

READY FOR THE DAY



WHAT WE NEED AS FOLLOWERS
OF JESUS TO BE READY
FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD ...



1. **We do not need** more information, 5:1-3.

- (1 Thessalonians 5:1–3 ESV) Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, **you have no need to have anything written to you.** 2 For you yourselves are fully aware that **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, “There is **peace and security,**” then **sudden destruction** will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Day... ἡμέρα [hemera] – a day, roughly a twenty four hour period reckoned to begin at sunset; a daylight period, roughly a twelve hour period from rising to setting of sun; a period, a unit of time, indefinite in scope; daylight, as contrasted to darkness; a day as assigned to a particular purpose or observance.

A. This is a different event than when believers will be snatched up to meet the Lord in the air.

- (1 Thessalonians 4:17 ESV) Then we who are alive, who are left, **will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,** and so we will always be with the Lord.

B. They are fully aware and so do not need more information as was the case with the event in 4:17.

- (1 Thessalonians 4:13 ESV) **But we do not want you to be uninformed,** brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

Fully ... ἀκριβῶς [akribos] – mindfully; in a careful and deliberate manner; exactly, accurately, diligently.

Aware ... οἶδα [oida] – to see, know; to perceive as acquired through observation or the senses; to notice, discern, discover; to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to anything; to pay attention, observe; to know of anything; to have knowledge of, understand.

C. This event will shock people (like a thief in the night) who are falsely hoping for peace and security apart from the Lord.

D. This “thief” will rob them of any hope for peace and security as this event brings sudden, inescapable destruction upon them.

EXCURSUS: THE DAY OF THE LORD — THE GRAVITY OF THE MATTER ...

Gravity speaks of the extreme or alarming importance of something, the seriousness of a matter; the quality of having weight, heaviness ... the Day of the Lord should be the most weighty, the most alarming day on our calendars.

The Day of the Lord in general is the period of time ordained by God during which he sets things right that were set wrong when Adam and Eve sinned and positioned this world in rebellion against its Creator. This **day** culminates in what Peter describes as the first created heavens passing away with a roar. (See 2 Peter 3:12 in our notes.)

Per Isaiah it is a day of destruction, dismay and anguish.

- (Isaiah 13:6–8 ESV) Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; **as destruction from the Almighty** it will come! 7 Therefore all hands will be feeble, and every human heart will melt. 8 **They will be dismayed:** pangs and agony will seize them; **they will be in anguish** like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at one another; their faces will be aflame.

Per Isaiah ... coming cruel with wrath and fierce anger to punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity.

- (Isaiah 13:9–11 ESV) Behold, **the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger,** to make the land a desolation **and to destroy its sinners from it.** 10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light. 11 I will **punish the world** for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will **put an end to** the pomp of the arrogant, and **lay low** the pompous pride of the ruthless.

Referenced by Ezekiel as something for which the prophets of Israel should have prepared the people but did not.

- (Ezekiel 13:5 ESV) **You have not** gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, **that it might stand in battle in the day of the LORD.**

Referenced by Ezekiel as that which would expose their fundamental religious beliefs as merely a pretense of peace.

- (Ezekiel 13:14, 16 ESV) And I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it down to the ground, **so that its foundation will be laid bare.** When it falls, you shall perish in the midst of it, and you shall know that I am the LORD. ... the prophets of Israel who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and **saw visions of peace for her, when there was no peace,** declares the Lord GOD.

Jesus warned that on “that day” many will be under the illusion that they know him.

- (Matthew 7:22a, 23 ESV) **On that day many will say to me,** ‘Lord, Lord ... **And then will I declare to**

them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

Referenced by Joel as destruction from the Almighty that is about to happen—is near.

- (Joel 1:15 ESV) Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD **is near**, and **as destruction** from the Almighty it comes.

Referenced by Amos as a misunderstood, false hope of religious people whose worship God hated and despised.

- (Amos 5:18–21 ESV) **Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light**, 19 as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. 20 Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? 21 **"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies."**

Referenced by Obadiah as relevant to all the nations.

- (Obadiah 15 ESV) For the day of the LORD **is near upon all the nations**. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head.

Paul speaks of the day of the Lord in reference to our lives in the context of the final judgment.

