

Day of the Lord Confusion

There is a great deal of confusion about 'The day of the Lord'. The most common belief throughout the Churches of God was summed up by a recent statement in an article, 'Are we living in the Time of the End', ('Beyond Today' magazine, January – February 2016): **"The time of "great tribulation" culminates in the "day of the Lord" "**.

But is this really so? Or is it possible that the hierarchical structure within the church has led some to the acceptance of a deception, which has distorted their comprehension of what God requires of them in those last years? Revelation 12:9, *'And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.'*

Only the scriptures can provide the true answer. Matthew 24:16, 21, provides the first clue - 'Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains' ... 'For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.'

Here, it clearly states that the great tribulation starts at the fleeing of some of God's people from Jerusalem, in order that they might not be trapped by the armies of the Beast, advancing from the North, Luke 21:20-21, *"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it.'*

Why is it that the only free group of God's people mentioned at this time in the Bible, are to be found in Jerusalem? Sadly, they are the only ones not then in captivity, brought about by the wars of the **earlier 2nd Seal**, see Matthew 24, especially verse 6, *'And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.'* Rev 6:4, *'And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword,'* Revelation 14:8, *'And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'* They escape captivity only because they follow God's instructions, (It is vital at this point to read the article 'Come Out of Her My People,") and so escape the great Tribulation. (http://www.ozwitness.net/docs/come_out_of_her_my_people.pdf)

Back in Matthew 24:21-22, we are told that the great tribulation is the most dangerous time for all humanity, *'For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equalled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.'* NIV. Indeed, it is so dangerous that by its end very few of sinning mankind will be left alive on earth, Isaiah 24:5-6, *'The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse consumes the earth; its people must bear their guilt. Therefore earth's inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left.'* NIV.

Revelation 7:14 also tells us that during the great tribulation, which is the 7th Seal, a great multitude of people need to wash their robes in repentance for their sins. *'I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'*

Who are these people?

They are the people referred to in Revelation 12:17 and 14, *'Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring--those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.'* These were Christians who, as Laodiceans, or lukewarm to God's word (Rev 3:14) were not prepared when Jesus Christ returned for His people, (Matthew 25:1-10) - verse 14, *'But the woman*

was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, '- three and a half years.

Why were they not ready and prepared? It seems that most of them expected that Christ would not return until *the end* of the Great Tribulation, not at its very start. They first expected to see the Beast and the False Prophet rise to full power over a large part of the world. They expected to see the prophesied miraculous signs from the false prophet. They expected to see the two witnesses for 3 ½ years, but all these events would not appear until *after* the first resurrection, and *during* the Great Tribulation of the 7th seal. Instead, they failed to carry out the instructions God placed in His word for them, regarding their work in Jerusalem.

So, this confusion comes about because, though the whole of the 7 year end time could justifiably be referred to as the 'Day of the Lord' as the Apostle John was carried forward in vision to view *all* of its events, Revelation 1:10, *'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, [Greek - 'Day of the Lord'] and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet'*, however, central to the Day of the Lord is the direct intervention of Jesus Christ at the half way point, starting with the rescue of His Bride at the resurrection of the 6th Seal, and then His pouring out of His wrath during the great tribulation. Revelation 6: 15-17, *'And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?'*

The 6th Seal actually includes the first resurrection, as we can gather from other verses, and it is clearly followed by the great tribulation, but you need to **prove it for yourself from the Bible** like the Bereans, (Acts 17:11) by noticing that:

1. The first 5 seals (Matthew 24:5-9, + Revelation 6) come first, during the last 7 years of the End Time. They are referred to in Matthew 24:29 as 'the tribulation of those days.' *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.'*
2. As we have just read in Matthew 24:29, they are *immediately followed* by the heavenly signs, Revelation 6:12-14, *'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.'* And Joel 2:30-31, *'And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.'*
3. **The heavenly signs at the 6th Seal are followed by the resurrection of the saints!** See Matthew 24:30-31, *'And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'* Rev 6:16 (At the 6th seal) *'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.'* 1 Corinthians 15: 51-52, *'Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: [See Vines Dictionary of N T Words] for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'*
4. **The resurrection** of the firstfruit saints at the end of 6th Seal is closely followed by the very beginning of the 7th Seal, or **great tribulation** (Revelation 8), as we can see by comparing Revelation 14:14-15 with verses 18-19. It is referred to as **the Great Day of the Lord** in Zephaniah 1:14-17, *'The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a*

day of trouble and distress, a day of wateness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung,’ the time of great punishment from the Lord, Joel 1:15, *‘Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction **from the Almighty** shall it come.’* Revelation 6:17, *‘For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand.*

The day of his wrath comes as a great surprise to most Christians who see Christ coming in the clouds, and then expect to be changed in the twinkling of an eye at their resurrection, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, *‘For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent[precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.’* Instead, they are left behind to face not peace and safety, but the wrath of God, 1 Thessalonians 5:3, *‘For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.’*

Only those who had avoided the deception of man, (knowing or unknowing) which is actually idolatry, rather than diligently looking directly to God’s word, will be spared that wrath, verses 6-9, *‘Therefore **let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, **but to obtain salvation** by our Lord Jesus Christ.’***

The whole of the *following 7th Seal* is that time of trouble which is worse than any ever seen before, Daniel 12:1, *‘And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book,’* which we also read of in Matthew 24:21 and in Revelation as the 7th Seal. It is commonly referred to as the great tribulation, and as we have seen, it starts with the appearance of Christ for His Saints during the **Day of the Lord** and lasts for 3 ½ years.

If you have followed these scriptures in your own Bible, the Day of the Lord will have been seen to include the resurrection of the Firstfruit Saints, **three and a half years before** most of the Church of God expects it to take place, resulting in great disappointment and tribulation for many of God’s people. Visit the timeline on our ‘End Time’ tab, to gain a fuller understanding.

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