

The Believer's Hope: The Second Coming of Christ

- I. The Lord Jesus promised that the faithful would not be exempted from tribulation. **JOH 16:33.**
- A. **tribulation:** A condition of great affliction, oppression, or misery; 'persecution; distress; vexation; disturbance of life.'
 - B. Christ's words were spoken to men who would suffer greatly for their faith. **JOH 16:1-2.**
 - C. The fates of the apostles and the annals of history bear witness to terrible tribulation that saints have faced.
 - 1. One school of prophetic theory affirms a period of "great tribulation" yet future from which "the church" will be spared by a preclusive rapture.
 - 2. This is a slap in the face of the faithful saints who throughout history have suffered intense persecution, pain and death for Christ.
 - D. **(ACT 14:22)** Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.
 - E. Tribulations may be of varied forms and degrees of intensity. **1TH 3:4; 2TH 1:4.**
 - F. No suffering is to be deemed greater than our future glory at the resurrection when Christ returns. **ROM 8:16-18 c/w 1PE 1:7.**
- II. For all the varied forms that tribulation may take, Scripture presents the hope of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as their antidote.
- A. This hope is grounded on the personal resurrection of Christ. **1PE 1:3 c/w 1CO 15:19-23.**
 - B. This hope is a saving influence. **ROM 8:23-25.**
 - C. This hope is a relieving influence. **PHIL 3:20-21.**
 - D. This hope is a purifying influence. **1JO 3:2-3.**
 - E. This hope is an invigorating influence. **PSA 27:13.**
 - F. This hope defers divine justice. **LUK 18:7-8 c/w 2TH 1:6-10.**
 - G. This hope anticipates a pure, blissful and eternal inheritance. **1PE 1:4; 2PE 3:13-14; REV 21:4.**
 - H. This hope is for the godly. **PRO 14:32; JOH 5:28-29; GAL 5:5.**
- III. Of all the troubles of this world, bodily death speaks such finality. It is with this in mind that Paul addresses the Thessalonians. **1TH 4:13-18.**
- A. **v. 13.**
 - 1. The word "sleep" in this context refers to a state of physical death. c/w **v. 16.**
 - a. This is a case where a word is NOT used in its primary sense.
 - b. Another example of this is in **JOH 11:11-14.**
 - 2. Christians may sorrow over the death of their loved ones in Christ. **ACT 8:2; PHIL 2:27.**
 - 3. However, the Christian's sorrow should not be as others "...which have no hope." Death is nothing but a nap before the power of Christ. **MAR 5:39.**
 - B. **v. 14.**
 - 1. The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection of those in Him. **1CO 15:17-23.**
 - 2. Note that there is something about a dead saint that is *with* God to be *brought with* God.
 - a. Man consists of spirit, soul and body. **1TH 5:23.**
 - b. The soul and spirit constitute man's inward parts. **JOB 14:22; 1CO 2:11.**
 - c. The inward man is changed during this life, delivering the elect from the complete mastery of sin. **EPH 2:1-5; ROM 7:22-25.**

- d. The inward man is made spiritual and has eternal life. **ROM 8:5-11.**
 - e. Life does not end with physical death. **LUK 23:43; PHIL 1:21-23.**
 - f. Physical death is a time of rest for the elect. **ISA 57:1-2; REV 14:13.**
 - g. The souls and spirits of departed saints will be brought with God to be clothed with their glorified bodies. **PHIL 3:21; 1CO 15:51-53.**
- C. **vs. 15-17.**
- 1. Compare the order of events at the Second Coming with **1CO 15:51-53.**
 - 2. The Lord HIMSELF descends from heaven. **ACT 1:11.**
 - a. He will not merely send an angel, nor Moses or Elijah.
 - b. The Incarnate God to Whom belongs all judgment (**JOH 5:22; ACT 17:31**) will once again enter this world but, unlike His first appearing, it will not be in humility.
 - 3. This is His coming again or second appearing. **JOH 14:1-3; HEB 9:28.**
 - 4. When Christ returns, there will still be living, faithful saints on earth, though in negligible proportions. **v. 15 c/w MAT 24:37; LUK 18:8.**
 - 5. The dead in Christ rise FIRST. The living saints will not prevent (precede) them. The living saints are then caught up with the resurrected saints to meet their Lord in the air.
 - 6. The saints will then receive glorified bodies fashioned like unto the body of the resurrected Son of God. Christ will finally redeem the flesh which He purchased with His own blood. **1CO 6:20.**
 - 7. The saints will EVER be with the Lord. **JOH 14:3.**
- D. **v. 18.**
- 1. The Second Coming is the hope of the believer. **TIT 2:13.**
 - 2. The Second Coming and the resurrection is the true hope of Israel. **ACT 26:6-8; 28:20.**
 - 3. The Second Coming is the destruction of death. **1CO 15:26, 54.**
 - 4. This doctrine of the Second Coming and the resurrection was a comfort and incentive for Paul. He recognized that his present afflictions were only temporary. He kept his gaze fixed upon the future glory. **2CO 4:17-5:4 c/w ROM 8:18.**
 - 5. Looking for the Second Coming evidences saving grace. **TIT 2:11-13; HEB 9:26-28.**
 - 6. Looking for the Second Coming is a proper effect of conversion. **1TH 1:9-10.**
 - 7. These words about the Second Coming can only comfort those who have faith. They only have a personal assurance of it. **v. 14 c/w JOH 11:25-26.**
- E. The approaching of our hope should encourage us to assemble with our brethren of like precious faith for mutual exhortation. **HEB 10:23-25.**