

Thoughts from Second Thessalonians ...

## Judgment Day



Most people live in the realm of their own imagination in regard to the return of Christ to judge the world. "All dogs go to heaven," and apparently all people do also! Of course, this is not really the case, as the word of God clearly establishes. Most of the residents of this planet try to bend the circumstances around them as best they can to make them fit what they want. At a certain survivor level, this is certainly necessary, but for the most part, members of the human race are just being selfish and trying to manipulate people and events to serve their own personal interests. Hence, with these mental habits ingrained, they also tend to try to manipulate eternity — in their minds — to serve their own desires. The Almighty God, however, has His own plan and

His own righteous sense of justice, and all men everywhere should repent and bring their thinking and perceptions in line with His.

- ◆ **Judgment on those who do not know God** — The first general group of people upon whom God's righteous retribution will fall will be on those "who do not know God." The eternal Father has made it clear that ignorance is no excuse. He has laid enough threads of truth on the floor of everyone's life so that if a person would pick up even one of those threads, it would lead straight to the Bible and straight to God. "A search for truth in any area leads to God." If anyone would seriously ponder the Creation, it is clear that only a Supreme Being could have created it; it could not, with all its intricacies, have come into existence by time and chance. "For since the creation of the world," affirmed Paul to the Roman brethren, "His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). This is not just Paul's analysis, it is the analysis of the Holy Spirit. Not only that, the gospel of Jesus Christ has gone out to the entire world; men must not only know that there is a God, but that He specifically has been revealed through Jesus Christ. "He who has seen Me has seen the Father," was Jesus' statement (John 14:9). "Having overlooked the times of ignorance," stated the apostle to the collection of people on Mars Hill in Athens, "God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30,31). The days of ignorance are gone; the judgment of God rightfully will fall upon those "who do not know God."

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- ◆ **Judgment upon those who do not obey the gospel** — It is one thing to know who God is because He has been revealed through the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is another to "obey the gospel." There are many who think that simple belief in the gospel is all that is necessary for eternal salvation. The scriptures, however, show that the gospel must not only be believed, but the gospel must also be obeyed. The first time in the history of the world that the gospel of Christ was preached was the Jewish feast of Pentecost recorded in Acts chapter two. When numerous in the audience were pierced to the heart over their guilt of crucifying their Messiah, they cried out, "What shall we do?" The first part of the answer was for them to "repent," which involved their changing their thinking. But the other part, where real obedience is expressed, is in being "immersed in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). This is where the gospel is initially obeyed, and is essential for a person to walk forever with Jesus in white.

Thus it is clear what an individual must do if he is to turn from darkness to light. Anyone who fails to know God, or who fails to obey the gospel will be in the lake of fire.

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