 2: 'For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just as a thief in the night' - that means *suddenly and unexpected*. What's *the day of the Lord*? That's not the rapture! This is *the day of the Lord*: the last seven years on Israel's calendar. Prophets wrote about this.

Verse 3: 'While they ...' – who are *they*? These are not Christians! '... *they* are saying, "Peace and safety!" – now wait a minute! "Peace and safety?" - Is anyone saying 'peace and safety' right now? Can the world say 'peace and safety' while the church is here as 'salt and light?' (Matthew 5:13 cp. Ephesians 5:8) Can the world say 'peace and safety' as in Psalm 2:3 when the kings of the earth and the apostate peoples are saying, 'Let us cast off their cords from us and remove their restraining bonds!' We Christians are in the way of the final evolution of mankind; we're obstacles in the way of the Satanic agenda to bring about transhumanism, singularity, *Übermensch*, and a 'new humanity 2.0.' We're in the way! But when the rapture occurs – we're taken out of the way. Then what will they be saying? "Peace and safety!" When are they going to say "Peace and safety?" Not in the middle of the tribulation! They can only be saying peace and safety at the beginning of the tribulation, because in the middle of tribulation all hell will break loose. It's real

simple when you see it from the standpoint of proper biblical hermeneutics. There's no confusion - none at all.

The Church

In the way of

- Transhumanism
- Singularity
- World Peace
- New World Order
- One World Government



So here we see 'peace and safety' can only refer to the time when the church is no longer here. You can't have 'salt and light' here while the world is saying "Peace and safety!" Satan has an explanation already in place – that when the rapture occurs, the 'aliens' who have come and been a part of 'the black awakening' - and we may see hybrids (*Nephilim*) in the streets - then when the rapture occurs, SUDDEN PEACE! - the obstruction is out of the way; now the 'aliens' appear as the saviors of mankind. The current modern day hybrids have the prototype DNA - the DNA source code that will allow mankind to transition from *homo sapiens* to *homo noeticus* by taking the mark of the beast and receiving this injection* - they will declare the promise of eternal life and 'you shall be as Gods.' They're going to buy it! Oh, by the way, you can't buy, trade or sell without it. We, the human race, are being set up for this big time.

* *Editor's note: This was spoken approximately 2009 – well before Covid-19 and its 'vaccine.'*

After The Rapture

- E.T.'s / Aliens
- Saviors of Mankind
- Black Awakening
- Hybrid DNA
- Transition: *Homo Sapien to Homo Noeticus*
- Mark of the Beast

"And you shall be as gods..."

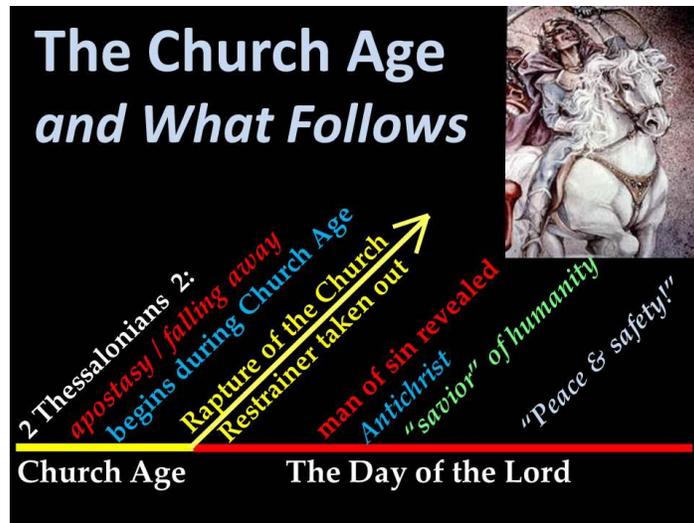


1 Thessalonians 5:4-5 'But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that *the day (of the Lord)* would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness.' - we're not a part of that time of wrath and judgment that is going to come on the world in the day of the Lord; we're not there! – Verses 6-8 '... so then let

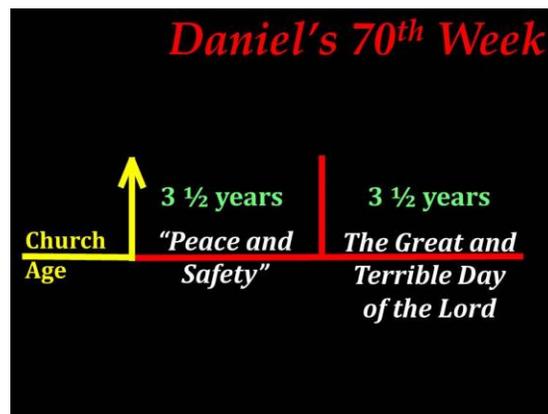
us not sleep as others do...' – in other words, become Laodicean – '... but let us be alert and sober, for those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love...' - this is *conduct!* ... watch this: - '... and as a *helmet, the hope of salvation...*' - *final salvation!* - *the rapture*. He just talked about it. How do we know this is final salvation? Because *he's talking to believers*; he's not talking about eternal security here, he's talking about *final deliverance - the day of the Lord* (1 Thessalonians 5:2).'

Verse 8 (continued): '...put on ... as a helmet, the hope of salvation...' – the word *elpis* (ἐλπίς) in the Greek doesn't mean 'Oh, I hope so,' like there is some uncertainty. The word is stronger than our English translation *hope*. It actually means *joyous and confident expectation* - it's that which is expected and anticipated - it's a confidence, a confident assurance - that's *elpis* – '... put on the helmet ...' – what does the helmet do? It protects the head! ...protects your mind! So, when you're being told *the black awakening* started and all hell is breaking loose - as we see in 2 Thessalonians - you're being told you're in *the day of the Lord* or *the day of the Lord* is about to break – when 'judgment begins at the household of God,' people are going to say, 'See! We're in the day of the Lord!' – **NO!** If you're a born again Christian, it's *not* the day of the Lord! It's a precursor - it is a false Armageddon - though it'll be a darkness, 2 Timothy 3:1, '... perilous times will set in...' - with finality – and the word *perilous* in the Greek is only used one other time in Matthew 8:28 to describe the Gadarene demoniac being *exceedingly violent* - so that's what we can expect. There's no 'peace and safety' there. Something perilous has to happen.

So, as we piece it together, we see as the church age comes closer to the rapture, 2 Thessalonians 2, there's going to be a great *falling away*; and then the 'man of sin' will be revealed. The falling away begins in the church age, but the rapture must occur *before* the man of sin appears. Why? Because the restrainer (the ministry of the Holy Spirit functioning through salt and light in the church), when it is removed, then 'Peace and safety!' will be proclaimed - then he (the man of sin) appears - appearing as the savior of the world, Revelation 6:2. He comes on a white horse as a false messiah, with a bow – no arrows - bringing peace. Put that together – Revelation 6:2 with what we just saw in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3.



It's so important that believers get this in place, because as we face the perilous times that are coming, if you don't have that helmet of final deliverance, then when all hell breaks loose - how are you going to be able to stand if you think that you're going to go through the tribulation and have to face Antichrist? It's a very sad thing when believers buy into the false teaching that throughout the history of the church the bride of Jesus Christ is being prepared, but the last generation has to go through 'the great and terrible day of the Lord' (Malachi 4:5). Is that some way to describe how Jesus Christ treats His bride? That doesn't sound like Jesus Christ is very tender and caring for His bride if the last generation of Christians has to go to Daniel's seventieth week, and especially the last three and a half years of 'the great and terrible day of the Lord' (Malachi 4:7).

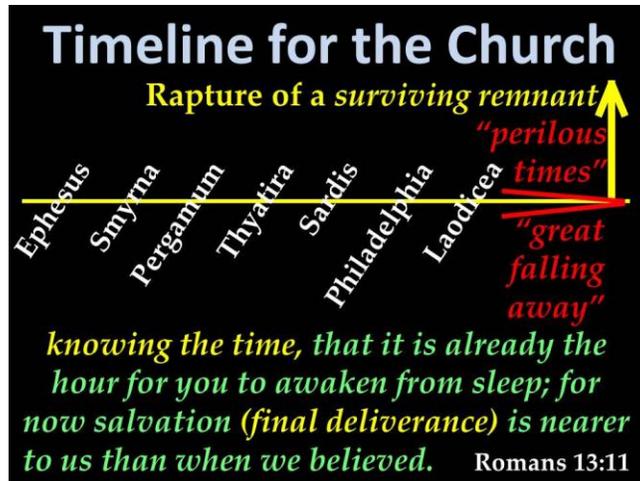


However, the church *is* going to be purged. He's coming back for a church 'having no spot or wrinkle' (Ephesians 5:27). That's why judgment 'begins with the household of God.' Prior to the rapture, the church will go through her own tribulation; and then Israel and the nations will face their tribulation.



