

THE HOUR OF GOD'S JUDGMENT IS COME

(LESSON 7)

Bible Study

1. What type of God do we serve? **1 John 4:8**
2. Who is the Judge? **Acts 17:31, John 5:22, 27**
3. What specific books are used in the judgment? **Daniel 7:10, Revelation 20:12-13, Malachi 3:16-18**
4. What do good works reveal? **James 2:17-18**
5. When are people judged? **Hebrews 9:27**

6. Who is subject to being judged? **2 Corinthians 5:10**
7. What standard is used in the judgment? **James 2:10-12**
8. What happens if a righteous person turned from righteous ways? **Ezekiel 33:13-20**
9. What verdicts will God render? **Revelation 22:11**
10. When Jesus returns, what part of the judgment is performed (investigation,

verdict, or execution)? **John 5:27-29**

What is the Urgency of the First Angel?

Revelation 14:7 states, "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." God's judgment is come. Does that mean the second coming has occurred? No. That does not appear until Revelation 14:14. What this does mean is that God's judgment did not begin until some point just before the second coming for if something had always been, one would not announce it. Further, if something were to occur after an event, one would not announce it beforehand, therefore, the judgment happens before the second coming, but God has not always been in

judgment mode.

Now you may have noticed that God's judgment is separate from the second coming then, or at least that is what has been implied thus far. Is there something else to substantiate this fact? Remember, God's way or plan is in the sanctuary (Psalms 77:13), and part of the sanctuary service included the annual celebration of feast days. These feast days reveals the same concept. The sixth feast is known as atonement (Leviticus 23:28) or judgment. The seventh feast is known as ingathering (Leviticus 23:39) and represents the second coming as studied in *Nailing It to His Cross*. Having two separate feasts representing the judgment and second coming are as two different and separate events. Judgment and second coming are not synonymous.

The subject known as the Judgment is one that many do not often talk about. The reason is that it reveals a judging God and most people rather think of God's loving characteristic -- a God that loves people so much that He will look passed all of the faults. Many believe that as long as they do good to one another, or that our good works outweigh the bad ones; God will allow them into heaven. In this lesson, we will examine what the Bible has to say. Since we believe that Jesus will return very soon, the judgment is a very important subject to understand. It is important to God or why else would He send such a warning message. Let us enter into the heavenly courtroom with the right ground rules.

What Type of God Do We Serve?

Before we enter into such a serious subject, let us remember what type of God we serve. 1 John 4:8 says, "*He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*" John 3:16-17 says, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*" We serve a loving God who even sent His only Son into this world to die for our sins. Now that is the ultimate love one could ever express -- (John 15:13). Further, we read that God cannot lie.

Who Is the Judge?

Acts 17:31 says, "*Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by [that] man whom he hath ordained; [whereof] he hath given assurance unto all [men], in that he hath raised him from the dead.*" There is a judgment day and notice who will carry it out -- the one that was raised from the dead -- that is Jesus Christ. Are we sure? John 5:22 says, "*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*" Clearly God the Father has handed the role of judgment to His Son who earned it by His sinless life and selfless sacrifice of Himself.

Is that bad news? 1 John 2:1 says, "*My little children, these*

things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." The word ADVOCATE in a thesaurus renders the following: ALLY, DEFENDER, SUPPORTER, ATTORNEY, and COUNSELOR. This sounds encouraging! The one who judges us is on our side. So, if we spend time with Him every day by reading His Word and communicating with him through prayer, then no, it is not bad news; it is wonderful news! But if we do not know Him or do not desire to spend time with Him everyday, then it is bad news.

This is like dating. Nobody has to tell a couple to make time for each other. When a note is written, it may be read many times. This should be the same relationship we have with Jesus. We should not have to make time for Jesus, but rather we should have to make time for everything else. And we should not grudgingly read His Word; rather, we should be anxious. Oh, how our priorities are out of control. There are all these societal pressures eating at our time. Who do you think is behind it all? That is right -- Satan. So, we must earnestly spend time with Jesus every day.

What Is the Judgment Like?

Daniel 7:9-10 says, "*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment [was] white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne [was like] the fiery flame, [and] his wheels [as] burning fire. A*

fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." This is an awesome site. Millions of angels around God the Father's throne as the books are opened and fire is proceeding out from the throne.

When does this scene occur? Continuing on, Daniel 7:13-14 says, "*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, [one] like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion [is] an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom [that] which shall not be destroyed.*" The books being opened for the judgment scene occurs before the second coming. This is exactly what Revelation revealed.

What books are opened? Revelation 20:12-13 says, "*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*" One of the books is the Book of Life. Did you also notice how Daniel

parallels Revelation and Revelation parallels Daniel? You cannot fully understand one without the other.

In addition to the Book of Life, there is another book that is used according to Malachi 3:16-18, it says, "*Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard [it], and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.*" The Book of Remembrance contains all of people's actions and thoughts. As people confess their sins, the record of that sin is then blotted out of the Book of Remembrance.

