

Ready for Christ's Return | Part 6

Lesson 2

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

October 15, 2023

What Happens When Christ Returns?

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps if Paul had begun the passage as listed above (4:13-18) with the last verse: to “encourage one another with these words,” curiosity might have hurried readers to learn about loved ones who have died.

Paul told his converts to “not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.” (4:13) Why not? Because Jesus will bring with Him in the *parousia* those who have died believing in Him.

What is *parousia*? It is the Greek word for “coming,” pertaining specifically to the arrival of a renowned person. Jesus is that person; his *parousia* will be his second, identified as *parousia* eighteen times in the New Testament and described by Paul in the memory verse below.

The memory verse does not tell the whole story. Those who still live will join Christ and believers who have “slept,” ever ensured to “be with the Lord forever.” (4:16-17)

Memory verse: “For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.”—1 Thessalonians 4:16

Pray, and read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. What number of people have no hope?
(1 Thessalonians 4:13)
2. What will God do for Jesus? (1 Thessalonians 4:14)
3. Whose voice will accompany Christ, as told in 1 Thessalonians 4:16?
4. Who controls the trumpet? (1 Thessalonians 4:16)
5. Where will living believers gather with Jesus and believers who have died? (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

3. Is Paul's portrayal of the *parousia* (second coming) exclusive to the Thessalonians? (1 Corinthians 1:7-8, 15:22-24, 52; Philippians 1:6; Colossians 3:4)

4. What other persons of the Bible have spoken of the *parousia*, if only partially? (Matthew 16:27-28; John 14:3; James 5:7-8; 1 Peter 1:13)

