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THE GREAT DAY OF JUDGMENT – ITS NATURE AND OBJECT

"Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of His saints, to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed."

"Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with His Truth." – JUDE 14,15; PSALM 98:7-9.

THE above texts relate to the great Day of Judgment, which is to end the Gospel Age and inaugurate the Millennium. We should notice first of all what these texts do not say. They do not say that our Lord Jesus will come to destroy the earth, to burn up the world. They do not say that there will be a partial judgment at death, and that later all will be brought out of Heaven and Purgatory and a Hell of torment, which are their proper places, only to be sent back to these same places again. Not so. But this is supposed to be stated in the Scriptures, and is what we have thought. Our prejudices and misunderstandings have attached to the words of Holy Writ a wrong meaning. It is the Love of God which brings judgment to the world.

The first judgment, or sentence for sin, was a sentence of death. Under that sentence the whole world was to perish, to be cut off from life, because of Adam's sin. But God had mercy, compassion, on humanity, and has provided that mankind shall have another trial, with experiences granted to enable them to realize the nature and results of sin. The first trial was a trial of Adam and Eve alone. Every member of the human family, however, will be given an individual trial for life everlasting, to demonstrate whether he will under favorable conditions come into harmony with God.

CHARACTER THE BASIS OF JUDGMENT

All hopes of eternal life for the race, therefore, hinge upon the results of that future trial. Men and women are in this life forming character – they are either improving or degrading themselves. Whoever is trying to do his best under present unfavorable conditions will enter upon that individual trial, or judgment, in a very much better condition than otherwise, and will progress more rapidly to perfection in that Day.

The Church of Christ is an exception to this arrangement for the world. They will not have a part in that trial, because the Church is a special, called-out class, and will receive their trial in advance of the world. They are now on trial for life or death everlasting. But their trial is for life on the Divine plane. Those who are now being dealt with by the Lord will, if faithful, be with the Lord the Judges of the world in the next Age; as we read: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Corinthians 6:2.) It will be a time when punishments and rewards shall be meted out.

Every evil-doer shall then be dealt with and receive punishment for his evil intent, and stripes for his correction. Every well-doer shall receive a reward. The work of that thousand-year Judgment Day will show men to what extent they are out of harmony with God, and will show them how to come into harmony with Him. By the conclusion of the Millennial Age none will be in ignorance. As it is written: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9.) Furthermore, the Scriptures tell us that the judgments will be graded according to the light previously had and sinned against. The wilful sinner, after a hundred years' trial, will be cut off in the Second Death.

All who shall make use of the opportunities of that time, making progress in character, will gradually go up the Highway of Holiness. They will be blessed more and more until they shall attain the full perfection of the earthly image and likeness of God which

was lost in Adam. This will be the glorious outcome of the redeeming work of Christ. Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God. All who continue to prefer sin shall eventually be utterly destroyed in the Second Death. Then God will have a clean Universe.

GREAT DAY OF THE LORD NOW PRESENT

We are now in the beginning of this great Day of the Lord. All the forces which are to play a part in this mighty upheaval which is to introduce the Reign of Messiah are rapidly gathering. The nations of earth and all the various elements which form society as at present organized – political institutions, financial institutions, ecclesiastical systems, etc. – are now before the bar of Judgment, and are being found wanting. All Christendom is trembling before the mighty forces that are coming in today. Morals are at a low ebb. As the glorious Messenger of the Covenant is now present to sit as the great Judge, we may well ask the question propounded by God's Prophet of old: "Who may abide the Day [now present] of His Coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And He shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver." – Malachi 3:1-6.

Ah, the world is longing for the blessing! Men are realizing more and more every day their great need of a strong arm to deliver them as they face the grave crisis which they feel is drawing very near; but they see not to what extent the inbred sin of man is incompatible with a Reign of Righteousness which is desired and so sorely needed. Before the help and the blessing can be realized the Day of Wrath must come; the "fire of God's jealousy" must burn fiercely, and consume all the giant evils so entrenched in the world and in the hearts and minds of men. It is not to be a fire merely of destruction, but, thank God, also of purification! It will not be a literal fire, but a symbolic fire, following which the Lord will turn

unto the people a pure language, a pure Message, and a clear declaration of the Divine will and Plan of Salvation.

SONS OF LEVI JUDGED FIRST

The earlier part of the judgment upon Christendom [R5442 : page 121] will be especially upon the antitypical sons of Levi, the silver class. These made a consecration of themselves to the Lord, as did the gold class, the faithful overcomers, "more than conquerors." This silver class we understand to be the Great Company, who are to "come up" out of the Great Tribulation, and to "wash their robes [which have become spotted and soiled] and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9-17.) These will be dealt with by the great Messenger of the Covenant, not with a view to their destruction or injury as individuals, but with a view to the destruction of their *flesh*, which they have failed to sacrifice in harmony with their Covenant – "that the *spirit* may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus."

