



“Understanding the Day of the Lord”

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

The more our culture embraces a secular worldview, the less confidence people have in the Bible, and in the evangelical church as the true voice of God's Word. The further away a culture drifts from the truth of the Bible, the further they drift into the darkness of deception, delusion, despair, and depravity, for no matter a person's worldview, they still have to answer the age-old questions of the true purpose and meaning to life.

There are three possible views of world history:

- Cyclical – as we see the same things happening in the world today as happened many years ago, it seems history is repeating itself.
- Linear – history is moving forward, but without a clear goal or purpose, and therefore life is without meaning.
- Biblical – God created us with a purpose, and for a purpose, and history is progressing according to His sovereign plan to achieve that divine purpose.
- Human history had a beginning, which is recorded in Genesis 1-3, and human history will have an ending, which is recorded in Revelation 19-22, and in between those two points is the story of God's plan for the redemption of lost man.

In the middle of those two eternal points is God's divine intervention through the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

- His first coming was in humility – to give His life as a ransom for man’s sin; to rescue those who believed in Him from the wrath of God to be poured out upon those who would not believe in Him.
- His second coming will be in glory – to remove the curse of sin from the earth, and to restore it to its former glory, as it was in the beginning.

This will be the “Day of the Lord,” and this is where history is headed.

- We are living in “the day of man,” in the kingdom of man, and under the authority of Satan, the god of this world.
- In the future, we will live in “the day of God,” in that new heaven and new earth where it will be one forever day.
- However, after the rapture of the Church, the earth will experience “the day of the Lord,” as God pours out His judgment upon those who refused to receive Jesus Christ their Savior and Lord.

The Apostle Paul was with the new believers in Thessalonica for only a short time, but he did not hesitate to teach them about the rapture of the Church and the Day of the Lord.

- Warning the people of God’s wrath to come was an essential element in Paul’s preaching, for only then would they see their need for a Savior.
- In Chapter 4:13-18, Paul made it clear, those who confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord would be spared from God’s wrath which was to come. This would be a fulfillment of the promise Jesus made to His disciples.
- In Chapter 5:1ff, Paul made it clear, those who refused to confess Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord would face the wrath of God, to which he referred as “The Day of the Lord.”

“The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives.”

2 Peter 3:10-11

Three characteristics of the Day of the Lord:

1. The Fact of Its Coming – Vs. 2 – “You yourselves know full well the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.”

- The Greek word for “times” is “Chronos,” such as the time on a clock, or the day on a calendar.
- The Greek word for “epochs, dates, or seasons,” is “Kairos,” such as a season of the year.
- While there may be room for debate as to their chronology, the main “Kairos” inside the “Chronos” which is called the Day of the Lord include:

For Christians:**For Unbelievers:**

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| • The Rapture of the Church | • Rise of the Antichrist |
| • The Judgement Seat of Christ | • Seven-year tribulation |
| • The Marriage Supper | • Temple Desecration |
| • The Return with Christ | • Armageddon |
| • The Millennial Kingdom | • Binding of Satan |
| • New heaven and earth | • Great White Throne |
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The Apostle Paul said, while the Christians at Thessalonica knew about all of the events, their main question was when it was going to happen.

- Chapter 5:1, *“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.”*
- Paul said they did not need to know the Chronos, for no one knows the exact Chronos except God the Father, but we can know the Kairos!
- As Paul said in Galatians 4:4, regarding the 1st coming of the Lord, *“In the fullness of “Chronos,” God sent forth His Son, to redeem us from the law,”* so shall it be regarding the Day of the Lord and His return – *“in the fullness of Chronos.”*
- God wants every generation to live in the possibility that all of the end-time events could occur in their lifetime.
- The next event on God’s prophetic timetable is the rapture of the Church, and when the fullness of Chronos come, the Kairos of the Lord will unfold just as He said it would in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and Revelation 6-18.
- However, rather than speculating on when that day will come, we need to live each day of our lives as if it began today.

2. The Ferocity of His Character –

- Isaiah 2:12 – *“Everything proud and lofty, and everything lifted up will be brought low.”*
- Isaiah 13:9 – *“With both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate.”*
- Jeremiah 46:10 – *“He may avenge Himself on His adversaries.”*
- Joel 1:15 – *“As destruction from the Almighty.”*
- Joel 2:31 – *“The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.”*
- Amos 5:18, 20 – *“Is not the day of darkness and not light?”*

- Zephaniah 1:15 – *“That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.”*
- Six times the “day of the Lord” is referred to as the day of doom, and three times it is referred to as the day of vengeance.
- In Revelation 6:17, John called it, *“the great day of His wrath upon sinners!*
 - He gives them over to a reprobate mind – Romans 1
 - He orchestrates earthly cataclysmic events – floods, fires, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, drought, disease, and other disturbances of nature.
 - He orchestrates heavenly cataclysmic events – the sun and moon will go dark, the stars will lose their brightness, and the Lord roars from Zion so loudly even the heavens and the earth tremble.
- The world has seen many previews of the coming attractions as God released His anger against the Israelites for their disobedience to Him, and the prophets said God acted in those historical events as a warning of what that final day of the Lord will be like.
- Chapter 5:2 – *“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief.”* Why?

Because, by the grace of God, we won't be here!

3. The Finality of Completeness – Vs. 3 – *“For when they say, “Peace and safety,” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they shall not escape.”*

Paul said, when the world believes it has reached the point where the threat of God's judgment is over, His destruction will be released like the labor pains of a woman giving birth.

- The first birth pain will be false teaching and spiritual deception – Matthew 24:4-5 – *“See to it that no one misleads you, for many will come in My name, saying, I am the*

Christ, and will mislead many.”

- In 2 Thessalonians 2:11, Paul said, *“God will send upon them strong delusion, so they will believe what the false teachers are saying.”*
- The second birth pain will be global warfare – Matthew 24:7 – *“You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not the end, for nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.”*
 - The birth pains the Lord describes in Matthew 24 parallel those seals John described in Revelation 6, resulting in a global slaughter such as the world has never seen before.
 - The third birth pain will be unparalleled catastrophes – Revelation 6:12-14 – *“There was a great earthquake. The sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, the whole moon became like blood; the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.”*
 - A third of the earth is burned up!

- A third of the trees are burned up!
 - A third of the sea will become as blood!
 - A third of the sea creatures will die!
 - A third of the rivers will dry up!
 - A third of the stars will fall, and a third of the sun and moon will be hidden!
 - The whole planet will be devastated, and as Paul said, there will be no way to escape.
- The fourth pain will be severe persecution – Matthew 24:9 – *“They will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name.”*
 - Multitudes of people will be saved during the tribulation, but the majority of them will be persecuted unto death.
 - In Revelation 6:9, John referred to those as the *“Souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained.”*
 - In Revelation 7:9ff, John referred to those as *“A great multitude which no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue, standing before the Lamb, clothed in white robes.”*
 - The fifth birth pain will be defection – Matthew 24:10 – *“At that time many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.”*
 - The sixth birth pain will be the worldwide proclamation of the gospel – Matthew 24:14 – *“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”*
 - The seventh birth pain will be the Son of Man appearing in the sky – Matthew 24:29, and Joel 2:31 – *“The sun will be turned to darkness, the moon to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord.”*

The Apostle Paul said, while there will always be “signs” that will indicate the nearness of the Day of the Lord, no one knows the exact time except God the Father.

- Therefore, they should remain steadfast in their faith in view of the Lord’s imminent return, which will begin with the rapture of the Church, and that could happen at any moment.
- Chapter 5:11 – *“Therefore, comfort one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”*
- Chapter 5:23ff –

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”
