

## Thursday Evening Bible Study

Series: the End Times – Bible prophecy about future events and periods

### Teaching Summary for Week 43 (Draft)

## The Tribulation Period

### Part 2. Overview

#### The Day of Christ

The Day of the Lord is not to be confused with **the Day of Christ** (the Lord Jesus).

The Day of Christ is not found in the Old Testament, or in the Gospels, or in the Book of Revelation.

In fact, the Day of Christ ( Christ Jesus, the Lord Jesus) is only mentioned by **Paul**. What does that suggest about the Day of Christ?

1 Cor 1:4-9

4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Notice the phrase “awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ”. This will give us the ability to identify other New Testament passages which address the Day of Christ but do not use that title.

2 Cor 1:13-14

For we write nothing else to you than what you read and understand, and I hope you will understand until the end; 14 just as you also partially did understand us, that we are your reason to be proud as you also are ours, in **the day of our Lord Jesus**.

Phil 1:3-11

3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until **the day of Christ Jesus**. 7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. 8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until **the day of Christ**; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

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Phil 2:14-16

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that **in the day of Christ** I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

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The word “day” in Scripture does not necessarily refer to time, but may be used instead for **the events** which fall within any period.

What event or events constitute the Day of Christ? Prove from the scriptures.
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There are other phrases that New Testament writers use to mean the Day of the Lord or the Day of Christ. They include:

“day of redemption” (Eph 4:30) = Day of Christ

“day of judgment” ( 2Pe 2:9, 2Pe 3:7, 1Jo 4:17) = Day of the Lord

“day of wrath” (Rom 2:5) = Day of the Lord

The Day of Christ is identified with **reward and blessing** for the church saints, while the Day of the Lord is identified with **judgment** for Israel and the Gentile nations.

The church is instructed to **wait eagerly** for the revelation of Jesus Christ to them, while the Day of the Lord is something to be **dreaded** by all who dwell on the earth

Two separate programs are in view.

The Day of Christ and the Day of the Lord cannot both refer to the same event (or events).

The book of Philippians has the most references to the Day of Christ (3). And Php contains an additional passage which describes the Day of Christ without using that title.

Remember that phrase we saw in 1Co 1:7 - “awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ”? This tells us that Php 3:20-21 is also describing the Day of Christ:

Phil 3:20-21

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also **we eagerly wait** for a Savior, **the Lord Jesus Christ**; 21 **who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

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Philippians 3:20-21 teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ will transform our fallen bodies into conformity with His glorious body.

This provides another key that allows us to identify more New Testament passages that describe the Day of Christ.

Rom 8:23-25

And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.** 24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

1 Cor 15:50-57

50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.** 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "**DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.** 55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here we have additional information about what will happen on the Day of Christ. What do we learn? [hint: it's in verse 52]. Let's discuss this together.

1 Thess 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.  
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1 Thess 4:13-18 brings the Day of Christ into full focus.

What more is revealed about the Day of Christ in this passage?

The Lord will come for us! He will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God.

The dead in Christ will rise first.

We who are alive and remain until the Lord comes for us will be caught up together with these resurrected saints.

This will occur in the clouds, where we will meet the Lord in the air.

From that moment on, we - the entire body of Christ - will always be with the Lord.

And this revelation will bring great comfort to the saints.

1 Thess 1:9-10

9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, 10 and to **wait for His Son from heaven**, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, **who rescues us from the wrath to come.**

We learn one more detail about the Day of Christ in 1 Thess 1:10.

Jesus will rescue us from the wrath to come.

The Day of Christ is a mystery, something concealed by God until He revealed it to Paul.

You won't find this event in Old Testament prophecy. Our Lord Jesus Christ does not mention it when He describes the end times in the gospels.

And it is not in the book of Revelation either.

John alludes to it in the Gospel of John (John 14:1-6) and in the letter of 1 John (1Jo 3:2).

The Day of Christ is for the Church only. The events included in the Day of Christ are events for the body of Christ exclusively.

## The Purpose of the Tribulation Period

We saw earlier that the source of the Tribulation Period is God, not satan.

Joel 1:15

15 Alas for the day!

For the day of the Lord is near,

And it will come as destruction **from the Almighty.**

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Rev 6:12-17

12 I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. 14 The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of **Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb**; 17 for **the great day of their wrath** has come, and who is able to stand?"

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What is God's purpose in bringing about the Tribulation Period?

The scriptures reveal three reasons for the Tribulation Period:

1. To prepare the **nation of Israel** for her Messiah by chastening and purifying her.
2. To bring an end to **wickedness**, pouring out judgment on the unbelieving people and nations.
3. To bring about a worldwide **revival**.

