

W217_The_second_advent_New_Testament.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book. Under the covering title of Christian Fundamentals. And the subtitle The Second Coming of Christ as taught in the New Testament. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of scripture together. And those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, we do switch off for a moment or two while we read from one Thessalonians chapter three and chapter five. This evening, we focus our attention upon the testimony of this one epistle. First Thessalonians two, the great subject which is before us, the second coming of Christ. In our previous study, we assembled together the seven epistles that were written during the Acts of the Apostles and ran through their testimony. But it would be presumption to assume that either you or I, by running through 70 epistles, could say, Well, we know all about that. And now we're coming to the One epistle and letting that speak its own peculiar message. But however it speaks, we are conscious of this that it will be in perfect harmony with the will of God at the time. In other words, the second coming of Christ is as much associated with Dispensational truth as any other feature. Because. Hope is associated in the New Testament with two distinct things. Hope in the New Testament is either the realization of your calling or the fulfillment of a promise. And in both cases.

[00:01:47] This promise or this calling is essentially related to whether the people of Israel are a factor in the scheme or whether you have reached that time when they were dismissed, when they took their hope with them, when the covenant, as it were, was suspended and God made a new revelation through his servant, Paul, as the prisoner of Jesus Christ for US Gentiles. The New Testament also uses words with regard to the Second Coming with discrimination. The key word for the second coming of Christ in the early part of the New Testament is the word Parousia. There is also 1 or 2 or 1 or 2 references which use the word apocalypse. But the word which peculiarly belongs to the church of the dispensation of the mystery is not the word. Parousia is never used of it. It is the word epiphaneia or our word. We say epiphany. Well, now, if God has chosen to use distinct words, then coming back to a principle that I've stressed before, the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, they must be respected. Well, now, first of all. I do not say that it is wrong. That would be very wrong of me to criticize anybody. That there should be a distinct movement to testify to the second coming of Christ. All we need

these movements to stir up the mind and focus attention about the New Testament doesn't do that. Paul doesn't write an epistle all about the second coming.

[00:03:23] He relates the second coming to their calling and to their manner of life. And so the first thing I want you to remember is that we must not. Either in this subject or any other. Just pick out a text and shut the book and then give an exposition of the text for we shall only mislead ourselves and others. The Second coming is an integral part interwoven in the teaching of this epistle, and we must see that interwoven first before we take out one thread and examine it. When you see this chart before you, you already have before your eyes the idea that there is a three fold cord and that three fold cord is sounded in the first chapter. It's. So it's taken to pieces in chapter three and four and five comes back again together. All you say. That's very clear. Yes, I know. All right. We'll start. On the top of the chart, I've listed out the three words. He says in this second verse, We give thanks to God always for you all making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience, of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. Those three words are characteristic of Paul's teaching. You remember one Corinthians 13 where he, after speaking about the wonder of miraculous gifts, says there's a better way and speaks of love or charity as it's put there.

[00:04:57] And then he says, these gifts may pass, but now abide faith, hope, love those three. You'll find them coming together in the Epistle to the Romans and in the Epistle to the Hebrews and elsewhere. In fact. I suppose it would not be too bold to say that there is no doctrine in the New Testament that lies outside faith, hope and love. And practice is associated with those three. And if any believer knows that he has the work of faith and the patience of hope and the labor of love, well, he is well on the way to glory, isn't he? I think we'd all say that practically exhaust the bill. So you see, what I'm trying to show is this, that while we may, for the purposes of teaching, lift out faith or lift out hope or lift out love, they mustn't be lifted out and separated and put aside. They belong. So that while we are keen that this present moment should consider the teaching of the second coming of Christ, we're also keen about all the relationships that we bear one to another as members of his body or the justification by faith and all the doctrine and practice together. It makes us saner because you see, you say you believe in the secret rapture, so you turn to one Thessalonians four one, and regardless of anything that's already written, you prove it.

