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LEADERSHIP DURING DIFFICULT DAYS
THE DAY OF THE LORD
1THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ²For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. ⁴But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

The day in which we live people can say almost anything they please and suffer no consequences for their proclamation. They can say all manner of verbiage and get away with it, whether true or false.

Much of the talk or chatter of today's politician is much of the same. They say "this bill is good." It will cure the ills and accomplish whatever we are facing. Their promise is I will do..., I promise to..., I am the only one... But when reality sets in, then the fix becomes worse than the problem. They speak as the positive speaker speaks...say the lie long enough and they will begin to believe it. Thus a warped mind, exchanging the truth for a lie.

The false prophets of the Old Testament habitually practiced and repeated their calms to charm the unsuspecting.¹ And as the Preacher of Ecclesiastes states..."there is nothing new under the sun."

Jeremiah 29:8-9 "For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream.

You see when you seek to please men rather than God, you are on the road to your downfall.

I. The PROCLAMATION of the False Prophets:

"They say Peace and Safety"

Notice the change of the pronouns; the third person pronoun "they" not first person pronoun "we" as in the previous context. You might ask "so what?" The implication is that those who are the *we*—believers are not here in that awful Day, but the *they*, the professors and unbelievers are still here.

"Peace" is the word that speaks of the absence of conflict and in the present context points to circumstances existing in the world that do not evoke a feeling of alarm or dread. Paul prophesies of a false sense of inward repose and security that will exist in the unbelieving world in the end times.

"Safety" conveys certainty and security that provides reality and firmness, thus safety. This is a sense of false security.

The world has always sought peace and safety from an outside source. However the divine source they **do not** want to heed. This peace and safety will be short lived on that great and climactic "day of the Lord." Daniel 9:27; Revelation 6:2; Ezekiel 38:11 demonstrates man's attempt to solve their dilemma from a human source.

Man has been deluded to believe the lie instead of the truth. Whatever is the source of the unbelieving world's sense of security is a fatal delusion, for at the very time they uttering their

confident claims of peace and safety, destruction will come upon them suddenly. They hate God and could care less what He has to say. Their disobedience places them in a deplorable situation.

II. The PREDICAMENT of the Unbeliever:

"Then Destruction will come upon them Suddenly"

The word order is "suddenly" destruction will come upon them. stressing the sure unexpected and sure ruination. As J. Hampton Keathley points out...

"Then sudden destruction ..." The word for "destruction" (*olethros*, cf. 2 Thess. 1:9) does not mean annihilation, but the ruination of peace and security through the outpouring of God's wrath on earth in the Day of the Lord. Included in this word is the utter and hopeless ruin, the loss of everything worthwhile causing the victims to despair of even life (cf. Rev. 6:14-17). The peace and safety undoubtedly includes the promises of *the white horse rider* of Revelation 6, the Antichrist. This is the prince of the people mentioned in Daniel 9:27. Likewise, this destruction includes the failure of that peace caused by *the red horse rider* (the scenario of Revelation 6:3) and perhaps also the wars and rumors of wars of Matthew 24.ⁱⁱ

Their predicament is seen in the picture of "labor pains"

III. The PICTURE of Pain for the Unbeliever.

"like birth pangs upon a women with child"

This is an OT metaphor of judgment (cf. Isa. 13:6-8; Jer. 4:31) and it also became a NT metaphor (i.e., birth pains of the new age, cf. Matt. 24:8; Mark 13:8; Rom. 8:22). It speaks of the suddenness yet certainty of an event, as well as the severe pain involved.

The analogy to a woman in labor includes at least four things.ⁱⁱⁱ

1. The world is "pregnant," ripe for what will happen because of its rejection of the Lord. God's wrath, which has been building up throughout history, will suddenly break forth. The signs of its coming are

discernible, even though the moment of its arrival is unpredictable.

2. This stresses the element of surprise: it will come suddenly, like the birth pains of a woman when the child is ready to be born.

3. The world can no more escape the coming wrath of God when it breaks out in the Day of the Lord, than a pregnant woman can escape labor pains. A strong expression is used in the Greek (a double negative, "*ou me*") to stress that fleeing or seeking escape will be futile.

4. Like birth pains, it will be short-lived, but will steadily grow in intensity.

The society represented at this time will be caught off-guard. They have heeded the peace and security of the false prophets, which are satanic lies. This is the character of the times—in Noah's day God had warned of a coming flood, but only eight people believed and were delivered (1 Pet. 3:20). Lot also warned his family of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, but they too would not listen (Gen. 19:12-14). Christ warns the church age to heed the coming eternal destruction in the gospels.

The unbeliever believes the lie of their father (Mt. 13:38; Jn 8:44; 1Jn 3:8) for they are his children.

For those who do not heed the gospel warning, they will not escape!

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IV. The PRONOUNCEMENT upon the Unbeliever

"they shall NOT (never) escape"

The double negative οὐ μὴ removes any hope one might have about their ability to escape this dreadful time. There is absolutely no escape. They will never, ever escape!

To escape means to flee away, to flee out of a place, to flee from, to escape. To escape like the prisoners in Acts 16:27 or like Paul in Damascus in 2 Cor 11:33.

Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ? Have you **repented** of your sins and thrown yourself wholly upon the Lord Jesus Christ accepting His perfect, eternally satisfactory, substitutionary sacrifice. If not, let the picture of **no escape** draw you to the throne of grace to receive by faith His free gift of salvation, which alone can give you genuine **peace and safety**. You will then be in the eternal hands of God in which **NOTHING** can separate you from Christ! He is able to keep you securely for all eternity.

ⁱ (Je 6:14; 8:11; 14:13,14; Lam 2:14; Eze 13:10,16; Micah 3:5)

ⁱⁱ <https://bible.org/seriespage/9-comfort-and-challenge-concerning-day-lord-1-thess-51-11>

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

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