



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume IX
Issue 220

God in Judgment

by – A.E. Saxby (1873-1960)

The misinterpretations of two of the parables of Christ are responsible more than anything else for the prevailing views of future judgment. The catch-phrases from these two parables – which have been quoted more than any others, and upon which the terrific structure of the doctrine of endless punishment has been erected – are possibly the two phrases, one of which is found in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus where Abraham is reported to have said, “*Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed;*” and the equally much quoted verse in the parable of the sheep and the goats which contains the sentence of the King, “*These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*”

By means of these, and perhaps several other striking and isolated fragments, the process of the reasoning out of the truth concerning future judgment has been inverted. Instead of ascertaining from Scripture, by a general survey of its teaching on this great subject, upon what principle God will judge mankind, and then fitting in these parables in their proper niches, the method of framing the teaching upon these parables has been followed, and then making all the teaching of Scripture fall into line. It is little wonder that the utmost confusion has resulted.

It goes without saying that we raise no objection to the use of these parables in the way in which Christ intended them to be used. They present definite teaching upon the points they were intended to elucidate, and they cannot be avoided, or explained away. It is impossible in the present article to deal exhaustively with these parables, since we are bent upon laying bare the principles

upon which God will proceed to a judgment of the world which will leave out no single individual. In doing so, however, we will be careful to do that which many expositors have most frequently failed to do. We will carefully observe *TIMES AND CLASSES* in this universal judgment which none will escape.

Men have made Him too often like a judge, who, without discriminating between the offenders of an assize (a judicial inquest), has assigned to each an identical sentence, and that the severest possible. In an amazing jumble, which serves to show the prevailing lack of apprehension of the principles and processes of divine judgment, sentences which are obviously directed to a certain class, are pronounced upon all classes indiscriminately.

Take these two parables to which allusion has been already made. No “Christ rejecter” – to use the phrase so common in evangelical circles today – will come under the treatment of either of these parables. The story of the Rich Man and Lazarus presents to us a condition of things prior to the present Gospel age, and the parable of the sheep and goats sets forth a scene subsequent to the close of this age, immediately prior to the establishment of Christ’s kingdom on the earth.

Both sentences are founded on works, a fact that
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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume IX, No. 220 – December 22, 2009

This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with
 - ... total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

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JUDGMENT (continued from page 2097)

must not be forgotten in their application. Neither the two Jews who figure in the first story, nor the sheep and goats who appear in the second parable, represent men who knew anything of Christ at all as a Redeemer proclaimed to them for their salvation.

We take no exception to the principles embodied in the parables being applied in similar conditions. Doubtless the selfishness of those who are possessed of the God-given standards of action towards their poor brethren (both were children of Abraham: the context proves this fact) will be faced in the future with the sure judgment upon such selfishness. Let the Sermon on the Mount serve to remind us that the rewards of obedience, as well as the penalties of lawlessness, will be meted out to every one who is given the privileges of relationship in any way to God. Then we shall learn the lesson of the parable in its all-around application, and we shall not be awarding eternal life to poverty, and eternal torment to wealth, as so often has practically been done in expounding this parable in the popular fashion.

It is much the same when we approach the other parable to ascertain its meaning. Here are sheep which, as well as goats, have not known Christ. These are not the sheep of John 10, for they know the Shepherd's voice (:4), and they know the Shepherd (:14); whereas the sheep of the Matthew parable are represented as ignorant of the Shepherd.

Again in the first parable the scene has been projected into eternity, whereas both the Rich Man and Lazarus were in *hades*, to which, it must be remembered, Christ Himself descended.

It is equally clear that the sentence meted out to both sheep and goats is limited to the Millennium and their case will be reviewed at the Great White Throne, for these two companies are figures of men of flesh and blood on the earth at the time of the return of Christ to set up His millennial kingdom.

Both these parables, then, have to do with the *PROCESSES OF THE AWARDS OF JUDGMENTS WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.*

Much more could be said to support the view here presented of these parables, which are illuminative of the just and impartial adjudication of the Son of Man, to whom is entrusted this great work of Judgment. Upon these fragments the teaching of the endlessness of punishment has been built up. Against this teaching we have the fact that, all through Scripture, both by statement and examples, the opposite principle is inculcated: that of judgment unto victory, of judgment issuing in salvation.

These parables do not deny this principle, but take their subsidiary part in the judgments of the ages, by means of which Christ establishes His kingdom.

