

Lesson # 6

A Closer Look at the Day of Judgment

The Fear of the Lord

Judgment doesn't get a lot of attention in most Christian circles, but it is a very important foundation. Why? Because it produces the fear of the Lord and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (see Prov 9:10). Paul seemed to expect Christians to understand judgment when he, in a slightly indignant tone, scolded the Corinthian Christians saying, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? ..." (1 Cor 6:2a). It is part of our destiny to rule and reign with Christ!

Jesus taught His disciples about the Day of Judgment and revealed an important part of their destiny when He said, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). The people of God ruling with Christ in His kingdom is described in other places as well.

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. ... And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

—Revelation 20:4-6 (NKJV)

The Honor of Ruling with Christ

We have seen that the 1000 year day in Revelation Chapter 20 is a period of judgment resulting in peace on earth and the restoration of all things. But the government of God in that day is also described as "a rod of iron" being wielded by Christ Himself, and also by those to whom He delegates authority (see Rev 19:15 and Rev 2:26-27). The kingdom government of God will be the only government on the planet and judges will be installed to maintain adherence to the laws which will flow from the central government of God. Isaiah foresaw this government and described it this way:

Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His
paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

— Isaiah 2:3 (NKJV)

What an honor to be one of God's children, and participate in the judgment that is to come. This needs to be a foundational part of our vision as we look to the future great anticipation. Consider the passage below from Psalm 149.

Let the high praises of God *be* in their mouth, And a two-edged sword in their hand, To
execute vengeance on the nations, And punishments on the peoples; To bind their kings
with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute on them the written
judgment-- This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!

—Psalm 149:6-9

More From the Parable of Stewardship

We have already looked at the parable of Stewardship (see Luke 19:11-27) and have seen that it is a framework for understanding the future, specifically Jesus' return and the appearing of the kingdom. Now, let's look at verses 15-19 and notice the events that will accompany Jesus return.

And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, "Master, your mina has earned ten minas." And he said to him, "Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities." And the second came, saying, "Master, your mina has earned five minas." Likewise he said to him, "You also be over five cities."

— Luke 19:15-19 (NKJV)

At His return, Jesus will call His servants together to give an account regarding the usage of His resources. Not only is it a time to give a stewardship report, but the stewardship will also determines the level of governmental responsibility given to the servants. The better stewardship was rewarded with authority over more cities.

Now let's look at verses 20-26.

Then another came, saying, "Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow." And he said to him, "Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?" And he said to those who stood by, "Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas." (But they said to him, "Master, he has ten minas.") "For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

— Luke 19:20-26 (NKJV)

In these verses, we see judgement upon the lazy servant who had refused to exercise any stewardship at all; judgment begins in the house of God (see 1 Peter 4:17). In the case of this lazy servant, it was more than a simple demotion. The parallel version of this parable in Matthew Chapter 25 reveals that this lazy servant was cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (see Matt 25:30).

After the servants of the Nobleman were judged according to their works, the last verse of the parable reveals judgement upon the enemies of Christ who had openly resist His authority.

But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me."

— Luke 19:27 (NKJV)

The above verse presents a picture of the return of Christ, His armies with Him, which as we saw above, marks the beginning of the Day of Judgement. Those who resist His rulership, will be slain.

The End of the Day: Eternal Judgment

Satan, having been bound during the 1000 year period, will be loosed for a time after the Day of Judgment. He will deceive the nations and they will gather as an army against the camp of the saints and the beloved city. God will then send fire from heaven to devour them.

