

Episode #430 Bins for Bible Prophecies 4 – The Day of the Lord

I. The Word of God contains many passages wherein Scriptures predict future events. There is a need to properly order the predictive passages of Scripture. Lord Bacon called this “sorting prophetic material.” We can compare this to sorting screws into bins. We need “bins for Bible prophecies.” We can get these by establishing the future time periods of Scripture, and then sorting any given prophecy into the proper one of these bins.

II. In our first message, we established four future bins, “The Tribulation Period,” “The Thousand Years,” “The Little Season,” and “The New Heavens and New Earth.” Yet we saw that certain predictive prophecies commonly placed in “The Thousand Years” cannot possibly fit there. Isaiah 2:1-4 takes place in “the last days.” We considered what the Scriptures say about the “last days” in many occurrences. We concluded that this phrase does not speak of one time only, but none of the time periods the phrase speaks of fit in “The Millennium.” “Last” means “result” or “outcome.” “The Last Days” is a period that results from all that came before it. The Last Days of Isaiah 2:2 result from all God did to bring them about.

III. One reason Isaiah 2:2 cannot be the Millennium is because of all the Bible says must take place “before the day of the LORD.” We will now enter into a study of this phrase.

IV. Before the Day of the LORD.

A. Acts 2:16-20. Peter, quoting from Joel 2:28-31, proclaims things that take place “in the last days,” which are also “before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.” This raises an important question: when is the Day of the LORD?

B. Revelation 1:10 speaks of the “Lord’s Day.” What day is this?

1. Perhaps the most foolish idea regarding this is that John means he was in a particularly spiritual state of mind on a Sunday.
 - a. In the New Testament this is always called “the first day of the week.”
 - b. There is no historical evidence that “the first day of the week” was called “the Lord’s day” before Revelation was written.
 - c. Justin Martyr (114-165AD) calls the day of worship SUN-DAY. It is most strange if John had already called this day “the Lord’s day” that this name was not in common use until 100 years later!
 - d. Our traditional observance of Sunday is not found in the Bible at all.
2. Nor is there evidence to link it to the Sabbath Day (Saturday).
 - a. It is called the “Sabbath of the LORD,” Deuteronomy 5:14, but never the “Lord’s day.”
 - b. Some point to Isaiah 58:13, but the word “day” is not in the phrase in Hebrew, just “the holy of the LORD honorable.”
3. In Hebrew it was always “the day of the LORD,” but Hebrew had no word “Lord’s,” so there was no other way for them to put it.
4. In Greek, word order is not set, so it is used merely for emphasis. “Day of the Lord” emphasizes “Day,” and “Lord’s Day” emphasizes “Lord’s,” but otherwise there is no difference.
5. Therefore we can conclude that Revelation 1:10 tells us that all of that book from that point takes place in the Day of the Lord!
6. Since Revelation covers Daniel’s 70th Week, the Millennium, the Little Season, and the New Heavens and the New Earth, the “Last Days” must be in a time period that takes place before any of these events take place.

C. So, we have positively identified a new “bin” into which we can sort prophecy. We can call this period, at least as a preliminary name, the “Last Days.” We can construct a chart of five time periods, as is shown below:

	The Last Days	The Tribulation Period	The Millennium	The Little Season	The New Heavens and New Earth
1	2	3	4	5	6

V. Ezekiel 20:33-38.

- A. Verse 33. Concerning the house of Israel (verse 31,) God rules over them.
- B. Verse 34. God brings them out of the countries where they are scattered.
- C. Verse 35. He pleads with them face to face in the wilderness. “Plead” is a form of the word “judge.” It means to presents one’s side in a controversy.
- D. Verse 36. He did not beg or grovel to their fathers. He set forth Himself and His plans
- E. Verse 37. This is how Israel will be brought into the New Covenant, not by believing the gospel as we do today. This covenant is yet future.
- F. Verse 38. The rebels are purged. Perhaps they do not want to leave the land of their sojourn, but He brings them out anyway. Perhaps they want to continue to go their own way, but He does not let them. This is judgment, not grace, as we have today. We are not told what happens to them, but they are probably not allowed to live. Then Israel will know that He is the Yehovah. Also see verses 42, 44.
- G. If we sort this prophecy, it must fit into our new bin, “The Last Days.” It cannot fit into the Millennium because:
 1. It begins with II Thessalonians 1:7-10 and Matthew 13:40-43. Instead of punishing them with everlasting destruction for not knowing Him, God pleads with Israel to bring them to Himself.
 2. God teaches them to know Him, rather than destroying them for not knowing Him.
 3. These events must take place before the Millennium, or else they will never take place at all.

VI. Malachi 4:5-6.

- A. The LORD is speaking here, verse 1.
- B. This takes place “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.”
- C. If certain conditions were true upon the earth, when the Lord Jesus comes He would have no choice but to smite the earth with a curse. Since He does not wish to do this, He will send Elijah first, before the coming of the Day of the Lord.
 1. Elijah will turn the heart of the fathers to their children. Matthew 18:3. This means those who are worldly wise become submissive like little children.
 2. Elijah also turns the hearts of children to their fathers.
 - a. Luke 1:17. This means he makes them wise. This speaks of John the Baptizer. Does that mean he was Elijah?
 - b. John the Baptizer did nothing that would still affect Christ’s coming in this regard.
 - c. John the Baptizer said he was not Elijah (John 1:21).

- d. Some say Elijah will be one of the “two witnesses” of Revelation. Yet this cannot happen in the tribulation because this happens before the Day of the Lord, and Revelation is in the Day of the Lord (Rev. 1:10).
- D. This is a gracious work that God will do before the second coming of Christ. Some claim Christ could come at any time. But if He were to come today, the earth would be cursed as a result of it. Praise God that He will send Elijah to prepare the earth first!

VII. Conclusion: The “Day of the LORD” is clearly said to include all the events of Revelation. Yet the Bible sets forth certain events that must take place before the Day of the LORD. These events have not happened yet, so this positively identifies for us a fifth bin, the very next bin in order from where we are today, as far as we can tell. We have called this bin “The Last Days.” Ezekiel 20:33-38 and Malachi 4:5-6 take place during this bin.