

e. Prize distributed

Paul will not be alone at the Prize Day. Others will also be there. They include others who have loved (perfect tense) the appearing of the Lord. The word "appearance" by context shows the rapture, albeit it is a word normally speaking of His visible appearance. This confirms the rapture is a contextual item.

Conclusion What a blessing to read Paul's final words at the end of the road for him on earth. May God be pleased to grant to each of us this privilege to so speak when we meet Him face to face. Will you? Will I? Beyond all else, when we leave here and go home, then it will be:

"The bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear bridegrooms face.
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace.
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand.
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land."

THE BOOK OF SECOND TIMOTHY

"The End of the Road"
2 Timothy 4:6-8

Introduction

1. It was on the Damascus Road that Paul met the Lord (Acts 9). Now, he has come to the end of that journey and is ready to meet Him again face to face! Christ is the Way and Paul knew that (John 14:6; Phil. 3:7).

2. As Paul reviews the past, he looks with joy upon the journey. He sees all in the light of God's grace (1 Cor. 15:10). Five major items stand out in his review since he first entered the relationship with Him Who is the Way. Here they are:

1. HIS FATE v. 6.

The emphatic pronoun "I" shows that Paul is the main subject and concern. He and he alone is involved. It is joined to the present progressive passive verb "offered." The original verb means that Paul is ready to be poured out as a libation or drink offering (Ex. 29:20). The verb is only used here and in Phil. 2:17. What all along was a possibility is now a certainty. His approaching death was the sacrifice poured out upon his ministry.

"Departure" is transliterated into English by the term "analysis." It means to "loosen up" and is only found here in the N.T. (cf. Phil. 1:23 for noun form). The perfect active form of the verb is used to show that the hour has struck; the time is viewed as already present. Various meanings are attached to this concept:

- a. As a prisoner--Paul is now being released from his prison-body!
- b. As a farmer--Paul is being unyoked from his work.
- c. As a warrior--Paul is striking tent and going on.
- d. As a seaman--Paul is unmooring and putting out to sea.
- e. As a philosopher--Paul will now have unravelled knotty questions and mysteries for him.

2. HIS FIGHT v. 7.

Here is an athletic word. The perfect middle of the

verb is used and seems best to connect with wrestling than with war (1 Cor. 9:5; Col. 1:29). It is used with the cognate elsewhere (Phil. 1:27, 30).

The "good fight" is not only that he has wrestled well, but perhaps even more pertinently, Paul has enjoyed a well-worth-while fight! Consider that! The struggle in which he engaged was one which called forth his worthiest and best. It was a good one in which to be involved. It included hardship (2 Cor. 11:16-33), enemies (2 Cor. 12:19-21), and demoniac powers (Eph. 6:12).

3. HIS FINISH v. 7.

Paul used this metaphor when dealing with the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:24). He is now a runner unto the Lord. The perfect active tense of the verb shows that he has run the distance. He is about to breast the tape. Now, some may consider the race an obstacle course, but in fact, it is a normal race course.

Complementing the truth taught here is Hebrews 12:1, 2. There some helpful hints on running are provided:

- a. Run and keep weight down--Spiritually, this means to become less and less; He more and more!
- b. Run and keep limbs free--Spiritually, this means to be rid of besetting sins. Anything which hinders freedom to run must be gone!
- c. Run and keep eyes right--Spiritually, this means to keep one's eyes on the Lord and forget the people and problems around.
- d. Run and keep the race going--Spiritually, this means that the believer is involved in a long-distance race and not a sprint.

The total thing here needs the reminder of 1 Corinthians 9:24. The goal is set. Run! Paul did!

4. HIS FAITH v. 7.

Once again the perfect tense of the verb is used. It makes certain that Paul gained "the faith" and did not loosen up on it. He was firmed up with the matter. The definite article before the noun "faith" shows that a body of truth is in mind. Paul held to this! This is the same argument

as Jude wrote (v. 3). The idea of "the faith" for Paul shows that it is impossible to liquidate the truth of God in favor of some sort of romantic love. Nowhere in the Bible is love given a priority over "the faith" or the sound doctrine desired!

5. HIS FUTURE v. 8.

The word "henceforth" is a good one with which to commence this verse. It means "as for the rest." With all that has preceded, now what? The answer is given:

a. Prize displayed

The present passive verb shows that a prize is laid up or laid away. This is the same verb used of money placed in a napkin (Luke 19:20) or of a hope (Col. 1:5). Paul uses it of an appointment laid up for all (Heb. 9:27)!

b. Prize characterized

The definite article is used with "crown" so that the certainty of the reward and the exact measure of the recompense to be bestowed is made known. Now, we know that all of God's righteousness is given to us through faith (Rom. 5:1). That is imputed righteousness. The concept of imparted righteousness is what is in view here. This speaks of life righteousness. It is righteous living. The crown, therefore, consists in righteousness and is given in view of righteous living.

c. Prize bestowed

The Lord Who is the righteous Judge will do the honors. Paul well knew about this because of his punishment under Nero, an unrighteous king. Thank God for the joy when we are rewarded by the wonderful wounded hands of our living Lord!

d. Prize arranged

"That day" is the rapture of the saints. It is then there will be a judgment seat (2 Cor. 5:10). That is the "Prize Day." Blessed time! 1 Thess. 4:17-18.