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A coming event that draws very near

"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 1:14-15.

(The substance of a sermon preached in Bethel Free Presbyterian Church at the evening service, July 4th, 1976, by Rev Ivan Foster.)

We are dealing with a prophecy that is almost 6000 years old.

From the very beginning, mankind has had a knowledge of the coming of Christ in judgment. The Old Testament is full of information concerning the events at the end of this age.

Notice that Enoch was looking to that day for the execution of justice upon the ungodly.

The flood was already revealed in the days of Enoch. He had named his son 'Methuselah'. The name means "when he dies it shall come". The "it" refers to the flood of judgment which came the very year Methuselah died.

But Enoch believed that a greater judgment would be visited upon the earth than that of the flood. Even the ungodly are aware of it despite their oft denials. "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; 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: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:15-17. Even Antichrist's armies knew of the "great day of wrath"!

Notice what Enoch had to say so long ago.

I. IN A DAY OF APOSTASY ENOCH PREACHED THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IN JUDGMENT

In the day of Enoch, the apostasy which culminated in the judgment of the 'Flood' was growing. From Genesis 5 we can work out, from the figures given there, some interesting chronology.

Adam was 687 years old when Methuselah was born. Following the birth of Enoch's son, Methuselah, it appears that Enoch became a believer and walked with God. He would have begun preaching the essence of the message recorded in Jude 14-15. He continued preaching for 300 years, Genesis 5:22. He was translated to glory in the year 987 BC, just 57 years after the death of Adam. I have no doubt that Adam would have heard him preach. Thus Adam would have been well acquainted with the dreadful consequences of his sin in the Garden!!

1. Note the character of the day of Enoch. We can often discern the spirit of an age by the names parents give their children. Today's trend to give names linked to 'pop stars' and entertainment 'celebrities' illustrates this.

Note some of the names mentioned in Genesis 5.

"Jared" means "descent". Was that a reference to the downward trend in society way back then?

"Lamech" means "wild man or overthrewer". Was this a reference to the rebelliousness against God that was developing and which would culminate in that described in Genesis 6:5 and 11? "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence."



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"Jabal" Genesis 4:20. He was a mover, a wanderer.

"Jubal". Genesis 4:21. His name is associated with entertainment, amusement and pleasure.

These names are reminiscent of the character of the last days as stated in 2 Tim 3:1-5. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

Paul thus describes days of overthrowing and defying the law of God, a wandering away from God and a following of man's natural instincts rather than the will of God as revealed in the Bible. It will be a time when the 'Jubals' of the world will be popular. "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

2. In the midst of this departure and rebellion, Enoch raised the cry: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints," Jude 14.

This cry needs to be raised again and men told afresh that they will pay for their sins and defiance of God.

Such preaching will have a sobering, sanctifying effect! "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer," 1 Peter 4:7.

It will also have a calming, comforting influence upon the church. "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; 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," 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

II. PART OF THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING IS TO PUNISH CHRIST-REJECTORS

The purpose of the preaching of the gospel is to challenge men to give thought to Christ and His message. "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" Matthew 22:41-42. What a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he," Proverbs 23:7. What we think of Christ tells us who and what we truly are!

We have already quoted 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. There we are taught that Christ will come to take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Enoch taught away back then that "all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and . . . all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" will be judged. What Christ-rejecting man has thought, said and done will be judged by the Saviour on that day!

It is a day when men will be convinced of the wickedness of rejecting the gospel of the Lord Jesus. The word "convince" in Jude 15, means "to prove to be wrong, to convict". There will be no arguing then by men who say they are not sinful or unholy. They will be convinced by the very sight of the Glorious Judge. Men will 'feel' and 'know' their sin! Men will learn of the terrible cost of sin, of defying God and rejecting the gospel.

III. EVERY SAINT WILL BE INVOLVED WITH CHRIST IN JUDGMENT

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" 1 Corinthians 6:2. When Revelation 20:4 states that the glorified saints of Christ, "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years," it is an indication that to them will be assigned duties involving the judging of the affairs of the world.

They will be with Him as He assembles the professing Christian nations together, the "sheep and the goats"



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of Matthew 25:32-46.

The nations spoken of there by the Saviour are the nations of Christendom. The nations in which true Christians, the sheep, are found and in which false professors, the goats, are found. The first act of that great assizes will be the elevating of true believers to the honour and glory reserved from all eternity for them. "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," Matthew 25:32-34.

That is what is meant by the Saviour's words in Matthew 5:5: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Those who are deemed today to have no honour, no right to proclaim the truth of God, no right to assert the teachings of God's law and protest against its violation by governments and men, and are told by Christ to suffer such affront and indignities meekly (Matthew 5:39) are those who will "inherit" (or "obtain by right") the earth!

As the One who was smitten on the cheek by wicked men will one day be revealed to be the Judge of all the earth (Matthew 26:67), so those who were treated in like manner, as least to some degree, by the wicked men of all ages, will one day be seen to be set in authority on this earth.

Few believers are aware of their future dignity. Few act as they should in the light of that day of honour. Are there not many believers today who silently acquiesce in that which they will one day have to condemn?

While meekness is demanded of us by the Saviour, He does not require us to be silent in the face of today's apostasy and declension. Rather we are to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins," Isaiah 58:1.

May the Lord bless these words to every heart and give us grace to live in the light the events Enoch spoke of so boldly.