

The Helmet of Salvation

Message by Doug Riggs, Pastor

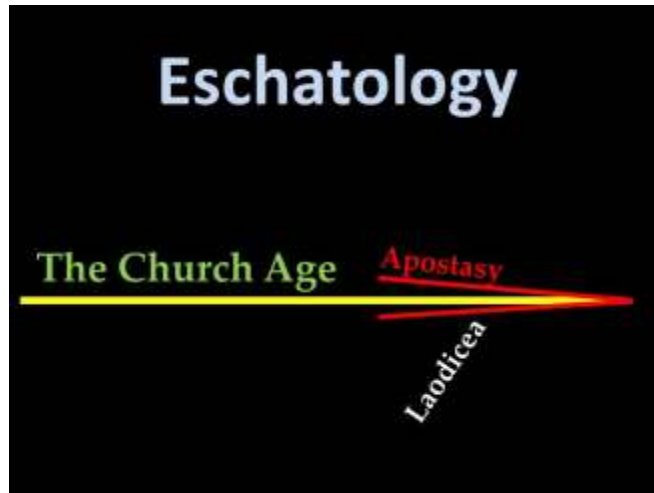
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From the audio podcast *The ByteShow with GeorgeAnn Hughes*, kept as much as practical in its spoken form.

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 *raptum* (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](#).



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.

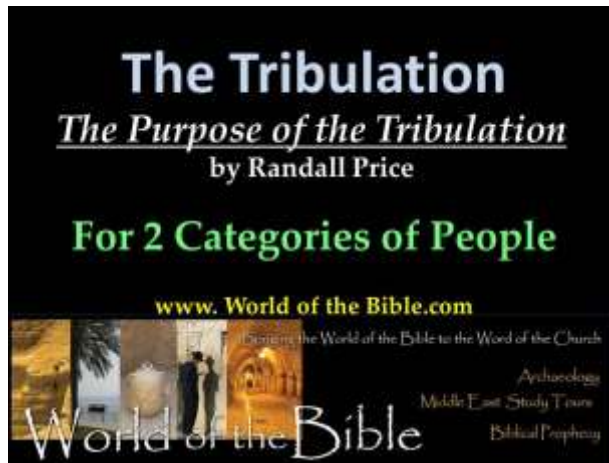
We'll look at Micah 4:6: "'in that day..." - that is, *the day of the Lord*. We know from Micah 4 that he quotes from Isaiah 2:1-4 regarding Jesus Christ when He returns at the Second Advent. "'In that day," - when the Lord returns to establish His kingdom – '...declares the Lord, "I will assemble the 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.

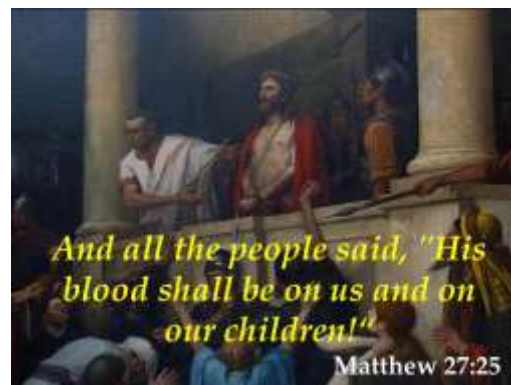
Remember in Matthew when Jesus was before the Jewish people, and Pilot was trying to find a way to set him free – and you only find it in Matthew:

'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* (καιρός) *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.

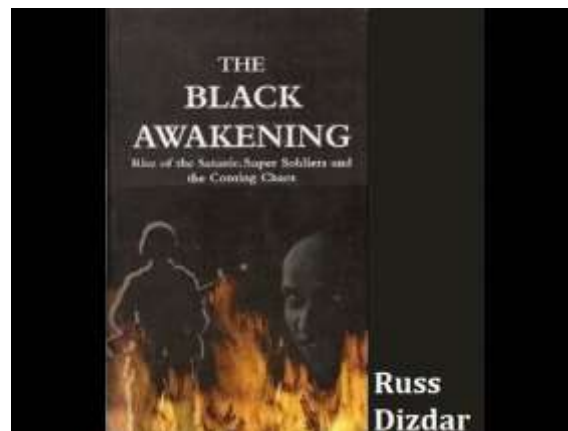
Going back to *the helmet of salvation* - let's go back to Isaiah 59. Notice, this is the last description of the defensive weaponry for the body of Christ that Jesus Christ is going to don when He returns at the Second Advent. He comes back *to be glorified in His saints* (2 Thessalonians 1:10) - *in 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.



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.

