



“The Day of the LORD Comes as a Thief in the Night!”

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

- Insight: 2 Peter 1:19-21 - And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

~ THREE PREPARATIONS FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD:

> PREPARATION #1 - (v1-3) OBSERVE THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES!

(v1-2a) This term “times and seasons” is found first in Daniel Ch. 2, let’s read.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of The Latter Days

BABYLON 606-538 BC	“His image’s head was of fine gold... Thou art this head of gold.” (Daniel 2:32, 38).
PERSIA 538-331 BC	“...His breast and his arms of silver... after thee shall arise another Kingdom Interior to thee...” (Daniel 2:32, 39).
GREECE 331-63 BC	“...His belly and his thighs of brass... another third Kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.” (Daniel 2: 32, 39).
ROME 27 BC-1453 AD	“His legs of Iron...And the fourth Kingdom shall be strong as Iron: for as much as Iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things:” (Daniel 2:33, 40).
DIVIDED ROMAN EMPIRE WRE 27 BC-476 AD ERE 67 AD-1453 AD	“ His feet part of Iron and part of clay... partly strong and partly broken... they shall not cleave one to another.” (Daniel 2:33, 41-43).
CHRIST’S KINGDOM	“...A stone...smote the Image upon his feet... (and) became a mountain, and filled the whole earth... the God of heaven (shall) set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...” (Daniel 2:34, 35, 44).

- Jesus sheds light on the *times and seasons* – Matthew Ch. 24:1 – Ch. 25:1-13.

- In the “Olivet Discourse” (Matthew chapters 24 & 25), we receive the context of the prophetic scenario regarding the world, Israel, and the church:

(1) The WORLD - Matthew 24:4-14 – Global deception, wars, famines, disease, natural catastrophes, persecution, lawlessness, will increase and be more severe as we approach the rapture of the church, and the gospel will have been preached to all the nations;

(2) The Nation of ISRAEL - Matthew 24:15-35 – Unveils God’s dealing with Israel after the rapture of the church, here we discover the *Seventieth Week of Daniel* (Daniel 9:24-27), the *abomination of desolation in the holy place* (at the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (Rev. 11:1-2), and *the great tribulation* (seven years in length, ref. Rev. Ch. 6—19), then the *2nd return of Christ*, these events will be soon take place after Israel becomes a nation (Israel became a nation May 14, 1948—“*parable of the fig tree*”);

(3a) The CHURCH - Matthew 24:36-51 - Jesus explains the moral condition the earth (*like the days of Noah*, global perspective) as we approach the rapture of the church. Jesus teaches His church to watch and be ready for the rapture, to be separate from the world;

- Remember: (a) The PROMISE – John 14:1-3; 1Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:52-58;

(b) The PRECEDENCE – Enoch (Gen 5:24 - *And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*); Noah protected by God (Genesis Ch. 6 – 9); Lot delivered by God (Genesis Ch. 19);

(c) The PREPARATION – Matthew 24 :40-51 the word “*taken*” in verses 40-41 is *para lombanomi*, this Greek word is also found in Mt. 1:24 when Joseph *takes* Mary as his bride; and in Mt. 17:1 when Jesus *took* Peter, James and John to the Mt. of Transfiguration and was glorified; also John 14:3 – “*I will come again and take you unto myself that where I am there you may be also.*” Notice, a bride is taken like the church to Christ; up to glory (the Mt.), the bride glorified in heaven; and we are forever with the Lord.

(3b) Last days TRUE & FALSE CHURCH - Matthew 25:1-13 – Jesus teaches that there will be a true church (bride) and false church (bride) at the time of the rapture;

(3c) Rewards for the TRUE CHURCH - Matthew 25:14-30 – Jesus teaches on the rewards of the true bride and the judgment of the false;

(4) CHRIST SECOND COMING - Matthew 25:31-46 – Here we see the *2nd coming of Christ*, to set up His “Millennial Kingdom,” the separating of the sheep and the goats (those allowed on earth to come into that 1000 year reign on earth (Revelation ch.20), and those rejected headed to *everlasting punishment* (Matthew 25:46).

(v2b-3) What is the “Day of the Lord”?

