

The People of the Apocalypse
“The Earth Dwellers”

This certain people group called “*them that dwell upon the earth*” (Revelation 3:10, 6:10, 11:10, 13:8, 12,14, 14:6) are also known as “*people and kindreds and tongues and nations*” (Revelation 10:11, 11:9, 13:7). These two vivid descriptions identify those who are spiritually lost and act in direct opposition to the Lord and His people during the time of the end.

1. The first time they appear in the book of the Revelation is when the church of Philadelphia is given this promise:

“*Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall try them that dwell upon the earth.*” (Revelation 3:10)

While some apply this verse to teach that the time of great tribulation (Matthew 24:21) will not come upon the church saints it must be remembered that it [the great tribulation] will not be focused upon “*them that dwell upon the earth*” but instead the great tribulation is in fact described as Satan’s “*great wrath*” or “*war with the saints*” (Daniel 7:21; Revelation 12:12; 13:7).

However, according to the Apostle Paul those who are lost, the earth dwellers, will be saying “*peace and safety*” when “*the Day of the Lord*” (I Thessalonians 5:2) overtakes them as “*as a thief*” (I Thessalonians 5:3,4).

Therefore, while the great tribulation upon the saints is in process, the earth dwellers will be experiencing relative peace and safety when “*the hour of temptation*” God’s wrath, the Day of the Lord “*comes upon them*” (I Thessalonians 5:3)!

So, Revelation 3:10 provides an assuring promise to the church of Philadelphia of being kept from God’s wrath which agrees with the Lord’s multiple promises given by the Apostle Paul:

“*Much more then, being now saved by His blood, we shall be saved from [the] wrath through Him.*” (Romans 5:9)

“*And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*” (I Thessalonians 1:10)

“*For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation [deliverance from the Day of the Lord] by our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (I Thessalonians 5:9)

The saints will be raptured/rescued out of Satan’s great tribulation and received into heaven:

“*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number...these are they [raptured saints] which came out of [the] great tribulation.*” (Revelation 7:9,14)

2. The earth dwellers are also seen as the ones responsible for martyring God’s people:

“*And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain [martyrs] for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Revelation 6:9,10)

These martyrs who appear in heaven have been killed by those who presently dwell upon the earth. They [the fifth seal martyrs] are calling for God’s judgment upon those responsible. They want to know exactly how long is it going to be before He executes their deserved punishment. This question is asked prior to the Day of the

Lord during the last half of the 70th Week of Daniel.

The time of their inquiry is determined by the next event, the opening of the sixth seal which reveals the sign of the Day of the Lord (Revelation 6:12-17) that occurs just “before” (Joel 2:30,31) the Lord begins His Day of the Lord wrath. His wrath begins when the seventh seal is opened (Revelation 8:1) revealing the contents of the scroll which contains the seven trumpet judgments and the seven vial judgments (Revelation 8,9, 15,16).

3. Then, after the first series of judgments, the seven trumpets, are almost complete, John is told:

“And he [the voice from heaven] said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” (Revelation 10:11)

Although intense global devastation has been poured out upon the earth and it’s inhabitants [Over 1/3 of world population has died], John is told that he will have to continue his prophesying as he oversees the full and complete Day of the Lord judgments including the seven vial judgments (Revelation 15, 16), the judgment of Babylon (Revelation 17,18) and the final climactic conflict of the Day of the Lord, the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19:11-21)!

4. *“And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies [Two Witnesses] three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell upon the earth.” (Revelation 11:9,10)*

After the death of the “two witnesses” a worldwide holiday/party atmosphere breaks out including the almost unthinkable act of “sending of gifts” as though the most celebrated event of that time has taken place! (Revelation 11:10) But, as the Scripture records, God always has the last word and He is definitely not finished with His two witnesses just yet!

“And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither, And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.” (Revelation 11:11, 12)

The Lord miraculously resurrects His two witnesses and “Great fear fell upon them which saw them” indicating the climactic ending of this supernatural event caused great fear, for they, the earth dwellers, in essence, know they have participated in this horrendous event by showing their approval of the deaths of these two prophets of God which is demonstrated by their grandiose worldwide celebration during the previous 3-1/2 days.

5. *“And it was given unto him [Antichrist] to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power [authority] was given him over all kindreds, and tongues and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:7, 8)*

Two distinct facts concerning the earth dwellers are underlined in these verses:

- A. Satan gives his authority to the Antichrist to rule over them (Revelation 13:7)
- B. They subsequently fall in line and worship the Antichrist (Revelation 13:8)

This clearly indicates the global influence the Antichrist will have over the world’s inhabitants/earth dwellers. He receives full and unfettered authority from Satan who is “the god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:4). And, in response, all of the earth dwellers give their complete devotion to this Satanically possessed world ruler thereby demonstrating their belief that he is divine, their god, whom they willingly worship!