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

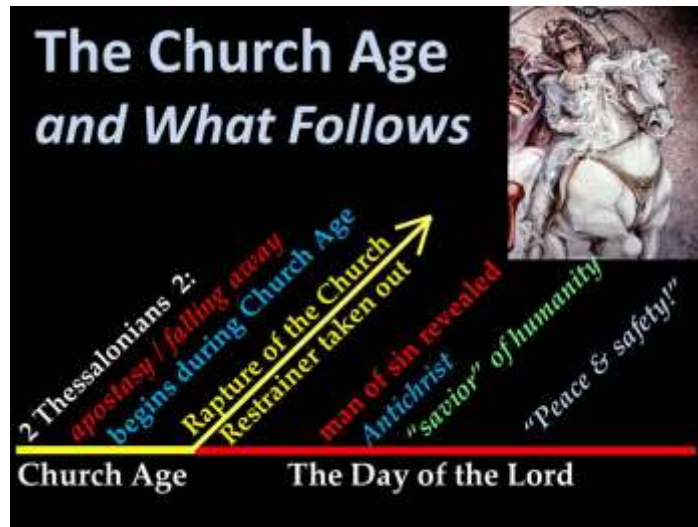


1 Thessalonians 5:4-5 'But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that *the day (of the Lord)* would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness.' - we're not a part of that time of wrath and judgment that is going to come on the world in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

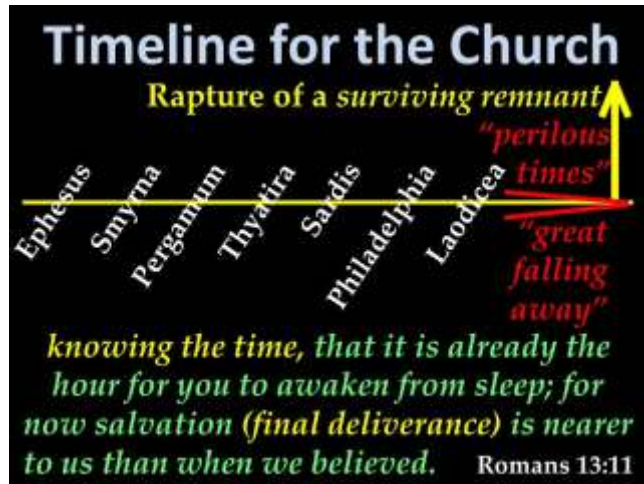


However, the church *is* going to be purged. He's coming back for a church 'having no spot or wrinkle' (Ephesians 5:27). That's why judgment 'begins with the household of God.' Prior to the rapture, the church will go through her own tribulation; and then Israel and the nations will face their tribulation.



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.'

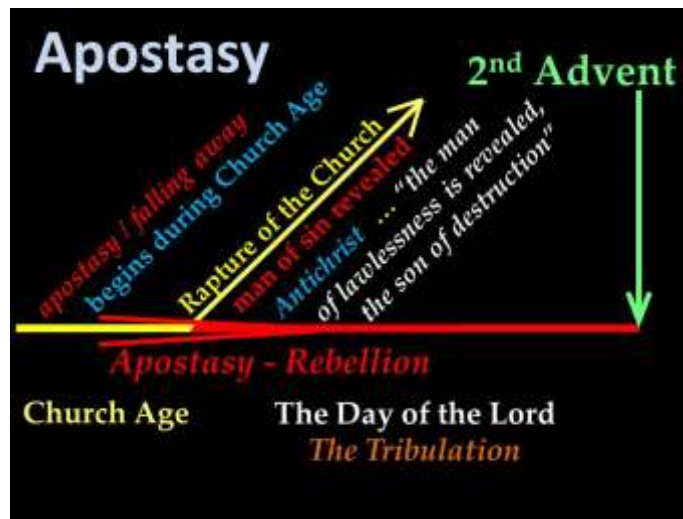
In 2 Thessalonians 1:3 and following, there were people saying that because they were going through persecution, they were in the day of the Lord. There were false teachers, or there was a spirit speaking in a prophetic gift, or some epistle allegedly coming from Paul insinuating that the day of the 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* (*apostasía* - 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*.

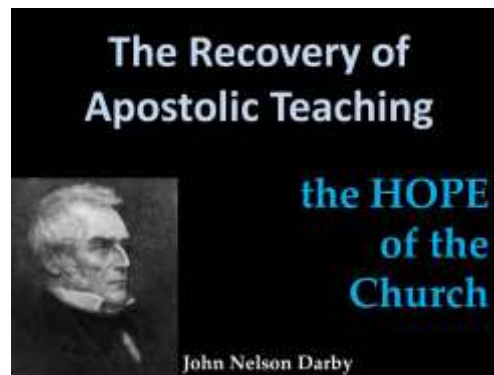
So as it gets dark - and *it's going to get darker!* The *day of visitation* is two-sided: If you're Laodicean, *it's judgment!* If you're Philadelphia, *it's exultation – it's deliverance* - it is Christ being revealed as the morning star in your heart – it is the manifestation of the supreme victory 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.

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