We studied this before. If our name is in the Book of Life, we will be judged as being allowed to enter into heaven (Revelation 21:27). If our name is not in the Book of Life, we are then judged to go to the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15). We also found that by being active in sharing the Word of God with others by character, Bible studies, etc., our names are kept in the Book of Life (Philippians 4:3) for these are the fruits of Christ truly in us. Further, those in the Book of Life are referred to as overcomers (Revelation 3:5). The overcoming is that of sin, selfishness, and this world. We only can do that by

accepting the atoning blood of Christ through salvation. We also learned that it is a gift, which we are free to accept or reject (Ephesians 2:8). To accept it, we must first realize that we are a sinner and repent of the sin we have committed (Luke 13:3). Then go boldly to Jesus in secret and confess our sins at which point He will forgive us of our sin (1 John 1:9). He will then blot them out of the book of remembrance. However, true repentance and confession will then lead to conversion where we are a new creature not desiring to commit the sin again (2 Corinthians 5:17). After conversion, we will then be impressed to make restitution where possible (Luke 19:8). By rationalizing that God will overlook the little sins because "I'm such a good person" is the way one rejects the free gift of salvation. That is because Isaiah 64:6 says "*But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*"

Many call this the "born again experience", but did know that God has a definition of what "born again" is? 1 John 3:9 says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." So, if one is continuing to sin, then they are fooling themselves if they think they are born again.

So, we just read a moment ago in Revelation 20:12-13 that we are judged by our works, yet the Bible tells us that we are saved by faith. How is this possible? James 2:14 says, "*What [doth it] profit, my brethren, though a*

man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" Well, that is our question. So, what is the answer? James 2:17-18 states, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith is demonstrated by works and works gives evidence of faith. It is like rowing a boat. With two oars, one labeled faith and the other works, using only one would lead to going in circles. But when used together, one can go straight ahead.

Here is another example. Take for instance the politicians. They make all kinds of promises to get elected, and once they are in office, their works give evidence that they lacked the sincerity of their promises.

Consider this, to go by faith only, means that one can live in sin. Going by all works gives way to a selfish motive in trying to earn heaven, while proper faith and unselfish works gives evidence of Christ working in you.

Now even though mankind tries their best to deny the existence of God, we as a world do use God's principles. There is the seven-day week that all countries use in one form or another. There is using beasts to represent things such as countries. And then there is the judicial system, which is also based on the Bible. In its simplest form, the judicial system contains three main steps. There is first the investigation, second, the verdict, and third, the sentence. All trials and judgments go through these three steps. Let

us now examine each of these steps from the Bible.

What Does the Bible Reveal About the Investigation?

Does the Bible substantiate the investigative phase of the judgment? Romans 2:16 says, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Jesus at some future point will search out the secrets, which Psalms 44:21 reveals is what is in man's heart – his desires, his decisions.

When is the investigation conducted? Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Since we all are destined to die, then we are all appointed to be judged. Our life is reviewed by heaven upon death.

Are we sure lives are not reviewed before death? Psalms 51:3-4 says, "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin [is] ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done [this] evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, [and] be clear when thou judgest." Psalms 37:32-33 says, "The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged." These verses reveal a future time of being judged.

Who is subject to being judged? 2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that

every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad." Notice that no one will escape the judgment.

What is at stake during the investigative judgment? Revelation 20:15 says, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 21:27 says, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither [whatsoever] worketh abomination, or [maketh] a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." What is at stake is our destination, which is dependent upon whether our name will remain in the Book of Life or not. In short, the investigation is used on deciding who is going to heaven and who is going to hell.

What is investigated during this period? Matthew 12:36-37 says, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Every word is recorded and that which is spoken properly will be considered "just" while those spoken improperly shall "condemn" us. Luke 11:23 says, "He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." Our speech either gathers or scatters. If it scatters, then we are serving Satan. You may ask how is that possible? Well, cutting friends down for the sake of a joke is one way, and Satan is really cunning because if the victim shows any sadness, Satan

implants the phrase to be said, "What, can't you take a joke?"

Another way is gossip. Gossip is not simply just talking about people. It is letting another know something that they did not have a need to know. If you or the other person cannot help solve a person's situation, do not utter it. But if the desire is to pray for the individual, still very little should be divulged.

Yet another sly way is that of negativism. There is an unwritten rule yet very powerful. It is called the *Law of Reciprocal Influence*. As people utter and focus on positive things, more positive things begin to occur. And as more and more positive things occur, it affects others in a positive manner and makes all around us happier people. That is God's side. Satan's counterfeit is the blatant opposite that so many people find themselves in. As negative remarks are uttered, more negative things tend to occur. And as they occur, it affects others in a negative manner. What benefit does it provide? It usually makes one feel worse and the person we utter it to also worse.

Basically, there are only two sides in this world -- God and Satan. Each word that we speak either gives glory to God or Satan. And God forbid if at anytime we would glorify Satan.

