

## Turning Down the Volume of Life – 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 – January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020

- I want to talk with you today about the benefits of living quiet Christian lives in a day where everything clamors for our attention.
- By quiet I mean, turning down the volume of our noisy and busy lives, minding our own business by not being nosy in others.
- What follows are two benefits that come to those of us who make it our ambition to lead a quiet life as Christians in this world.

### **1. We'll have more love for God's people (Verses 9-10)**

9 Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. 10 And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more,

- I find it interesting that Paul would once again commend them, this time; it's for their love for one another, as the family of God.
- I would suggest it's only when we simplify and quiet our lives that we're able to love one another in this way as God's people.
- This because, of what he says in verse nine about having been taught by God to love each other, which means they listened.

In his book, *Intimacy with the Almighty*, Chuck Swindoll writes, "Noise and words and frenzied, hectic schedules dull our senses, closing our ears to His still, small voice and making us numb to His touch."

1 Kings 19:11-12 - Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

### **2. We'll win the respect of outsiders (Verses 11-12)**

11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

- What Paul says here is very interesting for a number of reasons, not the least of which is what he refers to as the "outsiders."
- To me, this speaks to the paramount importance of how the non-believer is watching our Christian lives to see how we live.
- In other words, if we are no different than the world, then there will never be an interest in, or an attraction to, the Lord in us.

Again, Chuck Swindoll of this writes, "When I keep my hands out of things, His will is accomplished, His name is exalted, and His glory is magnified."

## Bible Prophecy Update – January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020

- For today's update I want to take the time to sort through all that's happened in the last week and try to make some sense of it.
- In order to do that, I had to go back into my archives and revisit a prophecy puzzle that I put together several years ago now.
- In so doing, I hope to answer some of the questions as it relates to both the timing of everything, and why it's moving so fast.

- I'll proceed with the presupposition that you're all aware of the Iranian ballistic missile strikes on US Bases in Iraq on Tuesday.
- As more information becomes available, it seems that Iran intended to kill Americans in retaliation for the killing of Soleimani.
- It's also reported that a Ukrainian Airliner was mistakenly shot down by Iran hours after the strike with a Russian made missile.

It should be noted that this all took place Tuesday, which is interesting given the breaking news about President Trump's peace plan on the same day. The Jerusalem Post published an analysis with a question at the end saying, "Trump's peace plan is on the way: Is Israel ready?" In it they say, with 10 months to the presidential election in the US, the Trump administration is considering presenting its peace plan in the coming weeks, even ahead of the March 2 Knesset election. The administration's reasoning is clear. If there's an Israeli election in March, there probably won't be a government until May, bringing them very close to the presidential election. ...It also seems clear that Trump would like Netanyahu to remain prime minister, going so far as to recognize Israeli sovereignty over the Golan shortly before the first election in 2019 ...As such, any rollout will probably be coordinated with Netanyahu for maximum benefit – or at least minimum fallout – from the pre-election timing. ...The question of how the plan could impact the upcoming Israeli election is an interesting one – because from what is known about it, its nature appears to be unprecedented.

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Trumps-peace-plan-is-on-the-way-Is-Israel-ready-analysis-613412>

I would argue that said peace plan vis-à-vis a President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu has poured gasoline on the fires of Israel's enemies who today stand at the ready to invade. It's for this reason that both need to be removed. Make no mistake about it; both leaders are keenly aware of this. On Thursday, The Times of Israel reported that Trump and Netanyahu discussed 'critical' issues after the Iran missile strikes. ...A brief White House statement said the two leaders discussed "critical bilateral and regional issues," giving no further details.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-and-netanyahu-discuss-critical-issues-after-iran-missile-strikes/>

- This brings us to the aforementioned prophecy puzzle and a possible scenario as it relates to what I believe will be the timing.
- Please know that I in now way wish to present myself as having all of this figured out, in that, this is just one plausible scenario.
- By one plausible scenario I mean that this is one possibility as to how and even when all of this will play out and come to pass.

- First, I think it would be good to provide you a summary of what these prophecies are about, for those new to Bible prophecy.
- It's my belief that 1 Thessalonians 5:3, Isaiah 17, Zechariah 12, Ezekiel 38, Daniel 9:27 and Revelation 13 happen very fast.
- I would liken it to the proverbial "Domino Effect," such that, when it happens it will set off a chain reaction and all will then fall.

- The question becomes one of "which domino is the first one, to set in motion all the other prophetic dominoes, as it were?"
- I believe it's 1 Thessalonians 5:3 where Paul says sudden destruction would come while they are saying "peace and security."
- It's for this reason that the next puzzle piece is that of the prophecy in Isaiah 17 concerning the destruction of Damascus, Syria.

- With Isaiah 17 I am putting the Zechariah 12 prophecy puzzle piece in place by virtue the goal posts being that of Jerusalem.
- In addition to the Zechariah 12 piece, I'm putting the Ezekiel 38 prophecy puzzle piece in place, via Russia, Iran and Turkey.
- The reason I've put Daniel 9:27 and Revelation 13 next is because I believe the antichrist will commence the 7-year tribulation.

- I'll bring it to a close with the question that's before every one of us today, which is where does the rapture fit into this scenario.
- It's very possible it could happen in concert with the sudden destruction that comes upon them as a women travailing in labor.
- If it is, and I'm becoming increasingly convinced that it is then truly we are closer to the Lord's return than any of us might think.

- This is why we do these weekly prophecy updates and end with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the simple ABC's of Salvation.
- The Gospel, or good news is that Jesus was crucified, buried, rose again on the third day, and is coming back for us one day.
- Before we get to the ABC's of Salvation, I want to share with you a powerful testimony from an online member that's in Japan.

Dear Pastor JD - Mum's funeral was yesterday. You know well that she had grown up traditional Buddhism temple family but become a born again Christian last year and was baptized in October 2019. Many people who came to the funeral were surprised to know that. HE also gave me a big blessing because Kayo (who met you in Minnesota) came to interpret for Justin at the funeral from CA. I reached Kayo because she had translated your sermon by herself a few years ago. I started participating in the translation as well with her. She was a pioneer for that. The Lord made me find her online ministry (<http://divineus.org/>) and I found you there. You know how blessing it poured to my sadness. (You can see her at the right and Justin next to me in Kimono with mum's foto.) At the funeral, Justin and Kayo preached the gospel, the saving knowledge of Jesus, the hope we will go to the heaven and could see mum as well soon. We put ABC's salvation tract in each bag visitors would take back home. The Lord used mum's death for His glory. I've become a born again Christian just about 2 years ago. JB Fuyuko

**The ABC's of Salvation** - The A is for Admit you're a sinner and your need for the Savior, (Romans 3:10, 23 – 6:23).

- The B is for Believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord and God raised Him from the dead, (Romans 10:9-10).
- The C is for Call upon the name of the Lord and confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, (Romans 10:9-10, 13).