

Acts 17:10,11 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: ... These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.:

God's people do not just simply ignore information from the Bible with a dismissive wave of their hand; but rather they listen carefully and then check out the things they are hearing in the Bible to see if they are true or not.

THE BIBLE RECORDS ANOTHER MAJOR SPIRITUAL JUDGMENT

But those two judgments of God aren't all, there's also another judgment for us to consider: The judgment of God upon the New Testament churches:

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?

God has provided us great amounts of information in His Word pointing to His end time plan to bring to pass judgment on the world's congregations. He also uses the figure of a cup to picture the outpouring of His wrath upon those in the churches and congregations:

Jeremiah 25:15-18 For thus saith the LORD... Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the LORD'S hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me: To wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah...

God first gives the cup to Jerusalem (a figure of the churches) and then to the rest of the nations (pointing to the world).

Jeremiah 25:29 For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.

By God's goodness and grace, He has revealed to us that the church age ended. Judgment began on the churches in the year 1988. God's Spirit came out of the midst of the New Testament congregations at that time, and immediately the light of the gospel was put out within all churches of the world. And yet despite the Bible's teaching on this point, the New Testament churches continue on completely undisturbed by this terrible truth.

Many of their pastors and elders have heard about the Bible's teaching regarding judgment upon them, but they dismiss it and completely disregard it. But how can they ignore such an enormous teaching of the Scriptures, especially on such a grave point? They are able to ignore it and dismiss it as nothing because it is a judgment found in the spiritual realm. The Spirit of God could never be seen while in their midst, and also could not be seen once He had left them.

The darkness that presently engulfs all churches all over the world is a spiritual darkness; it cannot be detected with physical sight and natural understanding. But God's people are able to understand and detect these things based upon discernment, or spiritual sight that God has given to them:

Daniel 12:10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

God's elect heard and understood the seriousness, the reality of the judgment on the churches, despite the fact that it was entirely a spiritual judgment.

SUMMARY

We've now examined three Biblical judgments, and we have found something remarkable: each of these three judgments can only be described as being spiritual in nature. And we're not speaking of minor, unknown and rather obscure judgments, but three of the most major judgments recorded in the Bible. How could we discuss anything more important than God's judgment upon mankind in the Garden of Eden: or, God's judgment upon Christ in Gethsemane: or, God's judgment upon the New Testament corporate church during the period of the great tribulation?

As a matter of fact, it would be impossible to name a judgment in the Bible more important than these three. That leads us back to our main question: does the Bible teach spiritual judgments? After searching the Bible we can say with assurance, that yes it does! The Bible does indeed teach that God brings spiritual (unseen to the naked eye) judgments to pass upon mankind due to their sin.

But the big question for us all in the world today is: did God bring to pass a spiritual judgment beginning on May 21, 2011? The Bible's response is: Yes! There is a good deal of Biblical justification for saying that a spiritual judgment began on that day and continues up until this present time.

In fact, the Biblical evidence is so strong that we really

need to ask ourselves: how could it be that we had never previously considered a spiritual judgment as even a possibility for the final judgment? We should note however, that the Bible does teach us that God will physically and very literally destroy this world on the last day of earth's existence. We wholeheartedly agree with this sound Biblical teaching. But the Bible is also teaching that May 21, 2011, began a period of time known as *Judgment Day* in a spiritual way.

This spiritual judgment will continue for a set number of days and then finally, on the very last day of this period of time God's wrath will physically manifest itself and utterly destroy this entire creation with every unsaved person along with it. The Bible reveals that every living person alive today has entered into the period of time the Bible identifies as Judgment Day. At this time we are all living in the Day of Judgment. Terribly, the following Scripture is now being fulfilled:

Isaiah 24:17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

Of course this terrible truth leaves us with many questions concerning the character of this present period of judgment.

And also we wonder how it is that God's elect people are still living and remaining upon the earth during this time. We will seek to answer these questions and many more in the next installment of our tract series, *Living in the Day of Judgment*.

