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Will God Save the Earth? Part 2

2 Peter 3:10: (NKJV) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Last week we discussed God being the inventor of green - we looked at many scriptures that helped us to understand that God's intention is not to destroy the Earth, but to in fact preserve it. There are many scriptural symbols used, such as "mountains," seas, "heavens being burned up," and others. We then looked at the great time of trouble predicted. So, if God isn't going to destroy the physical world, why is it in such turmoil now? There is another important aspect of this called the Day of Judgment. This program will build upon 1) the fact that the Earth abides forever, 2) the fact that the Scriptures talk about a great day of trouble, time of trouble or are they two after Judgment Day? and 3) is the Day of Judgment in the separate events. And what happens



Questions for consideration:

1. What is the purpose of the Day of Judgment?
2. What happens *after* the Judgment?

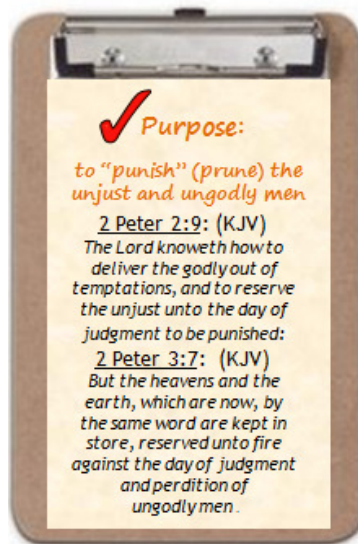
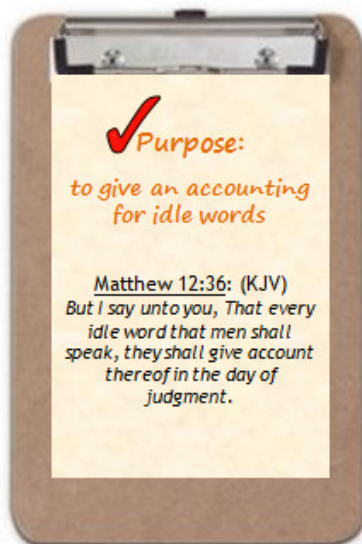
1. What is the purpose of the Day of Judgment?

First of all, when does this "day of judgment" occur?

Matthew 24:21-22: Jesus' prophecy focused on the time of his own return. Except those days of great tribulation be shortened, man would destroy himself.

How do we know that the Day of Judgment follows the day of trouble? Daniel 12:1-4: Daniel prophesied about this trouble many years prior to Jesus' reference. The order of events established: First this time of trouble, and then a resurrection but the understanding of this is sealed until the "time of the end," which is when the trouble comes! Hebrews 9:24-28: (this word for "ages" is often translated "world;" the system ended there - there was a changing of ages when the call went to the Gentiles) This scripture shows there was one offering for sin, one ransom paid. The Day of Judgment is *after* the resurrection.

Now that we know WHEN the Day of Judgment is, the next question WHAT HAPPENS at that time?



Is the Day of Judgment 24 hours long? Not reasonably. Many scriptures speak of the "day of the Lord is one thousand years," and we speak of "the day of a Noah," meaning his lifetime.

So, what does judgment mean?

Judgment: Strong's #2920 krisis (kree'-sis); decision (subjectively or objectively, for or against); by extension, a tribunal; by implication, justice (especially, divine law):

AV- a separating, sundering, separation; a trial, contest

This is more like a process than a proclamation.



Isaiah 26:9:
...when thy
judgments are
in the earth,
the inhabitants
of the world
will learn
righteousness.

Matthew 12:16-18: In this example, is he showing a final judgment to the Gentiles, or is he giving them a period of trial? It sounds more like a period of trial.

John 5:30: His assessment is a just assessment. There is not a final proclamation here, but rather an assessment process.

John 7:24: So, this judgment seems to fit more into the category of an "assessing, dividing and considering" process rather than a final pronouncement of sentence.

Here is another type of judgment that we may get confused with #2920.

Condemn: Strong's #2632 katakrino (kat-ak-ree'-no); to judge against, i.e. sentence

In this case, you are no longer deciding; you have decided.

Matthew 20:18 Hebrews 11:7 2 Peter 2:6: This is the difference between the process of gathering evidence and trial vs. the final proclamation.

