

I Thessalonians

Chapter 5:1-28

¹**Now as to the periods and times, brothers and sisters, you have no need of anything to be written to you.**

(MacArthur) Exacerbating their fears were false teachers who were attempting to deceive them (**II Thess. 2:1–3** > ¹*Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,* ²*that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit, or a message, or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.* ³*No one is to deceive you in any way! For it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,*

Now as to > (Swindoll) Though Paul continues to discuss future things in 5:1-11, he makes a gentle transition within that subject. He uses two small Greek words, *peri de*, to indicate this transition. We might translate this phrase, “*now concerning*.” Paul often uses this same phrase to indicate a change of subject (**1 Cor. 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12; 1 Thess. 4:9**). It doesn’t necessarily mean a completely unrelated topic ... However, it does indicate that Paul is “shifting gears,” so to speak—turning his focus from one aspect of a topic to a different aspect.

1 Cor. 7:1 > *Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

1 Cor. 7:25 > ²⁵*Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I am offering direction as one who*

1 Cor. 8:1 > *Now concerning food sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes one conceited, but love edifies people.*

1 Thess. 4:9 > ⁹*Now as to the love of the brothers and sisters, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;*

(Precept Austin) the change in subject from *hope* to *judgment* indicates that the Day of the Lord is a distinctly different subject from the Rapture of the Church and conveys a definite implication that the Day of the Lord will not include the Rapture of the Church

Periods > (HELPS) *chronos* > *time* (in general), especially viewed *in sequence* (a “*succession of moments*”)

(Vincent) The time measured in duration

(Precept Austin) *chronos* means a space of time. *Chronos* is a period of measured time, not a period of accomplishment as *kairos* (see below).

Times > (Strong's) *kairos* > time, season. Usage > fitting season, season, opportunity, occasion, time

(Vincent) The suitable time

(Precept Austin) *kairos* means a point of time or period of time, frequently with the implication of being especially fit for something and without emphasis on precise chronology. It means a moment or period as especially appropriate to the right, proper, favorable time (at the right time).

(Vincent) The plural is used because Paul is thinking of a number of incidents attending the preparation and accomplishment of the second advent, and occurring at different times.

(Wuest) *But concerning the duration of the successive intervals of time and the epoch-making periods of time ...*

² *For you yourselves know **full well** that **the day of the Lord** is coming just like a thief in the night.*

Full well > (MacArthur) *akribōs* (*full well*) describes careful, accurate, painstaking research (cf. Matt. 2:8; Luke 1:3; Acts 18:25). The Thessalonians knew for certain that the Day of the Lord will arrive unexpectedly.

In **II Thessalonians 2:1-2** Paul assures them that "The Day of the Lord" had not yet come when he wrote > ¹*Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,* ²*that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit, or a message, or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.*

The Day of the Lord > Walvoord states that there are 19 passages in the OT that specifically refer to "The Day of the Lord" (and 4 in the NT). We want to look at 3 of them:

Isaiah 13:9-11 > ⁹*Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.* ¹⁰*For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash their light;*

The sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light. ¹¹ So I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their wrongdoing; I will also put an end to the audacity of the proud and humiliate the arrogance of the tyrants.

Zephaniah 1:14-16 > ¹⁴ *The great day of the LORD is near, near and coming very quickly; listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. ¹⁵ That day is a day of anger, a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶ A day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and the high corner towers.*

Joel 3:14-18 > ¹⁴ *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. ¹⁵ The sun and moon have become dark, and the stars have lost their brightness. ¹⁶ The LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake. But the LORD is a refuge for His people, and a stronghold for the sons of Israel. ¹⁷ Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, dwelling on Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will no longer pass through it. ¹⁸ And on that day the mountains will drip with sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; and a spring will go out from the house of the LORD and water the Valley of Shittim.*

Based on the verses above ... how long is "The Day of the Lord"?

(Walvoord) As revealed in the Old Testament, it is a period of time that will begin with the seven-year tribulation, which could be called the judgment phase, and will continue throughout the entire thousand-year reign of Christ, which could be called the blessing phase. The day of the Lord will stretch all the way from the rapture to the end of the millennium. It will commence with a time of wrath and judgment on a wicked and Christ-rejecting world and will culminate in a time of peace and prosperity in which Christ will be in the midst of the earth and will rule over the earth and bring blessing to the nation Israel.

(Constable) It contains both judgment (in the Tribulation) and blessing (in the Millennium). Just as the Jews counted the nighttime as the first part of each day, and the daytime as the second part (cf. Gen. 1:5), so the "day of the Lord" will begin with a "dark" period (the Tribulation) followed by a "light" period (the Millennium).

The **Hopelessness** of man today > (MacArthur quoting various philosophers)

- Bertrand Russell > "There is no law of cosmic progress.... From evolution, so far as our present knowledge shows, no ultimately optimistic philosophy can be validly inferred"

- Richard Dawkins acknowledges, “Evolution has no long-term goal. There is no long distance target, no final perfection to serve as a criterion for selection, although human vanity cherishes the absurd notion that our species is the final goal of evolution”
- George Gaylord Simpson > “Man is the result of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind”

³ *While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*

Peace and Safety > (Constable) Evidently the occasion for the false sense of security ("Peace and safety!") felt then, will be the Antichrist's signing of a covenant with Israel (cf. Dan. 9:27). Thus the beginning of "the day of the Lord" and the beginning of "Daniel's seventieth week" also coincide.