In *The Eternal Saviour-Judge*, by Dr. James Langton Clarke, taking as his keynote the *Septuagint* version of Isaiah 19:20, "*Judging He shall save*," the author gives much food for thought by bringing the Old Testament types of judges and judgments under tribute, to make it clear that the great Antitype, in the person of Him who is to judge the quick and the dead, will judge with a view to salvation, no less than did these types of Himself in the Old Testament. Thus the revelation of Scripture is that *THE SAVIOURHOOD OF CHRIST IS CO-EXTENSIVE WITH HIS JUDGESHIP.*

This is in entire accordance with His Own announcement, that He came, **not to condemn** the world, but **to save the world**. According to the popular conception of the functions of His judgeship, He will spend not only the day of Judgment – in its protracted scenes of age long administration – in judging men, but He will also be occupied throughout eternity in a ceaseless punishment of their sins. The utmost such teaching will accord Him in the province of the unseen world is that His possession of the keys of hell (*hades*) and of death will make Him the Jailer of the souls He once died to save. On the contrary, He will eventually become the *Emancipator* of the prisoners in that prison house, which, in the prophetic visions of the Old Testament, He is repeatedly seen opening with ease and triumph.

With what vast responsibilities and engagements God has delighted to entrust Him. "*The Father hath given all things into His hands*" (John ►

3:35). Where the nail was driven in, the end of a world-wide scepter of dominion rests, never to be resigned until He has subdued all things unto Himself, and deposited His great trust intact back into His Father's hands.

What a vastly different issue is this from the partial rule, the eternal chaos, the hemispheres of heaven and hell, which tradition awards the Man of Calvary. How far different is His Father's purpose for His Well-beloved – a universe subjected, adoring, established at last in an indestructible allegiance, based on holiness and love, to the Father of Spirits!

To those who know the Man of Calvary, it ought to be sufficient that the Father has "*COMMITTED ALL JUDGMENT UNTO THE SON.*" We can do little more here than enumerate those successive judgments which Scripture sets forth for us.

What is He doing in this age but bringing forth judgment unto victory, applying, through the Spirit, that judgment which was passed at Calvary upon the sin and self-life of His people? Utterly mistaking the purpose by the addition of the words "*to come,*" the believer has missed the significance of the third function of the Holy Spirit in the passage, "*When He is come, He will reprove the World of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*"

The perspective here is backward, not forward. Calvary's triumph is to be practically registered in the believer by an unqualified acceptance of the sentence of death upon the old creation in him in all its parts here and now, so that he may say, "*I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*"

How many believers want a salvation without judgment! A ticket for heaven without a sentence executed upon the old man! This made Paul say to the Ephesians, "*For this ye know, that no unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*" This is, in a real fashion, an age of judgment unto salvation with age-during glory (II Timothy 2:10-13).

To all such as know Him, the scene of the *Judgment Seat of Christ* holds no terrors. *When manifested*

before that judgment seat (II Corinthians 5:10), *the holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord* (Hebrews 12:14), will create a boldness and humility that will rob the scene of all terror.

Passing swiftly over the great tribulation, when the cup of His earthly people and of the nations of the earth will overflow with His wrath, we come to the judgment of the living nations. This has been erroneously called the "last Judgment." We agree with Clarke, who thinks that it ought to be called the first rather than the last. It is, as he says, "*THE INAUGURAL JUDGMENT OF THE VISIBLE KINGDOM.*" It ushers in His kingdom of millennial glory. The scene in Matthew 25 is not the Day of Judgment, but *ONE INCIDENT* in that day or period. It will be followed by a thousand years of His reign as Messiah and King. All through this period He will be Judge, as well as King, with a rod of iron seeking to subdue all things unto Himself, through the power of His Cross.

Where we believe the thread of revelation has been missed is at the Great White Throne, which has been mistaken for the close of His kingdom instead of an episode therein. It introduces a final and severer judgment into His kingdom, as well as a wider triumph and larger rule. Beyond the thousand years, and the Great White Throne, is that age of His final victory at the close of which He will deliver His perfected Kingdom to His Father to receive His "*well done.*"

All these judgments and administrations founded on the triumph of the Cross of Calvary are *within the bounds of His kingdom.* Here is the missing link of eschatology. That which is predicated of time has been projected into eternity. By the time that God is "*All in all,*" described as "*THE END,*" judgment will return unto righteousness, and the victory of the Cross will be extended to the utmost bounds of the heavens and the earth (Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:20).

No word concerning the functions of Christ is quoted more frequently than the announcement that He is "*THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY, AND FOREVER.*" Ordinary theology would have us believe that He Who died for the sinner, regards him with compassion and desire up to the time of that

(see **JUDGMENT**, page 2104)

A Refreshing Study on the Resurrection

by – E.W. Bullinger

Scripture shuts us up to the blessed hope of being reunited in resurrection. That is why the death of believers is so often called “sleep” and dying is called “falling asleep” because of the assured hope of awakening in resurrection.

Its language is, “*David fell on sleep*” (Acts 13:36), not David’s body, or David’s soul. “*Stephen ... fell asleep*” (Acts 7:60). “*Lazarus sleepeth*” (John 11:11), which is explained, when the Lord afterward speaks “*plainly*,” as meaning “*Lazarus is dead*” (:14).

