

## **“There’s A Great Day Coming!”**

The world has seen some pretty magnificent days in its history. There was the day when God first pierced the dark void of eternity with the light of His creative word, and no mortal eye witnessed that. We merely read about it in the pages of God’s word. But, that must’ve been a day beyond our ability even to imagine. It was certainly a great day when, as Moses described, God opened the windows of heaven, and broke apart the fountains of the deep, flooding the earth and wiping out the human population, save a family of eight people. So many other days chronicled within the Bible could be classified as such great days, and what a thrill or a fright it would’ve been to have lived and seen many of those days transpire.

Even in modern history, there have been many days that will go down in history, either favorably or in infamy, as great days that made a tremendous impact on the history of the world. But, there is still a day to come that all of us will live to see, and it is the greatest day of them all.

**Jude 6 “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”**

This verse tells us that the angels that sinned were cast down to hell, and are being held in chains until they are finally thrown into the lake of fire. Jude’s words parallel those of Peter.

**II Peter 2:4 “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;”**

In other words, these rebellious angels are imprisoned until one day, they will stand before the mighty judge and receive their ultimate sentence: banishment to Gehenna Hell. Jude considered the events that will transpire on that final day to be so outstanding, as to call that “*the great day*.” It will be the day of all days.

The Bible surely teaches that such a day *is* coming. There is a great day coming. Some people seem to think that the world will go on forever; others that it will meet some catastrophic end by some force of the universe. The Bible makes no allowance for such, because it clearly teaches that the heavens and earth will be destroyed when Jesus returns.

**2Peter 3:10-12 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”**

That’s how Peter described “*the great day*” that is to come. The scriptures tell us that Jesus will return on that great day. As the Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives two thousand years ago, leaving His little band of disciples behind, you recall what the angels spoke to them:

**Acts 1:11 “Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”**

Just as Jesus bodily, visibly and literally ascended before their eyes back to the Father in heaven, so the angel affirmed that, one day, Jesus will, in the same manner, come again. It will be an awesome day when Jesus comes again and the world stands before Him in judgment. That will be a supernatural event, and it's beyond our ability to comprehend, much less describe. But, the fact remains that there is a great day coming, and perhaps, very soon.

First of all, I want to notice that the Bible speaks of that day as being a great surprise. In fact, as clearly as the scriptures say that Jesus is coming again, they are equally clear that His coming will be at the most unexpected hour. When Jesus told the parable of the coming of the bridegroom and the five foolish and five wise virgins, He made this comparison:

**Matthew 25:1-13** "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Jesus says we will know *neither the day nor the hour* when He will return. Some people have made a big business out of trying to predict the coming of the Lord and the events surrounding the end of time. I doubt if I have to tell you that. Prophecy is a huge seller in religion today, and if some preacher thinks that he can connect the dots of current world events with the book of Revelation, creating all kinds of mysterious conjecture, hype and excitement surrounding that, somehow he will get a lot of interest and sell a lot of books. However, anyone who tries to predict the time of the Lord's coming is very foolishly ignoring what Jesus said. He didn't say that His coming would come as a surprise to *everyone*, but He said the time of His return would come as a shock to the world.

**Matthew 24:36** "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

Even Jesus Himself doesn't know the day of His return. Only God the Father knows.

Many have a futurist interpretation of the book of Revelation, and I believe they miss the point of the book. It's not a road map to enable us to somehow discern or know exactly when Jesus will come again; it's merely a symbolic book that is written to assure the persecuted saints of the first century, and any other Christian who would face trials, ordeals, opposition and/or persecution, that victory is on the way. But when Jesus comes again, the Bible assures us that it is going to be a great surprise to the lost. Life is going to be going along as usual. It will be like any other day. People in some places will be sleeping in their beds, while on the other side of the world, people are busy at work or at school. Perhaps many will be gathered in houses of worship. People at work and play will not have the slightest idea that the world

is about to end. Husbands and wives will kiss one another and their children goodbye for the day, expecting to reunite at home that evening, but it won't happen because that will be the day that Jesus comes.