[00:06:21] Well, let's start, shall we? First of all, you will notice that I've set out on this chart the way in which the face and hope and love are brought together. We have them there in the first line. The work of faith, the labour of love and the patience of hope. And then we have, as you read in chapter three, an emphasis upon faith only. Oh, how concerned he is about their faith, comfort concerning your faith. He says that twice you notice not moved and stand fast and perfect with regard to your faith. And when the good tidings of your faith came, how it refreshed the apostle faith. Then he speaks about love one to another in the next section, chapter three, 12 to 412, and then in the last chapter, 413 to chapter 511. He has the emphasis upon hope. And when you come to the last chapter, you find that all three, not merely faith and hope and love, but all three are repeated in that chapter in case we missed it before, let's be sure. Chapters. Chapter five, verse eight. But let us order the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. There's the three. Then Presently he says. We beseech you, verse 12, We beseech you brethren to know them which labour among you. So he repeats the word labour. And then it says in verse 14 at the end, Be patient toward all men.

[00:08:00] And then it says, What do I want to work? Verse 13 Esteem Very highly, very highly in love for their works sake. It surely is not accidental that he starts with the word the work of faith, the labour of love, the patience of hope. And in the last chapter he brings all six words together again. And I think we do well, never to divorce them. Even James, you remember, draws our attention that faith without works is dead being alone and a person who goes all goofy over the second coming of Christ and is not walking worthy of his calling is not in harmony with this, for this speaks about a consistent walk and to live looking for that blessed hope you should, as it were, influence our lives and not merely give us ground of speculation. Well, so far, so good. Well, now we look at this first chapter and we observe when we reach the bottom that we have the first definite reference to the second coming in this epistle. And inasmuch as Galatians contains no reference to the second Coming in chapter one, verse nine and ten, we have the earliest reference to the second coming of Christ in Paul's epistles. And this matching in some measure set the course. He will not put a statement here and then contradict himself in the closing chapter, not the apostle, because he was writing under the inspiration of God.

[00:09:29] And quite apart from that, he was a man of truth and had ability to write and speak plainly. So verses nine and ten, for they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his son from heaven. I thought that at the bottom you see the work of faith, the labor of love, the patience of hope. And you turned and you serve and you wait. Well, that's an exposition of faith and hope of love, so far as it's beginning to be systematized by the apostle. But now notice this. They were to wait for his son from him. Well, you don't need to be even spiritual to know if you're waiting for somebody to come from heaven. You are not in heaven if you are waiting for his son from heaven. You can't be there already, can you? No. You say, Why press that? Oh, well, you've only got to go to the fourth chapter to find that some teachers that it is so. All right. The next thing is this. To wait for his time from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. So that these people were exposed to the wrath to come if they had not been believers in Christ, and only the blessed hope in front of them makes them sure that they will not pass through that wrath to come.

[00:10:57] Well, you know as well as I do, The Wrath to Come is focused in the Book of Revelation. The pouring out of the vials of wrath in them, The wrath of God is consummated. These people were liable if they hadn't entered into this blessed hope to be exposed to that dreadful day so far as they knew and so far as the apostle could tell them. Will you notice a further point with regard to this question of the wrath in chapter 216? Here we have somebody else, another company exposed to Ross. He says in verse 14, For you brethren became followers of the Churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus, for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us, and they pleased not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved to fill up their sins alway, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. So here are two companies one delivered from the wrath to come. The other exposed to that wrath, which fell in a few years time as recorded in Acts 28 and in history. When the Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple burned and destroyed and people scattered.

[00:12:33] So now we've got this people connected with the people of Israel at the very same time that these people were being converted and believing the people of Israel were subjecting themselves to this possibility of wrath to come because they forbade

the preaching of the gospel to those very gentiles. If we go a stage further in chapter five, verse nine. We read these words. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us. That whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. While living together with him is when and how all we are supposed to have read Chapter five. Verse 17, then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. So this, in this manner not going to glory independently, but going to glory at the second coming when he comes for his people. So the whole thing hangs together. We go back again. Chapter one. And to wait for his son from him. First of all, let's remember, we're not waiting or these were not waiting for the second coming. Second Coming is just an abstract title, isn't it? Never let us forget. It's the Lord himself. In Chapter four and in the Acts of the Apostles, this same Jesus, we're not waiting for the second coming.