- Paul Benware writes, “The phrase “*the day of the Lord*” is used nineteen times in the Old Testament (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 13:5, 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:1,11,31; 3:14; Amos 5:18,20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7,14; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi. 4:5) and four times in the New Testament (Acts 2:20; 2

Thessalonians 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10). It is also alluded to in other passages (**Revelation 6:17; 16:14**).

The Old Testament passages dealing with the *day of the Lord* often convey a sense of *imminence*, nearness, and expectation:

“Wail, for the day of the Lord is near!” (Isaiah 13:6);

“For the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near” (Ezekiel 30:3);

“Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand” (Joel 2:1);

“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:14);

“Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near” (Zephaniah 1:7).

Old Testament passages referring to the *day of the Lord* often speak of both a near and a far fulfillment, as does much of Old Testament prophecy.

Some Old Testament passages that refer to the *day of the Lord* describe historical judgments that have already been fulfilled in some sense (**Isaiah 13:6-22; Ezekiel 30:2-19; Joel 1:15,3:14; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah 1:14-18**), while others refer to divine judgments that will take place toward the *end of the age* (**Joel 2:30-32; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:1, 5**).

The New Testament calls it a day of “*wrath*,” a day of “*visitation*,” and the “*great day of God Almighty*” (**Revelation 16:14**) and refers to a still future fulfillment when God’s wrath is poured out on unbelieving Israel (**Isaiah 22; Jeremiah 30:1-17; Joel 1-2; Amos 5; Zephaniah 1**) and on the unbelieving world (**Ezekiel 38–39; Zechariah 14**).

The Scriptures indicate that “*the day of the Lord*” will come quickly, like a thief in the night (**Zephaniah 1:14-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:2**), and therefore **Christians must be watchful and ready for the coming of Christ at any moment.**

Besides being a time of judgment, it will also be a time of salvation as God will deliver the **remnant of Israel**, fulfilling His promise that “*all of Israel will be saved*” (**Romans 11:26**), forgiving their sins and restoring His chosen people to the land He promised to Abraham (**Isaiah 10:27; Jeremiah 30:19-31,40; Micah 4; Zechariah 13**).

The final outcome of the *day of the Lord* will be that “*the arrogance of man will be brought low and the pride of men humbled; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day*” (**Isaiah 2:17**). The ultimate or final fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the day of the Lord will come at the end of history when God, with wondrous power, **will punish evil and fulfill all His promises.**

> **PREPARATION #2 - (v4-8) LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE AND BE WATCHFUL!**

(v4-5) Let your LIGHT SHINE! – Through God's Word, the Bible: *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"* (Psalms 119:105). The Psalmist also declared, *"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"* (Psalms 27:1). Jesus said, *"I am the light of the world"* (John 8:12).

- Jesus plainly stated that those who rejected this divine light would bring judgment upon themselves (John 3:19-21). Light is also used as a symbol of holiness and purity. Paul counseled the Christians at Rome to *"put on the armor of light"* (Romans 13:12). We are called to be *"children of light"* (Eph. 5:1-17).

(v6-8) Watch (be on guard) and be sober (self-controlled); put on the breastplate of FAITH (Rom. 10:17; Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. Ch. 11; James 2:20; Jude 3) and LOVE (Matt. 22:37-39; John 13:34-35; 1 Cor. Ch. 13), and as helmet the HOPE OF SALVATION (Romans 15:13 - *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*)

- Bible commentator and Pastor/Teacher Warren Wiersbe writes, "Since we do not know when the Lord will return for His people, we must live in a constant attitude of watching and waiting, while we are busy working and witnessing."

- WATCH OUT! – 2 Peter chapter 3

> **PREPARATION #3 - (v9-11) SHARE SALVATION THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!**

- *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ* – that is the WRATH OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION!

- Remember what Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 - *For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

- Let's get some COMFORT and let's EDIFY one another from **REVELATION 3:7-13** (the church of Philadelphia). Jesus said that this church, a last- days church, a church of the rapture will be kept from the *hour of trial* which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell the earth.

- Why will we be raptured? Because we have *"kept His Word"* and we have *"not denied His name!"*

We BELIEVE THE BIBLE!
WE BELIEVE IN JESUS, AND JESUS SAVES!
Let's GO FOR GOD until He takes us home!