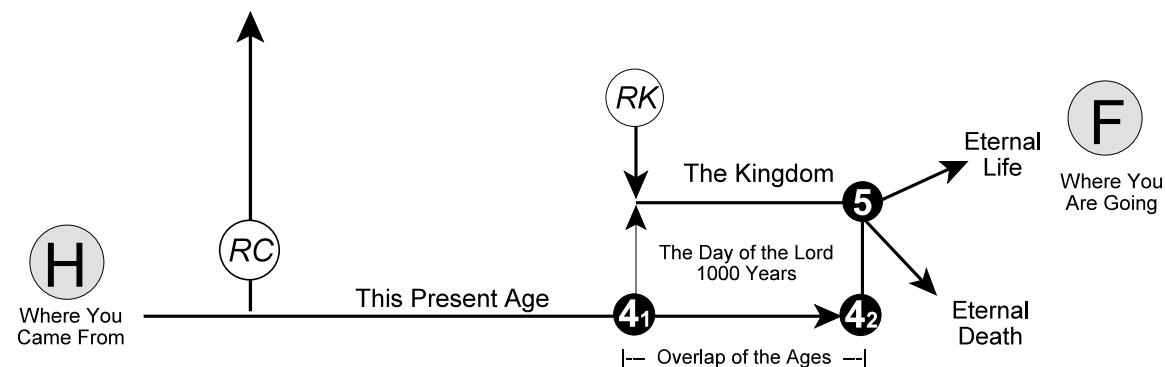
Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. 7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

— Revelation 20:6-9 9NKJV)

This turn of events tells us that, even under the government of God in an age of peace, there will be many who are not genuine Christians, but simply submit to the rule of God out of compulsion. Then once again, God uses Satan as a tool to accomplish His final purge of wickedness from the earth. After the Day of Judgment, then comes the second resurrection and the final or Eternal Judgment (see Rev 20:10-15).

Now it is time to once again modify our Destiny Diagram, in which *Eternal Judgment* will be represent by the number “5.”

Destiny Diagram 6



- RC The Resurrection of Christ**
- 4₁ The First Resurrection & RK -The Return of the King**
- 4₂ The Second Resurrection**
- 5 Eternal Judgment**

At the end of the 1000-year millennium, the rest of the dead will come before the throne of God to receive their eternal sentence. The faithful who have lived through the millennium, will continue on their path of destiny into eternal life. The ungodly will be cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death.

Judgement In This Present Age

Though we generally look at the resurrection as a future event, we have seen in this study that the Resurrection of Christ marked the beginning of this present age and we also saw that there are aspects of the resurrection that exist now. Likewise, there are aspects of judgment that exist in the present. Judgments in this age, which might also be described as chastisements, are mostly redemptive in nature and are designed to turn people back to God. The Lord chastises those He loves (see Heb 12:7).

An example of God's judgement in this age that is based in His love would include Paul being stricken with blindness on the road to Damascus; it was part of his salvation. Elymas the sorcerer was also stricken with blindness, however the blindness was temporary and the result was that the proconsul became a believer (see Acts 13:8). Paul wrote to the Corinthians about turning a man over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, yet the purpose was that his spirit might be saved (see 1 Cor 5:5). Even in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who were struck dead for lying to the Holy Spirit, it may be that their spirits were saved, though their flesh was destroyed (see Acts 5:1-11).

Such examples would certainly fall into the category of judgments, but would not fall under the category of Eternal Judgement. Again, though God may at times judge or chastise in this present age, eternal judgment and judgment in general is reserved for the age to come.

The Age of Amazing Grace

The resurrection of Christ marked the beginning of this present age, a time of amazing grace and restraint exercised by God. God is not angry with us. His wrath has been poured out on Jesus. Jesus took our sins upon Himself on the cross, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness - by whose stripes we were healed (see 1 Peter 2:24). What a wonderful opportunity we have in this present age, to bring our sins to Jesus that His blood might cleanse us, that we might receive the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and that we might come to know Him and the love that He has for us.

The age of grace, the restraint of judgment, His patient longsuffering, are expressions of His love. May we not be like those citizens in the Parable of Stewardship who hated the Nobleman saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). They were slain at His coming. Nor let us be like the lazy servant who lived under the Nobleman's rules, but never really knew Him or His purpose. He was cast into outer darkness.

Our message to those who have drifted away or have not genuinely given their lives to Christ is this: Surrender to Jesus as your Lord and King. Do not delay. His hand is extended in grace. To those who are stubborn and unrepentant in your heart, "...you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed (Romans 2:5 NIV).