1 Thessalonians 5:8-11, '... put on ... as a helmet... the hope...' the *joyous confident expectation* of what? *Final salvation!* Why? Here's the explanation: (Verse 9) 'For God has not destined us for wrath...' - what's *wrath*? *The day of the Lord!* (verse two). 'For God has not destined us for wrath, but for *obtaining salvation...*' - What salvation? *Final salvation!* It is an attainment - because you have to put on the whole armor of God - it means pursuing righteousness – it means to be characterologically straight and right with the Lord and with one another. You're taking a possession - like an inheritance. The final salvation is the final inheritance of that remnant at the end – '...for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.' You can't be encouraged if you're going to have to wait for signs or wait for the seal judgments, and then sometime at the mid-point of the tribulation, or two-thirds of the way in the 'pre-wrath' scenario, that *then* you'll be taken out. That's not encouraging! The purging is going to come *before* the tribulation. That's *remnant theology!*

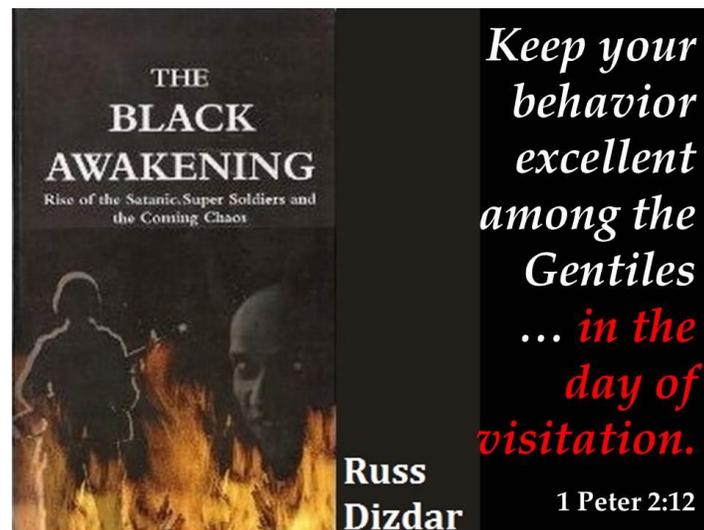
Romans 13:10-11, 'Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. This do...' - that is, keep manifesting love for the brethren - sacrificial love – '...knowing the time.' If you're Laodicean, you do not know the time - you do not know you are living in the last generation. We can't know the day or the hour specifically, but we need to know we're in the last generation. As Israel became a nation in 1948, we can connect that to what Jesus said: 'This generation will not pass away until all these things take place' (Matthew 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32) What things? Those things that He prophesied there in Matthew 24 and Mark 13 leading up to His second coming *with His bride* (Revelation 19:7 ff) to deliver Israel.



Romans 13:11-12, 'Do this, knowing the time, that is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep...' - that means to move out of the state and condition of Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea and become Philadelphia – '... to awaken from sleep...' - become spiritually alive to the Lord - become a part of that remnant! '... For now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.' Obviously this *salvation* is not born again salvation, because He's talking to believers! These are Christians! '...Salvation is nearer to us than we believed.' What is that? That's *final salvation!* - the rapture of the church - *final deliverance!* It '... is nearer then when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near...' - that is, when we are 'caught up to meet the Lord in the air' - we enter the day period *before* Israel and the nations. The day for Israel and the nations is the thousand year reign of the Lord on earth. '...For the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.' This *armor of light* is manifesting the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3-4), putting on the new man (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10), so that characterologically we are manifesting our new creation identity. '... Put on the armor of light...' - that protects us when our character is corresponding to God: 'God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all...' (1 John 1:5-7) '...but if we walk in the Light as He is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another...' – in other words, we are clear; the heavenly city is made of light - light coming from the Lamb; the character is light – transparency – righteousness.

Romans 13:13-14, 'Let us behave properly as in the day...' - that is in view of the coming of the Lord – '... not in carousing (partying) and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ...' – *put Him on!* He lives in our heart if you're born again; but people need to see Him when they look at you – who do they need to see? Through the power of the Holy Spirit, through brokenness, through being dealt with - the Lord Jesus Christ is more and more seen as that which is manifest in our life. '... put on the Lord Jesus Christ...' – His character and conduct – '... and make no provision (give no forethought) for the flesh (the old Adamic nature) in regard to its lusts.'

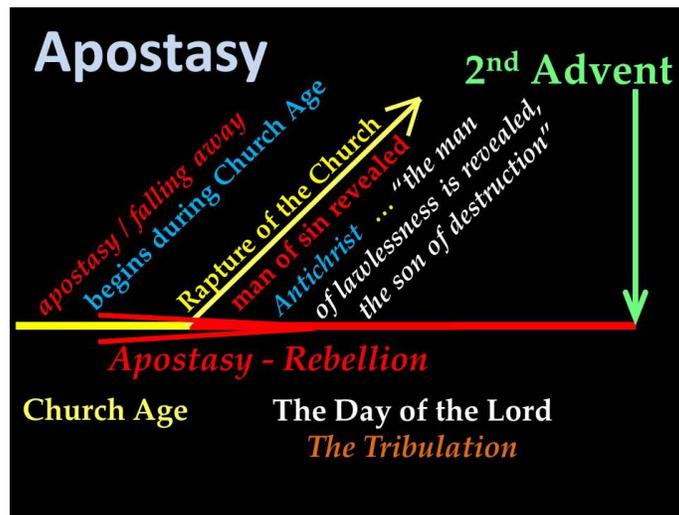
In 2 Thessalonians 1:3 and following, there were people saying that because they were going through persecution, they were in the day of the Lord. There were false teachers, or there was a spirit speaking in a prophetic gift, or some epistle allegedly coming from Paul insinuating that the day of the Lord had already come because of the suffering that they were in (i.e.: the day of visitation, 1 Peter 2:12). For us - the soon coming 'black awakening' - when that happens, there will be people saying that the day of the Lord has begun, just like what we have right here.



In 1 Thessalonians, the focus is on the translation (rapture) of the church; in 2 Thessalonians, since there were those who were saying that because of persecution that believers were in the day of the Lord, Paul had to write about the church in relation to the day of the Lord. In 2 Thessalonians 1, he talks about the day of the Lord and how it is going to be a judgment upon those who have not believed in Christ. The day of the Lord for the church is when He comes back to be glorified in the sphere of His saints - the church!

We see in 2 Thessalonians, the whole focus shifts to the day of the Lord because of the false teaching. 2 Thessalonians 2:1: 'Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the (*parousia* - *παρουσία*) coming of our Lord Jesus Christ...' - in other words, going back to what he taught in 1 Thessalonians on the church and our gathering together to Him. He's referring to the rapture - being caught up to meet the Lord in the air - 2 Thessalonians 2:2 - 'that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure...' - that is, *your mind* - so what is *the helmet of salvation* for? *Your mind!* - '...or be disturbed either by a spirit (someone who's supposedly speaking a prophetic message) or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come' - or as the Greek says, *is now present* (*enistēmi* - ἐνίστημι). What's present? *The day of the Lord!* They're implying there is no pre-tribulation rapture - they're saying, "The day of the Lord has come - all this persecution is proof that the day of the Lord has come.' In 2 Thessalonians 2:3 Paul says, 'Let no one in any way deceive you...' - the word *deceive* (*apataō* - απατάω) is *to deceive*, but *exapataō* (ἐξαπατάω) is the same word used when Satan deceived the woman in the garden, 2 Corinthians 11:3, '... as the serpent *deceived* Eve...' - *utterly deceived* - 'Let

no one in any way deceive you...’ - just like the serpent in the garden through his cunning – ‘Let no one in any way *utterly* deceive you.’



It's disturbing to think that if you are a member of the body of Christ, you're going to be in the day of the Lord. Notice, the subject is *the day of the Lord* – ‘Let no one in any way deceive you, for it (*the day of the Lord*) will not come unless the apostasy (the great falling away) comes first...’ – 2 Timothy 3:1 - it begins in the church – 1 Timothy 4:1-3 (2 Peter; Jude; Revelation 2 and 3) - the apostasy has already begun, and as we approach the end, that apostasy will increase. So the church prepares the way - the apostasy reaches its ultimate culmination – not at the beginning of tribulation, but according to this passage, in the middle of the tribulation when the ‘man of sin’ is revealed. That is the culmination of the apostasy that begins in the church. The church sets the stage; and then the whole world will finally follow suit – those that deny the gospel. Paul says, ‘... it will not come unless the apostasy (the great falling away)...’ - the word *apostasy* (*apostasia* - ἀποστασία) is only used in one other place (Acts 21:21 a rebellion against Moses) it refers to either a political or religious revolt. The noun is not built upon the etymology of the verb *to depart*. The noun is used to describe a moral, spiritual or political rebellion – translated *rebellion* – (2 Thessalonians 2:3) – ‘... the apostasy (rebellion) comes first, and a man of lawlessness (the son of destruction) is revealed...’ – remember the subject is *the day of the Lord* - not *the rapture*; so it is not stating that the church will be here. Paul is just defining the day of the Lord and what characterizes it. This entity, Verse 4, ‘who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship...’ - that's who he is - all the way through his final appearing – ‘... so that (three and a half years later after he manifests) he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.’

2 Thessalonians 2:5-6, ‘Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was (imperfect tense - *in the habit of*) telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed’ - the *what* is neuter - which looks at the character of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church as salt and light. It's not looking at the person - but *the character* of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. By the way, the neuter

is often a way which grammatically is used as a reference to the Holy Spirit as we see in John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14. The readers of this epistle, who were Greek, would make the reference without any problem.

Then the next verse moves from *the character* of the Holy Spirit working in and through the churches as salt and light to *the person* of the Holy Spirit - Verse 7, 'For this mystery...' - that is *the secret of lawlessness* (*anomia* - ἀνομία) is already at work - that is, it is supernaturally at work - it's hidden, it's not yet seen - '... only *He* who now restrains...' - it will take a member of the Godhead to do this - no angel can restrain the manifestation of Satan in all his power through Antichrist - '... only *He* who now restrains will do so *until* (indefinite temporal clause) He is taken out of the way.' Verse 8: 'Then the lawless one will be revealed.'

We see that at the second coming, Jesus Christ destroys him; and those who did not receive the love the truth will all be damned - this is what characterizes the same group of people in 2 Thessalonians 1. But in contrast to those who are living and perishing in the day of the Lord, he says in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, 'But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning *for salvation*...' - what *salvation* is that? Not initial salvation; *final salvation* - *final deliverance*! How? '... through sanctification by the Spirit and by faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you make gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ' - this same word is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 where we are to *obtain salvation*. Here, that *salvation* is gaining glory.

