

## *“The Day of the Lord Will Come...”*

*“...Be Mindful of the Words  
which were Spoken before  
by the Holy Prophets...”*

2 Peter 3:10, 2

What does the Bible mean when it refers to “The Day of the Lord?”

The phrase "day of the Lord" usually identifies events that take place at the end of time. (For an example read Isa 2:10-22, the first Biblical reference to the "day of the Lord"). The phrase "The day of the Lord" and "that day" are often closely associated and mean the same time frame.

An important key to understanding these phrases is that they always identify a span of time during which God Himself personally intervenes in history, directly or indirectly, to accomplish some specific aspect of His plan. We know He always is involved, but His presence is usually veiled. In the Day of the Lord, His actions and interventions will be obvious to all.S

The phrase "the day of the Lord" is used nineteen times in the Old Testament (Isa 2:12; 13:6, 9; Eze 13:5, 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:1,11,31; 3:14; Am 5:18,20; Ob 1:15; Zeph 1:7,14; Zec 14:1; Mal 4:5) and five times in the New Testament (Acts 2:20; 1 Th 5:2; 2 Th 2:2; 2 Pe 3:10). It is also alluded to in other passages (Rev 6:17; 16:14).

It is generally accepted to associate the day of the Lord with a period of time or a special day that will occur when God's will and purpose for His world and for mankind will be fulfilled—brought to a conclusion. However, here is where the differences begin. Sincere brethren will differ because until prophecy is fulfilled there will always be speculation about how it will all turn out.

### **What are the different viewpoints?**

Some scholars believe the day of the Lord will be an instantaneous event when Christ returns to earth to redeem His faithful believers and send unbelievers to eternal damnation. This has been labeled Amillennialism, because it sees the future as coming to a conclusion without a literal millennium. Some of the key points of Amillennialism.

- Satan is already bound in the hearts and lives of the believer. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1Jo 3:8)
- We are already reigning with Christ as kings and priests. Rom 5:17; Rev 1:6
- When the Bible refers to "one thousand" (as in Rev 20) it often means in a general sense, such as in Ps 50:10 where it references the cattle on a thousand hills.
- Most prophecies whether in the Old Testament or the New are to be understood figuratively or spiritually (Like Gal 4:21-31). Revelation gives seven different viewpoints of the church age. (For example, the letters to the churches in ch 2-3 is the same basic message as ch 20)

Illustration A

Other scholars (Premillennial meaning Christ comes for the Church before He literally reigns on the earth) believe that the day of the Lord will be longer than a single day. Rather it will be a period of time, a dispensation which begins with a time under the Antichrist and moves to intense suffering in literal fulfillment of the book of Revelation. It culminates when Christ will reign throughout the world before He cleanses heaven and earth in preparation for the eternal state of all mankind. Like the day in the Hebrew culture, it begins with twilight and darkness, settling into the darkest hours of the day before dawning into the intense glory of the new day. See Jer 30:6-24 for this transition.

Illustration B Overall perspective:

Illustration C Focus on the day of the Lord:

We as Christians are taught to be prepared and watchful for Christ's return which will remove us out of the judgments and wrath of the day of the Lord into the presence of Christ. Study 1 Th 4:14-5:10 and 2 Th 2:1-12. There is a distinct difference between living Christians, the "we" who are comforted by Christ's coming 1Th 4:13,18; 5:11; 2 Th 2:1-2 and the living unbelievers "they, them" who are trapped, "they shall not escape".

Jesus warned us to be ready Matt 24:36-51 and Luke 21:34-36. Those who are prepared shall escape "all these things that shall come to pass"... "for God has not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" 1 Th 5:9 The believers will return with Christ when He comes to reign on the earth (2 Th 1:5-10; Rev 5:10; 19:14)

#### **Correcting common errors taught by (some) Premillennials**

- *While we believe God will yet do something with Israel, we have no special alliance or loyalty to the nation of Israel of our day.* This is the Israel that will incur God's judgment. We are of the kingdom that is not of this world. John 18:38, 2 Cor 10:4)
- *Those knowingly unprepared for the rapture will not be given a second chance; rather they will "all be damned".* 2 Th 2:11-12. Novels written about life in the day of wrath or tribulation often picture conversions of those who received not the love of the truth. While many are saved during the tribulation (Rev 7:14; 15:2-4), it is because they hear the truth preached by the the 144,000 evangelists, (Rev 7) the two witnesses (Rev 11:3-13), or the angel (Rev 14:6).
- *Jesus does not have to come mid-tribulation; the coming of the Lord is*

*imminent.* When the Scripture speaks about Jesus' appearance after the tribulation it is for another work and not the gathering together of the saints. Matt 24:29-31 is a fulfillment of De 30:4 and other prophecies predicting the re-gathering of Jews from around the world. The "day of Christ" that cannot come (2 Th 2:2-3) until the Antichrist is revealed is the day of the Lord we are studying here, not the gathering together of the Church.

#### **Other observations about the Day of the Lord.**

The Old Testament passages dealing with the day of the Lord often convey a sense of imminence, nearness, and expectation: "Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." (Isa 13:6) Other passages that speak of the day as imminent are Eze 30:3; Joel 2:1; 3:14; Zeph 1:7).

Many of us believe the Old Testament passages referring to the day of the Lord often speak of both a near and a far fulfillment, as does much of Old Testament prophecy. Some Old Testament passages that refer to the day of the Lord describe historical judgments that have already been fulfilled in some sense (Is 13:6-22; Eze 30:2-19; Joel 1:15, 3:14; Am 5:18-20; Zeph 1:14-18), while others refers to divine judgments that will take place toward the end of the age (Joel 2:30-32; Zech 14:1; Mal 4:1, 5).

The New Testament calls it a day of "wrath," a day of "visitation," and the "great day of God Almighty" (Rev 16:14) and refers to a still future fulfillment when God's wrath is poured out on unbelieving Israel (Isa 22; Jer 30:1-17; Joel 1-2; Am 5; Zeph 1) and on the unbelieving world (Eze 38 39; Zech 14). The Scriptures indicate that "the day of the Lord" will come quickly, like a thief in the night (Zeph 1:14-15; 2 Th 2:2), and the unsuspecting world will be caught in a terrible and horrifying march to destruction.

Besides being a time of judgment, the day of the Lord will also be a time of salvation. God will deliver the remnant of Israel, fulfilling His promise that "all of Israel will be saved" (Ro 11:26), forgiving their sins and restoring His chosen people to the land He promised to Abraham (Isa 10:27; Jer 30:19-31, 40; Mic 4; Zech 13). The final outcome of the day of the Lord will be that "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day." (Isa 2:17).

Again, let us emphasize that the ultimate or final fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the day of the Lord will come at the end of history when God, with wondrous power, will punish evil and fulfill all His promises.

#### **The Sober Question**

God is fully in control of the future. Since I am created by Him and for Him, I will find security only when I am saved by the blood of the Lamb, living within His will for my life in holiness and surrender to His Word. Am I prepared for Christ's return? Or will I face the wrath of the Lamb in the day of the Lord? And also, am I using daily opportunities to urge my acquaintances and loved ones to be ready for His coming! The Day of the Lord will come!