Psalm 2, then begin #1 Thessalonians

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I thought that we should go ahead and study both Thessalonians and possibly both Timothys so that, then, we will have studied most of Paul's teachings with the exception of the large ones: Romans and both Corinthians. I'll need to do some weight lifting before we tackle those three; we'll save those for a later time unless we find God pushing us to go there... we'll see.

Before we go on to the introduction to 1 Thessalonians, I want to look at Psalms 2 because it prophetically describes the World as it is now:

Psalm 2: Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?

[2] The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying,*
[3] "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."

[4] He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision.
[5] Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure:
[6] "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."

[7] "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You.
[8] Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.
[9] You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "

[10] Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth.
[11] Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
[12] Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish *in* the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

Verse 1: Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?

This is our World today. Over the past 18 months, those who rule, in the kingdom of darkness, under the prince of darkness willingly submit, while teaching and believing that lucifer is, in fact, the good god, the one who sacrificed his place in Heaven in order to bring wisdom and freedom to man.

Politicians, celebrities and musicians: all who 'make it,' today, have aligned themselves with darkness; those who rule the politicians, celebrities and musicians: they worship lucifer willingly. 500,000 children go missing every year, in this country alone. The numbers around the World are even more staggering. Most of those are pressed into sexual service while many are sacrificed on alters to satan.

The religion of Babylon, with child sacrifice, has never disappeared; it has spread around the World and today, it is the true religion of the ruling elite.

These people, led by lucifer and his minions, have been planning their World-wide rebellion against God for thousands of years. That rebellion will finally culminate in the worship of Antichrist and the war of Armageddon when the Lord Jesus Christ returns, with us, to destroy His enemies and to set up His Millennial Kingdom where we will rule and reign with Him for 1000 years and then forever.

All of this is true; I won't take time to prove it, it would take so many pages... books, actually... but believe me, I've done the research and it is absolutely true and it goes so much deeper than what I am saying now.

You may think I sound like a conspiracy theorist but the reality is, God's Word predicted this time; He said there would be a World-wide conspiracy of the highest order among the ruling elite: Verse 2 goes on:

The *kings of the earth* set themselves, and the *rulers take counsel together*,
Against the LORD and against His Anointed,

It could not be more clearly stated than that. The kings and those who are above the kings, the true rulers, around the World, conspire together against God and against His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every one of them is submitted to an evil spirit which guides them into lucifer's plan. That plan is, first, to throw off any caution or restraint of Christianity:

saying, [3] "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us."

What are the bonds and cords from God? The caution and restraint found in God's Word.

They are finally making their move, all around the World; they have used, and continue to use, this manufactured 'pandemic' to pull all people, everywhere into their power and under their control and it is we, Christians, who are being marginalized, now, just like the Jews were in early 1930's Germany and anyone who does not see it, is simply not paying attention. It was Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda chief, who said: 'If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for *the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie*, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.'

Those in power are telling very big lies and repeating them constantly; those who are blind and deaf to the truth are believing those lies, wholeheartedly.

God prophesied, through David, about our time, now, in these Last Days.

But: [4] He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision.
God is not concerned nor does He worry; neither should we. He is in complete control and everything is running smoothly toward His planned conclusion. Blessedly for us, His plan is also to remove us, at any moment, before the final 7 years begins.

The stage is being set; all the pieces are being placed in their proper position. All that remains, before God unleashes His Wrath on this World, which has despised and rejected His Son, is our sudden disappearance.

[5] Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: 'talk about an understatement.' He will unleash His righteous fury on this wicked World. But, He said to us, through His message to the Church at Philadelphia, 'Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold*, I am coming quickly!* Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.' Rev 3:10
The stage is now set for the final act of unrighteous Man's rule on Earth. God has His planned culmination:
[6] "Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion."

[7] "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You.

[8] Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.
He will rule in Righteousness and absolute control: no longer the humble suffering Servant:

[9] You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "

Here is God's advice to those who will hold positions of National leadership in His Son's Millennial Kingdom:

[10] Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth.
[11] Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
[12] Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish *in* the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

That time is coming soon; the time for it to begin is very soon, possibly today!

Jesus said that the generation which witnessed Israel's rebirth, in 1948, would not pass away until everything, including the 7 year Tribulation, was concluded. If the Rapture happens today, the length of that final generation will be 80 years. 1948 to 2021+7=80. A generation in the Bible is usually 40 to 70 years. We are already long past due. That's where we are today.

Now: on to 1 Thessalonians 1:

The reason I think we need to continue studying and understanding what Paul has written is that he is the one to whom the Lord Jesus Christ gave the responsibility of revealing and teaching the mysteries of God. He is the one through whom God is revealing to us the wondrous Gospel of His grace and mercy: that we are saved, completely and eternally, by God's grace and mercy alone. Paul is the one, through whom, God reveals that He chose us from the foundation of the World and that it has been God's work, alone, to reveal Himself to us, to draw us to Himself in love, grace and mercy and to save us eternally.

It's Paul's teaching which the false teachers of today seek to marginalize and demonize: those like N.T. Wright who seek to pawn off, on us, his 'New Perspective on Paul.' His new perspective on Paul is to deny the foundations of the Gospel of Grace which God has revealed through Paul. Wright denies his foundational Truth of the substitutionary atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He died in our place. Wright denies that God's wrath was poured out on Jesus Christ so that it never would be on us and that our sin was imputed to Him while His righteousness was imputed to us. This kind of false teaching is the purpose of men like Jim Wallis and Tony Campolo and their 'Red Letter Christians.' They claim to 'stay true to the Gospel' by claiming that the Words of Jesus are all that matter, that Jesus was all about love, not condemnation; He accepted everyone without rejecting anyone. If you would visit the website of 'Red Letter Christians,' you'd see that they deny the true Gospel of Salvation and that they embrace every hard left cause in America and the World.

