

THE DAY OF THE LORD

from The Bible Project

What is the day of the Lord? When most religious people use the phrase "the day of the Lord," they use it to refer to the end of times, when Jesus returns at Armageddon to bring justice to the world and defeat evil once and for all. A lot of these images come from the very end of the Bible in Revelation, but to really understand them, we have to go back to the beginning of the Bible in Genesis.

Here, we see that God created mankind and gave them the authority to rule over the earth as representatives of God. Humans, however, were led astray and decided to define good and evil for themselves. What follows is the story of the death and destruction that their rebellion brings them. We see the Tower of Babel, where mankind tries to continue defining good and evil for themselves by elevating themselves as gods and we see the story of Egypt where Pharaoh tries to protect his own interests by enslaving the Israelite people.

After God liberates His people from this evil, though, they sing a song that talks about how God is their warrior, delivering them from evil. In this song, the Israelites refer to this liberation as "the day." This is the first mention of the day of the Lord (*that*) Old Testament verses talk about. This day is something the Israelites would celebrate every year with the Feast of the Passover.

As time went on, however, new enemies of the Israelites arose. The remembrance of the Passover, though, gave the Israelites hope that their God would again bring "the day" and deliver them from evil.

Later in the story, we do indeed see the prophet Amos bring the news that the day of the Lord was coming again to crush evil, but this time that evil existed within Israel itself. The day of the Lord comes upon Israel, and they are conquered and taken captive into exile. One after another, Israel is ruled by oppressive empires from this point forward, including the oppressive empire of Rome that Jesus was born into.

Jesus, however, didn't come to defeat the oppressive Roman empire, as much as the Jews first hoped He would. Instead, Jesus came to conquer the underlying issue, the sin that exists within man that had been leading them astray and demanding judgment since the Tower of Babel. To defeat this evil, Jesus took on the full power of sin and evil when He died on the cross, allowing evil to fully exhaust itself on Him and overcoming its one and only weapon -- death. In doing this, Jesus gave His followers power over sin and death themselves through the forgiveness that He offered and dealt evil a crushing blow.

Evil, though, still persists, and someday, Jesus promised to return for the final day of the Lord. This is the day of the Lord that the book of Revelation talks about, one where Jesus will return and destroy evil completely, freeing our world from corruption and bringing about the good and perfect world that God had planned for us from the start.

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