

WHEN JUDGMENT DAY COMES

- The Religious World is concerned about prophetic signs, the nation of Israel, and dispensational time tables.

Those things really do not greatly concern me. God will feed, clothe, shelter, and protect his people, if the whole framework of the world's economic and political stability falls apart tomorrow. — God does not depend upon the events of the world. He rules the events of the world! And all the prophecy experts in the world have proved themselves fools a thousand times over.

God has spoken plainly.

- No man knows when Christ will come again and when time shall be no more.
- No man knows, or has any basis upon which to predict, the time when God will destroy this world (Matthew 24:36; 25:13).

THREE CERTAINTIES

I do not pretend to have answers to all the questions men and women are asking about the events of the

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day. But here are three certainties, three things about which you can be absolutely sure.

1. There is a day appointed when God will judge this world.
2. When that day comes there will only be two issues of concern.
 - Your Sin!
 - God's Son!
3. And God has told us exactly what he will do when judgment day comes.

That is the title of my message tonight. — **WHEN JUDGMENT DAY COMES**. I will be preaching to you from Isaiah 24:1-23.

- Judgment day comes in providential judgments.
- Judgment day comes upon nations.
- Judgment day comes to families and to individuals.
- Judgment day comes in Holy Spirit conviction.
- Judgment day comes at death.
- And there will be a Day of Judgment at the end of time.

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Divisions: When Judgment Day comes...

1. The earth shall be destroyed (vv. 1-12).
2. God's saints will rejoice and give him praise (vv. 13-15).
3. There will be a time of great spiritual leanness (v. 16).
4. Unbelieving men and women will be terrified, gathered into the pit, and punished forever (vv. 17-22).
5. The Lord Jesus Christ shall reign gloriously (v. 23).

(1 Peter 4:17) For the time *is come* that **judgment must begin at the house of God**: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

EARTH DESTROYED

1st — **When judgment day comes the earth shall be destroyed** (vv. 1-12).

- God destroyed the earth once by a flood.

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- God shall destroy this present world by fire in the last day (2 Peter 3:11-12).

(2 Peter 3:11-14) “*Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, (12) 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? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (14) Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

And God is in the process of destroying this world right now! As it was with the original creation (Genesis 1:1-2), **soon the God of Glory will make this earth once again to be without form and void** (v. 1). That is what he is doing right now. All the frog kissers and tree huggers in the world notwithstanding!

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(Isaiah 24:1) Behold, the LORD **maketh** the earth empty, and **maketh** it waste, and **turneth** it upside down, and **scattereth** abroad the inhabitants thereof.

(Genesis 1:1-2) In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (2) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

In the Day of Judgment, earthly distinctions of rank, state and wealth will be utterly meaningless (vv. 2-4). Age, sex, wealth, poverty, rank, power, social position, all are meaningless when the judgment of God falls!

(Isaiah 24:2-4) And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

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(3) The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. —

(4) The earth mourneth *and* fadeth away, the world languisheth *and* fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

This earth must be destroyed because it has been defiled by man (v. 5).

(Isaiah 24:5) The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

Man's sin is here described in three ways.

1. “*They have transgressed the laws!*” — God’s broken law demands justice!

2. “*They have changed the ordinance!*” — They have changed the ordinances of God into sacraments. — And they have changed the ordinance, the Word of God, to suit the itching ears of men.

- God says, “*It is not of him that willeth.*” — Man says, “*It is of him that willeth.*”

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- God says, “*Salvation is of the Lord.*” — Man says, “Salvation is of man.”
- God says, “*Christ shall not fail.*” — Man says, “He might.”
- God says, “*They shall never perish.*” — Man says, “They might.”
- God says, “*They that are in the flesh cannot please God.*” — Man says, “You know God is pleased with our good works.”
- God says, “*You are not under the law.*” — Man says, “We are yet under the law.”
- God says, “*It is finished.*” — Man says, “There is something more to do.”

3. “*They have broken the everlasting covenant.*”

Strictly speaking, man could never break the everlasting covenant of grace, because it was not made with man. The covenant of grace was made by God with his Son. And Christ has fulfilled it for us. — But men break it in the sense that they cast it aside, despising it, and seek to be saved upon the footing of their own works.

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“Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth” (vv. 6-12).

(Isaiah 24:6) Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

Blessed by God, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace who must and shall be saved. They are chosen by God. They are redeemed by Christ. They shall be called and kept by the Spirit. But, by comparison, there are only “*few men left.*” It is for the salvation of those few that the earth yet stands (1 Peter 3:9).

All the joys of this earth are temporary and shall soon cease (vv. 7-9).

(Isaiah 24:7-9) The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry hearted do sigh. (8) The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

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(9) They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

The religions of the world, Babylon, “the city of confusion,” shall be broken down (v. 10).

(Isaiah 24:10) The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.

- Scandals Among Papists
- Scandals Among Protestants
- Scandals Among Fundamentalists
- Scandals Among the Reformed

Rioting is found in the streets, because nothing in the world brings poor sinners joy, peace, and satisfaction (v. 11).

