

Sunday October 12th 2014
From Here To Eternity
Part Four

1). 1Th 4:16 *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.....*

a). At the precise moment that God has set, at the end of 2000 years according to His calendar, the event described in our verses here from 1 Thessalonians will become a reality; for our part there will be no warning and no countdown, no waiting at the gate for our heavenward flight - in fact the scripture says - Lu 12:40 *"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

b). The Lord's descent from heaven with a shout will come at an hour we do not expect - the thought being that we will be engaged in some activity where Christ's return for His Church is not uppermost in our minds. This being so, just as we have seen over and over in past weeks, our preparedness is the key, which is why we are admonished, 'you also be ready'.

c). Now not only will the resurrection/rapture of the church come at an hour we do not expect, but the event itself is so rapid as to be over before we will be cognizant of what is happening - 1Co 15:51 ¶ *Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

d). No doubt we might remember that the phrase 'in the twinkling of an eye' is a translation of the Greek word 'atamos', which speaks of the smallest particle of time possible.

e). There will then be no seeing one another as we fly through the sky, no opportunity for that last minute repentance - we will either be ready or we won't be ready, it is as simple as that.

f). It might also cross some people's minds that as we stand at the Judgment Seat there will be some time for confession and repentance before our name is called - but the evidence of scripture shows that this will not be the case at all as when we see the whole 'church' in Christ's presence in

Revelation, following the resurrection/rapture Christ is shown to be Judge and no longer High Priest – that ministry ends the moment the trumpet sounds. Then in addition to this let's remember some verses from a previous study - Mt 24:40 *"Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.*

The two men and the two women we will remember exemplify the all-inclusive nature, for Christians, of the resurrection/rapture, and we can see both pairs engaged in their normal, everyday activity, just as we had seen earlier, so that the Lord's coming is at an hour they do not expect.

g). And then in that 'twinkling of an eye' they find themselves in the place where one is taken alongside Christ as His companion and the other is left, not becoming a companion of Christ. Here then is the separation between those who are faithful and those who are unfaithful – a separation based entirely upon that which each one will have done, or will not have done to be ready for this moment.

h). In this sense then our judgment is not about deciding whether or not we have been faithful, but about receiving that which we deserve as a consequence of our having run the race of faith or not - 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.* Mt 13:49 *"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

2). And what we see here is perfectly consistent with that which we already know concerning judgment in relation to eternal issues - Joh 3:18 *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

a). The word translated 'condemned' here can just as readily be translated 'judged' as it refers to one and the same thing.

b). And what we see here is that those who believe are not judged with respect to their eternal destination, whereas those who do not believe are already judged, even before they arrive at the Great White Throne.

c). So then, a person will never stand before the Lord to be judged as to whether they are eternally saved or eternally lost, that is already determined by their believing on the Lord Jesus Christ or not – For the eternally lost then,

their appearance at the Great White Throne is for them to receive the consequences of not having believed with respect to God's provision for sin – whether the death of an animal before the cross or the death and shed blood of our Lord afterwards.

d). And this is exactly how we need to view our appearance at Christ's Judgment Seat - Our eternal salvation is based upon Christ's finished work in the past and the salvation of our soul is based on Christ's High Priestly ministry in the present – also based on His finished work in the past.

e). Christ's blood on the Mercy Seat in the Heavenly tabernacle for the sins of the saved has been there since Christ entered the Tabernacle as our High Priest following His ascension. He does not put new blood there every time we confess. And the blood on the Mercy Seat makes atonement for our sins as we confess them.

f). The sins that we commit have already incurred the penalty that goes with them at the time we commit them - Ro 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, We will either receive those wages or else appropriate the blood on the Mercy Seat through the ministry of our High Priest instead – as with the eternal aspect of salvation, the choice is ours. - Le 17:11 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'*

g). And in connection with this let's also remember - Joh 19:34 *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

h). The blood here, through the opening of the Lord's side after His death, is the blood now found on the Mercy Seat, and it must be seen in connection with the forming of the Bride of Christ in the antitype of the Woman built from the Man's side once he was put into a deep sleep as seen in Genesis Chapter 2. And in addition to this we have to incorporate the water coming from the Lord's side into this process - Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

i). You see it is not sufficient for us to think about just confessing our sin by itemizing it as we would a shopping list. There is a whole process of cleansing in connection with confession that must be engaged in, as we would note from our Lord's actions on the night of the last supper - Joh 13:8 *Peter*

said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

A principle brought to our attention again by the Apostle John in –
1Jo 1:7 *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

j). The 'washing of water by the word' speaks of the renewing of our mind - 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.*

It speaks of 'putting off' 'the old man' and putting on 'the new man' in his stead, all of which can only be accomplished through a proper scriptural engagement with the Word, which flushes out, so to speak, the sin in our life.

k). Although we know this present truth, let's remind ourselves once again - Ro 14:23b.....*for whatever is not from faith is sin.*

From God's perspective then whatever is not based on knowing, believing and acting upon His Word, having faith to the saving of the soul, is sin. Those things that we may quantify as sin are really no more than a manifestation of our unbelief – unbelief being the sin that we need to deal with - Heb 3:19 *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

Heb 12:1 ¶ *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*

It is because of the sin of unbelief that Israel failed to receive their inheritance in the land of promise having come out of Egypt and because of unbelief that they must undergo the horrors of the Tribulation – and we would do well to realize that God views unbelief on our part with exactly the same lack of tolerance as He does with Israel - Heb 2:3 *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,*

l). And again, to state the obvious, if we don't continue steadfastly in the Word, if we neglect its proper study, if we conform ourselves to this world rather than being transformed by the renewing of our mind then we can only expect disaster beyond that split second, when we appear before the Lord. After all - Ro 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

