

Biblical Notes — 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2

1-2 – Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. [2] For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. (1. Περὶ δὲ τῶν χρόνων καὶ τῶν καιρῶν, ἀδελφοί, οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχετε ὑμῖν γράφεσθαι, 2. αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκριβῶς οἶδατε ὅτι ἡμέρα κυρίου ὡς κλέπτῃς ἐν νυκτὶ οὕτως ἔρχεται)

“As a prophetic period, the Day of the Lord is inaugurated with the rapture of the church as described in 4:13–18, covers the time of the Great Tribulation, and involves His return to earth and the establishment of His messianic reign. In this passage Paul is dealing only with the judgment aspect of that day.”

—— D. Edmond Hiebert, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 227.

“In Paul's prophecy of the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and the coming day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:1-11), he made a transition between these two related prophetic subjects by using the *peri de* construction at 5:1." Although *peri de* introduces a slightly new subject at 1 Thessalonians 5:1, it carries on the discussion of future things brought out in 4:13-18. This identical perspective is true with the *peri de* of Matthew 24:36.”

—— John F. Hart, Jesus and the Rapture: Matthew 24 in Evidence for the Rapture: A Biblical Case for Pretribulationism, (Moody Publishers, 2015), 54.

“The imminence of the day of the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 5 is obvious, but what is the nature of expectation related to the coming of the Lord to catch away His saints in 1 Thessalonians 4? I have expressed elsewhere that the *peri de* (“now concerning” or “now as to”) that begins chapter 5 turns to a new subject, but not one completely distinct from the one previously under discussion at the end of chapter 4. The connective phrase marks a shift in thought, but a shift that is not without some connection with chapter 4. Both the previous and the following context of 1 Thessalonians 5:1 relate to the *parousia* (“coming”) of Christ. The original readers had an accurate awareness of the unexpectedness of the arrival of the day of the Lord (5:1–2), having received prior instruction from the apostle. But they were ignorant of and therefore perplexed about what would happen to the dead in Christ at the time of Christ's return.”

—— Robert L. Thomas, The Rapture and the Biblical Teaching of Imminency, in Evidence for the Rapture: A Biblical Case for Pretribulationism. Epub ed., (Moody Publishers, 2015), 30.

“Having assuaged the angst of the Thessalonians concerning their loved ones who had died, Paul moves on to another matter of concern for the believers in Thessalonica. The apostle is clearly considering a new subject “yet not one completely distinct from the previous one.” This is indicated by the transitional expression “Now as to” (*peri de*). Quite clearly both of these paragraphs have to do with eschatology, and Paul considers them to contain a related topic. However, he is answering a different question than he did in chapter 4. He is observing events from a wider angle, and here his intent is not to offer the believers comfort but to impart to them a needed exhortation. In the previous passage, Paul was addressing the concern of the Thessalonians about their departed loved ones and their part in the Lord's return for His own. In chapter 5, he is addressing matters that concerned the living Thessalonians themselves. The circumstances and experiences of the believers in Thessalonica were causing some to ask if the day of the Lord had already begun and even to wonder if they were fated to suffer the fury, sorrows, and troubles of that day (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2). Thus Paul is taking a wider view and considering not just the rapture but the broader end-times picture.”

—— Kevin D. Zuber, The Rapture and the Biblical Teaching of Imminency, in Evidence for the Rapture: A Biblical Case for Pretribulationism, (Moody Publishers, 2015), 161.

“Clearly, the day of the Lord is not limited to that last feature (the second coming) but includes the whole time of judgment on the nations. The day of the Lord also includes the seal judgments of Revelation 6: 1-17 (ie, the “birth pangs” of Matt. 24: 6–8), which judgments are identified as the wrath of God and of the Lamb in Revelation 6:16-17. So the whole time—from the “birth pangs” to the final battle (cf. Zech. 9:10f; 14:3) —is rightly identified as the day of the Lord. “This time of trial at the outset of the earthly day of the Lord will thus not be brief.” That time is also called the tribulation (cf. Matt. 24: 9, 21; cf. Mark 13:19).”

—— Kevin D. Zuber, The Rapture and the Biblical Teaching of Imminency, in Evidence for the Rapture: A Biblical Case for Pretribulationism, (Moody Publishers, 2015), 162.