



The Earth and Its Inhabitants

(THIS ARTICLE ACCOMPANIES THE STUDIES OF THE SAME NAME FROM THE "THIRD DAY" RADIO SHOW)

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The Lord states that the Tribulation will be coming down upon the earth and its inhabitants. If this is true, the entire world and everybody that is upon the earth will be affected by the Tribulation.

Isaiah 26:21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

In this next verse it says the same thing but begins by talking about the city which is called by His name; which would be Jerusalem. It then goes on to say that the punishment will come upon this city and infers that it also comes upon the whole earth. Or does it?

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.

One of the first crucial understandings is the narrowing of the view that the entire world fall under the punishment of God and that all of the inhabitants of the earth are to be punished during the Tribulation. This would include of course the Christians, the Jews, but also Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, and all non believers, whether they have had the opportunity to receive Christ and refused, or have never heard the Gospel. All would be included with no exclusions. This next verse would substantiate this premise.

2 Peter 3:10 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.

2 Peter 3:12 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?

Everything from the earth to the works and the elements will be burned up. Nothing left. Even the heavens shall pass away and be burned up. There is a problem when we look at these scriptures with this understanding. If everything is burned up, there is nothing left to continue with. In Zechariah, chapter 14, we can see that the people left of the nations, I repeat; the people left of the nations, will come to pay homage to the Lord yearly at the Feast of Tabernacles. How could there be people left if everything was burned up? This is a problem. Yet there is an answer that will harmonize these verses.

The Tribulation does not come down upon the physical earth and its inhabitants. The Tribulation comes down upon the spiritual earth and its inhabitants. The spiritual earth and its inhabitants are the church. It is the church that is punished, not people that are outside of the church structure.

The church is located within the world so the world will be affected to a certain extent that the people within the church are also in a physical world. But those outside of the church are not the recipients of God's wrath.

If we go back and look at what occurred during the exile with Moses and then the occupation of the Promised land through Joshua using these as examples, or a pattern to follow, this is what we will find.

The only time that the Lord interacted with the unbelievers in an unfavorable fashion is when either the unbelievers (at that time the physical Gentiles) went to war against the children of Israel or they occupied the land that God promised to the children of Israel and would not leave. In both cases, there were interactions between the children of Israel and the Gentiles.

The Lord only moved against them if they were against the children of Israel. They were punished for this. Those that showed favoritism or did not come against the children of Israel were left untouched.

If we use this for an example, then for the Lord to punish unbelievers or other people is out of His character unless they come against his chosen.

Is the Tribulation for the whole world, or is it directed at the church.

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?

The Judgement of God begins at the house of God. The judgement of God is the Tribulation that comes down upon the church first. The end of them that obey not the gospel of God does not include those that have never heard the gospel of God. Those that obey not the gospel of God are those that now have the gospel, yet they chose to not obey it. They are the ones that come to an end. Their end is stated in the next verse of 1 Peter.

1Peter 4:18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

There are three groups within this passage; the righteous, the ungodly, and the sinner. These three are the tri-fold division of Babylon. Babylon is the church which is divided into thirds. The righteous are the Multitude. The ungodly are the Serpents and the sinners are the Scorpions. The Multitude is saved, the Serpents and the Scorpions end up in the lake of fire. (See the book "The 144,000 and the Multitude" and the "Trumpet Judgements Unveiled;" See the study "The 144,000," "The Multitude," "The Trumpet Judgements")

It is these three groups that the judgement of God comes down upon during the period of the Tribulation. They are the earth and its inhabitants. Not all verses that speak about the earth or the world are speaking about the church exclusively. However, the verses that deal with the judgement of God that includes the earth, the world and its inhabitants are clearly dealing with the church exclusively.

For further clarification of this premise, we go to a parable Jesus spoke and in His own words we will find that this is focused upon the church in the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13

Matthew 13:24-30 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

In this parable we have several different elements; a man that owns a field, he sows good seed (wheat) in that field, an enemy sows tares in that same field, the tares grow up with the wheat, at harvest time the tares are gathered first and bundled together for burning, the wheat is gathered into His barn.

