

In A Moment

INAM-10 "WE WHO REMAIN..."

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"THE DOCTRINE OF THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS"

1 THESS 4:15 "For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

The Thessalonian Believers were deeply concerned about some "doctrine" that was being promoted that apparently taught that the Saints that had died, were asleep, would not be included in the "catching-away" at **The Lord's Coming**. Paul's response was that **The Lord's Coming** would have a dual effect upon those who had believed that "Jesus died and rose again":

- Those who were asleep would be raised;
- Those who were alive would be changed.

Each of the two categories would experience a "miraculous" event. Therefore "whether asleep or alive" this knowledge was to be a source of hope and encouragement for every Believer.

ALIVE & REMAIN

1 THESS 4:15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the COMING OF THE LORD, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

Paul's assurance was to comfort / encourage the Believers who were troubled about whether the Believers who were "asleep" would be included when Christ comes for the Church, since they are not alive to "continue in the faith" or to be "living for Him". Have they simply "perished?" Was there any hope for them? Obviously "some" were teaching this false doctrine.

This is far from the words that Paul had offered to the Church. The hope of "the resurrection of those asleep in the Lord" and the "catching away of the living Believers" was prominent in the Early Church. A 2nd Century Christian writer (Aristides) presented this observance: "And if any righteous man among them passes from the world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God; and they escort the body as if he were setting out from one place to another that is near."

- For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord... – It is not exactly clear what was the source of Paul's declaration regarding the "resurrection and the catching away." Possibilities are:
- A collection of the "sayings of Jesus" that were not necessarily contained in the Gospels that would be written later...
 - There were obviously numerous sayings and narratives that are NOT in the Gospels...
JOHN 20:30-31 "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." [See also: **JOHN 21:25**]
 - There were certainly many Oral Teachings from Jesus which writers would quote later... or use as a resource:
1 COR 9:14 "In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living by the Gospel."

- A “*specific revelation*” given to Paul of “**Jesus’ Teaching**” on a subject that may be a direct quotation or a restatement of what the Lord had said:
1 COR 11:23 “For **I received from the Lord** what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread...”
- It IS CERTAIN that Jesus taught about the “**Resurrection**” and gave His disciples instruction about the subject (*although there would have been no direct teaching about the “**catching away**”*).
JOHN 6:40 “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and **I will raise him up** on the last day.”

➤ “**Until the Coming of the Lord...**” – “**Parousia**” – Which One: **2nd Coming** OR **The Rapture?**

- In order to identify the way this phrase is to be understood, it must be compared to other statements and the context of Scripture
- It applies to “**the Resurrection**” NOT **Judgment** ... [vs16]
- It is identified as the time of “**the Catching-Away**” – **THE RAPTURE** [vs17]
- Those “**raised**” and those “**alive**” will be “**caught-up**” to meet the Lord **in the air** [vs17]
- The Lord’s descent is “**in the air**” NOT “**upon the earth**” [vs17]
1 THESS 4:17 “Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds **to meet the Lord in the air**, and so we will always be with the Lord.”
ZECH 14:4 “On that day **HIS [The MESSIAH] feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives** that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two...”
- The Believers are to be “**encouraged**” by His Presence ... NOT **fearful of His wrath** [vs18]
- The Lord comes **FOR** the Saints... Not **WITH** the Saints...
- The subject is about the Lord coming to “**take the Believers to Himself...**”
JOHN 14:2-3 “In my Father’s house are many **rooms**. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a [room] for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a [room] for you, **I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.**”
The verb is **Mid Voice** – *something done for the sake / interest of the one acting...*
- The context is the Lord “**calling His Church INTO Heaven**” BEFORE the beginning of THE TRIBULATION
REV 4:1 “After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “**Come up here**, and I will show you what must take place after this.”
The Church is not mentioned again until **REV 19** – **THE 2ND COMING** – when the Saints return with Christ at the Great Battle of Armageddon

There is teaching that limits **which Believers are to be included** in the one who “*are Alive and Remain*” Their position is that:

- a) “**Alive**” refers ONLY to the ones who are faithfully living, and testifying... that are vibrant and growing in the faith...
- b) “**Remain**” faithful to the Lord in actively witnessing and working for Him... those who Remain in fellowship with Him having separated themselves from sin
- c) Not ALL who are “**believers**” will be “**caught-up**” ... the others will enter The Tribulation...

➤ **“WE Who Are Alive...”** –

- **WE... NOT Those** - By context this is addressed to ALL who are alive at the time of the **“event”**
1 THESS 4:15 *“that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord...”*
1 THESS 4:17 *“Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them...”*
When Paul wants to distinguish himself and his recipients from another group, or to identify a certain category that does not apply to all, he uses the pronouns **“We”** and **“They/Those”** (Notice this in THESS 5:1-11 when Paul writes about THE TRIBULATION and the Believers and unbelievers)
- The **“alive”** are in **contrast** to **“those who are asleep”** / the **“Dead in Christ”**
 - This is **NOT** about the **“spiritual condition / faithfulness / status / vitality”** of the believers
 - **BUT** about their **“physical condition / status / vitality”**
 - ALL the **“Dead in Christ...”** are included **w/o regard** to their **“spiritual status”** only that when they were alive, they **“believed...”**
 - Paul fully expected to be in this company of **“the Alive”** ones... as did he expect the Thessalonian saints to be...
 - Paul makes NO distinction in the **“spiritual condition”** of the recipients of his **LETTER...** Nowhere does Paul indicate it is for **“some of you”** or limit it to **“if you...”**

WE WHO REMAIN

“[we] Who Are Left...” – *“to remain there / to be left behind / to survive when others perished / or to remain while others departed to another place”* –

- This is also in opposition to **“those fallen asleep”** NOT to the **“spiritual standing”** of the recipients
- The ones who remain **“alive”** are the same ones who **“have been left behind...”**
- The **“dead in Christ”** are WITH Him in Heaven... they have **“departed to another place”**

SHALL NOT PRECEDE

1 THESS 4:15 *“...that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.”*

- **“will not have the potential to suddenly come ahead of...”** – The **“Living”** **come after** the **“Dead”**
- There is a **“honor”** given to the **“dead in Christ”** – they **“died in faith”**
HEB 11:13 *“These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar...”*
- Although there will be NO distinction in Heaven... **THIS is granted to them as a First Reward...**

NO Basis for a “Partial” Rapture... -

- **“WE”** applies both to those who are **“Alive”** and to those who **“Remain”** –
- **Grammatically they are the SAME ones...**
- Just as ALL the **“dead in Christ”** are raised... and **“caught-up”** ... -
- So also, ALL the **“alive in Christ”** are also **“caught-up...”** and will be together WITH them ... –

The End Times Chart

"THE PRE-TRIBULATIONAL ... PRE-MILLENNIAL VIEWPOINT"