Practical Example: Consider pre-season training camp for football. Everyone shows up and goes through testing and assessments. Players prove themselves and are accountable for their actions. At the end of training camp, the roster is cut and the sentencing is the final decision of whether a player made it or not. The process of training camp is a good picture of what the Day of Judgment looks like. It is a proving ground, a process to go through.

Matthew 12:41: The Day of Judgment is a period of discernment and accountability of who you are and what you have been. The Day of Judgment can be defined by the difference in the relationship of Jesus to his true followers now vs. his relationship with the world later that starts with a resurrection.

John 5:28-29: Jesus is creating a dividing line between his true followers and others. The followers were already judged, because they took on the commitment to be followers of Christ and their accountability happens now.

1 Timothy 5:24: See the difference? Some men's sins are accountable beforehand - true followers. Either way, there is judgment.

This is the difference between having an "Advocate" and a "Mediator:"

1 John 2:1-2: **Advocate**: an intercessor, consoler, somebody who sits by your side and represents you, who has your personal interests in mind

1 Timothy 2:1-6: **Mediator**: one who intervenes between two parties, either to make or restore peace and friendship

There is one mediator between God and men, but WE have an advocate. The relationship and end result is different. Jesus as our Advocate works with true Christians through our period of judgment now; Jesus' role as the Mediator intervenes between man and God later.

John 5:24: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21: God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself...bringing things back into balance. The trespasses committed are not terminal. *Judgment, therefore, is for the purpose of reconciliation, not destroying.*

Jude 1:14-16: Jesus with his true followers will be executing this judgment (having been already judged).

The resurrected are to be judged on the basis of righteousness, justice and mercy:

Hebrews 4:12-13: God will judge with righteousness, justice and mercy. All mankind will have the opportunity to be held accountable and to do something about it.

2 Peter 3:9: God doesn't want men to perish, he wants them to come to repentance. Jesus opened up that opportunity. There is justice in giving people an opportunity in a pure environment.





Some might say "all religion is useless because it is used as a tool of fear." When you see things done in the name of "religion" that are hideous, we have to agree! But here's the point - the true meaning of the word of God has nothing to do with that nonsense. The true meaning of the Day of Judgment is not a tool of fear, but a tool of accountability. We believe in justice and in people having to be accountable for their words and actions. The Bible believes that as well and will present that accountability in the context of complete absolute righteousness, justice and mercy. Fear is a tool used by Satan. The Day of Judgment is not to be feared, but it is a doorway to something even greater because the accountability is done perfectly. Imagine a world where justice perfectly prevails in the context of mercy and righteousness. Imagine a world where when you go before the judge, he always gets to the exact reason and source of the issue and proclaims judgment perfectly. This is what will happen for the entire world and should be respected.

The Day of Judgment will work through the Nation of Israel, guided by Jesus and his Church:

Genesis 22:17-18 Galatians 3:26-29: The promise was given to Abraham. There are two parts to the seed of Abraham with a purpose to bless the earth. This is something to look forward to, not something to be afraid of.

Jeremiah 31:28-34: Mankind will no longer have to bear the sins of those that have gone before us. Each will be responsible for his or her own self.

The Day of Judgment will be easier for some and harder for others depending on the level of accountability each has created in his or her life. It will also depend on each person's willingness to comply with a righteous, just, loving and merciful governing of God.

2 Peter 2:9: **Punished: Strong's #2849 to lop or prune, as trees and wings**

The object of pruning is not to kill the tree, it is to bring more fruit.