Notice that small element there. First the Lord is speaking about "a man" that owns a field and then when the gathering of the wheat occurs, the Lord directs "His reapers" to gather the wheat into "my barn."

Jesus tells us that there is a deeper meaning to this parable. The disciples asked Jesus later to tell them what this parable meant. Jesus gave us metaphoric identifications to the different elements within this parable.

Matthew 13:37- 43 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The man that owns the field and sows the wheat is Jesus Christ. The field is the world, the wheat are the children of the kingdom, the tares are the children of Satan, the enemy that sowed the tares is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, the tares are those that offend and those that commit iniquity (2/3) which get cast into hell; the righteous are the children of the kingdom (1/3).

The Lord tells us that the field is the world. Let's look at those that are in the field. There is the wheat that is a metaphoric identification of the righteous. There are tares that are metaphoric identifications of those that offend and those that commit iniquity. There are also the workers in the field that would be representative of the 144,000. In the field there are the workers (144,000), the wheat (Multitude), those that offend (Scorpions) and those that commit iniquity (Serpents). These are all groups that are associated with the house of God.

Where is everyone else, the Hindus, the Moslems, etc? They are not there because they are not under the judgement of God at this time. They are outside of the "church" and are therefore outside of the judgement of God that comes down upon the church. They are not included in "the earth and its inhabitants" or the "world" in verses that are speaking about judgement upon the church.

An interesting note; we have a reference to the righteous that we previously saw in the judgement beginning first at the house of God. We also see two classifications of people; those that offend and those that commit iniquity just as we had two; the ungodly and the sinner appear in 1 Peter 4:18.

This is because they are both speaking about the same thing. There is consistency and harmony with these two separate portions of scripture.

Here is another verse that is speaking about the judgement of God.

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.

This verse is speaking about the “earth” being defiled by its inhabitants. Why? Because they transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broke the everlasting covenant. How could someone that has never heard the gospel break the everlasting covenant they never knew existed, or transgressed the laws they know nothing about or changed an ordinance they have never read? The simple answer is that they can’t.

The defilement of the earth by the inhabitants of the earth occurs when professing Christians, professing believers in Jesus Christ, claim they know Christ but pervert to Word of God into something that they want it to say. Itching ears comes to mind. This earth that is spoken about in this verse is referring to the church and its inhabitants who have clearly transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant by giving away their birthright. (See the study “The Esau Effect”) This is very plain to see and understand that this is referring to the church. The next verse will reiterate this and explain the first passages that we looked at about earlier speaking about all of the works and elements being burned up.

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.

It is because the church has transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant that the curse will devour the earth. The curse is the Tribulation which devours the church (earth). Those that dwell therein are the earth dwellers because they are not seated in heavenly places. They dwell outside of the spiritual house that the Lord has given to believers, for they dwell in apostasy and lies.

The earth dwellers are desolate for they have embraced “the abomination that maketh desolate” (See the study “The Abomination of Desolation”). They do get burned up for the Lord brings the Multitude through the fire (See the study “The Multitude”) and the Serpents and the Scorpions also get burned up, ultimately in the Lake of Fire. The few men that are left are the Multitude. They do not get cut off as the Scorpions and the Serpents get cut off and die in Zechariah 13:8.

Another example of the earth being the church when it contains the judgement of God is found in Revelation, chapter 12.

Revelation 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

This verse gives a warning to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea. Interestingly, there is the 7-headed beast of Revelation 13 that comes up out of the sea and the False Prophet of the same chapter comes up out of the earth. The devil is coming down upon the inhabitants of the earth and the sea. Let’s see who the devil goes after once he is cast down to the earth and the sea.

Revelation 12: 13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

He goes out after the woman in the wilderness that births the man child. The woman is representative of the 144,000, the man child is the Multitude. The devil goes after the 144,000 and casts out a flood after her, but to no avail for the earth swallows up the flood.

When the devil sees that he can't get to the 144,000 because they are supernaturally protected when they were sealed, he goes out after the remnant of her seed.