Sudden > (Walvoord) the Greek word for *sudden* is emphasized. This event will not be preceded by signs; that is, there will be no warning. There will be no possibility of escape.

Will come upon > (Precept Austin) (*ephistemi* from *epí* = by, near, upon + *hístemi* = stand) means literally to stand upon or over and then conveys the sense of to be at hand (instant) or to be present and is generally used of any sudden unexpected appearance.

Sudden destruction will come upon them > (Precept Austin quoting Young's) the word order in the original Greek presents a dramatic picture... *then sudden destruction doth stand by them* (Young's Literal)

They will not escape > (Uteley) This is an emphatic double negative "Never, no, never under any circumstances."

⁴ *But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief;* ⁵ *for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;*

Not > (Precept Austin) *Not* is *ou* which is the Greek negative meaning *absolutely not*.

The day > The context is clear ... “The Day of the Lord”

Overtake > (Strong's) to lay hold of, seize

(Wuest) The picture in the word is that of seizing something and pulling it down.

(Precept Austin) (The word) was used in secular Greek of evils seizing with hostile intent, coming upon or overtaking someone which is somewhat of the sense Paul uses (the word) to describe the Day of the Lord "seizing upon" or coming suddenly upon unbelievers ...

You ... all > (Precept Austin) *You* > This pronoun is emphatic as is the word *all*.

For you are all sons of light and sons of day > (Walvoord)

- **Isaiah 9:2** also describes the transformation from spiritual darkness to light > *The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.*
- **Isaiah 9:6-7** reveal that the light is the Messiah > *For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of armies will accomplish this.*

(Constable, quoting Morris) In both Semitic and Greek thought, to be described as a "son" of something was to be characterized by that thing.

In this case, what characterized the Thessalonians was the "light" (in contrast to "darkness"), and "day" (in contrast to "night"). They belonged to a different "day": the day of grace. They were not walking in wickedness, either ("darkness").

(Utley) This metaphorical dualism of light versus darkness is characteristic of the Ancient Near East. It is a recurrent theme in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Apostle John's writings.

⁶ *so then, let's not **sleep** as **others** do, but **let's be alert** and **sober**.*

Sleep > (Strong's) *katheudo* > to sleep

(Utley) > This is a different word from 1 Thess. 4:13ff (*koimao* > *sleep, fall asleep, die*). It is often used in the NT for moral indifference (cf. **Mark 13:36**; Eph. 5:14).

Mark 13:35-36 > ³⁵ *Therefore, stay alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—* ³⁶ *so that he does not come suddenly and find you asleep (katheudo).*

Others > (Strong's) the rest, remaining

(Utley) > This is literally "the remaining" or "the rest." It is the same term used to describe unbelievers who have no hope in **1 Thess. 4:13**.

1 Thess. 4:13 > ¹³ *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the **rest** of mankind do, who have no hope.*

Let's be alert > (Strong's) *gregoreo* > *to be awake, to watch*

(Precept Austin) **Mathew 26:38, 40-41** > ³⁸ *Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and **keep watch** (*gregoreo*) with Me." ⁴⁰ And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and He said to Peter, "So, you men could not **keep watch** (*gregoreo*) with Me for one hour? ⁴¹ **keep watching** (*gregoreo*) and praying, so that you do not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Sober > (Strong's) *nepho* > *to be sober, to abstain from wine*

(Walvoord) All true prophetic teaching has an application. The study of prophecy is not just for prophecy's sake. God has taught us concerning future things because He wants us to be informed and, being informed, to be better Christians.

⁷ *For those who sleep, sleep at night, and **those who are drunk**, get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of the day, let's be sober, **having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.***

Those who are drunk > (Vincent) Literally > who are made drunk or get drunk

Having put on the breastplate ... > (Vincent) The figures are not original with Paul.

See **Isaiah 59:17** > *He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head;*

(Precept Austin) well equipped soldiers had two essential pieces of equipment, one to preserve the vital organs and the other to preserve the head. The modern-day equivalent is the bulletproof vest. The emphasis in this picture is on the protection of a believer and therefore Paul does not mention a sword.

Ephesians 6:14-17 > ¹⁴ *Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

(MacArthur) If faith forms the hard, protective outer surface of a Christian's breastplate, then love is its soft inner lining.

⁹ ***For*** God has not ***destined*** us for wrath, but ***for obtaining*** salvation ***through our Lord Jesus Christ***, ¹⁰ ***who died for us***, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.

For > The Greek word usually translated as *for* is *gar* > *for, in fact, indeed*. This one is *hoti* > *that, because, since*. Therefore, we could open this sentence with *Because God ...*

Destined > (Strong's) *titemi* > to place, lay, set

(In my opinion > this is one of the clearest passages that says we are NOT going through the Tribulation.)

Obtaining > (Strong's) reservation, acquisition

(HELPS) properly, make one's own; *completely* obtain, i.e. as a *full possession*, literally, "for *abundant (all-around)* gain."

(Precept Austin) means literally to make around and the idea is the obtaining of something in its completeness. It describes the act of obtaining something or the experience of acquiring something for oneself. The idea in 1Thes 5:9 is of the possessing of salvation as our present property!

For obtaining > (Vincent) More literally, *unto the obtaining*.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us > (Constable) This deliverance is certain because Jesus Christ died as our Substitute.

¹¹ ***Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing.***

(Contable) > This verse contains the first of 22 commandments for Christians, which follow through verse 27

Build > (Strong's) *oikodomeho* > to build a house

Build one another up > (Robertson) Literally, *build ye, one the one*