



The Comfort and Challenge Concerning the Day of the Lord

Should we fear the Day of the Lord? Should the Unsaved fear the Day of the Lord? Should Satan fear the Day of the Lord?

1 Thess. 5:1-11, “Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ²for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. ⁵You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

Is the “Day of the Lord” and the Rapture of the Saints the same thing/at the same time? Answer: NO! According to Old and New Testament Scriptures...they are not the same.

In chapter 4:13, the Apostle began with, “Now we do not want you to be uninformed.” Paul then proceeded to enlighten them on an important prophetic theme...that is THE RAPTURE.

THE RAPTURE:

- ***At the Second Appearing (Rapture) Christ will descend from heaven to earth (in the air, not on earth).***
- ***He will utter the word of command and thereupon the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God will awaken the dead, then the***

dead and the living alike will be caught up in the chariots of the clouds to meet Christ; and

- ***Thereafter they will forever be with their Lord.***

It is understandable that we don't understand all the details of this glorious, wondrous, unimaginable scene Paul is speaking about...PAUL didn't either. It was revealed to him...and we take it by FAITH that it will happen.

In this chapter, however, we find that Paul had thoroughly taught the Thessalonians on the Day of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-2, "Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ²for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night."

Quite clearly, God wants us to know and understand the prophetic themes and doctrines of Scripture. BUT WHY?

- 1. There are a number of biblical designs or purposes for the study and knowledge of the various prophetic themes of Scripture.***
- 2. As the last chapter (4th chapter) shows, knowing prophecy is designed to comfort, encourage, and give hope where there would normally be no hope.***

Note: 1 Thess. 4:13 and 18, "We do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, about those who are asleep, because we do not wish you to sorrow as the rest of people do because they have no hope.... So then encourage one another with these words."

- 3. It is also designed to remove ignorance of these prophetic facts so that Christians might be informed as a protection from erroneous ideas that might disturb them as we see in this passage (1 Thess. 5:1-11).***

- 4. A further blessing of knowing prophecy is that it also protects Christians from the counterfeit strategies of Satan and the world system that is under his control.***

- ✓ An example of a counterfeit strategy that was prominent in ancient times and is prominent today is the belief in a one world government which will be portrayed as a utopia and the final hope for mankind.

- 5. BUT the greatest purpose of the prophetic Word is the pursuit of holiness by His people...evident in one prophetic passage after another.***

- ✓ Check all the passages dealing with the return of the Lord and you will find that, almost without exception, ***our Lord's return is used as a basis for an exhortation to godliness.*** Including themes like living as foreigners in His service, living for heavenly treasure,

and finding comfort in the midst of suffering and persecution through the assurance of Christ's return. The present passage is no exception.

- ✓ ***Too often we get so bogged down in the debate over when the rapture will occur (pre-trib, post-trib, mid-trib) that we tend to miss or ignore the “holy living” emphasis in all of these precious Scriptures on Christ’s return.***

The prophetic Word should mark us out as a distinct people, just as cream is separated from milk.

- ✓ We are not of this world, just as the Savior is not. This should show in the moral quality of our lives, in our values, priorities, and pursuits.
- ✓ Paul uses several analogies in this passage to illustrate this: **light** versus **darkness**, **sleep** versus **alertness**, **drunkenness** versus **soberness**, and **wrath** versus **deliverance**.

Prophecy, then, is not designed to satisfy our curiosity or an urge for the sensational. Its design, in view of what it means spiritually, is TO MOTIVATE CHRISTIANS TO HOLY LIVING.

Facts About the Day of the Lord

1. It includes a time of great judgment and wrath on all the nations and on Israel ([Isa. 2:12-21](#); [13:9-16](#); [34:1-8](#); [Joel. 1:15-2:11](#), 28-32; [3:9-12](#); [Amos 5:18-20](#); [Obadiah 15-17](#); [Zeph. 1:7-18](#)).

2. It is associated with the overthrow of God’s enemies ([Isa. 2:12](#)).

3. It is God’s instrument of wrath to purge out the rebels from Israel and results in Israel’s return to the Lord ([Ezek. 20:33-39](#)).

4. While it begins with judgment to defeat the enemies of God, it ushers in a time of great blessing called the millennium in which Christ will reign with the church, the body of Christ ([Zeph. 1:7-18](#); [3:14-17](#)).

5. The day of the Lord is also known by the terms “the time of Jacob’s distress” ([Jer. 30:7](#)) ***and “Daniel’s seventieth week”*** ([Dan. 9:24-29](#)).

- ✓ Students of prophecy refer to this time as the Tribulation (see [Matt. 24:9, 21, 29](#); [Mark 13:19, 24](#); [Rev. 7:14](#)).
- ✓ The chief passage on the many characteristics and events of this time is [Revelation 6-19](#).

Note: The earthly wrath spoken about as “the Day of the Lord” does not pertain to those in Christ (v. 9). Their meeting with Christ will be “in the air” and separate from God’s dealing with those on earth.

Biblical scholars say, “Taken as a whole, the pretribulational point of view gives sense and meaning to 1 Thessalonians 5 and explains why this is introduced after the rapture. In effect, Paul is saying that the time of the rapture cannot be determined any more than the time of the beginning of the day of the Lord, but this is of no concern to believers because our appointment is not the wrath of the day of the Lord, but rather the salvation which is ours in Christ.”

Verse 11. “Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing.”

Final Application in these verses:

Two responsibilities given to the Christian:

(1) We are to comfort one another. This exhortation along with the many other “one another” exhortations call on us to be involved in the lives of one another in order to give comfort and encouragement.

(2) We are to “build one another up.” This is the Greek word *oikodomeo*, “to build up, erect, restore.”

- ✓ We are to help one another stay sober and spiritually awake in view of who we are as Christians and in view of our glorious inheritance.
- ✓ We are to help other believers find their strength in the Savior rather than in the details of life or from the things of this world which is passing away and headed for sure destruction.
- ✓ Believers do not need to be hearing something new all the time, but they often do need to remind themselves of what they already know so that they do not forget it.
- ✓ Christians need to take the opportunity for mutual edification among each other (the believers).
- ✓ Mutual encouragement and edification are still needed in every local church. And encouragement and edification with reference to their hope in Christ’s return is especially needed.

Conclusion = As with one prophetic passage after another, the design of the truth of this portion of Scripture is practical. It is designed both to comfort and to challenge us to godly living.
