

THE JUDGMENT OF THE ANGELS

THE APOSTLE PAUL asked of the Corinthian Church, "Know ye not that we [the saints] shall judge angels?" (I Cor. 6:3.) We have been frequently asked as to how the saints shall judge angels?

We have given the suggestion that it would not be appropriate for the saints to judge the holy angels, for evidently the holy angels do not need any judgment. In the past there was one judgment of the angels; this is mentioned by St. Peter. (2 Pet. 2:4,5.) He says that in the time before the flood the angels had their trial; and that those angels who did not maintain their condition of loyalty to God were cast down to *tartarus* – that is, to our earth's atmosphere, there "restrained in chains of darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day." (See also Jude 6.) This "**Judgment** of the Great Day," to our understanding, means that in that Great Day another trial will come to those angels.

The question might arise as to what will be the character of and when will be that "Great Day"? We answer that the Great Day is the Seventh Day. God divided the history of man, apparently, into seven great epochs of 1,000 years each. Six days (1,000-year days) of this great Week are in the past; the Seventh Day is the Last Day (1,000 years long, as are the other six). So this Last Day is the Great Day of Messiah – of the Kingdom of Messiah – in which He will rule and reign in the world for its judgment, uplifting and blessing. That will be the Great Day, in comparison with other days; the Sabbath Day, as compared with the six days of trouble and unrest that the world has experienced. In that Day peace and rest will come to the world, for Christ who takes the Kingdom will bring everything into subjection. To Him "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess." – Phil. 2:10,11.

So in connection with that Great Day, humanity is to have a judgment – "He (Jehovah) hath appointed a Day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained."

(Acts 17:31.) The great "Man" God has ordained is Jesus the Head and the Church His Body, of which the Apostle says some are Jews and some are Gentiles – "to make of the twain (Jews and Gentiles) one New Man" – the Mediator, the Peace Maker between God and mankind. – Eph. 2:13-17. [R4880 : page 358]

Without any question, then, we can see when the world will have its Judgment, or trial Day, to decide which of them will be worthy and which will be unworthy to receive perfect life as human beings. But now as to the trial of the fallen angels: –

THEIR JUDGMENT PROBABLY NOW

We have answered in previous issues of THE WATCH TOWER that this trial will be, we believe, at the very beginning of this Great Day. And why at the *beginning*? For the reason that there is only one way, so far as we can see, in which these fallen angels can have a trial, their trial consisting in having a *fuller opportunity to sin*, if they so desire, or an opportunity to show, if they wish, that they are sick of sin and desire to return to harmony with God. We cannot think that God will allow this trial of the angels during the Millennial reign, for then, nothing shall hurt; nothing shall destroy; Satan will be bound and all evil influences will be restrained. No, it cannot be then. And in order to be tried at all, these fallen angels must have certain liberties granted, to prove them. Otherwise, where would be their trial? Consequently, reasoning along this basis (2 Peter 3:7), we reach the conclusion that the trial of these fallen angels is in the near future – perhaps to some extent already begun. In what way? Somewhat after the manner of their previous trial before the flood. And what happened at that time? The account is given in Genesis, chapter 6. We read that at that time "The sons of God (materialized angels – Jude 6,7) saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took unto themselves wives of all that they chose (apparently without consulting anyone),...and there were born unto them children, who became mighty men of renown" – giants, different from purely human stock.

This was a very peculiar condition of things. How could this be, you may ask? How could the angels do this? The Scriptures answer that at that time the angels had a liberty which they do not now have. That liberty was the privilege of materialization – the taking on of a human body. They acted as men, they ate as men, they spoke as men; and as men they begot children. But since these fathers were of a superior stock, in some respects their children were men of renown and giants as compared with the ordinary human stock.

THEY ARE CONFINED TO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

The Apostles Peter and Jude tell us that after their wrong course these angels were separated from association with the heavenly and holy angels, who were in harmony with God, and were cast down to *tartarus*, to our earth's atmosphere, "to be reserved in chains of darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day." What does that expression mean? The "chains of darkness" we believe to be a figurative statement signifying that they were no longer permitted to materialize in the light and, generally, not able to materialize at all. But of late spiritists claim, and we believe truthfully, that these spirits can now materialize in as real and tangible flesh as any human being possesses. As they state, and as the facts prove, this can be done only under certain circumstances; they still have a great deal of difficulty in materializing in the light. The "chains of darkness" still seem to be on them to some extent.