- (1 Corinthians 5:5 ESV) You are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, **so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord**.

Peter calls our attention to the sort of people we should be in view of this coming day.

- (2 Peter 3:10-13 ESV) **But the day of the Lord will come like a thief**, and then **the heavens will pass away with a roar**, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. **Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness**, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! 13 But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

END EXCURSUS

2. **We need a sobering, self-controlled, Spirit-filled attitude of awareness of the gravity of the coming day of the Lord stirring our souls, 5:4-7.**

- (1 Thessalonians 5:4–7 ESV) **But you are not in darkness**, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all **children of light, children of the day**. We are not of the night or of the darkness. 6 **So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober**. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night.

A. Our essential need is **to not sleep but to keep awake** so that we maintain self-control and do not fall prey to the influences of darkness in this world.

Keep awake ... to be alert; to beware, conceived of as staying awake; to watch; to give strict attention to, be cautious, active.

Sober ... to get self-control; to curb the controlling influence of inordinate emotions or desires (and therefore become reasonable); to be calm and collected in spirit.

B. Fact: Believers are not in darkness, of the darkness or of the night.

- (Colossians 1:13 ESV) **He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son**.
- (1 Peter 2:9b ESV) ... may proclaim the excellencies of him **who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light**.
- (Ephesians 5:8 ESV) For **at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord**. Walk as children of light.

C. Fact: That day will not surprise the children of the day who keep awake and are ready for **that Day**.

D. **Children of the light** keep awake and are not controlled by the influences and influencers of the darkness of this world.

E. **Children of the day** keep awake and live with a heightened consciousness of the light of the day in the sovereign will of God in the affairs of humans.

F. In contrast ... Scripture speaks of the many who are desperate for peace and security (see 5:3) but sleep in the oblivion of the night with no idea of the sudden destruction that will soon be upon them.

Many (MOST?) will not be ready.

- (Matthew 24:5 ESV) For **many** will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.

- (Matthew 24:10 ESV) And then **many** will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.
- (Matthew 24:11 ESV) And **many** false prophets will arise and lead many astray.
- (Matthew 24:12-13 ESV) And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of **many** will grow cold. [13] But the one who endures to the end will be saved.
- (1 John 2:18 ESV) Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now **many** antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.
- (1 John 4:1 ESV) Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for **many** false prophets have gone out into the world.

3. We need to be self-controlled and sufficiently armed so that we might live in the high company of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5:8-10.

- (1 Thessalonians 5:8–10 ESV) **But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.** 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us **so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.**

A. Those who belong to the Day are ready for the Day because we have armed ourselves with faith and love.

We are ready because of our faith—we believe and trust in God. We obey his commands to love God and love one another. We are ready for the Day of the Lord because we know we are on the Lord's side with nothing to fear but only joyful anticipation of beholding the glory of God.

- (1 Peter 1:7 ESV) ... **the tested genuineness of your faith**—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—**may be found to result in praise and glory and honor** at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

B. Those who belong to the Day are ready for the Day because we are armed with the helmet of the hope of our salvation.

C. Our mind is fully protected from the fiery darts of the evil one by the helmet of the one true gospel—the gospel that Paul preached.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 **that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures.

D. We are not destined for wrath but for life with Christ.

CONCLUSION: We need to help each other get ready!

- (1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV) **Therefore encourage one another** and **build one another up**, just as you are doing.

We express godly love toward one another by coming alongside the person to help provide them with what is best in their relationship with God—sometimes comfort, sometimes encouragement, sometimes rebuke, always to build up their spiritual strength and courage.

Encourage ... παρακαλέω [parakaleo] – to come alongside; to comfort, to alleviate sorrow or distress; give emotional strength to; to call to one's side, speak to; to admonish, exhort.

Build one another up ... to build up; construct; to make nearer to fullness or completion (as of moral strength or someone's conscience); conceived of as constructing something further.

The writer of Hebrews stresses the increased importance of meeting together in order to obey God to encourage one another as we "see the Day drawing near."

- (Hebrews 10:24–25 ESV) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 **not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**

So we might ask ... How do we come alongside those who have stopped coming to church ... who have forsaken the assembly of the people of God ... How do we help them see the Day drawing near?