Let's go back to that phrase, 'God has chosen you from the beginning.' This is a little technical, but I need to do this. In the Greek language, *aparchē* (ἀπαρχή) is translated *from the beginning*. In the Nestle's text, and even the United Bible Society's new version of the Greek text - instead of *apa*, and then a space, then *archē* - *from the beginning* - they put the two together *aparchē* - it means *firstfruits*; good translations (i.e.: NASV) in the margin have *firstfruits*. Some translations have *from the beginning* - they translated it *from the beginning* rather than *firstfruits* because the Thessalonians were not firstfruits of Achaia (1 Corinthians 16:15). Those at Philippi were. They are thinking the term *firstfruits* refers to *firstfruits with reference to salvation*; but that's not the only use of *firstfruits*. We know Jesus Christ as the *firstfruits* as the first to be resurrected (1 Corinthians 15:23), and those who share in that *firstfruits* company when He returns; and the church is the church of the *firstborn* (Hebrews 12:23); we are the *firstfruits* of His creation (James 1:18). So, *firstfruits* here is not referring to *salvation* - it's referring to a sharing in Christ in *resurrection*. That's why Paul uses the term; in fact, when it comes to using the term *from the beginning*, Paul never uses this particular *aparchē* to describe *from the beginning*. There are other Greek phrases that he uses throughout the New Testament, but never *aparchē*.

If I was on that committee, I would say, 'You're trying to govern the text here by theological reasons - assuming that Paul means *firstfruits* as firstfruits of salvation. He's referring to resurrection!' When we understand that Paul is not talking about *initial salvation* there, he

is talking about *final salvation* – because (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) ‘... God has chosen you as firstfruits for *final* salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel...’ – *our gospel!* This is a part of *the hope of salvation* – it is to know that we share in 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23, ‘Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming;’ we share in that firstfruits company with reference to resurrection; and as firstfruits, *the hope of final deliverance*.

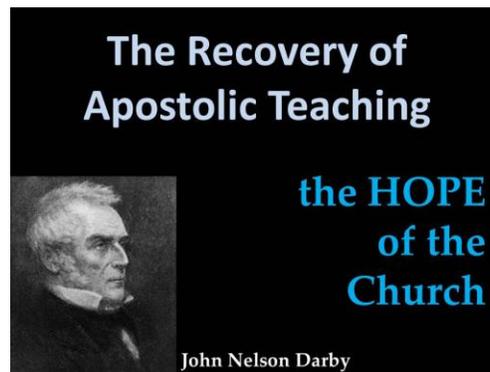
So as it gets dark - and *it's going to get darker!* The *day of visitation* is two-sided: If you're Laodicean, *it's judgment!* If you're Philadelphia, *it's exultation – it's deliverance* - it is Christ being revealed as the morning star in your heart – it is the manifestation of the supreme victory of Christ over all the powers of darkness. So when all hell breaks loose, God has an answer - and that answer will be a manifestation of the glory of Christ characterologically - that is, by analogy, like Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. When that morning star arises in the hearts of that remnant, it will be God's final statement to principalities and powers that eminent domain is declared - the church is ready to displace them forever! That's our calling and destiny.



My prayer is for you who are fixated on the church having go through the tribulation - and what you may say: ‘The church needs to be purged.’ You're absolutely correct! Jesus Christ is only coming back for a church without spot or blemish (Ephesians 5:27). Let me ask you a question: ‘What must happen before the church is without spot (defilement of sin) or blemish (vestiges of the old creation – that old Adamic identity)?’ *Something very radical is going to happen!* What is that? Judgment beginning with the household of God: 1 Peter 4:17-18 – ‘For *it is* time for **judgment** to begin with the household of God; and if **it begins with us first**, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?’ – *the great and terrible day of the Lord!* – ‘And if it is with difficulty that the righteous (present tense) are being saved...’ – that’s the remnant – ‘... what will become of the godless man and the sinner?’

This fits the apostolic profile - just like the apostolic truth that was taught and then lost for centuries – i.e.: *justification by faith alone in Christ alone* - that was part of the recovery of the reformation. In these last days, these refinements of that which was originally

apostolic - when it comes to the hope of the church - was recovered through John Nelson Darby and others, but now is under attack.



So, church age believer, you who know Jesus Christ: you will **not** go through the great and terrible day of the Lord - but what you will face when judgment begins at the household of God is going to look like Armageddon in some respects. What if Israel is divided and Jerusalem returns to its pre-1967 borders? How do you know Jesus Christ will not divide America at the Madrid Fault (that runs up through the Mississippi River) and split the United States in half - and the western half will go to communist China, and the eastern half will go to Russia? - and that could be *before* the rapture!



And I will say this to remind you of James 5:5 - that whole passage is prophetic - it's a warning to those, not just unbelievers, but to who are Laodicean, '... you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.' That word for *slaughter* is used for *the cutting of the throat of a sacrificial victim*. You need to be reminded of this: the most radical Muslims are those in the United States - they're far more radical than in many other places. Chuck Colson has some really good articles on this - the Muslim indoctrination and recruitment that is going on - so when the day of visitation comes, these guys are let loose. What do they do? They 'slit the throat' (James 5:5) - it's a *day of slaughter*. This doesn't mean there's not going to be a rapture right away. We will need to personalize those Psalms that promise deliverance - (Psalm 91; 27; 18:1-3). We have to understand the armor; we have to stand. No matter how dark it gets prior to the rapture, ***the helmet of salvation is the hope of final deliverance for the church***, and then when the church is taken out - *then*

they'll be saying, 'Peace and safety!' *Then* destruction will come upon them as a woman in labor (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

I've tried to give the sequencing to you – and hopefully this will help you think it through. I am not one who uses the rapture teaching to put the church to sleep. To the contrary, if you understand what I'm teaching from the word of God, you better be on the Philadelphian side - or don't expect any final deliverance for you. To those characterized by Laodicea, they will be vomited out of the mouth of Jesus Christ (Revelation 3:16). Revelation 3:14-22 is written to born again believers. Revelation 3:19, 'Those whom I love (*phileō* - φιλέω), I reprove and discipline...' – He only disciplines those who are born again. If you're without discipline, you're not a child of God (Hebrews 12:8).



That's the teaching of the word of God; I tried to give it to you straight as possible. It's *sharp* - it's a *sharp two-edged sword* (Hebrews 4:12) coming out of the mouth of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:16), to divide asunder soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, that you might be on that righteous side - to be a part of that remnant that fits the category that we saw in the Old Testament as an example. My prayer is that if you're involved with personal sin - if you're not right with God – that you get right with God - get right with one another - so that when that day of visitation comes, you will be among those who will be exalted in the appropriate season (1 Peter 5:6-10). 'Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.' By the way, in some manuscripts it reads: *that He may exalt you in the day of visitation* – or – *the time of strategic crisis and opportunity* (*kairos* - καιρός). It's also found 1 Peter 1:5.

That should be enough - that's quite a bit - you're going need to listen to this again unless you are up to date with what we're doing here. But I understand that most people are accustomed to little twenty-minute sermonettes. You're not going to get that here. 'The word of God is alive - it's living – it's powerful – it's sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder...' – what? - soul and spirit – it puts things into categories: soulical - the natural man; spirit – the spiritual man; '... it is a critic (sifter; analyzer) of the thoughts and the intents (motives) of the heart; and we are laid bare before the word – to Whom we'll give an account' - (literal and expanded translation of Hebrews 4:12). By the way, the

word for *laid bare* is used of an enemy pulling back the neck, and if you don't submit, he'll cut your throat.

I know God is loving - but He uses strong images. He's very zealous to give everyone full reward (2 John 1:8); He wants everybody to receive full reward. Do you know why? Because 'it's more blessed to give' (Acts 20:35) - so those who choose to go on and appropriate all the grace to receive full reward, you give God the opportunity to be most blessed when He says, 'Well done, good and faithful slave... enter into the joy of your master' (Matthew 25:21, 23). His greatest joy is to fully reward you. In doing so, He's crowning Christ *fully formed in you*.

So with that. we'll commit this to the Lord, in Jesus name. Amen.

The Helmet of Salvation

Message by Doug Riggs, Pastor

Part 2

I think that we're onto something that is very important to God and to the enemy. When you look at that armor in Ephesians 6 and how it's positioned in the text, *the helmet of salvation* is the last defensive item mentioned before you take up the sword. Comparing this to the passage in Isaiah 59, Paul is alluding to, at least partially, the return of the Lord Jesus.

Isaiah 59: 17-18, "... and he put on righteousness like a breastplate and the helmet of salvation on his head." This is Jesus Christ; and that would be to fulfill the hope of Him returning to deliver that Jewish remnant at the Second Advent (verse 20). Notice the last thing that's mentioned there. It says "... *the helmet of salvation* on his head and he put on garments of vengeance for clothing." That's *the day of the Lord*; that is *the time of Jacob's trouble*.

When we read what Paul wrote, he didn't quote that in Ephesians 6. He continued on with, "... taking up the sword of spirit, which is the word of God." And then we also note that in first Thessalonians 5 the helmet of salvation is mentioned. As we turn there by way of a review, we want to look at some of the areas that are very important in my judgment to help us understand what it means to be prepared in this final generation.