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SPIRITUAL JUDGMENT

BEGAN

MAY 21, 2011

LIVING IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT TRACT SERIES #1

The date May 21, 2011 was the most publicized date for the Day of Judgment that the world has ever seen. It was publicized on billboards, and advertised on buses. The message was seen on cars, bumper stickers, t-shirts, literature, magazines and newspapers. The news media all over the world also trumpeted the warning message of the gospel that that date would be JUDGMENT DAY! Much of the world was, in a sense, holding its collective breath in anticipation of the final judgment of God.

And yet, (seemingly) nothing happened. Things did not transpire as thought. There was no worldwide earthquake and awful circumstances that accompanied the date of May 21, 2011. Instead that day came and went like any other day. Nothing outwardly visible happened at all. Many in the world, quite relieved, ridiculed the whole idea. "See," they said, "it was all foolishness." And they were not alone, those in the churches likewise rejoiced: "We told you no one can know the day or the hour!"

However, what the world and the church failed to take into account was God's propensity towards bringing spiritual judgments to pass. A spiritual judgment, like anything spiritual, cannot be seen. By definition something *spiritual* is invisible to the human eye. For example, the Bible declares that God is Spirit:

John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

The Bible tells us that God is a Spiritual Being. But since the world cannot see him, and since the world cannot touch Him, and since it cannot detect him with its senses, therefore according to the world's reasoning God does not exist. Spiritual things are simply nonexistent to the world. But of course God does exist. Despite the fact that He cannot be seen with the natural eye, He is still very real. God's people understand this. We also understand that the Bible is a spiritual book. It is God's book, and since He is Spirit we're not surprised at all that the bible is full of spiritual truth. God's people believe through the eyes of faith which makes spiritual (invisible) things visible to the believer:

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Since much of the world denies God exists because they cannot see Him, we're not surprised that the idea of an invisible or spiritual judgment of God is ridiculous to them. And yet, as believers of the Bible we really aren't interested or concerned at all with what the world finds ridiculous or foolish. Our very gospel, our very book the Bible, our very Savior Jesus Christ is thought foolish by the world: proving beyond doubt to the child of God that the world is extremely blind and ignorant concerning spiritual things. We do not take our leading or direction from the world in spiritual matters whatsoever. The world's opinion of us and our beliefs is of absolutely no importance to the child of God. No. As a child of God our only concern is what does the Bible say.

Well, let's ask that question. What does the Bible say about the idea of a spiritual Judgment Day? Is it possible? Is there any Biblical precedent for this kind of an idea? In order to answer these questions we must search the Bible for answers. And as we do so it so happens that we will find quite a good deal of information concerning this very point.

THE FIRST JUDGMENT IN EDEN: A SPIRITUAL JUDGMENT

Let's begin our search in the book of Genesis. Soon after creating Adam God gave a very stern warning concerning one of the trees found in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2:16,17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

A great many people, even many not all that familiar with the Bible, no doubt, have heard of this first and only law given to newly created man. God clearly told man not to eat of the fruit of that one particular tree. And God also told man that in the day he ate of that tree he would surely die. It was a very direct, unequivocal statement. Certainly if you or I had been present at that time and had heard this statement coming from God, we would have understood perfectly. Eat of that tree—and you die! And of course we all know what happened. The sad tragic history of the world testifies to the fact that Adam and Eve disobeyed God. They soon ate of the tree God had told them not to eat from.

Genesis 3:3-6 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Adam and Eve transgressed the only law God had given to them. They ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. And yet they did not die in that day. If you were to read the entire historical account found in Genesis chapter 3, you will not find Adam, nor his wife Eve, falling over and dying after eating from the fruit of that tree. As a matter of fact, the Bible records Eve giving birth, having one of her children killed (Abel) and then giving birth to more children: all after eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. The Bible also records Adam living for hundreds of years thereafter; Adam didn't die until he was 930 years of age.