Revelation 12: 17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The remnant of her seed is the Multitude. The devil goes after the Multitude. Look back at the warning. The angel is warning the inhabitants of the earth and the sea to watch out, he's coming for you. The devil can't touch the 144,000 for they are not inhabitants of the earth or the sea. They are seated in heavenly places and are in the wilderness.

It is the Multitude that is directly referenced in these verses as the inhabitants of the earth and the sea. This warning is for the Multitude for they are inhabitants of the earth. And there are other inhabitants of the earth and the sea; the Serpents and the Scorpions.

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

These inhabitants of the earth in this verse are people whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. The 144,000 are written in the book of life. The Multitude are written in the Lamb's book of life. Those that are not written in the Lamb's book of life are the Serpents and the Scorpions whose names are blotted out as spoken about in Revelation 3:5. The Serpents and the Scorpions will worship the Beast that rises up out of the sea. (See the study "The Seven Headed Beast")

The Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems, and people who have never heard the gospel are not in the book of life. They have also never been blotted out for they were never in it to begin with. But there is an important factor that distinguishes them and their absence from this verse. They will not worship the beast, for the beast is located within the Christian church and they are so far removed from the Christian church and are therefore exempted and absent from this verse.

The Multitude, the Serpents, and the Scorpions are the inhabitants of the earth and the world. They are the ones that the judgement of God comes down upon. The Lord uses

the Scorpions and the Serpents to exact His judgement upon the Multitude, and because of their willing participation as unrighteous vessels, the Lord's judgement comes down upon them when they have done their dirty deeds.

There is one more verse that Paul speaks to us concerning the inhabitants of the world.

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

This verse speaks volumes. Everything that happened in the Old Testament was for examples or patterns and they were written for our understanding upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Go back to the parable of the sower of the good seed in the field. The harvest is the end of the world. Who gets harvested? The Multitude gets harvested as the wheat, and the tares get bundled as the Scorpions and the Serpents. This is upon whom the ends of the world are come; the Multitude, the Scorpions, and the Serpents. It does not come upon the entire physical earth. It begins at the house of God, the christian church which is comprised of the Multitude, Scorpions, and Serpents.

The 144,000 have come out of her already and are the workers in the field tending to the crop of wheat.

As I stated earlier, all of the verses that have the earth and the world within them are not referring to just the church. The verses that are specifically designated for the church are those that have the judgement of God within them. Context is the key. Anyone that is truly saved has come out of the world into the Truth and the saving grace of Jesus Christ and are then seated in heavenly places with Jesus Christ. They are no longer an "earth dweller."

If the Tribulation is focused upon the church, is the rest of the world affected? The answer to that question is yes. With the disruptions that will be occurring within the church including the murdering of the Multitude by their fellow brethren in the church, there will most certainly be disruptions within the world element for we still live in a physical world.

The focus of this study is not to determine how the rest of the world will be affected; it is to show that the judgement of God is not upon the rest of the world, it is focused upon the church and the inhabitants thereof.

In over 200 "Third Day" shows, Randy and myself have searched the scriptures diligently. We have found that there are identifications of the four groups; the 144,000, the Multitude, the Serpents, and the Scorpions throughout all of the prophetic scriptures, both Old and New Testaments.

These four groups are found in all of the examples that happened to them; the historical events that are recorded for us. We have not found any and I repeat any references to any group that is outside of the church structure that the judgement of God comes down upon. All of the end time understandings dealing with the judgement of God have only these four groups within them. It is very focused. It does not include the whole physical world. Judgement truly begins at the house of God.

We can now realize that the Bible was not written for the physical world as a whole, it is written for believers. Paul states that all of these things happened to them as examples for us in the end times; us being the believers.

This will certainly change the way that you look at scripture when you understand the ramifications of this understanding. When I understood this, so many things that were at one time convoluted began to make sense and scriptures began to harmonize with each other when there appeared to be contradictions before. We see through a glass darkly and as time and study passes, we can then begin to see more clearly until we have a very sharp and defined picture. These are first steps to understanding the complexity of scripture that when understood becomes simple that a child may understand.

Written by Sue Patterson
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