6. *“And I beheld another beast [the false prophet] (Revelation 16:13,14) coming up out of the earth and he had two horns like a lamb. And he exercises all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and causes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live.” (Revelation 13:11-14)*

The introduction of the false prophet reveals that he is the author and enforcer of global Antichrist worship. It is through his agency that miracles are done causing the earth dwellers to be deceived. The false prophet also calls for the earth dwellers to make an image of the Antichrist. These two arch-enemies of God are vitally linked together for the false prophet only has power to do miracles *“in the sight of the beast [Antichrist].”*

Three more facts emerge concerning the earth dwellers:

- A. They worship the Antichrist under the direct enforcement of the false prophet (Revelation 13:12)
- B. They are deceived by the miracles of the false prophet (Revelation 13:14a)
- C. They make an image of the Antichrist by direct order from the false prophet (Revelation 13:14b)

7. *“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” (Revelation 14:6,7)*

This global announcement given to the earth dwellers is *“the everlasting gospel”* which is heralded worldwide prior to God’s judgment the Day of the Lord. They are given the opportunity to turn to God before they take the fatal identifying mark of the beast as the following verses (Revelation 14:9-11) indicate.

Notice, they are commanded to do three things in view of God’s coming judgment:

- A. Fear God [Faith must be exercised first before one can fear God]
- B. Give Him glory [Glorifying God is the result of repenting (Revelation 16:9) being in a right relationship to God]
- C. Worship Him [True worship can only be accomplished by faith and repentance, worshipping in spirit and in truth]

8. *“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.” (Revelation 14:9-11)*

The first angel in this series gives the earth dwellers three positive commands for worshipping God in view of His coming judgment. The second foretells God’s judgment of the false worship system of Babylon, and the third gives the negative aspect of worshipping the beast. All three of these angels are giving global announcements concerning worship to the earth dwellers prior to the Day of the Lord.

9. However, the great majority of the earth dwellers will not heed God’s gracious warnings:

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues [The Six Trumpet Judgments] yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their sorceries, nor of

their fornications, nor of their thefts.” (Revelation 9:20,21)

“And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues [The Seven Vial Judgments]: and they repented not to give Him glory. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent [75 lb]: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” (Revelation 16:9, 11, 21)

These passages reveal the effect God’s judgment will have upon the earth dwellers, even though He graciously gave clear warnings to all men worldwide. Notice, they had opportunity to repent, but, “*they repented not*”, instead, they deliberately chose to continue their blasphemous rebellion against God, willingly worshipping “*the god of this world*” sealing their fate in the process.

Their eternal doom will eventually be meted out when all those who refuse to repent and receive the Lord Jesus Christ will stand before God at the final judgment. This will occur at God’s “*great white throne judgment*” when all those who have refused to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, including these earth dwellers, will be judged “*according to their works*”. They will then experience “*the second death*” which is eternal separation from God in the lake of fire! (Revelation 20:11-15)

10. The prophet Isaiah in the very beginning of his eschatological Day of the LORD prophecy called “The Little Apocalypse” which is found in Isaiah 24-27 tells of the coming judgment of these same earth dwellers:

“Behold, the LORD makes the earth empty, and makes it waste, and turns it upside down, and scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD has spoken this word. The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore has the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” (Isaiah 24:1-6)

Isaiah makes it crystal clear that God’s judgment is universal covering the entire earth, and every single inhabitant who is proud and has transgressed God’s laws, changed His ordinances and broke His covenant will be judged.

F.C. Jennings in his commentary “Studies in Isaiah” p.279 writes on Isaiah 24:1-3:

“God will judge the world by that Man whom He hath appointed.” It is true that from a human point of view, it was very far off in the day the prophet wrote; but it has come very near now, for that very same Spirit has taught us to “see the day approaching”. Does not the book of Revelation also tell the Churches of that “hour of trial that is to come on all the world to try the earth-dwellers,” precisely as does Isaiah?”

Isaiah later in this same chapter continues his Day of the Lord prophecy focusing on the earth dwellers:

“But, I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who flees from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that comes up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.” (Isaiah 24:16b-18)

Isaiah continues this horrific prophetic pronouncement upon the time of the end earth dwellers indicating there will be no escape from the all consuming judgment of Jehovah God! He closes this powerful section of

apocalyptic prophetic judgment upon the earth dwellers at the end of chapter twenty-six:

“For, behold, the LORD comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.” (Isaiah 26:21)