

# The Hope of Jesus' Return

## 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> **“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.**

<sup>14</sup> **For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.**

<sup>15</sup> **For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.**

<sup>16</sup> **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

<sup>17</sup> **Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.**

<sup>18</sup> **Therefore comfort one another with these words.”**

Throughout history, people have debated what happens after death. This subject in many ways remains a mystery since the dead cannot tell of their experiences.

Yet God's Word contains an abundance of information about life after death. In today's verses, Paul explains what will happen at Christ's return—both to the saints who have died and to those still living. First, Jesus will descend from the sky in a way similar to His ascension. (See [Acts 1:11](#).)

### **Acts 1:11 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> **“They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”**

Then, God will resurrect the bodies of departed believers, whose spirits will have been with Jesus since the moment of physical death ([2 Corinthians 5:8](#)). Next, Christians who are still alive will be transformed; they'll rise to meet Jesus in the air and will dwell with Him forever.

### **2 Corinthians 5:8 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup> **“We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”**

While we should strive to glorify the Lord every moment we're alive, it is important to be aware of these future events. The reason is found in [1 Thessalonians 4:13](#): **“So that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.”** In fact, [verse 18](#) tells us to comfort each other with the understanding of what will happen when Jesus returns. Knowing the pain, we encounter in this life—from tragedy, loss, fear, and sickness—God gives Christians a glimpse of the wonderful future in store.

What a loving heavenly Father! He understands our pain and gives us such hope, comfort, and strength to endure life's hardships. Read the Scripture passage again—but this time, in place of the words “those who have fallen asleep,” substitute the name of a departed Christian you love—and bask in the hope that the Father has given.