



5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Day of the LORD Will Come like a Thief

²Because you yourselves well know that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When people are saying, 'Everything is so peaceful and secure,' then destruction will suddenly come upon them, the way labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there is no way they will escape.

⁴But you, brothers, are not in the dark, so that the Day should take you by surprise like a thief; ⁵for you are all people who belong to the light, who belong to the day. We don't belong to the night or to darkness, ⁶so let's not be asleep, like the rest are; on the contrary, let us stay alert and sober. ⁷People who sleep, sleep at night; and people who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us stay sober, putting on trust and love as a breastplate and the hope of being delivered as a helmet. ⁹For God has not intended that we should experience his fury, but that we should gain deliverance through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah,"
(1 Thessalonians 5:2-9 Complete Jewish Bible)

The phrase "the day of the LORD" usually identifies events that take place at the end of time, that is, at the end of this present evil age.

"In order to set us free from this present evil age, Christ gave himself for our sins, in obedience to the will of our God and Father."
(Galatians 1:4 Good News Translation)

Closely identified with this phrase "the day of the LORD," are phrases such as "that day" (2 Timothy 4:8), "the day of His wrath" (Psalm 110:5), "the day of God" (2 Peter 3:12), "the day of judgment" (2 Peter 3:7), etc.

"The day of the LORD" is a time when the Lord will intervene in the events of this earth to consummate, that is, to complete His work of redemption (giving us redemption in our mortal bodies Romans 8:22-23) and bring judgment on the wicked (Matthew 25:46). It is a time for blessings on the followers of Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:10), and curses on those who know not God and that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Some people believe that "the day of the LORD" will be a longer period than a single day, a time before He cleanses heaven and earth in preparation for the eternal state.

Others believe it will be an instantaneous event when Jesus returns to redeem his faithful believers and bring judgment upon the wicked.

In Bible prophecy it is not always so clear when things will happen. But it is clear, it will happen! (2 Peter 3:3-4, 8-12).

I like Jesus' simple Eschatology (meaning time of the end). After Jesus explained in Matthew 13 what would happen at the time of the end of this age, He asked this question to His disciples,

"Do you understand all these things?"

'Yes,' they said, 'we do.'" (Matthew 13:51 NLT)

If you read Matthew 13, it is very simple to understand what will take place at the end of this age. Whereas Daniel the Prophet and John the Revelator said things in symbolic language that, at times, are hard to understand and even were for them.

"¹⁵I, Daniel, was troubled by all I had seen, and my visions terrified me. ¹⁶So I approached one of those standing beside the throne and asked him what it all meant..." (Daniel 7:15-16 NLT)

So for us to be dogmatic about Bible prophecy, always setting times and dates when events will happen seems to me to always lead to trouble. Didn't Jesus say,

"...The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know." (Acts 1:7 NLT)

But do know this, that what God has spoken will come to pass, for the Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). You can see the signs of the times, but let's not set dates (Luke 21:11; Acts 1:7).

When the unbelieving world says things like,

"...What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created." (2 Peter 3:4 NLT)

But you must not forget this one thing,

"⁹The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief..." (2 Peter 3:9-10 NLT)

Can you imagine the holiness, splendor, and justice of that day?

"...On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. ¹³But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness."

¹⁴And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight.

¹⁵And remember, the Lord's patience gives people time to be saved..."
(2 Peter 3:12-15 NLT)

Questions

Think about and discuss the following Scriptures:

1 Read 2 Peter 3:10-13 (Contemporary English Version).

¹⁰The day of the Lord's return will surprise us like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a loud noise, and the heat will melt the whole universe. Then the earth and everything on it will be seen for what they are.

¹¹Everything will be destroyed. So you should serve and honor God by the way you live. ¹²You should look forward to the day when God judges everyone, and you should try to make it come soon. On that day the heavens will be destroyed by fire, and everything else will melt in the heat. ¹³But God has promised us a new heaven and a new earth, where justice will rule. We are really looking forward to that!"

- 2 Peter 3:10-13 (Contemporary English Version)

2 Read Obadiah 1:15 (NIV).

*"The day of the Lord is near
for all nations.*

As you have done, it will be done to you;

your deeds will return upon your own head." - Obadiah 1:15 (NIV)

3 Read Malachi 4:1 (New Living Translation).

“The Lord of Heaven’s Armies says, ‘The day of judgment is coming, burning like a furnace. On that day the arrogant and the wicked will be burned up like straw. They will be consumed—roots, branches, and all.’”

- Malachi 4:1 (New Living Translation)

4 Read Acts 2:19-21 (Good News Translation).

*“¹⁹I will perform miracles in the sky above
and wonders on the earth below.
There will be blood, fire, and thick smoke;
²⁰the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will turn red as blood,
before the great and glorious Day of the Lord comes.
²¹And then, whoever calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.”*

- Acts 2:19-21 (Good News Translation)

5 Read Isaiah 2:12 (New Century Version).

*“The LORD All-Powerful has a certain day planned
when he will punish the proud and those who brag,
and they will no longer be important.” - Isaiah 2:12 (New Century Version)*

6 Read Isaiah 13:6, 9, 11 (King James Version).

*“⁶Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction
from the Almighty.
⁹Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger,
to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.
¹¹And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity;
and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the
haughtiness of the terrible.” - Isaiah 13:6, 9, 11 (King James Version)*

7 Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 (Living Bible).

"¹When is all this going to happen? I really don't need to say anything about that, dear brothers, ²for you know perfectly well that no one knows. That day of the Lord will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. ³When people are saying, 'All is well; everything is quiet and peaceful'—then, all of a sudden, disaster will fall upon them as suddenly as a woman's birth pains begin when her child is born. And these people will not be able to get away anywhere—there will be no place to hide." - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 (Living Bible)

8 Read Proverbs 11:4 (Living Bible).

"Your riches won't help you on Judgment Day; only righteousness counts then." - Proverbs 11:4 (Living Bible)

Have you repented and turned towards righteousness?

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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