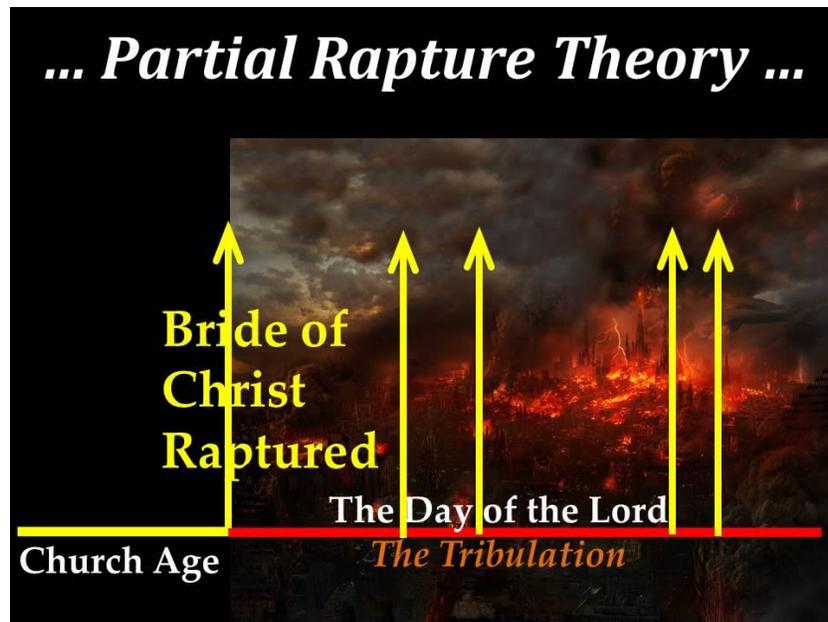
1 Thessalonians 5:8-11: "Since we (i.e.: Christians) are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another, just as you were also doing."

I think it'd be very difficult for him to say that if Paul believed that the church would have to go through a seven-year tribulation period with Antichrist on the scene and all the horrific conditions that are mentioned throughout the prophets, such as Isaiah 24; Isaiah 34: the entire Book of Zephaniah; Joel 3; Zachariah 12 through 14; if all those conditions and many other passages were present, then I don't see much encouragement in that. I don't see how you receive encouragement when you see the gravity of these passages. Zephaniah alone is horrific when it references the coming of the Lord.

If you look at 1 Thessalonians 5:9, it says, "He has not destined us for wrath." The readers knew what he was talking about. *Wrath* refers to *the day of the Lord* in verse two; but he adds, "... for obtaining salvation through our Lord, Jesus Christ."

That "obtaining" is *a possession*, and it is on the basis of overcoming. In other words, when we look at the prophecy and the hope that is given in Revelation 3:10 to the church of Philadelphia, those Philadelphian conditions must be obtained to be a part of that surviving remnant, and qualifies the believer to be a part of that rapture event.

There have been many that have seen passages that talk about a *harvest*, and that Jesus is going to return for a bride *without spot or wrinkle*; and I fully agree. The conclusion for many has been that since much of the church is either like Laodicea, or Sardis, or Thyatira, or Ephesus (having left their first love), since much of the church is like that, then when Jesus returns, He's going to return for a *prepared remnant*, that element of the body of Christ as *the bride*; and then they conclude the rest of the church will have to go through a series of purgings and cleansings before they are later raptured. It's called a *partial rapture theory*. Some also argue that you don't find the term *rapture* in the gospels. We're going to cover that.



In Hebrews 9: 27-28, the Holy Spirit speaking through the human author writes, "In as much as it is appointed for man to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also having been offered once to bear the sins of many shall appear a second time, not to bear sin, to those who eagerly await Him for salvation, putting on the helmet (i.e.: *the hope of salvation* in 1 Thessalonians 5), for those who eagerly await Him." *Those who eagerly await Him* puts them in the category of a Philadelphian characteristic in contradistinction to the characteristics that we see in Thyatira, Sardis, or Laodicea. What does that mean? According to Isaiah 10:20-23, and many other passages, it is only a remnant that will survive, who will be *caught up to meet the Lord in the air*.

What will happen? There will be an elimination process. These scriptures make it very clear that God is going to deal with the church in the same way He deals with Israel as it pertains to delivering a remnant. ***The hope of salvation is the hope of final deliverance.*** If you were to look at Jewish eschatology, what is the hope of a Jew being alive and survive when the Messiah returns? The hope of a Jew being alive and surviving is, as we see in Matthew 24, "He who endures to the end shall be saved" - that is, "to be delivered" - to go into the Millennial Kingdom of Christ. They'll have to resist *the mark of the beast*. And some of them will be martyred as we see in Revelation 6-18.

The point is, that He comes back to deliver *a remnant*. He comes back as a Redeemer to those in Jacob who turn from ungodliness. We see that in Isaiah 59. We see here the same principle applies, that He

will return a second time “for those who eagerly await Him for *salvation*” - that is, a *final deliverance*. And that's what the helmet of salvation is; it is *the hope of final deliverance*.

Rapture of a surviving remnant
The Hope of Salvation

Only a remnant survives:
Isaiah 10:20-23

Thyatira Sardis Philadelphia Laodicea

Purging prior to Rapture - Revelation 3:16:
"I will vomit you out of My mouth"

I think in order to bring this home, it may be repetitive. We attempted to cover this in [The Blessed Hope](#) series because there's such an attack upon this hope in these last days. There is hope that believers are given from scripture, and especially with reference to a godly remnant.

I might say in parenthesis, the Thessalonian believers meet all the characteristics of a Philadelphian company of believers (see Revelation 3:7-13). When you read the spiritual state and the accolade that Paul gives the Thessalonians, especially in chapters 1 and 2, what do we see? We see a company of believers who are remnant quality; they meet that criterion. So, he is encouraging them.

He wouldn't write the same to the Corinthians in their unrepentant state. In fact, when you read 1 Corinthians 10:1-14, we find the warning there that if they don't repent from their idolatrous practices, they're going to die as did the children of Israel who died in the wilderness. 1 Corinthians 11:30 warns the Corinthians to repent of their carnality of life in the assembly, that this explains the reason why “some are weak and sick and not a few are asleep” - that is, *they're dying*.

We need to understand remnant theology – which has been very much neglected – as understood in the context of the New Testament - *the overcomers* mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3.

Going back to First Thessalonians, there was a verse that I wanted to mention last time we were looking at this together, but I just overlooked it; so, we'll go back to 1 Thessalonians 1 and read Paul's words to that young growing church there. 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8: “You (Thessalonian believers) became an example to all the believers in Macedonia (Northern Greece) and Achaia (Southern Greece).” That's quite a statement! He couldn't say that about the Corinthians. “For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia but also in every place, your faith towards God has gone forth so that we have no need to say anything.” Wow! What an accolade. That's like when Jesus spoke to the church at Philadelphia - no condemnation. When He speaks to the church of Laodicea, it's the only church where there's no commendation, it's all condemnation. So, we see the distinction between the characteristic features and the spiritual condition of those churches as represented in Revelation 2

and 3. They're very different. We see a contrast between the Thessalonian believers and the Corinthian believers; the believers at Philippi and those at Laodicea.

He says of these believers in Northern and Southern Greece: "...they themselves report about us, what kind of a reception we had with you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God. And to wait (that is, to wait longingly and expectantly) for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, namely Jesus, (notice) who *delivers us from the wrath to come.*"

Now that word "delivers" (ὁ ρύομαι - *ho rhyomai*) is also one of the Greek terms that is used in the Greek Old Testament, the *Septuagint*, that translates the word *goel*, *kinsmen redeemer*. When we look at the implications of who Jesus is delivering from the wrath to come, it is talking about those who are beyond reproach. They are an example to all believers in Macedonia, and Achaia (verse 7). That's in direct contrast to the apparent state of the majority at Corinth.

It's important that we know that God discriminates when it comes to historical judgments. We can see that in Ezekiel 3 and Ezekiel 33, that those who are walking uprightly will be delivered in a day of judgment and those who, for whatever reason, no longer choose to walk in righteousness before the Lord, when the time of judgment comes, they lose their life. By way of application, it doesn't mean they're still not God's covenant children; it means they will die the "sin unto death." This is very important. Salvation is an issue that is settled at the cross when a person believes in Jesus Christ. According to Romans 3:19 and following, God pronounces and declares everyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ, who receives Him as their Lord and Savior, as righteous [δικαιο – *dikaio*].

That word for *justification*, or *to pronounce and declare one righteous*, is in the aorist tense. We don't have anything like it in English. The aorist tense is often translated as a past tense or historical tense, and the context will determine that. It can be also translated as a present tense. To give you an example of the aorist of how it could be used, especially as regarding *justification* in Ephesians 2:1, it says, "We (as believers) were once dead in trespasses and sins;" Ephesians 2:4: "But God being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us..." That's in the aorist tense. You might say, Well, that's a past tense; that's a historical tense. Not really! The aorist tense in its basic meaning [*aóristos*] means *without boundaries*; it is timeless. The aorist tense is the only tense in the Greek language that does not have any reference to time, similar to a perfect tense that designates a completed action in the past with abiding results; or the imperfect tense designating action continuing in the past; pluperfect is completed action in the past; future tense is future action, et cetera. The aorist tense does not function in terms of a time framework; its emphasis is that it just states a fact. The aorist tense merely says something did, does, or will happen.

In this passage, "... the love with which He loved us..." - that aorist tense would be like a gnomic tense - it's timeless, and the aorist tense signifies it is without boundaries. When we believe in Jesus Christ, He pronounces and declares us righteous (aorist tense). When did He declare us righteous? In time, when we believed in Christ. But we are taken out of Adam judicially, being dead in trespasses and sins, and we are baptized into Christ, also aorist tenses, we are taken out of the time framework into God's eternity where we were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." Once we believe in Jesus Christ, we are taken out of time in terms of our new creation identity, and we're now in the place of eternity with God based on the aorist tenses. To repeat, once a person believes in Jesus Christ, he is pronounced and declared righteous. And that righteousness lifts him out of time into the place of "chosen in Christ

before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love..." – that's eternity future.

