

# 1 Thessalonians 5

## The Day of the Lord

5 Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, 2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. 6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. 9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

## Final Instructions

12 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. 13 Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. 14 And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt 21 but test them all; hold on to what is good, 22 reject every kind of evil.

23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

25 Brothers and sisters, pray for us. 26 Greet all God's people with a holy kiss. 27 I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

## Analysis

This final chapter of 1 Thessalonians continues to discuss the day of the Lord, assuring Christians that it will not overtake them. It is associated with what Paul calls the night, in this passage, and it will overtake those who are children of the night. The day of the Lord will arrive like a thief in the night, which is not a welcome event. Also, it brings God's wrath\* upon unbelievers, whereas Christians—children of the light—will experience full salvation at the rapture. This prospect of receiving final salvation motivates Christians to encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:1–11).

While waiting for final salvation, Christians ought to lead a righteous life. This involves proper respect for church leaders. The Lord has placed them in positions of authority and trust over the church. Church members ought to hold them in high regard because of the ministry they perform. Christians also have a responsibility to be at peace with one another (1 Thessalonians 5:12–13).

Paul instructs believers to warn those who are lazy busybodies, encourage those who are easily discouraged, assist those whose faith is weak. And exercise patience with everyone. Furthermore, Christians should not try to get even with those who offend them. On a positive note Christians should keep on doing good to everyone and rejoice. They should keep on praying and offer thanks in every situation (1 Thessalonians 5:14–18).

Also, Paul instructs believers not to ignore or reject what the Spirit wants them to do, nor take a dim view of prophesying\*\*. Instead of rejecting messages delivered by alleged prophets, they should put those messages to the test. This testing allows believers to accept that which agrees with the Word of God, and reject anything which does not. Finally, Christians should stay clear of every form of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:19–22).

Lastly, Paul prays that God will make the Thessalonians completely holy and faultless at the rapture. He concludes with a prayer request and a benediction (1 Thessalonians 5:23–28).

*\*God's wrath is not a reckless rage, an uncontrollable anger, a senseless fury, or an unjust vengeance. The wrath of God is a precise and controlled response to the belittling of his holiness. Everyone who perishes under the wrath of God in eternity will not be because God lost his temper with them and mistreated them.*

*\*\*To prophesy is simply to speak prophecy. Prophecy is the noun, and prophesy is the verb. Prophecy at its most basic definition is "a message from God." So, to prophesy is to proclaim a message from God. The one who does this is, therefore, a prophet. Although foretelling is often associated with prophecy, revealing the future is not a necessary element of prophecy; however, since only God knows the future, any authoritative word about the future must of necessity be a prophecy, that is, a message from God.*