[00:14:17] We're waiting for the second coming of Christ. Or, as he puts it, to wait for his son from heaven. So there is that feeling that we should live looking. Now the word patience is very much associated with the word wait and with the word watch. The word patience. Made up of two parts hypo meaning under and meno meaning to abide or remain to remain under. Are the word White is made of two parts. Anna Abbas Above and below to remain. To remain above. You see all we're not going to pull a long face and say, oh, we've got to remain under because the other words isn't all we're remaining above. On tiptoe because we've entered into the blessedness of it before it comes. We'll keep the two friends. Don't be among those people who are only happy when they're miserable. But don't you see here we have the thought expressed. Let patience have its perfect work, says James. And then the at the end of his epistle, he says, You've heard of the Patience of Job. You've seen the end of the Lord. So this patience has a place in things He does as a work to do. I've never met anybody who would not benefit by a little bit more patience of you because I don't like to speak about myself. I let other people talk about me over that. But patience is a wonderful thing. I remember in one of the lists that the Apostle gave of his qualifications as an apostle.

[00:16:03] It was the very first. He said, in all patience May he needed it, didn't he? But you see, we haven't got to go about drilling ourselves and making ourselves humble and patient. We've got that in front of us all the time, and that makes it easier for us to remain under. Of course, if this is the be all and the end all of your existence, will you

elbow the other man out of the way? You try to get his job because he gets a pound a week more. But you say, Well, what's the odds? You see short life and a gay one and whatnot. But supposing you say, I've got that blessed hope in front of me. Well, then the same spirit that actuated Moses when he refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter and chose rather to suffer with the people of God and enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season because he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He was losing nothing. So we remain under willingly. We we walk through this wilderness like we read in the Old Testament, that the children of Israel said, Let us go through the high way. We'll walk on our feet. We will pay for our bread. We will pay for our water. We won't turn aside left or right. We are travelling home. That's what we are doing through this world and we are sustained by this blessed hope to have that position that people might despise us for that we take it lying down, they think.

[00:17:26] You see, Well, we can smile. We can wait because the best is yet to be. Poor souls. If they have no hope, well, let them have their fling if they must. We are not envying them. And if they despise us, they despise the better one than ever we shall ever be. Except by grace in him, in the eyes of the Lord. Well, now we've got those two. Then in chapter one, nine and ten, we've got that weight from heaven balancing, as it were, The patience of the hope. Do take with you, won't you? The idea of the one is under and the one is over. We we're not got we haven't got one. We've got both. The patience is the ability to remain under. But the waiting is because you already got your affections set upon things above. Now see. Well, now the next thing is. I think we must come to chapter two, because there we have another reference to this same coming. He says in verse 19. And what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming. See, the word here is the word I mentioned just now the word Parousia. Forthcoming. There is no idea of movement in the word parousia.

[00:19:00] Our word cunning as got the thought of arriving. But it's the personal presence rather than a movement. The word was in ordinary everyday use in the days of the Apostle, and that has been quite proved by the papyrus that's been dug out of the sands of Egypt. The word is used for the preparation that was necessary in a town for the coming of a king. Unfortunately, the papyrus said that they were having to tax themselves to pay the expenses. But so far as our blessed hope is concerned, we are not going to pay any expenses. Blessed be God. They're all paid. But at the same time,

he is a word that means preparation for the personal advent of a king. Well, that's what they were waiting for. That is the word. And we find this in use in 24 passages. I don't think I can give you the 24, but you have access to concordance and you can search this for yourself, but I'll give you 1 or 2. Matthew 24 now. Matthew 24 we've already considered and it is associated with the hope of Israel and the kingdom. It's connected with the prophecy of Daniel. And here we have this word in Matthew 24, verse three. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately saying, Tell us when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the world? Thy coming.

[00:20:41] They wanted to know the sign of their coming. And in verse 30, then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn. And they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet. And they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other. That's what's going to take place at this parousia coming. And that is the word used in one Thessalonians. So either you see, we must be careful not to divorce it because that Matthew 24 and this one Thessalonians is still within the limits of the hope of Israel. Another reference that I think we ought to have is one Corinthians chapter 15:23. That. As I say, there are 24 references. I'm giving you just a selection. It says in verse 22. For as in Adam, all die. Even so, in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. And the word order there means every man in his own rank. Totally different ranks. And this book is a very chapter says one star differs from another, though they're both in glory. So in the second coming, there will be his feet standing in that day upon the Mount of Olives.

