

THE DAY OF THE LORD

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. (Malachi 4:5)

What is this “Great & Dreadful Day of the Lord?”

Throughout the Old & New Testaments, there are numerous references to “*the day of the Lord*” or “*that Day*” or “*this Day*” or “*the Day*”

- *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. (1Thess. 5:4)*
- *Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. (Isaiah 13:6)*

This “*Day*” is the day that the Lord Jesus Christ comes to “*judge the nations*”

- *The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. (Ps.110:5)*
- *The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth. (Revelation 11:18)*

This **day of Judgment** ends the “*time of the Gentiles*” or the age of **grace** in which we now live

- *For the day is near, even the day of the LORD is near; It will be a day of clouds, the time of the Gentiles. (Ezekiel 30:3)*
- *Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (Romans 11:5)*

Ezekiel refers to this Day as a “*day of clouds*” – i.e. a day of **final decisions**

- *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. (Joel 3:14)*
- *For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near; As you have done, it shall be done to you; Your reprisal shall return upon your own head. (Obadiah 1:15)*

What Happens on this Great & Dreadful Day?

There are many Scriptures which each give a glimpse of what this dreadful day will be like:

- *It shall come as destruction from the Almighty, (Isaiah 13:6, Joel 1:15)*
- *Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. (Isaiah 13:9)*
- *A day of vengeance... the sword shall devour, (Jeremiah 46:10)*
- *For the day of the LORD of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up— And it shall be brought low (Isaiah 2:12)*
- *The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it? (Joel 2:11)*
- *The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. (Joel 2:31, Acts 2:20)*
- *The noise of the day of the Lord is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. (Zephaniah 1:14)*

- *For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.* ²² *And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.* (Matthew 24:21-22)
- *But I say to you that it will be **more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.*** (Luke 10:12)
- *The heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.* (2Peter 3:10)

Can We Know When this Day is Coming?

The Scriptures tell us several times that we **will not know the day or the hour** that this Day of the Lord comes

- *The day of the Lord so comes as a **thief in the night.*** (1Thess. 5:2, 2Peter 3:10))
- *But of that day and hour **no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.*** (Matt. 24:36)

However, we are told to “**watch**” for the signs

- *Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.* ⁴³ *But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, **he would have watched** and not allowed his house to be broken into.* (Matthew 24:42-43)

Scripture gives us several **signs of the days leading up to the Day of the Lord**

- *For that Day will not come unless **the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition.*** (2Thessalonians 5:2)
- *But know this, that **in the last days perilous times will come:*** ² *For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power.* (2Timothy 3:1-5)
- *And you will hear of **wars and rumors of wars.** See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet.*** ⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be **famines, pestilences, and earthquakes** in various places. ⁸ *All these are the **beginning of sorrows.*** (Matthew 24:6-8)*

Then the Book of Revelation shows us the **sequence of events** that will transpire during the Great Tribulation as Jesus opens the seven seals of the scroll that has been “**sealed till the time of the end**” (Daniel 12:9)

- We see that **when Jesus opens the sixth seal**, the events that occur closely match the previous descriptions of the **Day of the Lord**
 - ¹² *I looked when He opened the **sixth seal**, and behold, there was a **great earthquake**; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.* ¹³ *And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.* ¹⁴ *Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.* ¹⁵ *And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”* (Revelation 6:12-17)

Do Christians Need to Fear this Day?

Christians will be spared from this “**great and dreadful day**” through the **Rapture** – i.e. the “catching away of the saints”

- ⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And **the dead in Christ will rise first.*** ¹⁷ *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught*

up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.
¹⁸*Therefore comfort one another with these words.* (1Thessalonians 4:16)

This occurs **right before** the **Day of the Lord** and **right after** the preceding “*days*” of tribulation – i.e. not the **Great Tribulation** or the **Day of the Lord** but the days **leading up** to the Great Tribulation

- ***Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*** ³⁰*Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* ³¹*And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* (Matthew 24:29-31)

➤ This is called the “**Pre-Wrath Rapture**” which occurs sometime **after the mid-point** of the **7-year Great Tribulation**

The “*day of the Lord*” is not to be feared by Christians because this is the Day that we will “**glorified**”

- *When He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.* (2Thessalonians 1:10)

This is the day when we **receive our reward** for all our **sufferings**

- *For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.*
- *There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

What Do Christians Need to Do to Prepare?

Besides “*watching*” for the signs of the times, we are further told in the Scriptures to be “**ready**”

- *But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.* ³⁸*For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,* ³⁹*and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.* ⁴⁰*Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.* ⁴¹*Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left...* ⁴⁴*Therefore you also **be ready**, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.* (Matthew 24:37-41, 44)
- *But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.* (Luke 21:34)

This doesn't mean that our salvation depends upon our being ready, but rather the **salvation of others depends upon us** – i.e. we don't want to leave the man “*in the field*” or the woman “*grinding at the mill*” to be left behind

- We must continue in our **Godly obligations** rather than getting “*weighed down*” **in the things of the world** in order to **fulfill the Great Commission** and to continue doing **good works**
 - *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:18)
 - *Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.* ¹⁷*And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;* ¹⁸*they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”* (Mark 16:15)

- *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.** (Romans 12:1)*
- Our salvation does **not depend** upon our **good works** (“by grace you are saved through faith” – Eph. 2:8), but our **treasure in heaven does**
 - *Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³**each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.** (1Corinthians 3:12)*
 - ***Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** (Matthew 6:19-21)*

We are exhorted by Scripture to “**stand in the gap**” for the Lord and for the people and land where we live:

- *You have **not gone up into the gaps to build a wall for the house of Israel to stand in battle on the day of the LORD.***
- *So I sought for a man among them who would **make a wall, and stand in the gap** before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; **but I found no one.** (Ezekiel 22:30)*

And, as we stand in the gap, we are the ones who are supposed to “**sound the alarm**”

- *Blow the trumpet in Zion, And **sound an alarm** in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; For the day of the LORD is coming, (Joel 2:1)*

In addition, Scripture tells us that we must continue **gathering together** so that we can **exhort one another** – i.e., to **encourage** each other to **persevere** and to continue **doing good works**

- ***not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.** (Hebrews 10:25)*

When the Lord comes back on that “**great and dreadful day**” we don’t want to be caught “**carousing**” but rather **doing what He has asked us to do**

- ***Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ ⁴⁹and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** (Matthew 24:45-51)*
- ***Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.** (Matthew 25:23)*