

**The Day of the Lord**  
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**Text:** 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

**1 Thessalonians:** [Bibliography](#) or [Manuscripts and Greek Exegesis](#)

**UBS 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Paragraph Topic:** The Lord's Coming

**Central Idea of Message:** Jesus Christ is returning to reward those who trusted in him and to punish those who had the chance but did not.

**Introduction:** The world generally scoffs at the idea of the second coming (advent) of Jesus Christ. The world jeered at the concept of his first coming too.

But arrive he did in a lowly manger, and die he did on a cruel cross, and rise from the dead he did out of the clutches of the grave, and return he will in magnificent glory! No man knows when.

The day of the Lord will shock the unsaved, but the day of the Lord should not surprise the saved.

**I. The Day of the Lord Will Shock the Unsaved (vv. 1-3)**

- A. Christians have no need to be written to regarding times and epochs relative to the day of the Lord (v. 1)
  - 1. **There is nothing to write regarding when the day will be: no one knows when it will be**
    - a) This should have stopped speculation
    - b) Those who watch have no need to be told when the hour will be because they are always ready (cf. Faussett)
    - c) **The time of Christ's return is already fixed by the authority of God and Christians best not be overly concerned about it**
    - d) **Jesus never spoke of his return in terms of time but in terms of conditions (cf. Hobbs 282)**
  - 2. Christians who read their Bibles know the day is coming
    - a) Time does not go on forever
    - b) The end is drawing near
    - c) God's patience with sinful man has a limit

3. Times and epochs
  - a) Times: chronological periods
  - b) Epochs: seasons, significant events, pregnant opportunities
- B. Christians should know full-well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night (v. 2; Matt. 24:43; 2 Pet. 3:10)
  1. **Day of the Lord**
    - a) **Day of vengeance**
    - b) **Day of wrath**
    - c) **Day of judgment:** the day that the righteous God of the universe judges sin wherever it is found
    - d) **Day of reaping what has been sown**
    - e) **Day of God's righteous intervention in history**
    - f) **Day of glory for believers**
    - g) **Day of horror for unbelievers**
  2. **Like a thief in the night**
    - a) **Suddenly**
      - (1) When people are unprepared for it
      - (2) When people are not alert for it
    - b) **Unexpectedly:** when least anticipated by the world
    - c) **Relentlessly:** no abating, no let up
    - d) **Night**
      - (1) Refers to a time of relative unconcern and supposed security
        - (a) Locked indoors
        - (b) Snug as a bug in a rug
      - (2) People seem to do the worst of things at night
      - (3) What a horrifying experience for the King of the Universe to return while we are engaged in the wickedest of sin
    - e) No one will know in advance
    - f) Thieves take what is valuable and Christ will do just that when he raptures believers
- C. The unbelieving world sees things differently (v. 3)
  1. False prophets say peace is developing
  2. **Christians know there will never be peace without the rule of the Prince of Peace**
    - a) Not in America
    - b) Not in Israel
    - c) Not in the Middle East

- d) Not in the world
- 3. Many say man is safe from God: they are wrong
  - a) Is there really a God out there to worry about? Yes indeed!
  - b) The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah thought they had gotten by with their sin too
  - c) Man will never be safe from man because mankind is sinful
  - d) Those who are unrepentant will never be safe from the wrath of almighty God
  - e) Destruction, not annihilation, will come upon the unrepentant and there will be no medication to ease the agony
  - f) Escape from the coming destruction will be impossible for those who refused God
  - g) Double negative emphasizes the impossibility of escaping
    - (1) No cave dark enough to hide in
    - (2) No oceanic abyss deep enough to conceal
    - (3) No storm shelter strong enough to protect
- 4. **As with the birth of a baby, we cannot know the precise day or hour, but we can discern an approximate time for the birth based on physiological facts**
- 5. **So it is with the return of Christ: we cannot know the precise day or hour but we can discern an approximate season based on fulfillment of prophetic signs, so says Paul**

## II. **The Day of the Lord Should Not Surprise the Saved (vv. 4-6)**

- A. Christians are not in darkness such that the day should overtake them like a thief (v. 4)
  - 1. **This entire passage implies that Christians will be present when the day of the Lord comes**
  - 2. **Please note that a *secret rapture* of believers before the day of the Lord does not correspond at all with Paul's words here!**
  - 3. Jesus will come as a thief in the night regarding the unsaved, but the saved can discern the seasons (Matt. 16:3; 24:36)
  - 4. Christians must walk in the light
    - a) Light is a reference to righteousness as opposed to night and evil
    - b) Walking in light keeps one alert

- c) Walking in light keeps things in focus
  - d) Walking in light helps one see
  - e) Light: Semitic idiom which expresses character
- 5. Darkness: not ignorance, but moral and spiritual separation from God (cf. Hubbard 1356)
- B. Christians are sons of light and sons of day (v. 5)
  - 1. Sons of light
    - a) Opposite of darkness
    - b) Christians are to be emitting radiant brightness
  - 2. Sons of day
    - a) Opposite of night
    - b) Busy working, for day is the primary time designated for working in biblical times
- C. Christians must not slumber as others do (v. 6)
  - 1. Christians are commanded to remain alert
    - a) **Falling asleep at the wheel while driving a vehicle can have disastrous results, as can "falling asleep" spiritually**
    - b) We must never let our spiritual guard down
    - c) Christians must never become careless
    - d) Christians are on spiritual duty morally and ethically twenty-four seven
    - e) Be alert to opportunities
    - f) Be watchful against the attack of the enemy
  - 2. Christians are commanded to remain sober
    - a) Implies self-control: refraining from carnal indulgence, mental or physical (cf. Faussett)
    - b) Implies yieldedness to the Holy Spirit
    - c) Implies not being surprised
    - d) Implies not being confused
  - 3. **The rest of the world is apathetic to the things of God, but not Christians!**

**Conclusion: The day of the Lord will be both a time of rejoicing and a time of anguish. It will bring joy to believers and great distress to unbelievers. Are you ready for his second advent?**

Hymn #510, "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory."