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A0540 – October 2, 2005 – The Day Of The Lord

I. THE DAY OF THE LORD

What is a “Day of the Lord”? The Scriptures commonly use this description or similar phrases like “that day”, “the day of God”, “the great day”, et. al. These expressions refer “to God’s special interventions into the course of world events to judge His enemies, accomplish His purpose for history, and thereby demonstrate who He is—the sovereign God of the universe (Isa. 2:10-22; Ezek. 13:5, 9, 14, 21, 23; 30:3, 8, 19, 25-26).” “It refers to that point in history at which the sovereign God lays bare His holy arm on the behalf of His testament and of its heirs, whether in a way that is specifically miraculous or not.”

II. PAST DAYS OF THE LORD

There have already been several days of the Lord in the OT, all of them associated with war; God using human and angelic instruments to bring about judgment on nations. For example, Assyria was raised up to judge the northern kingdom of Israel (Amos 5:118, 20), Babylon was raised up to judge the southern kingdom of Judah (Lam 1:12; 2:1, 21-22; Ezek 7:19; 13:5; Zeph 2:2-3), Babylon to judge Egypt and its allies (Jer 46:10; Ezek 30:3), and Medo-Persian to judge Babylon (Isa 13:6, 9). On these days it was apparent that God’s mighty hand was at work.

The Scriptures indicate that there is a yet future Day of the Lord when God will use nations as well as angels to execute His sovereign purposes against His enemies and remove them from the earth, His purchased possession.

III. A FUTURE DAY OF THE LORD

The past days of the Lord were all executed on single nations, but there is a future Day of the Lord when God will judge all the nations of the world. For example, turn to

Obadiah 1:15 "For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.

Since this has never happened this Day of the Lord is still future. The future Day of the Lord described in Isa 2:10-22 is associated with the sixth seal described by the Apostle John in Rev 6:12-17. In both passages men hide themselves in the rocks and caves of the earth to hide from the wrath of God which is coming upon the world. This shows that the future Day of the Lord will involve the sixth seal and thus occurs during the 70th week of Daniel. 1 Thess 5 also speaks of a future Day of the Lord

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 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. ³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.

The unsaved will not be able to escape the Day of the Lord. Here the Day of the Lord is associated with the "birth pangs".

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, ² that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the Day of the Lord has come. ³ Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

Paul writes to the believers at Thessalonica because apparently they had received information that said they were already in "the Day of the Lord" but Paul said they were not to be deceived because the Day of the Lord could not begin until two things took place: 1) the apostasy and 2) the revealing of the man of lawlessness (the Antichrist). Since those two things had not yet happened the Thessalonians could not possibly be in the Day of the Lord. This Day of the Lord is yet future and begins after the apostasy and the revealing of the man of lawlessness. The man of lawlessness cannot be revealed until the restrainer is removed (2:7) and if the restrainer is the Holy Spirit then when His ministry of restraining ceases then the Day of the Lord can come. Thus, this Day of the Lord is still future. We can safely say that the Day of the Lord begins very near to the beginning of the Tribulation when the 1st Seal is broken and is associated with the "birth pangs".

IV. TWO CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

The future Day of the Lord will have at least two characteristics. First, it will be a day of darkness and tremendous wrath upon the whole world.

Amos 5:18-20 Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, For what purpose *will* the day of the LORD *be* to you? It *will be* darkness and not light; ¹⁹ As when a man flees from a lion And a bear meets him, Or goes home, leans his hand against the wall And a snake bites him. ²⁰ *Will* not the day of the LORD *be* darkness instead of light, Even gloom with no brightness in it?

Second, the future Day of the Lord will be characterized by light and tremendous divine blessing upon the whole world. For example, Joel speaks of the darkness of the Day of the Lord (3:9-16) and then immediately following that he describes great divine blessing.

Joel 3:17-21 ¹⁷ Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, And strangers will pass through it no more. ¹⁸ And in that day (which refers back to the Day of the Lord in verse 14) The mountains will drip with sweet wine, And the hills will flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD To water the valley of Shittim. ¹⁹ Egypt will become a waste, And Edom will become a desolate wilderness, Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, In whose land they have shed innocent blood. ²⁰ But Judah will be inhabited forever And Jerusalem for all generations. ²¹ And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, For the LORD dwells in Zion.

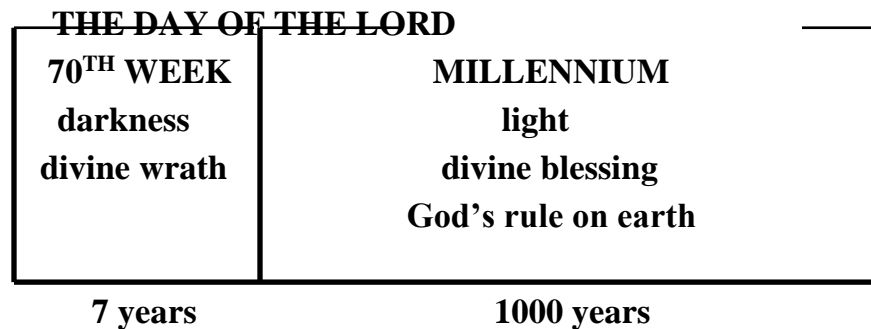
Zechariah says that the earlier part of “that day” will be characterized by darkness and the latter part will be characterized by light.

Zechariah 14:1-9 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. ² For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. ³ Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. ⁴ In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move

toward the north and the other half toward the south. ⁵ You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him! ⁶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. ⁷ For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. ⁸ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. ⁹ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be *the only* one, and His name *the only* one.

So, what the Bible pictures is two aspects of the Day of the Lord. The darkness and wrath characterize the Tribulation and the light and blessing characterize the Millennium.

Two Characteristics and Phases of the Future Day of the Lord



In the past God has broken into Satan's plans and has frustrated them with what we saw as previous days of the Lord. These have been graphic reminders that God is still sovereign over the earth and universe and to give them a foretaste of the future Day of the Lord that is coming.

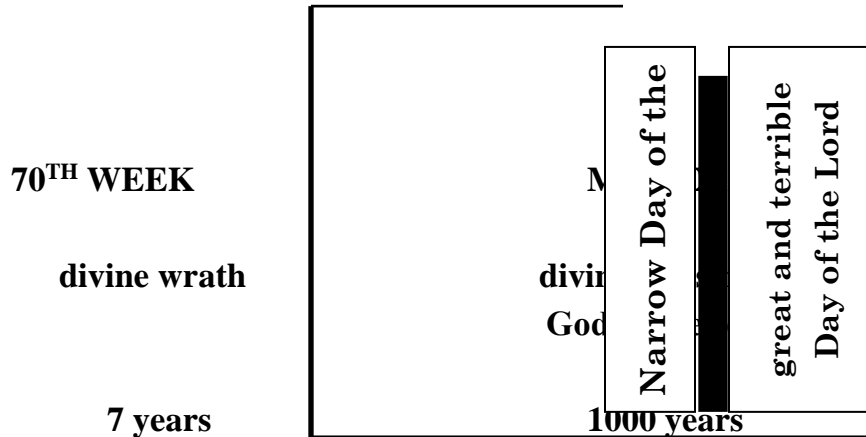
The first phase of this future Day of the Lord will be a concentrated judgment involving the 70th week of Daniel and the Second Coming of Christ immediately after that week. In this phase, God, who has permitted Satan and rebellious mankind to have their day, is going to have His day. He is going to suddenly intervene and destroy their rule over the world system and evict them from the earth. This phase is characterized by darkness and intense divine wrath.

The second phase of this future Day of the Lord will cover the period of God’s rule over the world system. God will bring with His Christ the theocratic-kingdom ruled by Jesus Christ, the last Adam. This will fulfill God’s original intention that man subdue and have dominion over the world as God’s representatives on earth. It will be fulfilled in the one man Jesus Christ. This phase will be characterized by light and blessing beyond measure.

V. THE BROAD AND NARROW DAY OF THE LORD

Further, when we study specific passages that mention the Day of the Lord it can be observed that some of the passages refer to one specific day—the day of the Second Coming of Christ to the earth from heaven with His angels. What we have seen so far may be understood as the broad Day of the Lord, which refers to both phases and lasts 1,007 years.

**Two Characteristics and Phases
of the Future Day of the Lord
BROAD DAY OF THE LORD**



That there can be a broad and narrow Day of the Lord should not be surprising since the word “day” is used in this sense on the first day of creation.

Genesis 1:5 God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

The entire twenty-four hour period was called “one day”. That’s the broad sense in relation to the days of creation. But when God called the light portion “day” and the dark portion “night” He used the word “day” in a narrower sense. In the same way, the future Day of the Lord has both a broad and narrow sense. The broad sense refers to the entire 1,007 years and the narrow sense refers to the one 24-hour day when Christ will return.

THE NARROW DAY OF THE LORD

Two OT passages prove that the narrow Day of the Lord is within the broad Day of the Lord and is limited to one specific day after the armies of the world have gathered in Armageddon. This will happen after the 6th bowl is poured out to prepare the way.

Revelation 16:12-16 The sixth *angel* poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. ¹³ And I saw *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; ¹⁴ for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. ¹⁵ ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.") ¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

Now turn to

Zechariah 14:1-5 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. ² For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. ³ Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. ⁴ In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. ⁵ You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him!

The same thing is taught in Joel 3:9-16. So, what this passage shows is that a Day of the Lord will take place after the nations have gathered against Jerusalem. After that happens then the Lord Himself will go forth and fight against those nations and will touch down on the Mount of Olives (interestingly, where the Olivet Discourse was given). What is that day?

Revelation 19:11-21 ¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and on His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *on Him* which no one knows except Himself. ¹³ *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." ¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God, ¹⁸ so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great." ¹⁹ And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Thus, it is the day of Christ's Second Coming. There are two specific passages that refer to this one Day of the Lord as the "great and terrible Day of the Lord"

Joel 2:31 "The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. (cf 2:11)

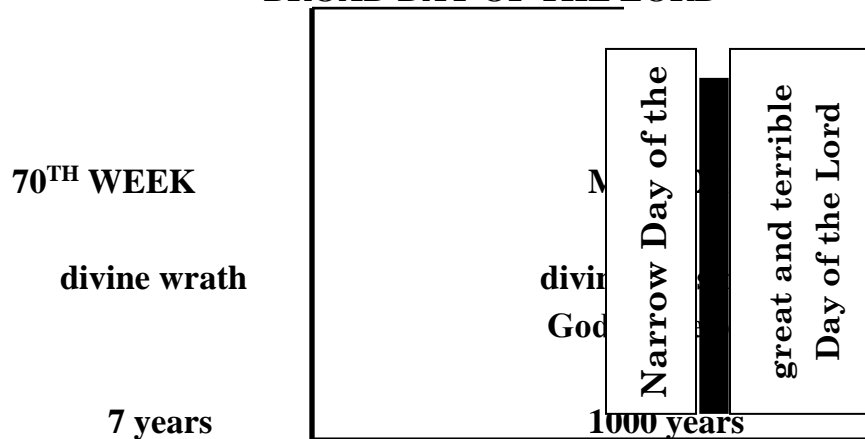
The phrase "great and awesome Day of the Lord" always refers to the narrow Day of the Lord and never to the broad Day of the Lord. Another passage that uses this phrase is...

Malachi 4:5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

This verse shows that before the narrow Day of the Lord, God will send Elijah the prophet. Elijah does not have to be sent before the broad Day of the Lord begins but before the

narrow Day of the Lord. He may then be sent sometime during the Tribulation period. Thus, many believe that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses God sends in Rev 11:1-13.