The *fire* of this great Day shall "try every man's work, of what sort it is." It will prove who of the professed disciples of Christ have built upon Him as their Foundation with the gold, silver, and precious stones of Divine Truth, and thus have constructed a true, strong, worthy character, unswervingly loyal to the Lord; and it will prove who have built with wood, hay and stubble. It will likewise discover who have built upon a foundation of sand. – 1 Corinthians 3:11-15.

FLESHLY ISRAEL'S SHARE IN THE JUDGMENT

A part of the prophecy of Malachi 3 seems to have an application to fleshly Israel. The Lord reproves them, showing that His course toward them as a people had been in conformity to His Covenant with them at Mt. Sinai. But they had been unfaithful to their part of the Covenant. At the appearing of this great Messenger of the New Covenant, which is to supersede the old Covenant, He

will purge God's ancient people. The time is now due for favor to begin to be restored to them; but before their *full* restoration they must experience further chastisement for their purification and preparation for the great Messiah.

In the "time of Jacob's trouble," now near at hand, Israel will come to see and recognize their King, whom they refused when He offered Himself to them at His First Advent. "They shall look upon Him [with the eye of faith] whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son." (Zechariah 12:10.) He will then receive them back to favor, under the terms of the New Law Covenant. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." (Malachi 3:4.) They shall then be used of Messiah as a channel of blessing to all the world.

BLINDED TO THE REAL DIFFICULTY

In this great Time of Trouble, the Lord will be a swift witness against every evil thing and will rebuke it, and thus all men will be taught of Him in the ways of righteousness. But as yet the poor, blinded world, bound by the shackles of Satan, do not know themselves. They do not yet see that selfishness is the basis of their every move and ambition; that the number who are not thus moved and controlled are so insignificantly small as to be without weight and influence.

It is not our thought to deride any efforts toward righteousness, even though inspired by selfishness. We merely point out that the true, Christian view of matters is a much different one. It is the Bible view. It recognizes God, the Divine will, purpose, plan, revelation, as having to do with all this world's affairs. It sees in the present upheaval of politics, the present uncovering of financial and social scandals, etc., another force making **[R5443 : page 121]** ready for the great trouble time, the great "earthquake" predicted in prophecy, the great cataclysm, now about to be

precipitated upon the whole world. The Scriptures indicate that this Time of Trouble will be upon us in 1915, and will be gradually approaching in the meantime.

In the providence of God the gross superstition and ignorance of the Dark Ages has been gradually dissipated to a considerable extent, that the minds of the people might be set free, not only from religious superstition, but also from superstition respecting the Divine right of certain families to inherit the kingdoms, the dominions of the world, and to live on a higher plane of social privilege than others. All these matters are now coming in review before the world, and Socialism is rapidly coming to the fore as the world's savior, their deliverer from priestcraft and superstition, and from political and financial autocracy. The world is being invited to look, not to Him who redeemed us with His precious blood, and who promised to come again and establish His Kingdom in righteousness, but it is being called to look to itself, to its own affairs and selfish interests, as the only hope, thus ignoring God and His overruling providences, and ignoring Divine Revelation respecting the future outcome of present conditions, in the glorious Millennial Kingdom for the blessing of all the world.

CHURCH FEDERATION NOW FORMING

From our standpoint, the present gathering of the churches into a great Federation is the fulfilment of Scriptural prediction; and the Lord's intelligent, faithful, consecrated people are warned against having any part in any such Church Federation. The Word of the Lord regarding the matter is, "Say ye not, A Confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A Confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and let Him be your fear." – Isaiah 8:11-16.

Dread to displease Him, but fear not men. It is the *tares* which have all along associated themselves with the *wheat* that are to be bundled, to be gathered together for a great trouble time. This is in

the mighty revolution of society shortly to set fire to all the social, religious, and financial institutions and arrangements of this present time, eventuating in anarchy, which, through God's overruling providence, will overthrow all things incompatible with righteousness and prepare for the Kingdom of God, which will be manifested in power and great glory, for the deliverance and blessing of all the human family.

We remember that as the Jewish Age drew near its close, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Messiah, declared to the Jews: "One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Luke 3:16.) We remember the fulfilment of this. The "Israelites indeed" were gathered into the garner of the Christian Church, and baptized with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The remainder of the Jewish nation, who "knew not the time of their visitation," were burned as "chaff," in a great time of trouble, which overthrew their nation. This great trouble is shown in Scripture to be a picture on a small scale of the conditions which will prevail in the closing days of this Gospel Age.