[00:22:07] There will be the meeting of the bridegroom and the bride in the heavenly Jerusalem. And there will be the manifestation in glory where Christ sits at the right hand of God. The hope being realized that each one of those callings and those distinct spheres or again. In this very episode one Thessalonians chapter three and 13, we read to the end. He may establish your hearts and blamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. When our guy. The coming of the Lord is coming with all his saints. And if those saints are the redeemed that are already in heaven, how? Oh, dear, dear, dear. How can you be waiting on earth for the Lord to come from heaven? And you're waiting to come with him? Don't you

see? But you say it says so. Yes, but then you see, what we've done is to misread this. We assume that with all his saints means with all his redeemed people, with his church. But if you go back to the Old Testament, you'll discover that this refers to the angels. Will you look at Deuteronomy 33 to. Deuteronomy 33 two. He said the Lord came from Sinai and rose up from Seir unto them. He shined forth from Mount Paran and he came with 10,000 of his saints. So here we have the coming of the Lord with all his saints. Well, if you read Psalm 68, you'll get another reference to the same event.

[00:24:02] Yeah. Psalm 68, verse 17. The Chariots of God are 20,000, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the Holy Place. So Deuteronomy and Psalm speaks about Mount Sinai and the Angels and their coming with the Lord and once more in the Prophet Zechariah. Chapter 14, verse one. The Prophet Zechariah. Chapter 14, verse one. I'm saying it 2 or 3 times because I can't find the place. Of course. Behold the day of the Lord cometh and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle. And then verse three, Shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle? And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a great valley and half of the mountain. Shall an office manager remove toward the north and half toward the south. Now, I was looking for the passage, which I haven't yet found. The Lord, my God shall come. And all the saints with thee. And I don't know whether anyone can help me over that. But if not, is it verse three? Verse five? Oh, yes.

[00:25:38] And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains. For the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal. Yea, you shall flee like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Isaiah King of Judah. Yes. Thank you. And the Lord, my God shall come. And all the saints with thee. Well, is anybody going to say that that refers to the church or the Lord? My God shall come and all the saints with thee. He is referring to that when he writes to them. You're waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. Will you turn to two Thessalonians Chapter one? Would you have to give two Thessalonians its own examination? But I paused a remark here that it's a poor line of teaching which has to say that one Thessalonians deals with the secret rapture of the church and two Thessalonians deals with something that's going to take place long afterwards. Who said so? Paul wrote to the same church within a month or two because

he's correcting things that they didn't understand. He's speaking about the same thing all the time. The same as one Corinthians is followed by two Corinthians and he refers to the same thing all the time. So here in this first chapter, it says verse seven, And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God.

[00:27:01] So the coming of the Lord with all his saints. Well, if you were living in that prospect, wouldn't you now say, Oh, thank God. I'm looking for his son from heaven who will deliver me from the wrath to come. I might have been left with those who know not God and believe not His gospel. And I should have been subject to that wrath instead. It all works together. It hangs together. For now, it's time for us to move to the one great passage with which we associate one Thessalonians Chapter four. And a good many of those who are listening to me say, Yes, I wish you got there earlier. Yes, I know you do. Because you see, we should have avoided all these other references and we could have got away with it, that this is a secret rapture and some are in heaven coming back with the Lord and whatnot. But you can't do it now. First of all, he says, I would not have you ignorant brethren. This is verse 13 of chapter four concerning them which are asleep. Do you notice that the Scripture speaks of those who have died as those who are asleep? Uh, I don't know whether I better do this, but I think perhaps as we read chapter five, I will draw your attention that the sleep and the waking in chapter four is not the sleep and the waking in chapter five.

