

Sunday September 21<sup>st</sup> 2014  
From Here To Eternity  
Part One

Introduction – In the next few weeks we are going to set out in some detail the things it would be good for us to know about that will take place between now and the endless ages we call eternity future, and everything that we can know about that which is to come will have the most profound impact on our present – and so as we begin today we will realize that there is a point on the line depicting God’s 7000 year plan which says, ‘You Are Here’. But before we go on from here to eternity let’s make absolutely sure that we know exactly where we are, not only in terms of time, but also in terms of the fulfillment of our high calling.

1). And so to begin let’s look at that recorded in -1Th 5:1 ¶ *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 ¶ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.*

a). Paul writing to the ‘Church’ in Thessalonica has just told them, at the end of the previous chapter, about the nature of the resurrection/rapture of the ‘church’, showing them that ‘the dead in Christ’ would rise first – this being the resurrection of all the eternally saved from this dispensation who have physically died, and that those who are eternally saved, who ‘are alive and remain’, shall be ‘caught up together with them’ – this being the rapture.

b). And Paul had written about this as he did not want the 'church', which of necessity would have to include us, to be ignorant concerning those who had died and that they should 'comfort one another with these words'.

c). He wanted then, to make absolutely sure that the 'church' understood what would take place when the resurrection/rapture happens and for the church to know what is implicit in the event itself, that judgment will follow - 2Co 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

d). Then as we move into Chapter 5 of 1 Thessalonians we see that Paul is not concerned with the 'when' of the resurrection/rapture of the 'church' but with the preparedness of those who wait patiently for it in the full knowledge of the judgment that awaits them and the glorious Kingdom beyond judgment to follow for those found faithful - Tit 2:11 ¶ *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

2Ti 4:8 *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

2). In 1Th 5:1 Paul says - ¶ *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.*

a). There is no need for Paul to write concerning 'the times or the seasons' with respect to the resurrection/rapture, because these are things that should already be known - we are to know about the 6 days of work and the 7<sup>th</sup> Day of rest from the foundation in Genesis and how this pictures for us the events surrounding Man's Day and the Millennial Kingdom which is to come as we see them in the Revelation and elsewhere in the scriptures, remembering that - Heb 4:9 *There remains therefore a rest [Sabbath rest] for the people of God.*

And keeping in mind the warning that accompanies this promise - Heb 4:11 ¶ *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

And in the use of the word 'diligent' with respect to entering 'that rest' we see the absolute importance of proper preparedness.

b). And in conjunction with this we are to know that now is the season for us to be at work in that typified by Ruth gleaning in Boaz's field as we look out ahead to the Sabbath rest that remains – Ru 2:8 *Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. 9 "Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." .....23 So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.*

c). Barley was the first harvest of the year, and it was a sheaf of barley that the Priest took to wave before the Lord on the Feast of Firstfruits, a feast that has to do with resurrection – Our Lord was resurrected at this feast, on the day the sheaf of barley was waved, and many OT saints came from their graves at that time also, an event which anticipates the fulfillment of this feast yet future beyond the Tribulation when all the OT saints will be raised from the dead - Mt 27:52 *and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*

Eze 37:4 *Again He said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! 5 'Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. 6 "I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.""*

d). Now wheat is a harvest that speaks of both death and resurrection as we would see from - Joh 12:24 *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

What we see here is that death must occur if fruit is to be produced and the only way that fruit can be produced following death is through the power of the Spirit in resurrection.

e). And so, taking what is pictured through the barley harvest and the wheat harvest together we would see the beginning point of our eternal salvation, where we passed from death into life immediately followed by that

pictured through baptism - Col 2:12 *buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

Which will now make possible for the one baptized to walk in the spirit and not in the flesh as they look to the Kingdom which is to come - Col 3:1 ¶ *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*

All of which we find typified through the barley harvest. This is then to be continued by a lifetime of dying to self in order to produce much fruit in anticipation of this coming Kingdom - Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

Ga 6:7 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

Ga 4:30 *Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."*

And perhaps it would be good for us to remember here that it is only the man of the spirit who can receive an inheritance; the man of the flesh is to receive nothing, and according to our scripture is to be cast out – this is another way of describing our dying to self.

f). Then within the overall framework of this picture from Ruth we must also include the journey to Bethlehem and the preparations for meeting Boaz on his threshing floor – all under the guidance of Naomi, a picture of the Word of God given through the nation of Israel.

g). The purpose for the journey must be known in order for it to be made, just as God made known to Abraham the purpose of his journey before he left Ur of the Chaldeans, and made known to Moses the purpose for his journey and the journey to be made by the children of Israel before they left Egypt.

h). And so, to know the seasons is to know the purpose for that typified through the barley and wheat harvests and to realize that this is the time in which we are to work in anticipation of the Sabbath rest that remains for us – it is to know the purpose for our journey and then to make that journey and the preparations that accompany it under the sole direction of the Word of

God by the Holy Spirit so that we may be victorious in the spiritual warfare – just as we had seen with respect to the OT saints in – Heb 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.*

3). If we return to our opening verses from 1 Thessalonians we find this in – 1Th 5:2 *For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.*

a). The eternally saved in Thessalonica, and by extension ourselves, 'know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night' – it comes as a thief in the night though only for those who are not prepared for it and the example Paul draws from to show this is that of Israel during the first half of the Tribulation as we would see from the reference to 'labor pains upon a pregnant woman' which calls to mind - Re 12:1 ¶ *Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.*

b). 'Peace and safety!' would be the cry of unrepentant Israel, not only at the beginning of the Tribulation when the peace treaty is made with Antichrist, but also at the mid-point in the Tribulation once the 2 witnesses have been killed in the streets of Jerusalem - Re 11:10 *And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.*