(Isaiah 24:11) *There is* a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

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The wealth and riches of the earth shall soon be consumed and flee away (v. 12).

(Isaiah 24:12) In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

These things are but the beginning of sorrows, the forerunners of destruction, God's warnings of judgment! — God began destroying the earth as soon as man began to sin. — (Read v. 1 again!).

(Isaiah 24:1) Behold, the LORD **maketh** the earth empty, and **maketh** it waste, and **turneth** it upside down, and **scattereth** abroad the inhabitants thereof.

SAINTS REJOICE

2nd — **When judgment day comes, God's saints will rejoice and give him praise** (vv. 13-15). The prophet told us in verse 6 that there are a "*few men left.*" Here he describes those "*few men,*" God's elect remnant. How suitable it is that this remnant should lift up their voice and sing redemption!

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In the midst of judgment, what mercy to escape it! If the world is universally cursed, how blessed it must be to be the salt of the earth!

When God judges the earth, he will gather his elect to himself (v. 13; Matthew 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10).

(Isaiah 24:13) When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, *there shall be* as the shaking of an olive tree, *and* as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

God's providential judgments are but the shaking of the olive tree, by which he gleans his harvest. — When he has gathered his harvest, he will cut down the tree!

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. *14* For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. *15*

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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 them which are asleep. *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: *17* 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. *18* Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

(2 Thessalonians 1:8-10) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: (9) Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; (10) When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

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In the midst of his righteous judgment God's people rejoice and praise him throughout the earth (vv. 14-15).

(Isaiah 24:14-15) They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea. (15) Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, *even* the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

We will praise the name of the Lord our God and glorify him because of his excellent majesty as God.

- In Saving Such Worthless Sinners
- In His Providential Judgments upon the Earth
- In the Final Overthrow of His Enemies
(Revelation 18:20-19:2).

(Revelation 18:20-19:2) Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. (21) And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down,

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and shall be found no more at all. (22) And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; (23) And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. (24) And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. — (19:1) And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: (2) For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

TIME OF LEANNESS

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3rd — **Just before judgment day comes, there will be a time of great spiritual leanness** (v. 16).

(Isaiah 24:16) From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

“From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.”

- The Righteous God.
- The Righteous Savior.
- The Righteous People — Made Righteous by Grace.

“But I said, My leanness! My leanness, woe unto me!”

- Some say, Isaiah here refers to his personal leanness of soul.

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- Some say, he is talking about the leanness of his people Israel, the spiritual leanness of God's church.
- I think his primary reference is prophetic, referring to the terrible spiritual leanness that would engulf the earth in these last days, because of treacherous, deceitful false prophets (Amos 8:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-16).

(Amos 8:11-12) Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: (12) And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*.

(2 Thessalonians 2:1-17) Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, (2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that*

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day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (5) Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. (8) And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (9) *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: (12) That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but

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had pleasure in unrighteousness. (13) But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (15) Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. (16) Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, (17) Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

UNBELIEVING TERRIFIED

4th — **When judgment day comes, unbelieving men and women will be terrified, gathered into the pit and punished forever** (vv. 17-22).

(Isaiah 24:17-22) Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. (18)

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And it shall come to pass, *that* he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. (19) The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. (20) The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. (21) And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. (22) And they shall be gathered together, *as* prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.

Perhaps Isaiah is speaking here of the same thing the Lord showed John in Revelation 6 about the opening of the sixth seal of judgment (Revelation 6:12-17). **The Lord God will at last, in that great day, avenge himself and his own elect** (vv. 12-17).

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(Revelation 6:12-17) 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; (13) 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. (14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (15) 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; (16) 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: (17) For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

The sixth seal is opened to introduce the great and terrible Day of Judgment. In that day, there will be a total dissolution of the physical universe

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(Revelation 6:12-15). It will be a climatic, not a gradual thing (2 Peter 3:10-12). And the entire world of reprobate rebels will be seized with sudden terror (Revelation 6:15-17). **In that great and terrible day, there will be a strange prayer meeting.**

- Men will pray, but the men praying will not be saved men, but unsaved men.
- They will pray not to God, but to the mountains and rocks.
- They will pray not for life, but for death.
- And they will pray not that they may see Christ, but that they may be hidden from him!

When that day comes, the door of grace will be shut forever! Christ will conquer all his enemies, either by the power of his grace or by the power of his wrath; but conquer he will (Isaiah 45:20-25).

CHRIST'S GLORIOUS REIGN

5th — **When judgment day comes, the Lord Jesus Christ shall reign gloriously forever** (v. 23).

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(Isaiah 24:23) Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

Christ will reign in Zion, the New Jerusalem, over all the earth forever. — Christ will reign before his ancients — His Elect. — Christ will reign gloriously.

- In His Glory as God
- In His Glory as the God-man Mediator
- In the Glorious Praise of His Saints

APPLICATION

When Judgment Day comes, how will you stand before God?

- Will you stand in Christ complete?
- Will you stand alone?

(Isaiah 45:20-25) Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a

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god *that* cannot save. (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me. (22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. (23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. (25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

Amen.