[00:28:22] We have two words for sleep. One means to fall asleep involuntarily. That's death. The other means to sit down and fold your hands and go to sleep. That's laziness. And in the second chapter, he says. Verse ten who died for us that whether we are watchful or drowsy. Three, not whether we wake or sleep, but whether we are watchful or drowsy. We shall live together with him. But if you are not watchful and you are drowsy, you'll lose your crown. But you're not talking about that. He's talking about living with him. But that's another question. And we'll go back to one Thessalonians four. Them which are asleep that we sorrow not even as others which have no hope. He doesn't say we do not sorrow, for we have that most wonderful, outstanding example of one who stood by a grave and could say these words which no man on earth has ever said before, or can say, since I am the resurrection and the life. And yet, that very same chapter tells you that Jesus wept. So he doesn't say that we've got to be stoics and we've got to say that we have no sorrow. That would be untrue. But we do not sorrow as

those who have no hope. Have you ever had tears in your eyes and caught a rainbow? Well, if you have not. Next time you cry, you try it. You'll discover that you can get a rainbow with a tear.

[00:29:51] And that's what God wants us to do. Have your tears at human, but have them irradiated by his grace. That sunshine that's representing the hope to which we press. So here we have it. We sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even so, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him? There are those who think that this means they will bring he will bring with him from glory. But this has to do with those who are asleep and they are awakened and they come with him through that gracious work of God. For this, we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, this is introduced. Rather with a formality to make it a bit more serious that we which are alive. And remain that they remain on the earth until the coming of the Lord shall not prevent or go before them which are asleep. It evidently wishing them to say to see this. It says this I say unto the Word of the Lord. God is not going to have one part of his church in glory and the other part waiting. No. He says, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, with the Trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. They will rise first, then.

[00:31:26] We which are alive because it's human to realize that there will be some living on the earth when the last day comes. And God is prepared for both those multitudes that have died and the fewer number that are living in this way. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them. With them. You see. In the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so in like manner, just like that. And no other way shall we ever be with the Lord. And then the apostle puts the words wherefore comfort one another with these words. I don't know whether you've ever received a card from somebody telling you the death of some friend or loved one. I wonder whether you've ever had on that card the words which scripture says are a comfort to you. Because some people say to me, Well, there's no comfort in that. They want the comfort of the idea that when a person dies, you go straight away to glory or to some intermediate state. Scripture says he's asleep and they awaken together, not separate together, living and dead together. They assemble for somebody once said, I believe there's a little kindness there on the part of God. There'll be no anxiety of mother and father and child and whatnot. They'll all have looked round and seen whether

they're all there or not before they go into that great presence. Thou know. Well, now let's come back on our story a bit.

[00:33:04] What about this voice of the archangel? Why should he be brought into it? Will you come to think of the archangel? Who is the archangel? Well, we better settle that first. And we. The epistle of Jude. That immediately before the book of the revelation and prepares for it to a large extent. It says in verse nine. Yet Michael the Archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses Durst, not bring against him a railing accusation, but said the Lord rebuked thee. Well, the only thing I'm doing for the moment is to show you the passage which tells you that the archangel. Now, you see in in the Church of England, there are two first bishops, archbishops. They manage it all right. But there's only one archangel one, and it should be so. The word ark means one. Or the first. Now, this archangel is disputed. The very next book says that there was war in heaven and Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. He is disputing. And when you come to the book of Daniel. An angel is held up by an angel of darkness for 21 days until Michael Lee comes to his rescue. The chief prince. So he's contending this is this is this is the sort of field marshal of God's battalions, Michael. His references in Jude in the Book of Revelation, in the book of Daniel.

[00:34:56] Then one other feature, if you go back to the book of Daniel, will link him with this people and not with the church as we understand it. Daniel The 12th chapter, or as I have referred to an earlier chapter, we will look at chapter ten just in passing. Daniel the 10th chapter. Indistinct chatter. As we've said, the angel was sent with a message to Daniel, but he was intercepted. And he says in verse. 11 year old Daniel, a man, greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee and stand upright for unto thee. Have I now sent? And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. And then he said unto me, Fear not Daniel, for from the first day that thou did set thine heart to understand that the chasten thyself before thy God. Thy words were heard. And I am come for thy words. But the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withheld me one and 20 days. So he is a man praying and God sending the message. And yet the evil one has such power that he can hold up an angel from heaven by 21 days. Anyone who discredits Satan and belittles him is only serving the evil purposes of that dark prince. So it says here. But the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withheld me one and 20 days