**II Peter 3:3-4 "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."**

In other words, if Jesus is really coming back...if that promise is really true, Jesus would've already been here.

**II Peter 3:5-10 "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."**

Friend, that day is coming, and it could be today, it could be tomorrow, it could be a hundred years from now, but that great day IS coming.

Now, whether the Lord returns today or a thousand years from now doesn't change the fact that we will ALL witness it because there will be a great gathering on that day. Nobody will escape the return of our Lord and the end of the world.

**John 5:28-29 "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."**

You see, when you die, you don't just dissolve and cease to exist. When you die—even in a lost and undone, Christ-less state—you don't just disappear into the void of nothingness. Rather, Jesus says there is coming a resurrection: for the good AND for the evil. One of the results of Jesus' own resurrection is that one day, He will have the power to call us forth from tomb. That's what will transpire the moment Jesus returns.

**I Thessalonians 4:16 "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:"**

Every cemetery on earth will erupt as the sleeping ones of bygone ages come forth! What happened when Jesus called Lazarus' name in front of Bethany so many centuries ago will happen the world over when Jesus comes again. In fact, one theologian said that the reason that Jesus specifically called Lazarus' name when He resurrected him from the dead was because that the voice of Jesus has such

power that it would've brought every corpse in the graveyard back to life had He not specified "*Come forth, Lazarus!*" Well, one day the Lord will do just that.

Some people see death as an escape, not only from their present troubles, but from life itself and even from God and accountability to Him. They might even have their corpses cremated and their ashes scattered in the wind. But they've not escaped the Lord or the resurrection of the great day. Death is merely a temporary separation.

**James 2:26 "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."**

That spirit goes back to God who gave it, and that body returns to the bosom of the earth to go back to the dust from whence it comes. But when Jesus comes again, the Hadean world that holds the spirits of the dead will be emptied. Those spirits will be reunited with a new and imperishable body. Someone says, *how can that be?* The Corinthians asked that question a long time ago (**I Corinthians 15**). Well, if God made man, and if God knows the number of hairs on every man's head as the Bible says that He does, then surely He holds the DNA code for every living person! A God who can create the world, and designed you just as you are can certainly resurrect the dead, and the Bible teaches that beyond a shadow of any doubt. He will do just that when Jesus comes again.

That leads right into my next point: that will be a great gathering. Can you even try to imagine the sight of ALL of the billions living on earth joined with ALL of the dead of bygone ages gathered in one place? When John was exiled on the island of Patmos, God opened the curtains of the future, revealing to John an incredible futurama.

**Revelation 21:12-13 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."**

**Romans 14:11-12 "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."**

Adam will stand there, along with all of the great patriarchs of the twilight age of the earth, the Caesars of ancient Rome will stand before the Lord, the people from every nation, every tribe, every creed and every color will all stand before the Lord. Jesus said that even the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be there.

**Matthew 10:15 "Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."**

Even the people of Ninevah—that evil city where Jonah preached centuries ago—will be there.

**Matthew 12:41 "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."**

Jesus said the Queen of Sheba, who lived in ancient Solomon's day, will be there as well.

**Matthew 12:42** “The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”

And you and I will be there, too. We will each and every one be a part of that great gathering when Jesus comes again!

**II Corinthians 5:10** “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ;”

Also on that great day there will be a great examination.

**II Corinthians 5:10** “...that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

It should be rather humbling to us, and perhaps for some, very frightening, to know that our lives will be opened like a book before the judge of the earth. Time will be irrelevant, and one by one, we will take our place before the great white throne of judgment. In some way, a way that I don't understand but that the Bible affirms, we will stand before the Lord one by one, and answer for every thought we ever had, every word we ever spoke, every deed we did. Jesus once said that “*every idle word*” will be accounted for.

**Matthew 12:36** “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

Do you think about that as you speak from day to day? Every curse word, every profanity, every lie, every half-truth, every word of gossip, every word of hypocrisy...will be replayed before the courts of heaven. The secret things deeply hidden from the view of others will be brought out for ALL to see.

