

1 Thess 5:1-11

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 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. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

The latter part of 1st Thess 4 is about the rapture of the church.

People have made bold predictions regarding the end of the world.

- People want to know the unknown.

Ecc 3 says that God has put eternity in the heart of man.

God has a plan for His people, you and me. And He has a plan for the Jews.

The one prophecy man Jews have been waiting on is the coming of the Messiah.

The church of Thessalonica knew the Messiah had come,

- but they still had many questions.

Paul assured them we will be one in Christ.

Paul wanted the Galatians to understand

- that although many of them were Gentile,
- they were still spiritual sons of God thru faith in Jesus.

In the book of John Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath:

John 9:16

16 ~~Therefore~~ some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath."

Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

In Christ we are united, but in the world,

2

- we are divided from non-believers.

You see, we have a different Jesus than the world has.

Jesus said to be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

And that's the theme Paul wants to develop in this section,

- those looking for the Lord's return,
- and those who are not.

We'll see the use of different pronouns in this section today

- to show the relationship of the believers
- and non-believers to the Lord.

So Paul addresses the question in chapter 5 of the end of time and of judgement.

We understand this time as the day of the Lord

The latter part of chapter 4 addresses the rapture,

- and the first section of chapter 5
- speaks of the day of the Lord or the tribulation.

1 Thess 5:1-2

1 But concerning the times (chronology, a period, a sequence of events) and the seasons (a point of time, those specific crisis in time), brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

Paul was telling the church that they had no need to know the chronology of events,

The issue for Paul wasn't when, but how.

- How are you living your life until He returns?

In chapter 4, the Thessalonians were concerned about those who had died.

- Paul didn't want them focused on death
- but on the one who gives life.

So he tells them, "concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you."

"times and seasons" only appears 3 times in scripture

- and refers primarily to God's plan for Israel.

Dr. A.T. Pierson used to say, "History is His story."

God wrote the book, and He decides how it ends

The day of the Lord does not point to one specific day in time.

- It's a season, a period of time.

Most are not familiar with

- "forgiveness day in America
- and global forgiveness day."

Those are designated days when the pagan world says people should forgive others.

Jesus doesn't say, I'll forgive you one time a year,

- no, He forgives us daily.

One day His grace is going to run out!

Amos speaks of that day:

Amos 5:18

18 Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
For what good is the day of the Lord to you?
It will be darkness, and not light.

Jer 46:10

5 For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts,
A day of vengeance,
That He may avenge Himself on His adversaries.
The sword shall devour;
It shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood;

Isa 13:6

6 Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand!
It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

2 Peter 3:10

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Then Paul says the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night.

If you knew the time of day a thief was to arrive at your house, you'd be waiting.

You'd be waiting and you'd be prepared to take action.

Jesus said His coming will be as in the days of Noah

- in the days before the flood,
- they were eating, drinking,
- marrying and giving in marriage.

Judgement came upon the world that didn't believe it would come.

Since we believers are not in darkness, we are not oblivious to the signs around us.

And though it is our destiny, our goal should be,

- and I believe it is, to see Jesus face to face.

The day of the Lord on the other hand

- is going to be a terrible time
- for those left behind.

During the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation,

- people are going to be thinking of peace.
- The anti-Christ is going to come on the scene
- and promise peace to the Jews
- and they'll buy into it.

1 Thess 5:3

3 For when they (unbelievers) say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

After the rapture the anti-Christ will be revealed.

The church is called the light of the world. When the rapture takes place, the light will be gone, this place will be very dark.

2 Thess 2:7

7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains (speaking of the Holy Spirit working thru the church) will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one (anti-Christ) will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

When the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth in the sense that the church

- is no longer here after the rapture,
- it's then that the Spirit will no longer
- hold back lawlessness.

At that point, the anti-Christ's path to power will be unobstructed,

- then God will begin to unleash
- His wrath on a rebellious world.

The Holy Spirit will still be present because God is omnipresent.

In fact, the Holy Spirit will need to be present

- because many will come to know the Lord
- during those terrible times.

People are ignoring the plethora of warnings out there

- by neglecting to listen to God's word.

Jesus warned in Matt 24, as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- People were warned, all but 8 perished in the flood.

When Lot warned his family that the city was going to be destroyed, they wouldn't listen.

Gen 19:14

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.

In both cases people went around living life as normal, never considering the warning.

Luke 17:26-30

26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:

27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28

Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

Paul is telling the Thessalonian church that those days will be terrible.

And in those days, some will think there is finally peace and safety.

Now, there is coming a time in the future

- when there will be at least on the surface-level,
- some semblance of peace.

The bible tells us that in the future a ruler is coming,

- and nations will yield their sovereignty
- to a dictator who comes in with a peace plan.

This will be short lived.

Paul says in verse 3 that sudden destruction comes upon them.

This is known as the great tribulation.

In the middle of the tribulation period, God's wrath will come upon those people.

Joel 1:15

15 Alas for the day!

For the day of the Lord is at hand;

It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

The stage is being set to usher in the anti-Christ.

We know that a world ruler is coming,

- and that's alright
- since it's part of God's plan.

And like other world leaders in the past, this one too will come and go.

Acts 12:21-23

21 So (that) on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them (people in Sidon & Tyre). 22 And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.

There is coming a future ruler that will promise peace to the world.

- He's going to form a treaty with the Jews
- to rebuild their temple and after 3 ½ years
- he will break that treaty and from then on
- during the great tribulation, things will get really bad.

People will say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

Rev 6 says that in those days people will hide in caves and say to the mountains and rocks,

Rev 6:16-17

16 "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

When the Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus testing Him,

- they asked that He'd show them a sign from heaven.

Matt 16:2-3

2 He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; 3 and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is

red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.

The Lord held the Jews responsible to knowing the times.

- They had the prophets of old.
- How much more should we not be held accountable
- since we have God's complete word.

What's the purpose of the tribulation period?

- To prepare Israel for the Messiah's coming.
- At that time, Israel will look upon the Messiah
- whom they've pierced, they will repent and be saved.

The tribulation is also to punish sinners on earth.

Isa 26:21 the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity;

Additional Scriptures:

THE MYSTERIOUS "DAY OF THE LORD" (ANSWERS)

1. A thief in the night (1 Thessalonians 5:2)
2. Isaiah (13:6) and Joel (1:15) use almost precisely the same words.
3. Ezekiel (7:19)
4. Peter (2 Peter 3:10)
5. Elijah (Malachi 4:5)
6. Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:2)
7. Fire (Zephaniah 1:18)
8. It would be darkened (Acts 2:20).
9. Lamentations, appropriately enough (2:22)
10. Ezekiel (30:3)
11. The valley of decision (Joel 3:14)
12. Amos (5:18)
13. Joel (2:11)
14. Humility and righteousness (Zephaniah 2:3)
15. Obadiah (verse 15)
16. Zechariah (14:1-2)
17. Sinners (Isaiah 13:9), a theme echoed throughout the Bible
18. Malachi (3:2). If these words sound familiar, it might be because they are included in George Frederick Handel's Messiah.