and low. Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

[00:36:37] Well, that was the one reference, and the other is chapter 12. The first verses. And at that time shall Michael stand up the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people. Who were the children of Daniel's people? The Church. Israel. When Michael stands up as Israel in view. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even at that same time. So when Michael stands up, the Great Tribulation comes, which is described in other scriptures in Matthew 24, in other parts of the Scriptures, as lasting for roughly three years and a half. And at that time, thy people shall be delivered, every one that would be found written in the book, and many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. So we've got Daniel associated with a conflict with the sleeping, with the waking, with the people of Israel and his introduced right straight into one Thessalonians four. And unless it's done to deceive us, it should warn us that we're still on the ground where that people, Israel and their hope are in view. I don't think there's very much more to say with regard to the teaching of this book with regard to the Second Coming, unless we just look say at. The verse 11 in chapter five, where after going through the story again, he says, wherefore, comfort yourselves together. There is such a thing in the Scripture as the comfort of hope and the emphasis too.

[00:38:26] I'll come back to Chapter four for a moment. One other feature which slipped the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. The shift. I don't know whether that takes you back in mind to the time when the children of Israel walked round the walls of Jericho and two things took place. They sounded a trumpet. And on the seventh day when they sounded the trumpet. Joshua said. And when you do at that time, shout, Let no man shout. Till that time he gives them explicit instruction. So we have the seventh trumpet and the shout. Well, one Corinthians 15 says at the last Trump. Well, as far as we've got any information in the scripture, the seventh trumpet is the last Trump and the Shout and the archangel is taking us once more back to Jericho, on to the Babylon that falls in the Book of Revelation. And so places one Thessalonians four directly in line with the hope of Israel, which the Apostle said in the last chapter of the acts held in bound with a chain. Now, there are some folks who will resist this. I remember many years ago when I was writing in Things to Come, and that goes back to

the year 1911, I think 1910. Somebody wrote a fierce letter to Dr. Bullinger and said that this man myself was stealing one Thessalonians from him.

[00:40:04] Well, Dr. Bullinger wrote a nice, kindly letter and it simmer down. But here's the thing I would like to tell you. In about two years time, that very same correspondent wrote back and said, I hadn't stolen anything at all. For he woke up to see that the Blessed Hope was not necessarily limited to one Thessalonians four. So there's hope for me yet, friends. And if you are listening, feel that you have been robbed. Well, search and see. You're the bereans. I'm only just trying to put over to you what I see in Scripture, but I'm not making up your mind for you. You search and see. But I suggest to you that if you take these passages as they come in Thessalonians, you're waiting for his son from heaven who delivers from the wrath to come. You're looking for the coming of the Lord with all his holy ones. That's the angels. And that takes you back again to the Old Testament. You're waiting for the voice of the archangel that stands for the Children of Israel. And also when he stands up the time of tribulation. And then you say you're going to avoid the light by a secret rapture. It won't fit for it. There is an avoidance of it. It belongs to another calling and another company. So I'll leave it with you for the time being that you, as I say, exercise the marine spirit. You search and see, and then may God give you the comfort of the hope.

[00:41:23] Now, next time we meet together, we shall have to consider the relationship between one Thessalonians and two Thessalonians. And if we are agreed that the second Epistle cannot possibly refer to a distinct company altogether, when he's writing to the self-same church at the selfsame time and referring to the self-same things we shall discover, it takes us right into the book of the revelation to the dominion of the man of sin, and consequently cannot possibly refer to the church which is the body of Christ, for it has no reference to that particular time at all. We are already finding anticipated a little bit in the passage we read just now in chapter five, because there he says, you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. He is telling them they have no need to be told the times and seasons because they knew already. And what they did know was the day of the Lord came as a thief in the night. He didn't say, You will never be there, but it says it won't overtake you as a thief because you're of the day and light. You will have the light of the knowledge of truth. Others will be overtaken because are unbelievers. So we shall find the day of the Lord again. Comes in two Thessalonians. And I think for the moment we'll leave it there.