It's hard for our minds to get around this, but the gospel of salvation is absolutely phenomenal. Once God pronounces and declares a believer as righteous, He cannot ever go back on that; He cannot renege based on His character - His faithfulness - who He is in His essence; it's not even possible. After a person is saved – it is as said, "Once saved, always saved" - that is as it applies to justification. But then the whole process of sanctification with the goal of *obtaining our inheritance* comes into view. The inheritance comes into view; fulness comes into view; that which pertains to our eternal position and vocation and capacity to partake in and manifest the glory of God in the ages to come; that's all conditioned on our faithfulness in time.

Salvation - Justification
Sanctification
UNCONDITIONAL **CONDITIONAL**
 obtain our
 inheritance
 fulness
 eternal position,
 vocation and capacity
 re. glory of God

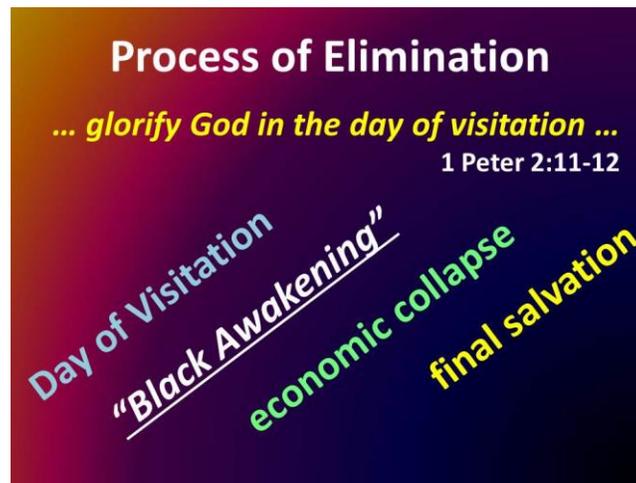
Believers can actually die the "sin unto death," and therefore be "saved so as through fire," as we see in 1 Corinthians 3:14-15. At the judgment seat of Christ there'll be some who are "saved so as through fire" in contrast to those in 2 Peter 1:10-11, where a wide entrance shall be provided for those who become, in the fullest sense, *a partaker of the divine nature* through faithfulness and obedience.

There are vast differences between believers in time; that's obvious to anyone. We see a difference between those who are referenced here in the church of Thessalonica, and those who are referenced in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 where many of those Christians after five or six years were still babes in Christ, carnal, fleshly; they were not maturing, and they were in danger of dying in the wilderness according to the analogy and reference in 1 Corinthians 10:1-14. It's important to know that there are vast differences between believers in time and, therefore, in eternity. Those differences will be accentuated in degree and measure far beyond our comprehension because God's reward of the believers' faithfulness is an act of justice. We know that from 2 Timothy 4:7-8 where Paul says, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness..." - that's *a victor's wreath* of righteous; that means he's an overcomer. "...There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, **the righteous Judge**, will award to me, and not only to me, but also to all those who have loved His appearing" – that is, those who entered that state of *first love* (Revelation 2:4).

The aorist tense is a tremendous thing. The hope of salvation is for those who are 'alive and survive unto the coming of the Lord' (1 Thessalonians 4:15 and 17); divine life possesses that remnant – they are the living ones, namely, *the surviving remnant*; they [περὶλείπομαι - *perileipomai*] shall be 'snatched out.' This snatching out - to be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thessalonians 4:15 and 17) - the

result of a rescue - a **rescue!** It is *final salvation*, but it's promised only to a remnant, which implies there's going to be a process of elimination.

This elimination - as we approach the very end of the church age, and we don't know precisely where we are in terms of the end of the end – when that *day of visitation* finally arrives, and it could be really soon, we don't know what the precipitating factor will be – it could be *The Black Awakening* (referring to the book by Russ Dizdar); it could be a major global event; an economic collapse. That *day of visitation* spoken of in 1 Peter 2:11-12 will be initiated by God. God has an answer and a response in the darkest hour in the church age; *final salvation* means it's going to be very dark – but it's going to be very bright for those who make up that company of believers who are *making known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*. (2 Peter 1:16) in whom Jesus Christ as *the bright and morning star* arises in the hearts of that prepared remnant (2 Peter 1:19).



So that's somewhat of a review, and I want to remind the listeners (readers) that First Thessalonians was one of the first epistles that was circulated between churches in various locations. In fact, most scholars recognize that the gospels were not circulated until after First and Second Thessalonians were. The gospels are where are recorded the Olivet discourse (Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 (the temple discourse that precedes and sets the stage for the Olivet discourse in Matthew 24 and Mark 13)). The Thessalonian epistles were in circulation prior to that which was given to the Jews. We see in Matthew 10 and Matthew 15 that of all that which represents the Olivet discourse, He was speaking to Jews – *they were Jews*; they weren't members of the body of Christ - there was no body of Christ at that time. "The Spirit has not yet been given because Christ has not yet been glorified," John 7: 37-39. "He came to none other than the lost sheep of the house of Israel" to fulfill the covenants to the fathers. We see that in Mary's testimony in Luke 1, and Simeon's testimony in Luke 2, as well as Paul's testimony in Romans 15. He came to confirm the promises to the fathers; the gospel of the kingdom was presented.

And then as we come to the Book of Acts, we see a gradual transition from the gospel going as a renewed offer to the Jews, and as they continued to harden their hearts. God gradually began to turn to the Gentiles, first by opening the door through Peter, and then by raising up Paul, who became the Apostle to the Gentiles, as we see in Romans 11. And gradually as the door opened to the Gentiles, it was during this transition period that God began to unveil the *mystery*, that is *the sacred secret* (Ephesians 1:9-11; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:27; Romans 16:25-27). We see that *the mystery* gradually began to open up - that mystery being a secret that revealed the eternal purpose of God that was hidden from all

previous generations. But then as Israel hardened their heart, God began to unfold the mystery of the body of Christ, "the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all." It's a tremendous thing.

Acts

(the church) which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Eph. 1.23

The eternal purpose of God hidden from all previous generations now begins to be revealed

Mystery - sacred secret

Eph. 1:9-11; 3:1-11; Col 1.27; Rom. 16.25-27

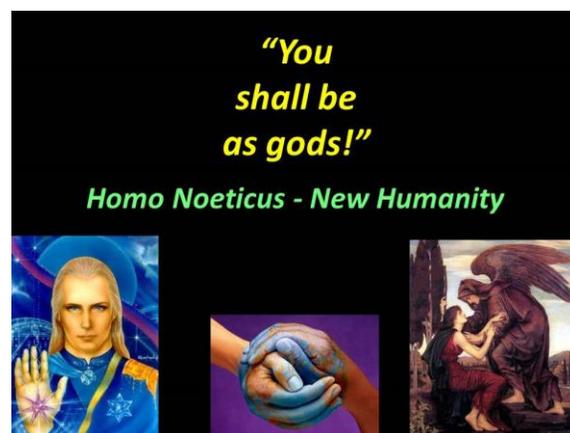
As Israel had rejected Jesus as their Messiah, God opened the door to the Gentiles, which originally in the prophets was going to be contingent upon Israel being restored as the head of the nations. Then the Gentiles would flow to Israel and receive the blessing of Abraham. But they hardened their heart as a nation, and rejected their Messiah. So, does that mean God cannot bring salvation to the Gentiles? No. This becomes the dispensation of the Gentiles. And we see that when the fulness of the Gentiles comes into the body of Christ (Romans 11:25), then all Israel will be saved - that is, that which represents the Jews in the tribulation who turn to Christ as Messiah, and they complete that number of Jews that make up God's redemptive plan that will go into the millennial reign of Christ.

The Thessalonians were primarily Greeks - new believers - and Paul just made it very clear that they were not destined for wrath and that they are going to obtain salvation; they were to put on the helmet of final salvation. The doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture is simple, straightforward, and very clear. There's no mention of them going through any seven-year tribulation whatsoever prior to them being "caught up to meet the Lord in the air." Of course, that should have settled it. But, as we see from Second Thessalonians, something happened. Through the word of the Lord that was given to Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:15, "This we say to you by the word of the Lord..." This is specific revelation regarding the translation of the church. Something had happened. What had happened? We find that in Second Thessalonians, Paul's emphasis shifts from what we call *the rapture* to *the day of the Lord*. What is the relationship of Christians to the day of the Lord? It wasn't even an issue in First Thessalonians. In fact, he mentions in First Thessalonians "the day of the Lord" only after the rapture passage, where he said in 1 Thessalonians 4:18, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." What words? The promise to those who are *alive and survive* who are to be *caught up to meet the Lord in the air*. The Thessalonians qualified in terms of characterological issues and holiness. For example, go back to 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13: "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete [ὁλόκληρος – *holoklēros*, sound through-and-through] without blame (without censure) at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."

He's totally confident. They've already been given the hope of deliverance (1 Thessalonians 1:10) – and they have not been appointed to wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9). And as I mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5, the only reference to *the day of the Lord* is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, "Now as to the times and the epochs (i.e.: seasons – that is, the chronology and the strategic nature of these events leading up to the day of the Lord), brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord..." - which includes wrath – He *delivers us from the wrath to come* – "...*the day of the Lord* will come just like a thief in the night (suddenly and unexpectedly). While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!'" - when will they be saying 'peace and safety'? When "those who are alive and survive" are caused to "meet the Lord in the air."

The obstruction has been removed from mankind, moving it into *homo noeticus*, moving into that which represents the 'new humanity' that Satan will be offering them by the Nephilim (hybrids) who will have the DNA 'upgrade' that will be offered to mankind. So, by taking an injection, they'll be able to 'become as gods' and attain immortality. The world cannot be saying "Peace and safety" while the church is here as *salt and light*. It is obvious the church is not here during that time. That's in the context of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. So, when they are saying, "Peace and safety," that is, after the rapture up until - when? 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and following: when *the man of lawlessness is revealed*. 1 Thessalonians 4:18: "While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape." He's talking about *the day of the Lord*.