Others seek to deny Paul's teaching because he is the one through whom God said, 'Pastors are to be men and only men' and also, that God has designed the family structure between husbands and wives and the responsibilities of each, before God, that the God-ordained family is the foundation of all civilization.

I was looking at this ridiculous website that went on and on about all that is wrong with Paul but then, the guy says, 'He was the first to come up with the idea of the second coming and the Rapture,' as if those doctrines were things of derision... well there you go: you can even find a kernel of truth in a sea of stupidity. If this guy had had any understanding, he would have joined the chorus claiming the Rapture was only thought up by John Nelson Darby, 18 Centuries later.

Paul is the one, the only one to whom the Lord Jesus Christ fully revealed the truth of the Rapture. Because we are seeing so much prophecy fall into place around the World, today, it is important for us to study Paul's letters to the Thessalonians because it is here that we find some of the clearest, most obvious revelation of Jesus Christ's promise to come for us at any moment.

1 Thessalonians

Introduction: Of the 13 or 14 (if Hebrews is included) letters Paul wrote, as inspirited by the Holy Spirit and preserved for the Church down through the Centuries, his two, to the Thessalonians, were the earliest, written about AD 51. They were written while he was in Corinth after he left Berea because of persecution. Silas and Timothy, who had stayed in Thessalonica, had come to Corinth to tell Paul of the condition of the Church in Thessalonica.

In Acts, we read that Paul preached the Gospel, in the synagogue, for three Sabbaths in Thessalonica. As the result of his preaching, a large number of Gentiles and a few Jews believed the Gospel and turned from their idolatry to trusting in the sacrifice and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ for Salvation.

Paul was worried about these young Christians, even though he's the one who told us 'to be anxious for nothing.' In the 3rd chapter, he tells them how concerned he was for their spiritual health, fearing that 'the tempter' might have been able to take advantage of them. He was thankful, then, when Silas and Timothy brought to him a good and encouraging report about the Thessalonians.

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is taught throughout 1 Thessalonians, and we will see in Paul's 2nd letter to them that he needed to comfort them because false teachers had come in, teaching that the return of Jesus Christ had already happened and that they had missed it.

We have many false teachers today telling us the same: that Jesus already returned, spiritually, in the year AD 70, when Titus destroyed Jerusalem.

Also, today, even if they do not believe that the 2nd Coming has passed, most pastors and teachers refuse to even address the Words of Prophecy, the Revelation, the Rapture, the Millennium and Jesus' return at Armageddon before the Millennium. They have no convictions on these crucial subjects and they never mention them at all. But it was the Lord Jesus Christ, Who said, 'Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. [2] In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so,* I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. [3] And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again and receive you to Myself*;' John 14:2. His return is very important, it was very important to Paul and it should be very important to us but sadly... with most... it holds no importance at all.

If pastors and teachers really cared about the spiritual health of their flocks, if they really cared about teaching them to *'walk in a manner worthy of their calling*,' they would be teaching and stressing Jesus Christ's return in every message they taught: it's Paul, who wrote: '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,' Titus 2:11 and then John wrote, 'Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:2 This is what pastors and teachers should be teaching if they care about their flocks' spiritual health because it is the belief and understanding of the imminent Rapture, that we will stand before Him, at any moment, that causes us to discern our walk, to carefully stay in a place of close fellowship with God, through His Holy Spirit. Those who have no understanding of His soon return are those, of whom, Jesus said: 'But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' [49] and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, [50] the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of...' and Peter wrote: 'knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, [4] and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

These are the attitudes developed in people who are never warned of Jesus' soon return.

This is why we should study Paul's letters and especially his letters to the Thessalonians: they were waiting expectantly for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Rapture and so should we, especially since we, unlike the Thessalonians, also see so many Bible Prophecies converging in fulfillment around the World.

Verse 1: 'Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Paul acknowledges his fellow workers, Timothy and Silvanus, or, Silas as we've better known him. Paul is reminding these young Christians, previously pagans, of just what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for them; they are now 'in' God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; they have been granted, by God's grace, eternal life which is in the Father and in the Son. Remember, Jesus prayed, 'I pray for them... those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. [10] And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them... Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We *are...* I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; (us, today) [21] that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.' John 17

Paul assures these young believers that God's grace and His peace are always theirs in which to walk.

Verse 2: 'We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers...'

Paul had to have had a huge prayer list: those from every church and especially those whom he remembered. God wants all of us to be faithful in praying for each other and for others we know: family, friends, neighbors, extended relatives... enemies... I surely could do without that particular reminder... but we are commanded! Notice Paul says, 'we' give thanks in 'our' prayers... they were praying together for so many needs. Jesus said, 'Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. [20] For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.' Matt 18:19 Debbie and I are two; whenever we pray together, the Lord Jesus Christ is in our midst.

Verse 3: '...remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,'

The Thessalonians were working together, in love, taking the Gospel to those around them. Again, Paul brings in the Rapture: that we are patiently waiting, in hope, of the Lord's return for us. That is always what Paul means when he refers to our hope in Jesus Christ. Our patience of hope: 'Because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.' Rev. 3:10 Our hope is in Jesus Christ and His soon return for us in the Rapture.