**Two Characteristics and Phases
of the Future Day of the Lord
BROAD DAY OF THE LORD**



Bullinger said of this day, “It is called ‘the great and terrible Day of the Lord,’ as though it were the climax of the whole period known as ‘the Day of the Lord.’” It certainly is the climax of the judgment phase of the broad day. This judgment phase is divinely designed to be an outpouring of wrath upon the domain of Satan and rebellious mankind. The narrow day serves as the climax of that phase. This narrow Day of the Lord will accomplish several things:

- It will expose God’s enemies to the presence of Christ and the fullness of His divine power and glory, judgment and warfare.
- It will bring the angelic armies of heaven against these enemies.
- It will end the rule of Satan and rebellious mankind over the world system and evict them from the earth thus ending their day on earth forever and ushering in His day.

Thus, we can conclude several things:

- The Day of the Lord refers to God’s special interventions into the course of world events to judge His enemies, accomplish His purpose for history, and thereby demonstrate who He is—the sovereign God of the universe
- The Bible reveals that God’s Day of the Lord interventions into the course of world history often involves human and angelic instruments.
- There have been several Days of the Lord in the past but there are still future days of the Lord

- The broad Day of the Lord will have two phases. The first phase is characterized by darkness and is the judgment phase. This phase is known as the Tribulation. The second phase is characterized by light and is the blessing phase. This phase is known as the Millennium where Christ, the second Adam, will reign over the whole earth.
- The first phase of the broad Day of the Lord is the end of Satan's usurped rule over this domain. Once he and his followers are evicted from the earth God will restore His theocratic kingdom
- There is also a clear distinction between the broad Day of the Lord and what we may call the narrow Day of the Lord. Broadly, the Day of the Lord refers to the Tribulation and Millennium, a total of 1,007 years. Narrowly, the Day of the Lord refers to one day, the day of Christ's Second Coming to earth with His angels.
- The narrow Day of the Lord is always referred to in Scripture as "the great and terrible Day of the Lord".
- This "great and terrible Day of the Lord" will be the climax of the Day of the Lord judgment phase
- God will send forth Elijah before the great and terrible Day of the Lord and not before the broad Day of the Lord.

Because of this cataclysmic change in the world system that will take place on the day Christ returns, Joel called the place where the battle of Armageddon takes place "the valley of decision" (Joel 3:14). In closing, turn to 2 Peter 3:10. Why am I teaching you all this. I'm not teaching you all this just to keep your interest (although it is terribly interesting). Peter said,

2 Peter 3:10-12 ¹⁰ But the Day of the Lord [broad, phase 1] will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. ¹¹ Since all these things are to *be* destroyed in this way, what sort of people *ought* you to *be* in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! (cf Matt 24:35)

I'm teaching you this for the same reasons Peter taught it to the believer's of his day. In light of all the destruction God will bring on the earth "what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness"? I want you to see the holiness of God and how much God hates sin. God wants us to look at the future day of the Lord and be confounded by His holiness and hatred of sin. Verse 12 says "looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God". Why should we who are not destined to go through the day of the Lord hasten its arrival? Because when it arrives the kingdom is just around the corner, and all believers are destined to be in that kingdom (John 3:1-15). Thus, the new heavens and new earth of verse 13 are not referring to what God will create after the Millennium but the conditions

of the earth during the Millennium. Isa 65-66 refer to the Millennium as new heavens and new earth and it will be. 2/3-3/4 of the entire surface of the earth will be burned during the Tribulation. How should we then live since our appointed place in that kingdom will be based on our lives while still in the body?

If you have not trusted in Jesus Christ alone as your savior then this day of the Lord may come upon you like a thief. You will not be prepared to escape the terrible wrath of God. I urge you today to cast off the chain you have to this world and take hold of the freedom of eternal life in Jesus Christ. He paid the debt for your sin past, present, and future on the cross. All that is required to receive the gift of salvation is for you to believe in Jesus Christ. As Christ said, "Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

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