Genesis 5:3,4 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son ... and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years:

But how is it possible for Adam to have lived for hundreds of years after eating of the fruit of that tree? Is it possible that God was wrong somehow? We dare not think that He (God) lied. No. Neither of these things is an option: God is never wrong and it is impossible for Him to lie. How then can we explain it? The answer comes once we look at the Bible with a view towards spiritual understanding. That is, we must consider the possibility that God did bring death to mankind on the very day He said He would; but that the death man died that day was not physical but rather a spiritual death:

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Through these verses we learn that man died in his sins. The Bible reveals that mankind died in his soul existence. Before they fell into sin man was alive in both body and soul. He had communion with God. An intimate relationship existed between God and mankind. But once man sinned that spiritual connection between God and man was broken: he died that very day in his soul. This is why when God saved people during the day of salvation that it was necessary that they became born again in their soul. Salvation was the re-generation of the

sinner's dead soul. The important point for our study is, that God simply said: "In the day you eat thereof you will die." God said this without specifying what type of death man would die. He did not reveal in advance that he meant death in soul and not death in the physical body.

Therefore we see that the first major judgment recorded in the Bible was actually a spiritual judgment. It was spiritual, because no one could have seen Adam and Eve's soul die that day. In fact, Satan could have claimed he was right and have said, "See, I told you that you wouldn't die. Look! Nothing happened to you. You're still very much physically alive." And any outward observers would have agreed with him. Yes, indeed, nothing happened as God had said. And yet, that idea would have been completely wrong. Something did happen. Something very real and something very grievous did occur, albeit in the spiritual realm. God's wrath fell upon them and they died in their soul existence.

"Alright," some may say, "we'll allow the idea that God did bring a spiritual judgment upon Adam and Eve: but that doesn't mean that May 21, 2011 was a spiritual judgment." Yes that's true, but at this time we're not trying to prove May 21, 2011, was the beginning of Judgment Day.

The question before us right now is: is it possible that God could bring the world's final Day of Judgment to pass, in a spiritual way? Once we establish the answer to this question, we can then move on to discuss the good deal of outstanding Biblical evidence that continues to point to May 21, 2011, as Judgment Day. For now though, let's turn again to the Bible and see if we can discover anything further regarding spiritual judgments.

THE FIGURE OF A CUP

The Bible often refers to God's wrath by using the figure of a cup.

Psalms 11:6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

Notice that along with fire and brimstone God intends to rain down "snares" upon the wicked. Perhaps you can envision literal fire and brimstone falling down upon unsaved mankind in the awful Day of Judgment, but snares? That's traps. Does anyone really believe that traps or cages are going to fall down from the sky all over the earth? Of course not! God added this word "snares" in order to assist us in understanding that the cup of wrath given to all the unsaved people of the world will be a spiritual cup. It's not literal, but spiritual judgment. This is why the Bible also says the whole world will be snared at the time of the end:

Luke 21:34,35 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

On May 21, 2011, as the world rejoiced and exclaimed (the church along with them) "nothing happened." At that very time God ensnared all of the unsaved people of the earth (in and out of the churches) and began to give them the cup of His fury to drink.

SECOND SPIRITUAL JUDGMENT: CHRIST DRINKS FROM CUP OF GOD'S WRATH

The Bible also reveals to us that Jesus Christ took upon Himself the sins of His people, and that God poured out His wrath upon Christ: punishing Him in their place. The Lord Jesus entered into the human race in order to demonstrate and show forth His glorious atoning work. While in the Garden of Gethsemane he began to experience God's wrath while making this demonstration:

Matthew 26:39,42 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

Jesus drank of the cup of the wrath of God; but what did this mean? Did fire bolts come down from heaven to destroy Him? No. There was nothing like that. Actually, any outward observer in the Garden of Gethsemane would have only seen a sorrowful and grieved Jesus, nothing else. There were no outward indications of God's wrath at all. In other words, Christ's drinking of the cup of the wrath of God while in the Garden of Gethsemane was not a physical judgment, but rather a spiritual judgment. Jesus suffered greatly due to His experiencing punishment in the spiritual realm.

This means then, that now two important Biblical judgments were completely spiritual in nature: the judgment upon Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and the judgment of God upon Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. These two judgments by themselves present sufficient evidence to support the idea of Judgment Day occurring in a spiritual way; at least the existence of these Biblical precedents ought to move the sincere child of God to honestly investigate this as a genuine possibility. The Bible refers to those that honestly search for truth concerning the things they hear coming forth from the Word of God as Bereans: