

Heaven

Lesson #7: Judgment Time

I Why is Judgment Necessary?

“It is the final and equitable requirement demanded by the rule and reign of God in all of its aspects.

- A. It fulfills the final requirement of conscience
The moral law, written in our nature, is a copy of the eternal moral law written in God’s nature. This law, immanent in us, implies a future reckoning, a judgment day when that which is true, though not apparent concerning men, may become manifestly true and receive full and final justice.
- B. It fulfills the final requirement of history
The slow process of the moral ideal in history points to a culmination which shall crystallize the contending forces of good and evil and bring about their final separation.
- C. It fulfills the final requirement of the theistic view of the world.
The kingdom of God is like a great drama. It moves forward to a climax. All the apparently loose ends of the development are slowly combined and gathered together. Without the climax the drama is meaningless.” (“Christian Theology” by Bancroft, pg. 355-356)

II There are at least three elements associated with divine judgments:

- A. Revelation of the facts: “There is the revelation of the facts in each case, involving all the details of the deeds to be judged, the motive for performing them, the means by which they are carried out and the immediate and long-range results. Divine power alone is able to perform this necessary function of revelation (I Cor. 3:13, 4:5 and Rev. 20:12-13). And, divine omniscience alone can bring motive, means and result into focus (Matt. 7:21-23).
- B. Evaluation of the facts: There is the evaluation of the facts involving the weighing of each detail for worth. God will measure the knowledge of men to determine motive and establish the degree of guilt (Luke 12:47-48 and Matt. 10:15). On this basis the degree of praise or blame, punishment or reward will be settled (I Cor. 4:5)
- C. Execution of the recompense: There will then be the execution of recompense upon each individual involved. The principle is clear ‘For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.’(Gal. 6:7)” (“The End Times” by Hoyt, pg. 211)

III Society has a variety of judicial courts that address a range of issues. Similarly, there appears to be a rather wide array of “judgments” to be pronounced by God.

- A. There was the Judgment of Sin on the cross. See John 19:30
- B. There will be a Judgment of Believers (the Judgment Seat of Christ) See I Cor. 5:10, I Cor. 4:5 and 3:11-15
- C. There will be a Judgment of Israel
 - 1. Old Testament Saints-those who looked forward to the cross and were saved by faith (see Hebrews 11) will be resurrected in the first resurrection. See Rev. 20:4-6
 - 2. Tribulation Saints-will be gathered back to the land of Israel (see Matt. 24:31 and Ezek. 37:1-14) After their judgment, perhaps only one-third of the Israelites will survive (see Zech. 13:8-9)
- D. There will be a Judgment of the Gentile Nations

This likely occurs at the end of the tribulation period and before the millennium. See Joel 3, Matt. 25:31-46 and Rev. 19:11-12. This judgment may be what is known as the separation of the sheep and goats. The unsaved will be sent into everlasting punishment, the saved will be allowed to go on into the kingdom.
- E. There will be a Judgment of Babylon/the Great Harlot

This judgment falls on the false religious system (federated ecclesiastical system). “The destruction begins at the middle of the tribulation period and doubtless continues until almost the end.” See Rev. 17:1-19:3
- F. There will be the Judgment of the Tribulation Saints

This judgment is focused on the tribulation martyrs who are to be given positions of honor and responsibility. See Rev. 20:4-6 and consider the parables of the talents and pounds (Matt. 25 and Luke 19).
- G. There will be a Judgment of Satan and his angels

Approximately one third of the angels in heaven chose to follow Satan in his rebellion (Rev. 12:3-4). Ultimately all of these fallen angels will join Satan in the final judgment and will be cast into the Lake of Fire (I Cor. 6:3, Rev. 20:10 and Matt. 25:41)
- H. There will be the Judgment of the Unbelievers
 - 1. This judgment is known as The Great White Throne Judgment. It takes place after the millennium when the second resurrection occurs. See Rev. 20:5.

2. The “great and the small” appear. Everyone non-believer regardless of earthly classifications will stand before God and give an account.

3. They will be judged :
 - a. “out of the things written in the books” (the Bible) Rev. 20:12
See John 12:28 and Rom 2:16
 - b. out of “the book of life” A book of divine grace that does not contain their names (see Luke 10:20, Rev. 3:5, 13:8 and 17:8)
 - c. “according to their works”
There seems to be a sense of degrees associated with the judgment. See Luke 12:47-48, II Cor. 9:6 and Matt. 11:22-24

IV A word about The Judge

- A. God is the Judge (Deut. 1:17 and Heb. 12:23)
- B. The standard is perfection (Deut. 32:4)
- C. He is the God of truth (Isa. 65:16)
- D. He is sovereign over all. There is no appeal beyond Him. (Heb. 12:23)
- E. He is omniscient (Isa. 40:9-14)
- F. He is longsuffering (James 5:7 and II Peter 3:9)
- G. Don't forget about the role of the mediator-Jesus Christ (I Tim. 2:5)

V So what? Everybody, get ready!

Matthew 25:1-13

Consider the parable of the ten virgins...“therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think society in general does not like to talk about judgment at the hand of God?
2. As the believer shares the gospel, should he or she emphasize the good news or the bad news of judgment to come?

3. Is there anything you need to do in order to be prepared?