Now when you come to 2 Thessalonians, what has happened? Notice what is said: "Now we request you..." 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3: "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming [παρουσία – *Parousia*] of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, (that's the rapture - that's translation) that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure..." There's going to be a *shaking* (Hebrews 12:25-29). Part of this shaking is that believers, with this final move of the enemy comes, the dragon seeking to swallow up that *man child* in Revelation 12:5, there'll be believers that are going to be shaken. Why? Because they don't have the helmet of salvation on. He said, I'm writing "that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure (your mindset) or be disturbed (and agitated) either by a spirit (someone claiming to speak prophetically) or by a message or by a letter as if from us, to the effect

that..." – notice – it is the same word used in first Thessalonians 5 – "... *the day of the Lord* has come (or is now present). Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first..."

We see that apostasy had already begun (1 Thessalonians 4:1 and following; 2 Timothy 3; 2 Peter 2; Jude 2; Revelation). As we come to the end of this age, it will culminate in Laodicea. And then as those who are *alive and survive* are taken out, *the man of lawlessness* will be revealed – When? Not at the beginning! He comes as a savior (Revelation 6:2), but in the middle of the tribulation he will be revealed, this *man of lawlessness*. He comes as a 'savior' first, then "...the son of destruction" (as *Apollyon*). That will not be manifested until the last three-and-a-half years of the tribulation; that's why it's called *the great tribulation*. Notice (2 Thessalonians 2:4): the one "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship..."

We've covered this before. But why were these believers subjected to the teaching, the false teaching, that they were going to go through the day of the Lord? 2 Thessalonians 1 gives us the background: *because they were suffering*. 2 Thessalonians 1:4, "...we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your *persecution and afflictions* which you endure." Somebody had come along and interpreted that they were in the day of the Lord. He doesn't say in verse 5, 'This is a plain indication that you're now in the day of the Lord, and you're going to have to go through this time of Daniel's 70th week and face the horrors of the judgments that pertain to the kingdom of antichrist; and *then* you will be among those who are alive and survive and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air' -? **No!** The rapture occurs prior to this; but there's going to be increased suffering leading up to the rapture; and I believe it will be global. It's *the day of visitation* (1 Peter 2:12).

	Helmet of Salvation		2 Thess. 2:3 - man of sin revealed
<i>Will NOT enter the Day of the Lord</i>			
2 Thessalonians: written to correct false teaching	Day of the Lord	Rev. 6 -18 Judgments	
		1 Thess. 5.1-3 "Peace and safety"	

And notice what he says (2 Thessalonians 1:5-6): this suffering you're going through is not an indication that you're in the day of the Lord, but "of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered *worthy* of the kingdom of God, for which you indeed are suffering. For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus (literally, *in* the revelation of the Lord Jesus) will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire." Notice: "... to give relief to *you who are afflicted* ... when the Lord Jesus will be revealed (notice:) from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire." Is that the rapture? No! Look at

the context, verse 10, “when He comes to be glorified in His saints...” These saints are church age believers, “... He comes to be glorified *in His saints*.” This is Revelation 6 through 18 when He's judging Israel and the nations, and He's judging the unbelievers. He does this “in (the sphere of) His saints.”

I refer to those who may not have already listened to [The Celestial Court](#) series, why the church has to be in heaven so that “when He comes (returns) to be glorified in His saints...,” He comes to deliver Israel who are still on earth. And we see that with the coming of antichrist, the subject is *the day of the Lord* when he writes (2 Thessalonians 2:3), “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first...” - that is, the day of the Lord – “...the apostasy comes first...” - that comes leading up to the rapture, “... and the man of lawlessness is revealed...” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3) - he's revealed as the false Christ (Revelation 6) – “...the son of destruction...” – that's in the middle of the tribulation, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, “... who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object or worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.” This is what Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24 and Mark 13 as “the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION.” This pertains to Israel; this is not about the church.



And he goes on and writes about that which characterizes the day of the Lord - in particular, the last three-and-a-half years in the following verses. But notice 2 Thessalonians 2:13: “But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you *from the beginning (firstfruits)*..” All the Greek tools I have – for example, *The Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, and Nestle's Greek text - they have ἀπαρχή - *aparchē* – I explained this the last time – *firstfruits*. *Firstfruits* does not mean the firstfruits in terms of salvation, because the Thessalonians were not the firstfruits; those at Philippi were. This does not refer to firstfruits of salvation. This influenced the committee to choose *from the beginning*, a phrase Paul never used in this particular Greek form. It's *chose you as firstfruits* (James 1:18; 1 Corinthians 15), Christ in resurrection, His firstfruits - we share in the firstfruits of Christ's first resurrection. He's “*chosen you as firstfruits [ἀπαρχή - aparchē] for salvation...*” What salvation? Final salvation! “...through sanctification by the spirit and faith in the truth. It was for

this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)

1 Thessalonians 5, verses 9 and following says we are to ‘gain salvation’ - that is *final salvation*, through conduct and be a part of that Philadelphian company. Here, *final salvation* is further defined as *gaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And that will occur in the rapture and the resurrection.



When you put these two epistles together, it is very, very clear that what Paul is talking about is completely antithetical and distinct from the conditions we have in the gospels. In order to set the stage to see this contrast, I want us to see – and I mentioned this earlier - Jesus' First Advent ministry. I will cite two of Paul's statements found in Galatians 4 where Paul says (verse 4), “But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, (notice:) born under the law.” Jesus Christ fulfilled the law (Matthew 3:15 says He fulfilled all righteousness); and Romans 10:4 states that He “is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” In other words, He lived the life of perfect obedience and died as our substitutionary sacrifice on the cross. He was born under the law; He lived under the law; He died under the law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the law that we, subsequent to His fulfillment of His sacrifice on the cross, might receive “adoption as sons” – that is, attain the name of a son, to enter in to that inheritance that comes to those who share the rights of the firstborn son. Tremendous! Notice the distinction there?

If we come to Romans 15, we see another very revealing statement. Paul was a dispensationalist. That offends some people and, if so, and that happens to be a problem for you, you're going to need to work through that. In fact, Jesus was a dispensationalist when He read from Isaiah 61 where it says the Father (Yahweh) “has sent me to heal the brokenhearted (to bind up their wounds) ... to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord AND the day of vengeance of our God...” - right in the middle of the passage He stopped there in His reading in the synagogue there in Nazareth (Luke 4). He didn't even quote the rest of the verse: “and the day of vengeance of our God...” - He leaves that out. Why? Because He was dispensational. God's economy wasn't first to bring judgment, but salvation. Who did He come to? Notice what it says in Romans 15:8-9: “For I say that Christ has become a servant *to the circumcision* (a reference to the Jews) on behalf of the truth of God (Old Testament prophecies) to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy...” He was a servant to the circumcision, not the body of Christ in the First Advent. The body of Christ had not even come into existence until Pentecost (see 1 Corinthians 12:12 and many other passages). Notice: He's “a servant to the circumcision” – it's

very clear. By the way, those who would like to dig into this deeper, you could read *The Greatness of the Kingdom* by Alva J. McClain ... tremendous!

In Matthew 10, when Jesus is sending out the disciples to go into the various cities and prepare the way for the Lord to come, He sent them out - we know from other passages - two by two. Matthew 10:1-2, as He's sending out the disciples, "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these..." Then verses 5-7: "These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: 'Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."' Notice: "... go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

In Luke 1, we see Zacharias' response; he was the father of John the Baptist; he blesses God (Luke 1:67 and following), and what does he say with reference to the coming of the Messiah? God "has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people." There's no Gentiles here - He's talking about Israel. Luke 1:67-74, He "has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant - as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old - SALVATION FROM OUR ENEMIES, and FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; to show mercy toward our fathers, (notice:) and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham our father (referring to the father of all the Hebrews and the Jewish nation), to grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear."

It's very clear why Jesus said what He said, "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles" (Matthew 10:5). It was simply because He came to fulfill the promise given to *the fathers*. But as that nation hardened their heart and rejected Him, evidenced by the fact that the Sanhedrin deliberated that He should be delivered over to the Romans for crucifixion. The Jewish Sanhedrin, the ruling political and theological body, along with the Gentile Romans were together in collaboration to kill Messiah. It wasn't just a Jewish conspiracy; Jews and Gentiles are both accomplices of putting Christ on the cross.

If you turn to Matthew 15:21, as He is traveling in His ministry, "Jesus went away from there, and withdrew into the district of Tyre and Sidon" - which is Gentile territory. This is a lesson for His disciples. "And a Canaanite woman ..." - in other words, a Gentile, "... came out from that region and began to cry out saying, 'Have mercy on me. Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed.'" *Son of David* is a title of a messianic expectation for the Jews only. Jesus doesn't come back as *Son of David* to deliver the Gentiles at the Second Advent. Remember: there's neither Jew nor Gentile in Christ (Galatians 3:28). But at the Second Advent, He comes back to deliver a remnant of Jews, as well as Gentiles. We see that in the word of God.

Notice: this woman appeals to Jesus as if she were a Jew, "Son of David." If she would have said, "Lord," or "Son of Man," He would have answered. But He reacts to her as a Gentile. The coming of the Messiah as "Son of David" has been the exclusive expectation of the Jews. Notice what Jesus did: "But He did not answer her a word" (Matthew 15:23). Why? Because she has no right to speak as if she's a Jew. (Remember Jesus said (Matthew 10:5), "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles.") "But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, 'Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us.'" In other words, they didn't want anything to do with this Gentile woman either.

