



WILL THE WORLD COME TO AN END?

Study 27

Day of the Lord

It's a big laugh - all this talk about the end of the world. Why? Because there is a scientific 'law' called the 'Law of Uniformitarianism.' It assumes that what happened in the past are the same natural processes as those which can be observed in the present. Therefore the world can expect to continue as it always has done. What they deliberately forget however, is there has been a precedent; the world has ended once before!

In the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:3-4)

What is the historical precedent which makes us realise the question is not so silly after all? (2 Peter 3:5-6)

When Jesus was here he actually said the world would come to an end. He was not speaking in hyperbole. Write Jesus' straight forward statement in the box opposite. (Matthew 24:35)

Furthermore, the final end of the world will be more than a surface destruction. It is the complete disintegration of the planet and its solar system! Join the following descriptions with the verses describing how it will happen.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Earth shaken out of orbit | Isaiah 13:10,13 |
| Heavens dissolve and collapse | Isaiah 34:4 |
| Sky's vanish like smoke | Isaiah 51:6 |
| Stars fall to the earth | 2 Peter 3:10 |
| Earth destroyed with fire | Rev. 6:13,14 |



THE DAY OF THE LORD

"The Lord almighty has a day in store ..." (Isaiah 2:12) and that day is what scripture calls the '**Day of the Lord.**' It is spoken about by the prophets and always in terms of dread and awe. The enclosed comparison chart shows the major references side by side. Study the chart in tandem so that an overall picture comes into focus. Tick the boxes wherever the box description can be found or where you feel it is alluded to.

	John	Jesus	Isaiah	Joel	Zeph.	Peter	Paul
Called 'Day of the Lord' or implied	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sun, moon, or stars affected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Major destruction on earth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sudden, shocking unexpected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

★ Note: Jesus did not explicitly use the term 'Day of the Lord', but Matt 24:29 is a direct quote from Isaiah 13:10 implying the same event.

WHAT ABOUT ZECHARIAH?

Now we throw a cat among the pigeons. The prophet Zechariah also speaks of a 'day of the Lord' but his scenario is different to the other prophecies in that it speaks of survival after the holocaust. There seems to be a contradiction since it would not be possible for earth to survive what the other prophets talk about. Fill the missing line from Zephaniah 3:8 and compare it with what Zechariah says.

*A day of the LORD is coming, when your plunder will be divided among you. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it ... **Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King.** (Zechariah 14:1,16)*

Earth Survives

"I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them - all my fierce anger.

Earth Consumed

_____ (Zeph 3:8)

So what does Zechariah mean by survivors? Here are two possible explanations. Please tick the one you think best explains.

Strict Literal View

Zechariah 14 will happen in the future and has to be **fulfilled literally** in all aspects. It will begin at the return of Christ and will be a **partial destruction** after which the earth will be refurbished and the survivors go into the millennial reign. The end of the world, as described by other prophets, will occur 1000 years after that.



Double Fulfillment View

Zechariah 14 is a '**double fulfillment prophecy.**' The initial fulfillment was the destruction of Jerusalem by armies in AD70 followed by the spread of the gospel (in symbolic language) throughout the Church age. However this early fulfillment prefigures a final and **complete destruction** which happens at Christ's return.



WILL THERE BE A 1000 YEAR REIGN?

Any question about the end of planet earth depends on what we think concerning the 'Millennium.' The details are beyond the scope of this study but it cannot be ignored because one thousand is a lot of years to fit. Also the Christian world is seriously split on this matter and students of prophecy have to decide between (at least) two main views before considering what might or might not happen to the world.

The Pre-millennial view

The pre-millennial view teaches that the second coming of Christ will come **before the millennium** and that he will establish a literal earthly kingdom. This Kingdom will be centered in Jerusalem from where he will rule the whole earth. At the end of the 1000 year reign Satan will be loosed for a short season and will attempt to overthrow the kingdom but will fail. At this stage there will be a massive conflict culminating in the destruction of our present world and the creation of a new heavens and earth.

The A-millennial view

The A-millennial view considers the term 'thousand' in Revelation 20 as figurative - representing a long, indeterminable period from Christ unto his second coming. During this millennial period the New Testament harvest is reaped, then, in the latter days, Satan will be loosed for a season resulting in deception and apostasy. After that Christ will return and the earth will be consumed in fire. It will not survive the cataclysms to stand for another 1000 years. Instead there will be a new heavens and earth in which the righteous will dwell with God eternally.

Discuss this with Christian friends then share your point of view here. And remember, great men of God have held to one or the other belief.

Answers here:
www.5loaves2fishes.net/pdfs/answers.pdf

John Revelation 6:12-17	Jesus Matthew 24:29-44	Isaiah Isaiah 13:6-13, 34:4	Joel Joel 2:30 - 3:15	Zephaniah Zeph 1:2-18, 2:3, 3:8	Peter 2 Peter 3:4-13	Paul 1 Thess 4:16 - 5:9
<p>12 I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.</p> <p>15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can withstand it?"</p>	<p>29 Immediately after the distress of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.</p> <p>30 Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.</p> <p>32 Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.</p> <p>... 42 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.</p>	<p>6 Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.</p> <p>7 Because of this, all hands will go limp, every heart will melt with fear. Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame.</p> <p>9 See, the day of the Lord is coming - a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger - to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light.</p> <p>11 I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. I will make people scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir.</p> <p>13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the Lord Almighty, in the day of his burning anger.</p> <p>... 34:4 All the stars in the sky will be dissolved and the heavens rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree.</p>	<p>30 I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.</p> <p>32 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls.</p> <p>33 In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.</p> <p>... 11 Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down your warriors, Lord! Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side.</p> <p>13 Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow - so great is their wickedness!</p> <p>14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine.</p>	<p>2 I will sweep away everything from the face of the earth, declares the Lord.</p> <p>3 I will sweep away both man and beast; I will sweep away the birds in the sky and the fish in the sea - and the idols that cause the wicked to stumble. When I destroy all mankind on the face of the earth, declares the Lord, ... 14 The great day of the Lord is near - near and coming quickly. The cry on the day of the Lord is bitter; the Mighty Warrior shouts his battle cry.</p> <p>... 18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath. In the fire of his jealousy the whole earth will be consumed, for he will make a sudden end of all who live on the earth.</p> <p>... 23 Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger.</p> <p>... 38 Therefore wait for me, declares the Lord, for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them - all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger.</p>	<p>4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.</p> <p>8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.</p> <p>10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.</p> <p>11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth.</p>	<p>16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.</p> <p>5:1 Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.</p> <p>4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober ... putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.</p>

THE DAY OF THE LORD
Comparison Chart of Bible References
(Version - NIV)