

## God Will Determine

Did you know that the same God that drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden in Eden, and destroyed the earth with water during the days of Noah, is the same God who revealed “the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” (2 Peter 3:10-12). If you didn’t know that, now you do.

There are three key factors that need to be considered: (1) “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18). This wrath, of which the Apostle Paul speaks, is a judicial wrath. Mankind recognizes the need for judicial recompense against those who violate the law and will not be ruled. Without a judicial system, the civil society would be in chaos, unruly, and subject to tyranny. The same is true concerning the religious society under the care and ever-present eye of the Lord.

Throughout Biblical history, even a casual reading indicates that God is in control of the world. He will execute, and has executed, judgment against unruly and ungodly men. One such event involved the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. Jehovah gave Abram a promise that his seed would possess the land. However, it wouldn’t be until the sins of the Amorites had become full. When Israel went into the land, and was instructed to destroy the inhabitants of the land, it wasn’t so Israel could occupy the land, but was Jehovah’s judgment upon a nation that had reached the high point of lawlessness: for Jehovah said, “Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out from before you; And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye therefore shall keep my statutes and mine ordinances, and shall not do any of these abominations; neither the home-born, nor the stranger that sojourneth among you; (for all these abominations have the men of the land done, that were before you, and the land is defiled); that the land vomit not you out also, when ye defile it, as it vomited out the nation that was before you. For whosoever shall do any of these abominations, even the souls that do them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep my charge, that ye practice not any of these abominable customs, which were practiced before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am Jehovah your God” (Leviticus 18:24-30).

In order for Jehovah to remain just, there must be justice in Jehovah's dealings with man today that does not contradict Jehovah's dealings with man before, during, and after the law of Moses, as Peter said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34-35).

(2) The second key factor is that man does not get to determine how, or by what means, salvation is provided. In reference to the how, John said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him" (John 3:16-17). In reference to the means, Paul said, "For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8), and in reference to the proof of Jehovah's means, Paul said, "who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake; among whom are ye also called to be Jesus Christ's" (Romans 1:4-6).

(3) The third key factor is that God has the right to determine those who are His, i.e., "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). Have you "put on Christ"? Ross Triplett, Sr.