Another thing brought up in the judgment is found in James 2:10-12, which says, "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point], he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a*

transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." We should be keeping God's law seeing we are going to be judged by it.

The next area investigated is revealed in Matthew 5:28, which says, "*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*" The world says, "You can look but don't touch." God says, "Don't even think it!" Why? Because as people think it, people eventually have the tendency to act upon it.

Similarly, Matthew 5:22 says, "*But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*" Not only is murder a concern, but also Jesus says even if we are angry with our brother or sister, that is our fellow man, we are in danger of going to hell.

And if what of our actions then? Matthew 10:33 says, "*But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*" How can people deny God? Titus 1:16 says, "*They profess that they know God; but in works they deny [him], being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*" By continuing in sin, people deny the power of Christ to grant victory over sin. Is this really a factor in the judgment? Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 says, "*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and*

keep his commandments: for this [is] the whole [duty] of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether [it be] good, or whether [it be] evil." Every action is brought into investigation. The New Testament also supports this. Romans 1:32 says, "*Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*" 1 Timothy 5:24-25 says, "*Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some [men] they follow after. Likewise also the good works [of some] are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.*" As we see, our actions go before us into judgment.

But there is good news regarding the sins that have gone before us into judgment. 1 John 1:9 says, "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

Is there an example of the investigation process? Ezekiel 33:13-20 gives that example. "*When I shall say to the righteous, [that] he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; [If] the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall*

surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live. Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways."

How deep does the investigation go? Psalm 44:21 tells us, "*Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.*" Some sincere Christians think that avoiding a sin is a matter of controlling the exercise thereof. God searches deeper -- right into the hearts.

This is a real thorough investigation. Wow. It sounds really hopeless. It does not look like we have a chance to make it past this stage of the judgment. Well, take heart. Hebrews 7:25 says, "*Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*" It may seem impossible but remember our Great Attorney. He is able to save us. He tries every possible means to win our case. He is in constant intercession on our behalf; it is just a matter of letting our Attorney work for us, in other words, surrendering all to Him.

And if we fear approaching God, consider John 6:37, which says,

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jesus is willing to represent everybody. There are no exceptions.

When we trust our attorney fully, how successful is He? Jude 1:24 says, "*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present [you] faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.*" That is hard to imagine -- being presented to God the Father as being faultless (without sin).

If we allow Jesus to be Lord and Ruler in our lives, the first phase is not bad. Then there is the second phase -- the verdict.

What Does the Bible Reveal About the Verdict?

Revelation 22:11 declares, "*He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*" There is going to be a time when these very words will be spoken, identifying the verdict of all. After the evidence has been completely investigated, a guilty or not guilty verdict is rendered. Notice that this appears before the second coming, which is in verse 12. "*And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward [is] with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*" Also notice that His reward is with Him when He comes.

Matthew 25:32 says, "*And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate*

them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats." The investigation determines who will be known as the sheep and who will be known as the goats. Jesus is coming back for His sheep. Amen?

Once the verdict is read, only the sentencing remains.

What Does the Bible Reveal About the Sentencing?

Revelation 11:18 states, "*And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.*" This is simply stating that when Jesus returns, He will be handing out the sentencing phase of the judgment.

2 Timothy 4:1 says, "*I charge [thee] therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.*" What portion of the judgment is carried out at this point? John 5:27-29 says, "*And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*"

The reward of the sheep is

recorded in Matthew 25:34, *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* The reward of the goats is recorded in Matthew 25:41: *"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."*

What will the reaction of the wicked be? Revelation 6:16 says, *"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."* They are not prepared for the return of Jesus. They did not spend time getting to know their Attorney. They were careless with their thoughts and words. Satan led them down, down, down the road of sin to the point that they did not want to change. They went along with the crowd. And when that sky splits open, they will know that He is not returning for them and will cry to be buried in the earth.

What will the reaction of the saved be? Isaiah 25:9 exclaims, *"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this [is] our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this [is] the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."* These are those that were daily getting to know their Attorney by reading His Word. These are those that spent time in prayer. These are those that detested sin, and they even trained their minds not to lust or think evil of another. These are those that went through difficult times willingly, knowing that it would

lead to a much happier future. They know that when the sky splits open, their Advocate is coming to take them home.

Imagine What We Have To Look Forward To?

Imagine, No more death. No more disease. No more goofy taxes. No more debt. No more work. No more glasses. No more fear. No more tears. No more sorrow.

"Eye has not seen, ear has not heard" what is waiting for us (1 Corinthians 2:9). It will be heaven! It all can be yours. What is 70 years in comparison to eternal life? Do you agree that it is worth it?

John 10:27-28 says, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand."* Are you willing to follow Jesus in all that He says and be sheep to receive the sheep's reward?

May God Bless you and may you continue to look upon the heavenly things that your Father and His Son are preparing for you, keeping your eyes off the earthly things that will soon fade away.