Isaiah 1:24-28 is a great passage for understanding the purpose of the Tribulation Period:

Isa 1:24-28

Therefore the Lord God of hosts,  
The Mighty One of Israel, declares,  
"Ah, I will be relieved of **My adversaries**  
And avenge Myself on My foes.

25 "I will also turn My hand **against you**,  
And will **smelt away your dross** as with lye  
And will **remove all your alloy**.

26 "Then I will **restore** your judges as at the first,  
And your counselors as at the beginning;  
After that you will be called **the city of righteousness,**  
**A faithful city.**"

27 **Zion will be redeemed** with justice  
And her repentant ones with righteousness.

28 But **transgressors and sinners will be crushed** together,  
And those who forsake the Lord will come to an end.

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**1. To prepare the nation of Israel for her Messiah by breaking her power  
and judging her.**

Jer 30:4-11

Now these are the words which the Lord spoke concerning Israel and concerning  
Judah:

5 "For thus says the Lord,  
'I have heard a sound of terror,  
Of dread, and there is no peace.

6 'Ask now, and see  
If a male can give birth.

Why do I see every man  
With his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth?  
And why have all faces turned pale?

7 'Alas! for that day is great,  
There is none like it;  
And it is **the time of Jacob's distress,**  
But **he will be saved from it.**

8 'It shall come about on that day,' declares the Lord of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck and will tear off their bonds; and strangers will no longer make them their slaves. 9 'But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

10 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant,' declares the Lord,  
'And do not be dismayed, O Israel;

For behold, **I will save you** from afar

And your offspring from the land of their captivity.

And Jacob will return and will be quiet and at ease,

And no one will make him afraid.

11 'For I am with you,' declares the Lord, 'to save you;

For **I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you,**

**Only I will not destroy you completely.**

But I will **chasten you justly**

And will by no means leave you unpunished.'

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The key phrase here is “the time of Jacob’s distress ( trouble)”. Jacob is shorthand for the nation of Israel, particularly when the nation is in need of chastening.

God’s purpose for Israel in the Tribulation is to bring about the conversion of a multitude of Jews ( as well as Gentiles). This remnant will enter into the blessings of the kingdom, and experience the fulfillment of all of the Lord’s unconditional covenants with Israel.

## **2. To bring an end to wickedness, pouring out judgment on the unbelieving people and nations.**

Jer 25:30-33

30 "Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them,

'The Lord will roar from on high

And utter His voice from His holy habitation;

He will roar mightily against His fold.

He will shout like those who tread the grapes,

**Against all the inhabitants of the earth.**



31 'A clamor has come to the end of the earth,  
Because the Lord has a controversy **with the nations**.  
He is entering into judgment **with all flesh**;  
As for the **wicked**, He has given them to **the sword**,' declares the Lord."

32 Thus says the Lord of hosts,  
"Behold, evil is going forth  
From nation to nation,  
And a great storm is being stirred up  
From the remotest parts of the earth.

33 "Those **slain by the Lord on that day** will be **from one end of the earth to the other**. They will not be lamented, gathered or buried; they will be like dung on the face of the ground.

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Zeph 3:8-11

8 "Therefore wait for Me," declares the Lord,  
"For the day when I rise up as a witness.  
Indeed, My decision is to gather nations,  
To assemble kingdoms,  
**To pour out on them My indignation,**  
**All My burning anger;**  
**For all the earth will be devoured**  
**By the fire of My zeal.**

9 "For then I will give to the peoples **purified lips**,  
That all of them may call on the name of the Lord,  
To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.

10 "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia  
My worshipers, My dispersed ones,  
Will bring My offerings.

11 "In that day you will feel no shame  
Because of all your deeds  
By which you have rebelled against Me;  
For then I **will remove from your midst**  
**Your proud, exulting ones,**  
**And you will never again be haughty**  
**On My holy mountain.**

### 3. To bring about a worldwide revival

Matt 24:14

14 "This **gospel of the kingdom** shall be preached in **the whole world** as a testimony to **all the nations**, and then the end will come.

The results of this gospel preaching are described in Revelation 7:

Rev 7:9-15

9 After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude** which no one could count, from **every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; 10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying,

"Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" 14 I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.** 15

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Please note that these people are not the Church Age saints. These are the **Tribulation saints**. They come out of the Great Tribulation: the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

In preparation for our next lesson, please read **Daniel 9:24-27**.

In order to understand the time elements in the tribulation period, you have to study the prophecy of Daniel. In Daniel 9:24-27, Daniel gives an outline of the chronology of Israel's future history in his astounding prophecy of the seventy weeks.