Matthew 15:24-26: "But He answered and said..." – and here's the explanation why He did what He did - "I was sent **only** (get that! - *only*) to the lost sheep of *the house of Israel.*' But she came and began to bow down before Him, saying..." - notice, she didn't say, "Son of David." She said, "Lord, help me!" He's not just Lord of the Jews; He's the Lord of all mankind. So, now when she appeals to Him, recognizing that she has no Jewish claim on Him – "He answered and said, 'It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.'" He's referring to Gentiles. He doesn't think of her as a dog; but this is what the disciples implied in verse 23, "Send her away..." But He see her faith, and He's going to teach them a lesson. This is a prophecy of what's going to take place after Pentecost.

Matthew 15:27-28: "But she said, 'Yes, Lord...'" - notice: no 'Son of David' here – "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." The Lord's eyes must have sparkled on that. "Then Jesus said to her, 'O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed at once." And the disciples are watching. So, what does this mean? This is a harbinger of what's going to take place in the Book of the Acts, when once these Jewish apostles become members of the body of Christ and begin to move out amongst the Gentiles, beginning at Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. It's tremendous!

It's impossible to cover all the details here, but I want to just pick up a couple of things. In Matthew 24, we know this has been called the Olivet Discourse because it was on the Mount of Olives when Jesus gave this teaching. In Matthew 24:1-2, "Jesus came out from the temple..." – that's where you find the Luke 21 discourse, "... and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. And He said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.'" That happened in 70 A.D., as a result of the temple being burned. The gold melted from the temple furnishings and went down into the cracks of the stones; so, they dug up every stone to get the gold.

Matthew 24:3: "As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things happen...'" - that is, the destruction of Jerusalem; that's in the background – "... and what will be the sign of your coming..." - that's the Second Advent; there's no rapture here. They don't know anything about a rapture – "...and the end of the age..." What age is that? The only age they know is the age of Israel; they don't know anything about a church age; they don't know anything about *the mystery*, the dispensation of the church. Jesus already told them that 'salvation is of the Jews' – 'do not go the way the Gentiles' – 'I came to none other than the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' He's already said that – Matthew 10; Matthew 15 – remember? The end of the age is the only age they understand – the end of *the age of Israel.*

Matthew 24:4: "And Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you...'" Deception is going to be increasing, leading up to the second coming of Christ – He's not referring to the rapture. He talks about one nation will rise against another nation, kingdom against kingdom (verse 7). This is part of the birth pangs (verse 8); He adds, "and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes" (verse 7). Look at the starvation that's in the world today. Look at the earthquakes; they've been increasing, not only in number, but in intensity. All this is increasing; but these are merely *the beginning of birth pangs.* In other words, the Messianic age will not happen right away – it's like giving birth to that Messianic age - this is the beginning; this is not *the great tribulation.*

Matthew 24:9 "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name." This is not only what will happen in a preliminary way during the time of

the Book of Acts - we see the beginning of it there – but we also see the Jews who are the ambassadors for Christ, the 144,000 that are sealed in Revelation 7; and we see their character in Revelation 14 – they are God's ambassadors because the church has been removed. They're going to be delivered up for their faithfulness and they will not submit to the *mark of the beast*; and they are going to be martyred. Those who are not martyred will be among those who are alive and survive when Jesus Christ returns at the Second Advent to deliver them. As it is written, they “... will be hated by all nations because of My name.”

Matthew 24:10-14: “At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead (deceive) many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. But the one who endures to *the end...*” – that is, the end until Christ returns to this earth to deliver this Jewish remnant – “... he will be saved.” That’s final salvation for the Jew. It’s not final salvation for the church. You don’t endure to the end of the great tribulation before Jesus comes and delivers His bride. This is Jewish eschatology. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world (the inhabited earth) as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

We see the 144,000 are sealed *after the rapture*, the translation of the church (Revelation 7). The tribes of Israel are mentioned there. Then in the last paragraph of Revelation 7, we see around the throne those from every kindred, nation, tribe and tongue, the fruit of the witness and the ministry of the 144,000. These are those ambassadors who complete *the great commission*; the church will not complete the great commission; it will be the Jews that complete it. There’s a statement that confirms that in Matthew 10:23, where it says, “you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.” That’s a tremendous prophecy.

Matthew 24:15-16: “Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).” That’s spoken of in Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 - we see that this pertains to Jewish prophecy. In fact, in Daniel 9:26 and following, the prophecy is in reference to Jerusalem and to ‘this people’ - Daniel's people. This prophecy is specific to a Jewish context. This is not for the church. He says, “... when you see (*when you see!*) the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION...” - that's in the middle of the tribulation. That’s what inaugurates *the great and terrible day of the Lord*. He says, “then those who are in Judea ...” - those who see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION – those who are in Judea! That's not the body of Christ. These are Jews! “... flee to the mountains.” Notice verse 20: “But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.” The church doesn't have to live according to the Sabbath; according to Hebrews 3 and 4, Christ is our Sabbath, and Romans 14 makes it very clear that some people esteem the Sabbath above any other day, and there's some that esteem every day alike. He doesn't say to the Gentiles that they must be in submission to Sabbath Law. This is clearly not Gentiles; this is clearly not the church.



Matthew 24:21-22: “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect (that Jewish elect) those days will be cut short.”

Matthew 24:27-30, “For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.” When is that? The last verse of Revelation 19 indicates it as the conclusion of the battle of Armageddon. “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens (*the armies of the heavens* (Arndt and Gingrich’s *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*)) will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn...” I believe this will be “when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...” (2 Thessalonians 1:10), and “every eye will see Him” (Revelation 1:7) because when He comes to be glorified in His saints, the body of Christ glorified will then be *the fullness of Him who fills all in all* (Ephesians 1:22, 23) Tremendous! The hope and calling of the church is absolutely extraordinary and unique and was never prophesied in the Old Testament.

Matthew 24:31-34: “And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect (that Jewish remnant) from the four winds (all regions of the earth), from one end of the sky to the other. Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.” Again, He’s talking to that Jewish remnant. “Truly I say to you, this generation...” – the generation that sees all these things fulfilled – and WE’RE IN THAT GENERATION – “... this generation will not pass away...” – that is, they will not die. It says that “... this generation (that sees this) will not pass away until all these things take place.” We’re already 73 years into that generation (2021) since Israel became a nation. **We’re at the end of the end.**

Matthew 24:36-38: “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.” However, the Son of Man now knows (see Revelation 1). In His incarnation before glorification, He didn’t know; but now He knows. “For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage...” - notice those who are married and giving in marriage were also involved with

cohabitating with fallen angels [בְּנֵי־הַאֱלֹהִים - *Bənē hā'Ēlōhīm (sons of God)*] (Genesis 6:2) resulting in the hybridization of their offspring. They were “marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark.” (Notice:) “and they did not understand until the flood came and *took them all away*; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.” The flood is a judgment; that is the background. Notice what it says, “...they were eating and drinking...” – that is, these people did not understand until the flood came that judgment was coming - and what? “... took them all away...” Who was taken away? *The unrighteous!* Who remained on earth to start a new civilization? *Righteous Noah plus seven!* They remained.

So, for the church age, those *who are alive and survive* (remain) shall be called up to *meet the Lord in the air* - just the opposite of what happened in Noah’s day! The church will be taken out and the unrighteous will remain. At the conclusion of the tribulation, the unrighteous are taken out and the righteous remain. *It’s just the opposite!* Notice: “... just like the days of Noah...” - verse 39: “... the flood came (divine judgment) and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.” What *coming* is that? The dispensation of Israel, Daniel’s 70th week, *the time of Jacob’s trouble* (Jeremiah 30:7).

Matthew 24:40-43 – notice what He says: “Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken...” – who’s taken? Notice verse 39, the defining context, *the unrighteous*. “...and one will be left” – like Noah who was left – *the righteous!* “Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken (in judgment) and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, ...” - that is, Jesus comes suddenly and unexpectedly – “... he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.”

If you go to Matthew 25, we have the parable of the foolish and wise virgins. That’s not the church. John 3:29 – John the Baptist is referred to as the *friend of the bridegroom*. You don’t find anywhere in the gospels ‘the bride.’ You have the bridegroom; you have the friends of the bridegroom; and John was a member of the covenant community of Israel – but you have no mention of *the bride*. You have the invitation to the wedding feast in a number of the parables of our Lord. Where’s the bride? The bride is hidden; the bride is secret. That’s the church. Here in Matthew 25, these are the attendants. The remnant of Israel needs to be ready when Jesus *returns with His bride* (Revelation 19:7), who “has made herself ready” - the marriage takes place in heaven. And when He returns with His bride to this earth to celebrate *the marriage supper of the Lamb* (Revelation 19:9), those Jews need to be ready. That’s Matthew 25; they need to be ready to meet the Bridegroom with His bride. These are the bridesmaids, if you will, that will make up *the marriage supper of the lamb*; that’s Israel’s role to be there at that glorious celebration which will inaugurate the kingdom when He comes and sits at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; it’s a huge feast. We see that in Isaiah 25:6. When Jesus returns with His bride, there’s going to be a huge feast. That’s *the marriage supper of the Lamb*.

Notice: ‘one is taken; one is left.’ It’s very clear from the passage in Matthew 24:39, that those taken away are taken in judgment, and those who survive, like Noah, remain. These passages give us the eschatological framework of the Jewish expectation pertaining to the second coming of the Lord (the Second Advent). It is completely the opposite of that which we see offered to the Gentile believers Paul wrote to at Thessalonica regarding the rapture of the church.



