

## JewishEncyclopedia

Read more: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/#ixzz1SYqG4gvN>

This website contains the complete contents of the 12-volume **Jewish Encyclopedia**, which was originally published between 1901-1906. The Jewish Encyclopedia, which recently became part of the **public domain**, contains over 15,000 articles and illustrations.

This online version contains the unedited contents of the original encyclopedia. Since the original work was completed almost 100 years ago, it does not cover a significant portion of modern Jewish History (e.g., the creation of Israel, the Holocaust, etc.). However, it does contain an incredible amount of information that is remarkably relevant today.

### DAY OF THE LORD

By : **Emil G. Hirsch**

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=169&letter=D&search=day of the lord>

An essential factor in the prophetic doctrine of divine judgment at the end of time (see Eschatology), generally, though not always, involving both punishment and blessing. It is identical with "that day" ( **הַיּוֹם הַהוּא**: Isa. xvii. 7, xxx. 23, xxxviii. 5; Hos. ii. 18; Micah ii. 4, v. 10; Zech. ix. 16; xiv. 4, 6, 9), "those days" (Joel iii.1), "that time" ( **הַעֵת הַהִיא**: Jer. xxxi. 1, R. V.; xxx. 25, Hebr.; Zeph. iii. 19, 20), or simply "the day" (Ezek. vii. 10), or "the time." On the supposition that Genesis reflects the nation's earliest hopes—denied by the critical schools—the promises given to the Patriarchs of ultimate blessings upon Israel and, through Israel, upon mankind (Gen. xii. 2, 3; xvii. 2, 4, 5, 6; xxvi. 3, 4; xxvii. 29; xxxii. 12), may be taken for the primitive germ of the idea.

The original conception was probably that of the day on which Yhwh manifests Himself as the wielder of thunder and lightning, as the devastator who shatters the powers opposing Him; and this was in historical times transformed into the day when He would smite Israel's foes (compare Isa. xiii. 6; Ezek. xxx. 3). But in the eighth century B.C. Amos is found sounding a decided warning against his people's expectation that simply because they are Yhwh's people the "day of Yhwh" will bring requitement on Israel's enemies alone. It will be an occasion of visiting wrong-doing both within and without Israel. "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos v. 18; viii. 9). In Amos the punitive aspect of "the day" is dominant; ix. 8-15 is held to be exilic by most modern commentators; but see Driver, "Joel and Amos," pp. 119-123 (Amos iii. 2, v. 18, viii. 9). The day is "darkness and not light" (v. 18). Amos' contemporary Hosea does not use the phrase, but he expresses the idea of a judgment to come along lines identical with those found in Amos (Hosea x. 8, xiii. 16). Isaiah, too, strikes in the main the note of gloom. Israel and Judah both feel the weight of divine wrath provoked by their unrighteousness (Isa. i. 10-17, 21-26; ii. 19-21; iii. 1-15; v. 8-24). But this will show Yhwh's power. He will be exalted (ii. 11-17). The judgment cometh suddenly with earthquakes and thunder and tempest and whirlwind and the flame of a devouring fire (xxix. 6). Still through this terrible process, like the purifying of silver, the nation will be restored on a basis of righteousness (i. 24-26). Isaiah's horizon is national. The foreign nations, too, will be judged, but only in relation to Israel. The kingdom is Israel's alone (this is on the theory that the Messianic passages, except Isa. i. 24-26, are of a later age; see Cheyne, Duhm, Hackmann, G. A. Smith, and others; Hastings, "Dict. Bible," ii. 488). Micah, too, emphasizes the doom of Jerusalem as *the* feature of the endtime (iii. 12).

