

11. THE DAY OF THE LORD

Woe to you who long for the Day of the Lord!

Why do you long for the Day of the Lord?

It is a day of darkness, not light (Amos 5:18).

Blow the trumpet in Zion,

sound the war alarm on my holy hill.

Let all who live in the land be apprehensive,
for the Day of the Lord is coming.

It is close by – a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of dark storm clouds (Joel 2:1-2a).

It is a great day of judgment (Isa 2:12, 17-19, Joel 1:15, 2:11, 3:14-16). There are smaller judgments, but the Day of the Lord is a day when the Lord visits the Earth in judgment (Zeph 1:14), a unique day, a dark day when light from the sun, moon and stars will not be seen (Isa 13:10, 24:23, Joel 3:15, Mt 24:29, Rev 6:12-13).

The Day of the Lord is near – but ‘near,’ ‘soon,’ and ‘at hand’ often mean absolute certainty rather than closeness of time. Compare Jesus words spoken two thousand years ago: I am coming soon. It is a day in the future when God will intervene in human affairs, especially concerning Israel, and resulting in Israel’s exaltation.

In the NT, the Day of the Lord becomes the day when the Messiah returns (2 Thess 2:2-4), the day of Christ Jesus (Php 1:6, 10). The Day of the Lord will come unexpectedly like a thief for unbelievers (1 Thess 5:2, 2 Pet 3:10), but believers are not in darkness that this day should surprise them like a thief (1 Thess 5:4).

❖ Jesus returns with power and glory

When Jesus Christ returns on the clouds with power and glory (Mt 24:27, 30, Rev 1:7) there will be a lot of noise and his coming will pierce the darkness and gloom with flashing lightning surrounded by brilliant light. His face will shine like the sun in all its brilliance and his voice will sound like the sound of rushing waters (Ezek 43:2, Rev 1:15-16).

❖ Israel mourns

When Jesus returns to the Earth, his destination will be Jerusalem. The glory of his presence will be seen there in the temple (Ezek 43:4). Various Scriptures tell us that all the *tribes of the land* will mourn at Jesus' return (Zech 12:10-13, Mt 24:30, Rev 1:7). Unfortunately, some translations say 'all the *peoples on Earth* will mourn because of him,' but unbelieving nations will not repent at this time, they can only curse God (Rev 6:16, 9:20-21, 16:9-11, 21).

❖ Jesus will be accompanied by saints and angels

Jesus is accompanied by all the holy ones (Zech 14:5), both angels (Mt 16:27, 25:31, Mk 8:38, Lk 9:26, 2 Thess 1:7) and saints (1 Thess 3:13, 4:14, Rev 17:14, 19:8, 14).

❖ Resurrection of the righteous

The bodies of the righteous dead from all over the world will rise from their graves in a flash and meet the Lord in the air (Isa 26:19, Dan 12:2, Mt 24:31, 1 Cor 15:23, 1 Thess 4:16). There may not be much left of the bodies, but a little DNA is all that is needed to add continuity to an individual's resurrection body.

❖ Rapture

The living saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air with the resurrected dead. In the twinkling of an eye, they are transformed with supernatural bodies (Mt 24:40-41, 1 Thess 4:17, 1 Cor 15:51-52, Php 3:21).

❖ Descent of New Jerusalem

The saints are not taken to heaven at Jesus' return, heaven is coming down to Earth (Rev 21:2-3)! The New Jerusalem, the eternal home of the saints, comes down out of heaven from God (Rev 21:2, 9). Its glory

will be visible above earthly Jerusalem, the heavenly realm overlapping the physical realm (Isa 60:1-3, Rev 21:24). It is not only a new location for the saints but also for God, Jesus, and the angels.

❖ **Jesus' descent to the Mount of Olives**

Jesus will descend to the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4), from where the glory departed from the temple before it was destroyed in 587 BC (Ezek 10:18, 11:22-23), and from where Jesus spoke to his disciples about the end times (Mt 24:3), and from where he ascended to heaven (Acts 1:12). So, it is to here also that he returns and re-enters the temple (Ezek 43:1-5, Mal 3:1-2).

❖ **The completion of God's wrath**

Before Jesus' return, the extraordinary distress and suffering on Earth was caused by man but after the Church has been raptured, God's holy wrath on rebellious mankind is poured out in its fullness as the glorified Jesus touches down on the Mount of Olives. His holy and almighty power triggers worldwide earthquakes, as foreseen by so many prophets (Jer 4:23-26, Ezek 38:19-20, Hag 2:6, 21-22, Zech 14:4, Heb 12:26-27, Rev 6:12-16, 16:18-21). The Mount of Olives will split in two from East to West forming a great valley (Zech 14:4, Rev 16:19). Jerusalem will split into three parts and be raised high above the surrounding land (Isa 2:2, Zech 14:4, 10). Terrified by the wrath of God, the rich and powerful will try to hide in basements and bomb shelters (Isa 2:9-10, 19-21, Rev 6:15-17, 16:1-16).

❖ **Cosmic disruption**

The sun and moon are darkened, blotted out by smoke (Isa 13:9-13, Joel 2:30-31, Rev 6:12, 8:12, 9:2). Every mountain and island is displaced (Jer 4:23-26, Ezek 38:20, Rev 6:14, 16:20), and huge 45 kg hailstones fall on people (Rev 11:19, 16:21).

❖ **Babylon falls**

As a result of the worldwide earthquakes, the Babylonian empire falls (Rev 14:8, 17:1-2, 18:1-3), and the network of the world's cities that are the center of political, economic, and entertainment activity collapses (Isa 2:12-21, Eze 38:20, Rev 16:19, 18:10, 16-17, 19) as God humbles human pride (Isa 2:10-22, 13:11-13, 24:1-6, 18-22, Rev

16:19), as he did four millennia ago when he confused the languages of those building the tower of Babel.

❖ **The conquering Messiah**

The nations have revolted against the Lord and his Anointed (Ps 2:2) and have laid siege to Jerusalem. The Messiah goes out from Zion and defeats them (Rev 16:16, 19:19). The armies that have invaded God's land panic and attack each other (Ezek 38:21). They are struck with a plague, and their flesh rots (Zech 14:12-13). All who attack Jerusalem are destroyed (Zech 12:9, 14:2-3) and birds feed on their flesh (Ezek 39:4, 17-20, Rev 19:17-18, 21).

As weeds are pulled up and burned, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out his angels and they'll weed out of his kingdom all who cause people to sin and all evildoers. They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom established by their Father (Mt 13:40-43).

❖ **Antichrist and False Prophet thrown into hell**

Antichrist and the False Prophet are captured and thrown directly into hell (Dan 7:11, 9:27, 2 Thess 2:8, Rev 19:20). Satan, however, is confined to the spiritual underworld during the millennium (Isa 24:21, Rev 20:1-3) after which he will be released briefly. The great chain with which he is bound symbolizes the fact that he will have zero influence in the world during that time.