In that trouble time which came to the Jews, though various steps were taken to hinder the destruction of the nation of Israel, all efforts failed. Even the Roman Emperor was desirous of preserving the nation and of establishing order; and the Roman army was sent, not to destroy them, but to establish peace in their midst. But the Lord had declared that the fire of trouble which He enkindled should not be quenched by any power, that it should do its work to the full; and it did. **[R5443 : page 122]**

Likewise it will be with the great fire of trouble with which this present Age will end, and into which the "tare" class of Christendom will be cast. It will not be an utter destruction of life (although many lives will be lost in the awful trouble of this Day of Wrath), but it will completely consume all earthly governments and

institutions and will overthrow *Churchianity*. These will be consumed in the fire of anarchy. Nothing shall be permitted to quench that fire, or hinder the utter destruction of present systems. But, praise God, when the fire shall have devoured the stubble and the falsities and deceptions of the present order, it will but have prepared the way for the great blessing which God has designed and provided, in His coming Kingdom. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9.) It will be a terrible chastisement, but it will be the necessary work of the skilful Surgeon, who wounds but to heal.

"REFUGE OF LIES" SWEEPED AWAY

In our Lord's parable of building a House upon the Rock or upon the Sand, He gives a forceful picture particularly of the tests to come upon Christendom at the close of this Age. Here His figure is that of a fierce storm, a flood, with mighty winds beating upon the faith structure of His professed followers, overthrowing the faith of those not built upon Christ, the Rock, but built upon the sand. And so we see it today. A mighty downpour of Truth is now in progress throughout Christendom. The great storm is now raging. The denominations of Churchianity are trembling under the shock. Their foundations of human tradition, man-made theories, ignorance, "doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1), are realized to be unsatisfactory. They are unable to stand before the great searchlight of Truth now being turned upon them. Ere long the storm of Truth will wash out the quicksand foundation upon which nominal Christianity is built, and her utter wreck will follow. Only the true people of God will be able to stand the test of this great Day – now upon us!

This is the same storm and flood mentioned by the Lord through the Prophet Isaiah: "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places. When the

overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye [false teachers] be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report [the Message, the Truth]." – Isaiah 28:17-19.

This overwhelming trouble will soon reach the entire world. Indeed, it has already begun among all nations to some extent. All men must be awakened by the judgments of the Lord and brought to a realization of their need of the Arm of Jehovah, to deliver them and to uplift and save. The whole world is to be judged by The Messiah. All will witness that this judgment, trial, could not come before the great Judge takes His seat and authority: hence none of all those who died *before* our Lord's First Advent could have been judged by Him. All should likewise be aware of the fact that the world in general has not been on trial *since* our Redeemer was appointed the Judge, that the world has not been on trial previous to the present time. Indeed, the great mass of mankind neither know the Judge nor understand His Law, nor have they any conception of the conditions and requirements necessary to life everlasting. This is in harmony with the presentations of Scripture on this subject.

JUDGMENT DAY A TIME OF BLESSING

The Apostle Paul declares (Acts 17:31), that God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained [The Christ, Head and Body]; whereof He hath given assurance unto all, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." That appointed Day was future in the Apostle's time, and is still future, though now about to dawn. The Gospel of Christ, Good Tidings, is to the effect that He who bought the world with His own precious blood is to become the Judge of all men, the living and the dead. "All in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth," "and they that hear shall live." – John 5:28,29,25.

A new trial is to be granted to Adam and all his race. It will be an individual trial, under the enlightenment and uplifting influence of the great Messianic Kingdom. Truly, this is "Good Tidings of great joy" to the world, the "groaning creation." Even though the great Adversary has succeeded in deceiving the vast majority, even of Christians, into thinking to the contrary, this Trial Day, the Day of Judgment, is to come to all the sons and daughters of Adam for their deliverance and blessing, if they will. This Great Day, which will be "the desire of all nations," is forcefully depicted by the Prophet David. (Psalms 96-98.) The saints of the Lord, the faithful followers of Christ, those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," shall be associated with their great Head as assistant judges, in His glorious work of human uplift and restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

How glad we are that our eyes have been anointed to see all these wonderful arrangements of our God! How glad we are that we can understand the significance of the dark clouds now hovering over the world and soon to break! How we rejoice that we can discern the silver lining to these clouds of trouble, and know that the end will be glorious – that beyond the yawning chasm just before us, beyond the blood and tears of the coming whirlwind and tempest, the blessed Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing and blessing in His wings, and mankind, broken and helpless and despairing, shall be led into the light and glory of the Kingdom of God's dear Son!

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