**Ecclesiastes 12:14** “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

The double lives, the dishonesty, the hypocrisy, the sins committed under the cover of night that no one knew about will all be exposed, if not repented of and confessed to God. They will finally and ultimately be exposed in the day of judgment. There's no running from the judgment of God. There's no running from the all-seeing eye of God. There's no evading that great day that is coming, unless you repent of your sins and confess your sins to God if you're a Christian, or obeying the gospel and having your sins washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ, thus becoming a Christian. Until your sins are dealt with by the blood of Jesus Christ, they are *on your record*, and that record will be examined when you stand before the Lord. That will be the examination of all examinations, and it will truly be a great and fearful day for anyone who is unprepared to meet the Lord Jesus Christ.

That examination will end in a great separation. What a chilling and a haunting thought to think about. What a sad thing to contemplate, that the masses of earth are going to be eternally and irreversibly parted on that day. I want you to bring that right down to a personal level and understand, very sadly, that some husbands are going to be separated from the wives that they spent their lives with and loved with all of their hearts for a lifetime. They will never see one another again. Some mothers and fathers will look into the faces of their children for the last time.

**Matthew 25:31-34,41** “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ... Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:”

Remember what Jude said about the angels that sinned?

**Jude 6** “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

Jesus said that on that great day, when all of the nations stand before Him, and the sheep are divided from the goats, those who are on the wrong side, unprepared and outside of Jesus Christ, who remained in their sins will be told to *depart*.

**Matthew 25:46** “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

A line will be drawn that day, separating the chaff from the wheat, the goats from the sheep, the righteous from the unrighteous, those who are robed and ready and those who wasted their lives in sin and were unprepared.

Now I want to ask you: where will you stand on that great day? Which side will YOU be on when Jesus separates the sheep from the goats? Should Jesus come on this beautiful Lord’s Day, where will YOU be found? And what will you hear Him say when you stand before Jesus? It WILL happen. There is a great day coming, and when you stand before Him, what words will you hear? *Well done*, or *depart*?

That’s going to be a great separation. We shouldn’t deceive ourselves by looking at our lives and thinking, *well, by the sum total of my life, I think I’m a pretty decent fellow. I’ve done some nice things. I’m on God’s side because I love Jesus and I sympathized with the Bible. I didn’t really live for the Lord, but I didn’t think ill of Him either. I was good to my neighbor, so maybe I’ve done enough good things that I’ll be all right. He’ll look at my life and say, “Well done.”* No, it doesn’t work that way. I would not usurp the Lord’s place of judgment. All of us who are Christians will stand before the Lord and have our lives examined deed by deed and word by word, and we will account for the lives we’ve lived and whether or not we were faithful to Jesus. But I can tell you this with all certainty, because the Bible says it. I say it on authority of God’s word: If you have never obeyed the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, I can tell you what’s going to happen on that day. I can tell you *exactly* what’s going to happen that day because the Bible tells us.

**II Thessalonians 1:7-9** “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”

Have you obeyed the gospel? How does one obey the gospel? It's more than just mentally assenting. I must *obey* the gospel. I not only must agree with what the gospel says and believe what the Bible says, I must act upon what the Bible says by yielding my heart and my life to Jesus in repentance and confessing Him before men. Jesus said that if I don't do that, He'll deny me before the Father in heaven.

**Matthew 10:32 "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."**

Jesus also said that I must be baptized for the remission of my sins.

**Mark 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."**

**Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."**

**Romans 6:3-5,17 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:... But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."**

That last passage teaches us that when we submit to Jesus Christ in baptism, when we are baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins, that we *obey from the heart* the gospel. We *obey from the heart* that form of teaching or doctrine, which is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. How? By being buried with Christ in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life. Have you done that today? What will the Lord say to you when He returns? The old song says it best:

"There's a great day coming, a great day coming. There's a great day coming by and by."

Will L. Thompson, 1886

Surely one day, Jesus is going to burst through the eastern sky and the angel of the Lord is going to put one foot on the land and one foot upon the sea, and declare that time will be no more. Where will you stand when that great day comes?