

We're Entering the Time Biblical Prophecy Calls 'The Valley of Decision'

In this day of increasing lawlessness, the world will witness the difference between those who walk in the light and those who walk in darkness. For this reason, it is crucial that we have God's law within our hearts. When His law is in our hearts, we do what is right even when no one is looking. Even if we could get away with what is wrong, we won't do it because we serve the higher law of love—loving our God and His ways above anything this world could offer us.

Before the Judgment Seat

One of the most common elements of the apostolic gospel preached in the first century was there will be a day of accountability when we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to answer for the deeds we did in the body.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10, NASB1995)

Our deeds reflect what we really believe. In our day, many have fallen into the extreme or hyper-grace false teachings, which has set them up for a terrible fall and judgment. We are no longer under the law for righteousness but Christ is our righteousness in Whom His true disciples abide. If we are abiding in Him, we will live as He lived. His love for the Father and for us compelled Him to live in a way that was far superior to the law. So will those who abide in Him. Consider that the apostle Paul was writing to so-called believers when he wrote:

“But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation” (Rom. 2:5-8).

Believers who begin to presume the grace of God and give themselves to doing the deeds of darkness have proven, by their actions, they are “sons of darkness,” not sons of God. Even if they escape civil judgment in this life, they will not escape but suffer the worst of all judgments.

The Lord desires something much better for us. All will stand before His judgment seat to be recompensed for the deeds done in the body in this life. However, for those who have become His true disciples, there will be rewards far beyond anything we could be offered in this life. His true followers will therefore not fear the day of judgment but have confidence in it, as the apostle John wrote in 1 John 4:17: “By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.”

His true disciples will conduct themselves in this world the way He did when He walked the earth, with all the dignity and nobility of Spirit the sons and daughters of the King of kings should walk in. In this day of increasing evil and lawlessness, those who have the law in their hearts will stand out even more as great lights in this world. This will, at times, bring persecution, which is a great honor for those who serve the King.

When we are persecuted for being so different and refusing to partake of the deeds of darkness, we are sowing seeds in some that will sprout in due time and lead to their salvation.

However, we must do it because it is the right thing to do, regardless of whether we witness the fruit that may come from it. We must do what is right because we follow the King and have devoted ourselves to doing His will in all things.

Times of Revealing & the Valley of Decision

The times that we are entering are intended to reveal what is truly in the heart of all men. As we are told in Daniel 11:31 and 32, "...They will set up the abomination of desolation..." and "By smooth words He will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action."

A primary intent of this "abomination of desolation" is to turn to godlessness all that can be turned, including, if possible, even the Lord's elect. Those who truly know their God will not be beguiled but will "display strength and take action."

The Lord's true followers will be known in these times for their strength and action, not just their words. The faithful disciples of Christ in these times will have strength to resist the evil one and what is evil as defined by the Lord, not men. They will remain faithful to their Lord regardless of the cost. For many, this cost will be high and if it is, so will the reward for faithfulness. For some, it will be their lives but nothing in this life can be compared to the life they will have attained.

True disciples believe in the resurrection and, therefore, do not fear death. True disciples die daily and have already died to this world. Those who are already dead to this world will not fear anything this world can do to them. Being dead to this world is a basic requirement of discipleship and to physically lay down our lives for the sake of the gospel is an ultimate honor, not something to fear.

These trials are coming upon the whole world now. **We are**

entering the time biblical prophecy calls “the valley of decision.” This is not new for most Christians in our time, since the usual state of all true Christians is to suffer persecution. All true Christians suffer persecution even in western, democratic countries.

Until the latter part of the twentieth century, being a Pentecostal could prevent you from being accepted in college or even getting a job. To be labeled a Pentecostal could get you fired from almost any job or position, even in the United States, the most religiously open and free country. In many places, Pentecostals were physically attacked more viciously than minorities. Where this happened, few other Christians stood up for them because those who did were likely to suffer the same fate. And because the media rarely covered this, many did not even know it was happening in their own communities.

As we see the evils of racial bigotry rise again, even if they are directed at majorities more than minorities, it is the same evil spirit and we can be sure religious bigotry will rise with it. All bigotry is evil and we must stand against this evil. However, we also must be prepared for when it is turned on us, and it will be. This will cause many to renounce their faith, as in the above text quoted from Daniel. It will separate the pretenders and fair-weather followers from the truly faithful ones. Now is the time to get ready for this and resolve to stand and not deny our Lord, even if it costs our lives.

Our Great Honor and Reward

As we are promised throughout the Scriptures, those who remain faithful in the greatest difficulties receive a greater reward. Just as the first apostles rejoiced at their persecution and were considered worthy to suffer shame for the sake of the Lord and His gospel (see Acts 5:41-42), and kept right on preaching the gospel and teaching the people in His name, we must resolve to do the same.

Because we are assured we will all reap what we sow (see Galatians 6:7), we need to stand with and support those who are persecuted if we want to also be considered worthy. The Lord said as we treat the least of His, we treat Him. So, we should consider it a great honor to stand with the persecuted and if need be, suffer their fate with them for standing. In this way, we stand with the Lord Himself and He promised those who do will also receive His reward.

Heaven has given us this great honor and opportunity to stand for the Lord and His truth. Those who have been chosen to live in the times of this great and increasing persecution have been given one of the greatest honors of all. Let us show our appreciation by doing all we can to prepare for our part in them, even if that means being prepared for persecution, or even execution.

In the times that are now unfolding, many faithful followers of the Lord will pay with their lives for their faithfulness but they will have gained some of the greatest rewards for all eternity. Let us resolve, now, to prove ourselves worthy of this great honor by preparing for it now, standing for Him and for His truth every chance we get, and laying down our lives daily to follow Him. *That is true discipleship.* That is also why this day of evil is being allowed—so the world can witness the nature of the truth through those who follow the Truth Himself. {eoa}

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