In the latter half of the seventh century B.C. (Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah) the idea that "that day" will see the punishment of wicked Assyria in behalf of righteous Israel finds expression. This view thus contains a new ethical element; it is not, as formerly in the popular conception (see above), the *natural* relation of Israel and Yhwh that brings wrath upon Israel's enemies, but it is because Israel is righteous ( **צַדִּיקִים** ) and Assyria, or non-Israel, is wicked ( **רִשְׁעִים** ; Hab. i. 4, 13). Judgment and consequent destruction fall on the "Gentiles," not on Israel. There is here the first intimation of a world-judgment in connection with "the day," an aspect that becomes thenceforth more and more prominently emphasized. Zephaniah, indeed, puts it strongly, but with the significant addition that a righteous remnant of Israel will survive the day ("judgment" on Jerusalem—i. 8-13; on Philistia, Ethiopia, Assyria—ii. 1-6; "on the nations"—iii. 8; on the earth's inhabitants—i. 2, 3). The day of Yhwh is a day of trouble, distress, and desolation; of supernatural terrors and of darkness and thick darkness (i. 14-18). The assembled nations are destroyed by Yhwh's, anger (iii. 8). The enemies of Israel who are to be punished are, in Zephaniah's conception, no longer definite peoples, as they were for Isaiah (see above); they are the **גוֹיִם** generally, and the instruments of God's punitive power are a mysterious if not mythical people—the "invited guests" of Yhwh ( **קְרִיאִי** , i. 7).

## **During the Exile.**

In the Exile the conception underwent further amplifications. Judgment is held to deal with individuals. As a result a righteous congregation (not nation) was to emerge to form the nucleus of the Messianic kingdom. This kingdom was to have its prelude in the day of Yhwh, meting out individual retribution (Jer. i. 11-16; xxiii. 7, 8; xxiv. 5, 6; xxv. 15-24, 27-33; xxxvi. 6-10), which will lead to change of heart (xxiv. 7; compare xxxii. 39); a new heart and a new covenant (xxxii. 33, 34). The blessings of the new conditions will be participated in by the nations (iii. 17; xii. 14, 15; xvi. 19). Only the impenitent will be destroyed (xii. 16, 17). Ezekiel's vision enlarges on details. A universal uprising of the nations under GOG is one of the incidents (compare Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.; Zeph. i. 7). With this the climax in the development of the idea of the day of Yhwh seems to have been reached. Henceforth the thought of judgment (= day of Yhwh) disappears almost entirely, and is succeeded by a universal Messianic kingdom, preceded not by a day of wrath, but by the missionary zeal of righteous Israel and the spontaneous conversion of the nations (see Messiah).

## **After the Exile.**

Of the post-exilic prophets only Malachi lays great stress on the element of judgment. The Temple is central to his religious construction. To it Yhwh will come suddenly, but a messenger will prepare for His coming for judgment. Before that "great and dreadful day" Elijah will "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Mal. iv. 23, 24 [A. V. 5, 6]). This judgment (in Hag. ii. 21-23, it is destructive for the nations) is only on Israel (*ib.* ii. 17; Mal. iii. 3, 5, 13 *et seq.*). The day "burns as a furnace"; it destroys "all the proud and the workers of iniquity." In apocalyptic writings, however, the day of Yhwh reappears. Joel (400 B.C.) reverts to it. The valley of Jehoshaphat is the place of judgment. The nations are gathered, judged, and annihilated (Joel iii. 1, 2, 12). Yhwh is Israel's defender (iii. 2). Israel is justified, but it is Israel purified (ii. 25-27, 28, 29; iii. 16, 17). Before "the day" all Israel is filled with the spirit of God (ii. 28, 29). Nature announces its approach (ii. 30, 31). As in Joel, so in all apocalyptic visions the idea is prominent that the day of Yhwh (= of judgment) marks evil's culmination, but that Israel and the righteous will be supernaturally helped in their greatest need. Faintly foreshadowed in Ezekiel, this thought is reproduced in various ways, until in Daniel (vii. 9, 11, 12, 21, 22; xii. 1) it finds typical expression, and is a dominant factor in Jewish apocalyptic writings and Talmudic eschatology (see Apocalyptic Literature, *s.v.* Book of Enoch; Daniel; Day of Judgment; Eschatology). Regarding the name "Day of the Lord" given by Christianity to Sunday, see Didascalia; Resurrection, from the Dead; Sunday. Regarding the Talmudic day of God in the sense of "millennium," See Millennium. Bibliography: The commentaries to the prophetic passages quoted: R. H. Charles, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, London, 1899; Smith, *The Day of the Lord*, in *American Journal of Theology*, 1900. E. G. H.