

Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

Volume 32, Number 48

November 29, 2015



A Certain Coming in Judgment

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 14–15, KJV 1900)

Throughout our study of death, the Second Coming, and our resurrection at that Day, our primary focus has been on the impact of these events on the child of grace. That truth is present in the passage; "...with ten thousands of his saints." However, the primary emphasis of the passage deals with the Lord's judgment against the wicked. No study of final things would be complete that does not address this point. In fact, throughout Scripture, this truth regularly appears in the context of both the comfort of God's children and the Lord's righteous and deserved punishment of the wicked. When David struggled with envy at the present state of the wicked, his peaceful resolution only came as he remembered "...their end," the Lord's righteous and certain punishment of the wicked, however easy their present state. (Psalm 73:1-17)

First, anchor your thoughts of this theme with the truth as it shall relate to you, the child of grace who loves the Lord and believes Him.

...the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.

The Lord does not come alone or in isolation for this execution of judgment. He brings an innumerable number of His saints with Him. You should be aware; "saints" in the Bible doesn't refer to an elite collective of bigger than life super Christians. Every child of grace is made a "Saint" by grace. The saints who, like David, observed the wicked habitually indulging their sin seemingly without any righteous consequences against them shall see the Lord's judgment righteously executed against those same wicked people. The text mentions nothing about the saints being personally involved in the judgment. The Lord executes the judgment. He needs no others to do so. But He shall bring the saints with Him to witness this righteous event.

Occasionally, I encounter sincere believers who struggle with the idea that any human being deserves conscious and endless punishment for his/her sins. Does the punishment match the crime? I offer that, in our present limited and compromised state of sinful humanity, we are not in a position to rightly assess the heinous character of the crime of sin against God, so we are likewise in

no position to pass judgment on the appropriateness of the punishment. In that day, we shall witness the Lord's judgment from a radically different perspective, **the Lord's perspective**. Then we shall fully understand that the punishment altogether fits the crime.

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. (Revelation 19:14)

In this context we see Jesus coming in the clothing of a soldier ready for battle. He alone is dressed and equipped for battle. Who are the saints of whom Jude writes? In this verse John describes the witnesses of this final battle as "...the armies which were in heaven."

If you study the Old Testament passages that describe the qualifications, work, and clothing of the priests who ministered in the tabernacle or temple before the Lord, you will notice that they wore linen clothes. John's description of the clothing of those who shall accompany Jesus on that epochal day is no incidental matter. They are clothed in linen, **the wardrobe of priests**. Not a one of them, of us, shall engage the enemy on that day. Not a drop of saint's blood shall be shed in that war. Not a single saint shall die on that battlefield. No, not one! We shall be there as witnesses of the battle, a battle that our King and the Captain of our salvation shall fight and win **alone**. What a vast contradiction to the fantasy ideas of Armageddon that so many contemporary Christians believe and fear. What a comfort to know Scripture's description of our Lord's final and epochal victory over all His enemies, and His defeat of their final rage against Him.

...to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

The passage leaves no question or doubt regarding those who shall face God in judgment on that Day. Of two specific classes of people present on that Day, one class shall be judged, but the other class seems more present as witnesses to the

judgment. Nothing in the passages so much as hints that a single one of those "...ten thousands of his saints" shall face this judgment. As a child of grace, never forget the comforting truth of Scripture. God called your sins, all of them, before Him in judgment in the Person of His darling Son. Jesus died and thereby entered into true judgment before the Father for your/our sins, all of them, none excepted. The Father judged those sins in Jesus, and announced for all to read that He was satisfied with the price paid. (Romans 4:25; Jesus was "delivered" for our offenses, delivered to death, and He was raised again from death for our "justification." In our King James New Testament, "condemned" typically refers to a formal sentence of "Guilty as charged," and "justified" refers either to the formal sentence of "Not guilty" or to God's treatment of us as not guilty. When Jesus arose on the third day, God declared His verdict for our sins. He fully and finally accepted what Jesus did as the complete and satisfactory settlement for our sins and their legal debt before Him. The judgment for our sins already occurred. We shall not face it yet again at the Second Coming)

Jude thoroughly describes the character of those whom the Lord shall judge. Consider each point of the inspired description.

1. *...all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds.* They not only have an ungodly character, but they actively practice their ungodly deeds. I wholly accept that our inherited sinful nature from Adam brings with it a punishable quality in God's righteous judgment. However, every Scripture, this one included, that deals with God's actual sentence against and punishment of the wicked always—no exception—identifies **sinful conduct** as the basis for eternal punishment. Not one passage ever singles out only a person's Adamic sinful nature as the basis for eternal punishment. To argue that one's sinful nature is the basis for eternal punishment is therefore an argument from silence, which is a non-argument and a logical fallacy that does not deserve or require a counter-argument. When Scripture always states wicked conduct as the basis for God's righteous and eternal punishment against the wicked, why would anyone who claims to respect and believe the Bible be interested in attributing the basis for eternal punishment to anything else? Spend some time studying the specific passages in the Bible that deal with God's actual punishment of the wicked, in each context identifying the stated basis on which God shall execute that judgment. Every passage follows the pattern that we see in our present study passage. God's executed judgment against the wicked is based on ungodly deeds and ungodly words. I am quite content to follow Scripture and not anyone's vain imagination.

2. *...and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* Their actions invade their vocabulary. For these wicked people, action is not enough. They eagerly seek occasion to speak out against God. They manifest their ungodly character in both words and actions. When I first noticed the outspoken manner of wicked people against godly people and godly conduct, I was puzzled. If these people do not believe in God and in His fixed moral commandments, why are they so angrily vocal against Him and those moral principles? Jude's words in this passage resolved my quandary. The wicked are not content to merely not believe. They feel compelled to shout out in angry rage against God and against any moral principle that He commands. He regards their "hard speeches" to be fully as punishable as any other "ungodly" deed that they commit, and He shall punish them rightly for those ungodly words and deeds.

...and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed. We use "Convince" when thinking of changing a person's mind. They disagree with us, and we hope to "Convince" them of our view. In historical English use, this word links with "Convict" which carries the English meaning of the Greek word the KJV translators communicate in the passage. The Lord's judgment against these wicked people is not intended to get them to change their minds and agree with Him that they were wrong and sinful and He right and righteous. His judgment has one stated purpose, to "execute judgment," to punish. The Greek word here translated "convince" means just that.

...to convict, confute, refute, usually with the suggestion of putting the convicted person to shame...an intensive form...to convict thoroughly, is used of the Lord's future conviction of the ungodly, Jude 15¹

The point of the word rightly addresses the completion of God's righteous judgment, "Guilty as charged, righteously and justly deserving of the punishment prescribed by God and His Moral Law." In all, He is righteous and just. While we may at times presently wonder if the punishment fits the crime, we shall then have no doubt. His return shall vindicate His righteous justice against the wicked fully as it shall manifest His merciful grace on behalf of His beloved children. Child of grace, you shall be present to witness both events, but you shall experience only one, "*...ever be with the Lord.*" (1 Thessalonians 4:17b)

¹ W.E. Vine and F.F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan NJ: Revell, 1981), 239.

Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church
16434 Woodruff
Bellflower, California

Worship service each Sunday
Joseph R. Holder

10:30 A. M.
Pastor