

Day of the Lord

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For Discussion: The Day of the Lord (New Testament)

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What is the Day of the Lord?

Most people associate the day of the Lord with a time when God's will and purpose for His world and for mankind will be fulfilled. It is both a period of time as well as a singular day. The first mention of it in the New Testament is by Peter at that first Pentecost after the Resurrection:

Acts 2:20 – *The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.*

The Apostle Peter is quoting Joel 2:31 which is in the context of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

How does the Old Testament characterize the day of the Lord?

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, see also Ezekiel 30:3, Joel 2:1 & 3:14, Zephaniah 1:7).

- 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).

How does the New Testament clarify the day of the Lord?

The New Testament also calls the day of the Lord a day of "wrath," a day of "visitation," and the "great day of God Almighty" (Revelation 16:14).

- It 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).

- 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.
- The day of the Lord is also when God restores Israel to the land He promised Abraham (Isaiah 10:27; Jeremiah 30:19-31, 40; Micah 4; Zechariah 13).

This means that the day of the Lord must include the Millennial Kingdom since that is when the land promises to Israel will be fulfilled.

How do you explain the "nearness" aspects of the day of the Lord in the Old Testament?

- This is because the 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.
- The Old Testament references to the Day of the Lord includes the Day of Christ introduced in the New Testament.

What does 1 Thess 5 tell us about the day of the Lord?

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 – *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 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.*

Paul uses the phrase "day of the Lord" as a contrast to the vast difference between the Rapture of the Church (Chapter 4) and all that follows it. The Rapture offers hope, the ultimate hope of any Christian generation (including his).

- The day of the Lord, while covering a vast period (at least 1,007 years), begins in absolute horror.

How is it the day of the Lord comes like a thief?

The day of the Lord come unexpectedly on those who will be impacted by it. Not that there weren't signs, but unbelievers refused to heed the signs.

- As a thief robs his victims of what they have, the day of the Lord robs the unbelievers of their peace and safety.

What was the purpose of the 1 Thessalonians epistle?

The Thessalonians were apparently concerned that some of their fellow Christians who had died due to natural causes would miss out on the Rapture.

- The Apostle Paul would go on to write a second epistle, as someone would come along later writing a letter as if from Paul, claiming the resurrection had already happened...

How is the day of the Lord distinguished from the day of Christ?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5 – *Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the **day of Christ** had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

The day of Christ is another term for the rapture of the church.

What precedes the day of Christ?

The falling away which is translated from the Greek word apostasia. Some believe this is referring to a spiritual falling away referenced in other places as the apostasy of the church. Dr. Andy Woods makes a compelling case that this falling away is a physical falling away making it another term for the rapture of the church.

- If that is the case, it would make the pre-trib rapture doctrine absolutely undisputable.

What follows the day of Christ?

The *man of sin is revealed*... the Antichrist will become known and will come to power. This means that it is an absolute waste of time for the church to speculate on who the Antichrist might be.

What do the following passages reveal about the day of Christ?

1 Corinthians 1:7-8 – *eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

We will be resurrected on the day of Christ because our sins have been forgiven when we believed in the Savior which is our justification.

Philippians 1:6 – *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ*

Our sanctification is completed when we are glorified in the resurrection (aka rapture) at the day of Christ.

Philippians 2:16 – *holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

The day of Christ will be a day of rejoicing because we have believed the gospel (*the word of life*) and thus our good works will have value in eternity (rewards).

What can we conclude about the day of Christ?

The day of Christ is viewed as a positive event associated with the Rapture when all Christians receive their resurrection bodies.

- The day of the Lord, on the other hand, is almost always associated with the negative aspects regarding the return of the Lord.

Is the day of Christ like a thief in the night?

No... Since the day of Christ refers to the Rapture of the Church, and no one can know when that will happen, it remains in a state of imminence, in other words, meaning it could happen at any time, and nothing needs to precede it.

1 Thessalonians 5:4 – *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day [the day of the Lord] should overtake you as a thief.*

True born-again Christians will not be surprised by the Rapture/day of Christ because their relationship with Jesus makes them ready for it. And we also can know when we are in the season of the Rapture (1 Thess 5:1).

- The day of the Lord will not rob the Christians of this Age because they will already be resurrected!

How do we know the day of the Lord cannot begin until after the day of Christ?

The removal of the Church corresponds with the end of the evil-restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Holy Spirit allows it...

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 – *For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed*

What reinforces the idea that the evil-restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit ends at the Rapture?

In the context of the Apostle Paul reminding the Thessalonians about the Rapture, we see this:

1 Thessalonians 5:9 – *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ*

The wrath here is a reference to the day of the Lord, our salvation comes before that at the day of Christ (the Rapture).

How is the day of the Lord both a period of time as well as a singular day?

The day of the Lord is a period of time because it begins with the Tribulation and extends into the Millennial Kingdom.

- The singular day of the Lord is the actual day on which Jesus returns to earth with the armies of heaven.
- The day of Christ is only a singular day... the day of our resurrection aka the Rapture of the church.

What are the armies of heaven returning to earth with Jesus on the singular day of the Lord?

These will be the glorified church and the angelic hosts as described in Revelation 19:11-16.

How do we know we are in the season of the day of Christ?

Because of all the stage-setting going on for the day of the Lord...

- Israel: back in the land, restoration of the Hebrew language, their invincible army, world-wide antisemitism
- Technology: infrastructure for Mark of the Beast, smart phones, weapons of mass destruction
- Globalism: nationalism is passe, no borders, nations yielding sovereignty
- Nature: lethal floods every day, earthquakes
- Wars: struggle to be on top of the NWO
- Society: lawlessness, love growing cold
- Church: Apostasy, scoffing

What take-aways come to mind from our discussion?

- The day of the Lord is a reference to the Tribulation and the Millennial Kingdom.
- The day of Christ is a reference to the rapture and our resurrection.
- The stage setting for the day of the Lord indicates the day of Christ has to be near.