This deceptive peace and safety is short lived though as sudden destruction comes upon them and they shall not escape when Antichrist declares himself to be God and begins his genocidal move against the Jewish people – Lu 21:24 *"And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

c). To say this as plainly as possible, there is no compromise to be made with the enemy of our soul as his aim is our destruction, just as his aim remains to destroy Israel. Consequently let us never think that the man of the flesh and the man of the spirit can live together in harmony within our body – 'Peace and safety!' - this is an impossibility – there is no peace treaty to be

made with our sin nature - Ga 4:29 *But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.*

Ro 7:18a *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells;*

d). If we should ever come to the place of thinking that our old man, our sin nature, is not as bad as he used to be then we are drowning in deception – Eph 4:22 *that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

e). There is only one course of action for us, which we already know, we are to be renewed in the spirit of our mind through the Word of God and as a consequence of this we will follow that given to us in - Ro 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

Ro 6:12 *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

Col 3:5 ¶ *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

f). As a consequence of having been taught these things through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit that which Paul writes to those in Thessalonica in v4-5 of our opening scripture is also true for us - 1Th 5:4 *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.*

g). Again, the coming of ‘this Day’, which within our context would refer to the resurrection/rapture of the ‘church’ and the judgment that follows, is not a matter of timing, but a matter of preparedness – we all know that this Day is coming, but it will still be ‘as a thief in the night’ for those who are not spending their present in preparing for it as it will overtake them while they are still not ready for it. Remember the foolish virgins - Mt 25:6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'" 7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish*

*said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

4). As we continue in our verses from 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5 we find an admonition that we can also take as a warning - 1Th 5:6 ¶ *Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.*

a). There is then the possibility even for those who are no longer in darkness that they might sleep and be drunk – returning as it were to the night.

b). And we would see sleeping and drunkenness here used in a metaphorical sense to represent those things that would distract us from watching and being sober, or serious minded, concerning the salvation of our soul.

c). Within the continuous conflict between the soul and the spirit it is possible for us to become discouraged and tired, and therefore distracted from our purpose looking for what would be a false rest; but let's remember what the scripture says - Ga 6:8 *For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

d). And to avoid growing weary and losing heart we are to engage in the opposite of that seen through sleep and drunkenness – we are to watch, to be constantly on guard against the world, the flesh and the devil and to have a serious mindset concerning our present pilgrim journey, something that is made possible through that seen in - Eph 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be [continually] filled with the Spirit,* The constant renewing of our mind through the Word of God, always with a view to the coming Kingdom of Christ - 1Th 5:8 *But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.*

e). The imagery in this verse inevitably calling to mind the spiritual warfare and the whole armor of God from Ephesians Chapter 6.

f). At Kadesh Barnea the first generation of Israel to come out of Egypt lost heart because the task before them appeared in their own eyes to be too great - Nu 13:31 *But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."*

g). But that which was a lie for Israel then is just as great a lie for us today.

h). The truth remains the truth - Nu 13:30 *Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."*

i). Let's remember - 1Th 5:9 *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake [remain alive] or sleep [die], we should live together with Him.*

j). That which God has appointed us to, 'salvation [of the soul] through our Lord Jesus Christ', can without doubt be attained and He has provided everything necessary for us to be successful in this – once again should we fail and find wrath instead of salvation it will be because we have chosen not to believe that which God has said and will not, as a result, have governed our lives in the appropriate fashion – remember what scripture says about Israel – Heb 3:19 *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

k). Complacency, lethargy and acquiescence to our sin nature are an unholy trinity that can easily cause havoc amongst those who have begun their journey towards the Kingdom – let's remember that it was when Israel was camped at Rephidim that the attack of the Amalekites came.

l). And as we consider our position in our own race of faith here let's also remember our responsibility towards one another - 1Th 5:11 ¶ *Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.*

5). Now with respect to time our current location, our 'here' is a good deal easier to place. That pictured through the sacrifice of Abel has been fulfilled and that pictured through Noah remains yet future and between these 2 points is that pictured through Enoch. And so we find ourselves in time then beyond that pictured through the type of Abel and before that pictured through the type of Enoch.

a). And we might be interested to know that Enoch, who pictures for us the resurrection/rapture of the 'church', and is the foundational type for the

faithful Christian – that the name Enoch is derived from the Hebrew word ‘chanak’ [khaw-nak] that means ‘to train up’.

b). And like Enoch, we can see all that we have looked at today as being the child training of the Lord – we in this sense are to become Enoch, to be trained up in anticipation of that which Enoch pictures, the resurrection/rapture of the ‘church’.

c). Within the overall structure then of God’s 7 days as detailed in – 2Pe 3:8 ¶ *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* 9 ¶ *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.* 10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.....*

Within this overall structure we can easily find our place that says, ‘You Are Here’ – and we may well be excited by what we see as our proximity to the return of our Lord for His Church, but our excitement will be no more than a hollow sham unless we are properly prepared for when that day comes.

d). It is an absolute certainty that we will all go from here to eternity and that every event that we shall see prophetically laid out for us will be fulfilled and so with that in mind the much more important consideration for us is not where we are in time, but where we are in our preparedness for our appearance at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

e). And as we close for today, thinking of where we are in our preparations for standing before our Lord, we would each individually have to draw the line that says, ‘You Are Here’.

f). Heb 10:35 *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.* 36 *For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:* 37 *"For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.* 38 *Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."* 39 *But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

g). We shall continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.