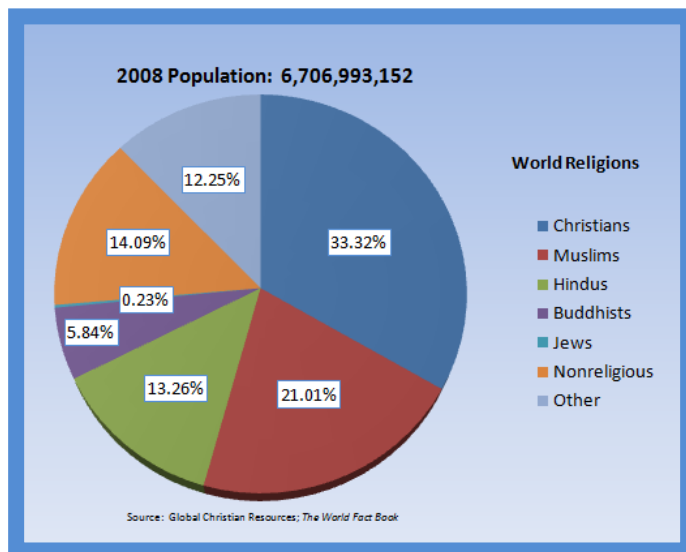
Observations on what this coming Day of Judgment includes:

- A resurrection of all men;
- A time of accountability - no one is excluded;
- A high standard - God's righteousness is the uncompromising template for all;
- A clear order - Jesus, his true followers, Israel and the world;
- Even angels will meet with judgment for wrong doing.



2. What happens *after* the Judgment?

Most of the world is non-Christian.



God let us know what was to come:

Acts 3:18-21: Jesus had been held in heaven until the times of restoration. Restoring something puts it back to its original form. God said in Acts that Jesus is coming to restore all things. We were previously told that Jesus would return during the time of trouble. Our belief is that Jesus is here organizing the falling of the governments so that the building of God's government can take place during the resurrection.

Practical Example: A woodworker repairing a chair involves taking it all apart. There are pieces laying all over the place. Someone coming in during this process would find it hard to believe that all of these pieces could become a chair. The woodworker has to clean each piece, refit them, reglue them, recondition them and put them all back. The taking apart is the restoration process.



Old Testament Prophecies:

The Big Picture:

Daniel 2:44: (NRSV) *And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever;*

Many of our previous references to Daniel these past few weeks have been about trouble. This is an end time prophecy about the never ending kingdom set up by God. There is a process of replacement going on.



"The Song of Ruth," as sung by four young sisters Lisette, Estelle, Gabriella, and Audelia

The four-part harmony demonstrated with this song is a representation of the harmony that will be in the Day of Restitution. There will be a harmony upon the earth that is unimaginable.

The release from death: Psalms 102:18-22

The salvation of the nations: Psalms 67:1-4: One of the problems we have today is getting beyond the personal agendas and perceptions to get to true righteousness. Here it says we don't have to worry about that - it's God's righteousness and the right thing will always be done for the people. That is what comes after the Day of Judgment - reconciliation, restitution, bringing back the people who were once lost.

Psalms 22:27-29: Jesus quoted this Psalm when he was on the cross. It is a Psalm of victory and hope because of Jesus' sacrifice.

The process of Restitution for the people: Isaiah 35:8-10: The path Jesus described for his followers was narrow and difficult. Matthew 7:14 This Isaiah scripture, however, is describing a different path - a super highway in which everyone can be on and come to righteousness. Peter called Satan a "roaring lion," looking for people to devour. On this highway, there will be no ravenous beast (Satan's influence, false understandings, evil peer pressure) to interfere. Each person will be accountable for their own decisions and will be able to learn from them to live in a good, righteous, wholesome, just loving world. This is the Good News of the Gospel!

The results of the process:

Habakkuk 2:14: This is not a scripture of fear.

Isaiah 65:21-25: We live in a day of entitlement where people believe it is their right to have what they want. These scriptures do not describe a Day of Entitlement. Each builds and inhabits their own house, works their own field, and do the things necessary to support himself. Isn't that really what would make us all happiest? The gift is not free land and free food, the gift is opportunity.

It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer - God is very present in that day.

Wrapping up with the big picture:

Zephaniah 3:8-9: Anger, indignation, fire, God's jealousy...but what do they produce? A pure language that ALL people may call upon the name of the Lord. This is a restoration of all things, just as all the holy prophets predicted.

Romans 5:18: The ransom of Jesus puts it all in the clearest, most understandable perspective. He died for the sin of Adam. Everybody dies in Adam's sin, everybody is resurrected because of Jesus' righteousness. They go through the Day of Judgment, which is a day of accountability, so they can get to a day of goodness, happiness, life, liberty, and the pursuit of godliness.

So will God save the earth?

For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...

Think about it...!