And we have just seen that whatever is not from faith is sin, and we know that without faith it is impossible to please Him.

m). If our consistent engagement with the Word comes low down on our list of priorities it is time for a change before the change comes for all time. Remember - Ga 6:7 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

n). So then, following the split second that takes us to Christ's Judgment Seat our faithfulness or our unbelief is already known; there will be no trial to examine evidence so as to make a decision, no plea bargain to be made, only a just recompense of reward to be received – we have seen the outcome for one group who try to negotiate with the Lord in that Day - Mt 7:21 ¶ *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*

If we want to hear those words, 'Well done good and faithful servant.....' in the future then it must be that we are a faithful servant in His House now, in the present.

o). The verses that follow on from those we have just looked at in Matthew Chapter 7 should speak volumes to us - Mt 7:24 *"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."*

p). The onus is upon us to believe that which the Lord has said through His Word while we have the opportunity to do so - 1Co 11:31 *For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.*

q). Remembering by way of encouragement - 2Pe 1:3 *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,*

3). Ru 3:1 ¶ *Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? 2 "Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. 3 "Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself,*

put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 "Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do." 5 And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do." 6 ¶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. 7 And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. 8 Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.

a). Here in the Book of Ruth we see that Boaz is 'winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor'. At the conclusion of the winnowing the grain has been separated from the chaff with the heap of grain remaining and the chaff blown away – here then is a foundational picture for all that we have been looking at today – beyond the separation of the grain from the chaff there remains only Ruth, the picture of faithful Christians, those Christians who have properly availed themselves of the blood and the water, having washed themselves, anointed themselves and having put on their best garment, before appearing on the threshing floor.

b). Beyond 'the twinkling of an eye' the separation will have immediately taken place, the angels coming forth to separate the wicked from the just, leaving those faithful Christians who comprise the Bride of Christ in the Lord's presence just as we see pictured with Ruth – 1Pe 1:7 *that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

They will have been called out of the called, their souls will have been saved, their adoption as a firstborn son complete and their bodies redeemed, now having a covering of glory, and as with Ruth the presence of this group before their Lord in their fully redeemed condition cries out to Him - Ru 3:9 *And he said, "Who are you?" So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative."*

c). Simply put, Ruth asks Boaz to marry her and redeem the inheritance and in the antitype of this the very presence of the Bride of Christ before the Lord, without having to speak the words, will make the same declaration.

d). No one will be in this group by accident, no one will be in this group without having set their heart on being there, no one will be in this group without having had faith to the saving of the soul.

e). And just as Boaz responds to Ruth - Ru 3:11 *"And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman.*

So Christ will respond to His Bride.

4). We have spoken in previous weeks of the dramatic and rapid change that comes about with the resurrection/rapture of the 'Church' and just how dramatic the change is and will become can be seen in the events that immediately follow the Judgment Seat - Re 4:1 ¶ *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. 3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. 8 ¶ The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

a). The verses here in revelation Chapter 4 may be so familiar to us that we miss the enormity of what is taking place here. We know that the events described here take place beyond the Judgment Seat and therefore at a time following the Bride of Christ having been revealed, but let's remember that those pictured in this scene will have just witnessed the events of the Judgment Seat, they will have witnessed the salvation of the soul, that which is

described as 'so great salvation' - 1Pe 1:12 *To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into.*

Here then, if we can say it this way, is the beginning of the culmination of God's plans and purposes for the ages set in place from 'in beginning' – a time when as we see from Job - Job 38:7 *When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

Here is the certainty of a complete change in the rulership of the heavens and the earth with the future promise of a new heavens and new earth in which righteousness will dwell, something that will impact every province of God's universe in the endless ages to come.

b). So it is not surprising that we see - *10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

c). And we should see this as more than just a relinquishing of the elders' crowns of rulership so that they can be worn by those constituting the Bride during the Millennium, which of course is true, but we should see this also as a supreme act of worship and homage to the Creator of all with an inexpressible joy in His goodness and grace and mercy – here then is a moment for which these angels have been waiting for millenniums.

d). This might give us a glimpse of how dramatic a change is taking place with the resurrection/rapture of the 'church'.

5). Ru 4:5 *Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance." 6 And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it." 7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel. 8 Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." So he took off his sandal. 9 ¶ And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi.*

a). Following Ruth's appearance on Boaz's threshing floor at midnight, it is the following day that Boaz goes to the gate of the city where all legal transactions are conducted in order to redeem the inheritance.

b). And as we see there is a 'closer relative' who has the first right to redeem the inheritance for himself.

c). And that which we find pictured here in Ruth Chapter 4 takes us to the antitype of these verses found in Revelation Chapter 5 - Re 5:1 ¶ *And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." 6 ¶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" 14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.*

a). It is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb as though it had been slain who is found worthy to open the seven sealed scroll – a scroll that contains the terms of the redemption of the inheritance, a redemption brought

about through judgment, which is why Christ is described as both the Lamb and the Lion.

b). And in the antitype of that seen in Ruth Chapter 4, God the Father is seen as 'the closer' relative who cannot redeem the inheritance for Himself lest He ruin His own inheritance.

c). This though will have to wait until next time – if the Lord is willing.