Spiritists further claim, however, that the spirits are breaking these bonds and that gradually they will be able to do fully in the light everything that they can now do in the dark, and even more than this. The Bible corroborates what the spiritists claim, only that the spiritists teach that these things are done by the *dead*; who, the spirits tell, are more alive after death than before. Spiritists assert that it is the spirits of dead human beings that materialize. But the Bible takes the opposite position and says that these spirits are the fallen angels, and that so far

as humanity are concerned, the dead are totally dead and must remain so until the resurrection.

So, then, the Bible and the Spiritists are in decided conflict; and yet there is this harmony that we speak of, namely, that at the time of the Judgment of the Great Day we may expect the bonds restraining these spirits to be loosened. Of course God could hold them in restraint; but He will now *permit* these fallen angels to have a great lease of liberty. Then will come to them a great trial and testing, or judgment, in respect to their willingness or unwillingness to do according to the Divine will.

SOME OF THEM PROBABLY REPENTANT

It would not surprise us if some of the fallen angels who sinned in the past have repented and have had long centuries of experience with the unrepentant ones; and that these have suffered persecutions from those of evil mind. And so there may thus be two classes among the fallen angels; the one class desirous of doing the will of [R4880 : page 359] God and the other class, like Satan himself, wilfully opposed to the will of God. The trial time will prove each of these angels and manifest to which class each belongs.

We think, too, that we see in the Scriptures a passage which we had not seen with the same force before – a Scripture that seems to give a thought along this very line. It seems to imply that at a very near date probably these fallen angels will have wonderful power, such as they have never had since the days of the flood, and that this wonderful power will be used in a very malevolent manner, to stir up mankind to evil doing; and that this will be the key, the secret connected with the awful time of trouble which the Bible tells us will mark the conclusion of this Age and which will constitute the forerunner or beginning of the New Dispensation.

THE HOLDING OF THE FOUR WINDS

The Scripture we have in mind is found in Revelation 7:1-3. This symbolical passage speaks of the four angels which stand at the four

corners of the earth and hold the four winds that they should not blow upon the earth or upon the sea "until we shall have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." To our understanding we are in that very time when the servants of God are being sealed in their foreheads. The forehead represents the intellect; and to be "sealed in the forehead" is to be intellectually marked.

The intimation is that at this time, in the conclusion of this Gospel Age, God will grant some intellectual mark upon his servants that no others will have; that there will be a great work of sealing; and those in perfect harmony with God are to be His servants in the work of sealing. This seal is the Truth. "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) The Truth will mark in their foreheads those who receive it, branding them in a way that others of mankind are not marked or branded.

All of the Lord's truly consecrated children can see what a wonderful power the knowledge of the Divine Plan has been. How different everything in the world seems! How the eyes of their understanding have been opened to see many things that they could not understand before! Just as soon as the sealing of the saints is completed, just as soon as all the elect are thus marked, just as soon as this Age shall be completed, then those four angels who are holding the four winds, that they should not blow upon the earth, will let them loose; and the effect will be – what? If four winds, from the four corners of the earth, come together, they make a whirlwind; and that is exactly what the Bible declares the great time of trouble will be.

SOME FORCEFUL SYMBOLS

The thought we wish particularly to call attention to is that these "winds of heaven" are symbolical winds – not literal winds; and that the "earth" that is not to be hurt is the symbolical earth – not the literal earth; and that the "sea" that is not to be hurt is the symbolical sea – not the literal sea. We have previously shown, in our **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**, that these symbols are found throughout the Old and

New Testaments; the earth represents the social order, government, restraint, etc.; and the sea represents the restless mass of mankind, which more or less lash and dash against the earth, the governmental power. "*The winds of heaven,*" in this case, we understand to be "the powers of the air."

The Bible says that Satan is the Prince of the Power of the Air, that he is the Prince of Demons. (Eph. 2:2; Matt. 9:34.) Therefore we understand that in this symbolical sense "the powers of the air" are the demons; that these powers of the air that are being held until the saints of God shall have been sealed in their foreheads, are these fallen angels. As soon as the power that is now controlling them shall be removed, we shall have a reign of evil all over the earth. The evil spirits will do all the evil that is in their power, and this will constitute the trial of all the fallen angels – the lifting of the restraints to see whether they will go contrary to the Divine will. All who thus manifest their alliance with evil in any way will become subjects of the Second Death; while others who show their loyalty to God will mark themselves as worthy, presumably, of everlasting life.

It may be something in connection with the saints that will constitute the test of these angels. However, we need not wait many years until we shall know.

=====