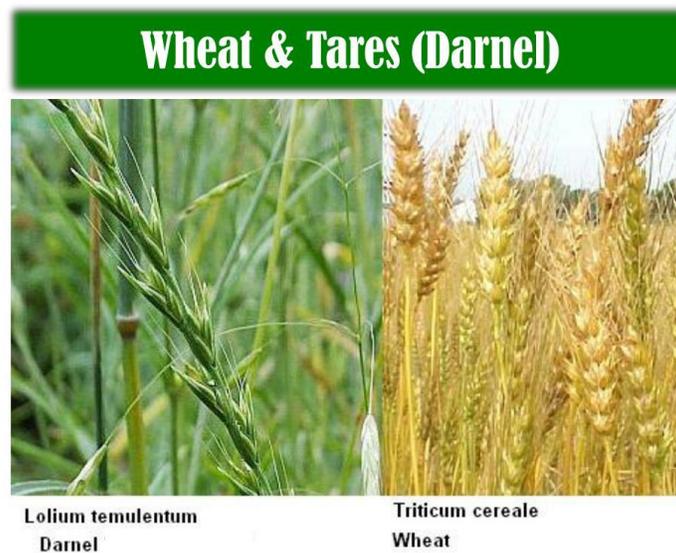
There are a number of parables in Matthew 13, but we're going to only read the parable of the sower, because that parable is singled out from all the others. "... "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.'" The disciples want to know - out of all the different parables - 'Please explain this parable.' We're going to go back and read the parable and make some comments and applications so you can see.

Matthew 13:18-21: "Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom ..." - this is not the doctrine of the mystery (Romans 16:25-26, Ephesians 3:1-11) - this hadn't even been revealed because there was no body of Christ yet. Remember: Jesus was born under the law; lived under the law, along with all those disciples with Him who were living under the law as well, until they were released at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to take the place of the law in their hearts (Romans 8:2). "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one whom the seed was sown beside the road. And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away (caused to stumble). And the one on whom the seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word..." - they all hear the word; *the word* is the same, but *the soil* is different - the response is different according to each individual's heart.

Matthew 13:22-23 "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world..." - that is, the worry of this age; he's not looking for eternity, he's occupied with this age, as Lot was - "...and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold..." - notice He mentions a hundredfold first, because that's *full reward* (see 2 John 1:8) - "... some sixty, and some thirty" - that's good ground; but He mentions a hundredfold first because He wants to give full reward to all.

Matthew 13:24-30 "Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares..." - darnel; it looks like wheat, but it doesn't have any fruit in it - "...among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field?"

How then does it have tares?" – it looks like wheat, but there's no fruit; it can't reproduce or produce more wheat, in other words – "And he said to them, "An enemy (ultimately looking at Satan – and culminating in the antichrist) has done this!" The slaves said to him, "Do you want us, then, to (notice what it says:) go and *gather them up* (in other words, remove them – take them out of the way)?" But he said, "No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together..." – this is not talking about the body of Christ, but the relationship of the kingdom message in the world and those who receive it and those who do not – He's not going to bring judgment on those who do not accept the truth of the gospel yet – "Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn." (The tares are removed; the wheat remain.)



Matthew 13:36: as He finished the parables, "Then He left the crowds and went into the house..." – probably at Bethany where He usually stayed – "And His disciples came to Him and said, 'Explain to us the parable (i.e.: illustration) of the tares of the field.'" This is the key to understanding the fact that at the end of the age, when Jesus comes to deliver the remnant of Israel and the remnant of Gentiles - there will be some Gentiles saved, according to the last paragraph in Matthew 25, those who show favor to the Jews, His brethren, and are not persecuting them, they're going to be saved; they will go into the Millennium.

Matthew 13:37-39: "And He said, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom..." The good seed is not only the word of God, but it's also the sons of the kingdom - compare verse 19 with Luke 8:11 – *sons of the kingdom*. "... and the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy who sowed them is the devil and the harvest is **the end of the age...**" (the age of Israel – that's Matthew 24. That was the question that the disciples asked the Lord there in Matthew 24:1 and following. It's about "... *the end of the age* and the reapers are angels." What do we see in Revelation 6 through 18? We see angels; they're sounding the trumpets, and pouring out the vials - they're administrating judgments. We see that all through the Book of Revelation. This is *the time of Jacob's trouble*; this is *the day of the Lord*. The church is not there. If you haven't listened to [The Blessed Hope](#) series and [The Celestial Court](#) series, we went over this in the past. Notice: this will be done at *the end of the age*.

Matthew 13:41-42: "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness." Notice the words: *will gather out*, that term - and it doesn't have to be the exact same Greek term. Thematically, conceptually, and hermeneutically it's the same; it's the context that determines the use of words. There's two different Greek words that are used to describe *gather out* - there are all kinds of ways to express various circumstances using different vocabulary terms. It is the theme that determines the interpretation. "The Son of Man will send forth His angels (at the end of the age), and they will *gather out* of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will **throw them into the furnace of fire**; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear." This will be the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ. Notice: Who are those taken out? The *stumbling blocks*, verse 41. Going back to Matthew 24, what did we see? We'll go back and review that again.

Matthew 24:37-39: "'For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood (i.e.: the time of judgment) they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.'" The angels are going to come and take them away. Who's left? *The righteous!* We see that in Isaiah 59. The Redeemer comes to Zion **to deliver** those in Jacob who turned to righteousness. The others are taken away.

Matthew 24:40-41: "'Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.'" - taken in judgment; the one that was left refers to the righteous remnant. "'Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken (i.e.: in judgment) and one will be left (i.e.: the surviving remnant).'" This is all a part of a framework. When you have *the helmet of salvation* on, you know that you know that you will not enter any part of *the day of the Lord*. That's the whole issue of Second Thessalonians. It's to encourage the believers that this pressure and suffering that they're going through is not *the day of the Lord*; however, it is that which leads up to the day of the Lord. And then when the church is removed, there'll be a time of false peace (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3). It will then be followed by the manifestation of *the man of sin* (2 Thessalonians 2:3 and following) where all hell will break loose, the judgments as we see in Revelation 6 through 18.

Luke 17:20-21: "Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed...'" - this sounds like a contradiction, but right here, He's talking to the Pharisees. They want to see the Messiah come and deliver them from the yoke of Rome. But the initial phase of the kingdom, in terms of how that is manifested to the church (Romans 14:17), is that "the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking." In the Millennial Kingdom it will be. But in this aspect of the kingdom, that is from Pentecost to the rapture, "the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." That's what He's referring to. He's not coming with signs to be observed in terms of the expectation of Jesus coming to deliver the Jews from the yoke of their enemies. The Pharisees are looking for signs, and there are all kinds of signs given, but then, when He is crucified, and after Pentecost, they will not see any of these signs; His coming is not with signs to be observed. "'... Nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.'" Another translation says *He's in your midst*, because the King (Jesus) is there; or another way to translate it: 'the kingdom of God is within you.'

From Pentecost to the rapture, that kingdom is the formation of the King in the members of His body. That's *the mystery* form of the kingdom. Luke 17:22-34: "And He said to the disciples, 'The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. They will say to you, "Look there! Look here!" Do not go away, and do not run after them. For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying..." (this includes those women who were copulating with the fallen [בְּנֵי הַאֱלֹהִים - *Banē hā'Ēlōhīm*] *sons of God* in Genesis 6:1-4), "...they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed (i.e.: Second Advent). On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. Remember Lot's wife..." - those Jews will have to escape to Petra; we see that in Revelation 12 - "...Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it (alive – i.e.: the Jewish remnant). I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left."

Who is taken? *The unrighteous!* It's just the reverse of the rapture. At the end of the church age, who is taken? The church shall be 'caught up to meet the Lord in the air' – taken. Who's left? The unbelievers! But here (Luke 17) it's just the reverse as to the one who will be taken. Luke 17:34-35: "... one will be taken and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken (i.e.: in judgment) and the other will be left (i.e.: as a part of that remnant). Some manuscripts have verse 36: "Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left." Luke 17:37: "And answering they said to Him, 'Where, Lord?' And He said to them, 'Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered.'" That's the conclusion of the battle of Armageddon in Revelation 19:20-21.

The day of the Lord is completely distinct from *the day of Christ*. The New Testament describes *the day of Christ* – and that refers to the rapture, the translation of the church. "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:9). The coming of the Lord for His church is *an attainment*; it is the gaining of a possession. It means that to be a part of that surviving remnant, we need to be a part of that Philadelphian company where there is no condemnation.



... put on ... as a helmet,
the hope of salvation.
1 Thess. 5.8

The Day of Christ

For God has not destined us
for wrath, but for obtaining
salvation through
our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Thess. 5:9

**The Day
of the
Lord**

Hopefully this will help us see and better understand the nature of *the helmet of salvation*. Put on the helmet of salvation, which is, as Paul says, *hope*.

1 Thessalonians 5:8-11: “But since we are of the day (i.e.: *the day of the Lord* – not of the night), let us be sober (i.e.: a part of being a remnant – having self-control; self-discipline – the fruit of the Holy Spirit), having put on the breastplate of faith and love (i.e.: the uniting bond of perfection – Colossians 3:14), and as a helmet, *the hope of salvation*.” ***The helmet of salvation is the joyous confident expectation of final salvation.*** “For God has not destined us for wrath (i.e.: to be in any part of *the day of the Lord*), but for obtaining (final) salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.” - the same thing He said at the end of the explanation of the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:18). The term English word *rapture* is a transliteration of the Latin term, *rapturo*, which translates the verb ἀρπάζω - harpazō, *to be snatched up by force and taken out of this world while the enemy, that roaring lion, is seeking to devour the remnant of the Lord* (1 Peter 5:8).



**The Helmet of
Salvation**
*joyous, confident
expectation of final
salvation (deliverance)*

Rapture – from Latin *raptura*
Translated from the Greek
ἀρπάζω = *to be snatched up by
force; rescued*

I pray that this will be helpful for those that may be confused; and as the days get darker and darker, *the helmet of salvation* means you hang in there, you persevere; the Lord has made provision for there to be **a final deliverance**. Amen.

Ministry for the End Times

Doug Riggs, Pastor, Morning Star Testimony Church, Inc.

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