Now, when the Holy Spirit uses one thing to describe or explain another, He does not choose the opposite word or expression. If He speaks of night, He does not use the word light. If He speaks of daylight, He does not use the word night. He does not put “*sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet*” (Isaiah 5:20). He uses adultery to illustrate idolatry; He does not use virtue. Thus, if He uses the word “*sleep*” of death, it is because sleep illustrates to us what the condition of death is like. If *Tradition* be the truth, He ought to have used the word “*awake*,” or “*wakefulness*” – but the Lord first uses a *Figure*, and says “*Lazarus sleepeth*,” and afterwards, when He speaks “*plainly*” He says “*Lazarus is dead*.” Why? Because, sleep expresses and describes the condition of the “*unclothed*” state. In normal sleep, there is no consciousness. For the Lord, therefore, to have used this word “*sleep*” to represent the very opposite condition of conscious wakefulness would have been indeed to mislead us. Yet all of His words are perfect, and are used for the purpose of teaching us, not for leading us astray.

So, effectually, has Satan’s lie, “*Thou shalt not surely die*,” succeeded and accomplished its purpose that, though the Lord Jesus said “*I will come again and receive you unto Myself*,”

Christendom says, with one voice, “No! Lord. Thou needest not come for me: I will die and come to Thee.” Thus the blessed hope of resurrection and the coming of the Lord have been well nigh blotted out from the belief of the Churches, and the promise of the Lord been made of none effect by the ravages of *Tradition*.

In Philippians 2:27 we read that Epaphraditus “*was sick nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him*.” So that it was mercy to preserve Epaphraditus from death. This could hardly be called “*mercy*” if death were the “*gate of glory*,” according to popular *Tradition*.

In II Corinthians 1:10-11, it was deliverance of no ordinary kind when Paul himself was “*delivered from so great a death*” which called for corresponding greatness of thanksgiving for God’s answer to their prayers on his behalf. Moreover, he trusted that God would still deliver him. It is clear from II Corinthians 5:4 that Paul did not wish for death; for he distinctly says “*not for that he would be unclothed, but clothed upon (i.e., in resurrection and “change”) that mortality might be swallowed up of LIFE*,” not of death. This is what he was so “*earnestly desiring*” (:2).

Hezekiah also had reason to praise God for delivering him from “*the king of terrors*.” It was “*mercy*” shown to Epaphraditus; it was “*a gift*” to Paul; it was “*love*” to Hezekiah. He says (Isaiah 38:18-19),

For the grave [Hebrew, sheol] cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day.

On the other hand the death of Moses was permitted, for it was his punishment; therefore, there was no deliverance for him, though he sought it (Deuteronomy 1:37; 3:23, 27; 4:21-22; 31:2). Surely it could have been no punishment if death is not death; but, as is universally held, the gate of paradise!

In I Thessalonians 4:15, we read,

This we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain shall not precede them which are asleep.

To agree with *Tradition* this ought to have been written, “shall not precede them which are already with the Lord” – but this would have made no sense, and there is nothing of that in the Word of God.

While we may draw our own inferences from what the Scriptures state, we shall all agree that it is highly important that we should clothe these views in scriptural terms, and that we should ask and answer how far it is that these popular sayings have practically, at any rate until recent years, blotted out the hope of resurrection, the hope of the Lord’s coming again to fulfill His promise, to receive us to Himself.

You remember how the apostle speaks to some in I Corinthians 15, who say that there is “no resurrection of the dead;” and in writing to Timothy he refers to Hymenaeus and Philetus, who had led some away from the faith by saying that “the resurrection is past already.”

The greatest comfort which the greatest Comforter that the world ever knew had to give to a sister who had been bereaved of a beloved brother was, “Thy brother shall rise again.” All hope is bound up with this great subject and, if our THEOLOGY has no place in it for this great hope, then the sooner we change it the better; for remember that this subject is one of REVELATION.

We are expressly enjoined by the Lord Himself,

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice (John 5:28).

These are the Lord’s own words, and they tell us where His Voice will be heard; and that is not in heaven, not in Paradise, or in any so-called “intermediate state,” but in “the GRAVES.” With this agrees Daniel 12:2, which tells us that those who “awake” in resurrection will be those “that sleep in the dust of the earth;” from which man was “taken” (Genesis 2:7; 3:23), and to which he must return (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Psalm 146:4 declares of man,

His breath goes forth, He returneth to his earth; In that very day his thoughts perish.

The passage says nothing about the “body.” It is whatever has done the thinking. The “body” does not think. The “body,” apart from the spirit, has no thoughts. Whatever has had the “thoughts” has them no more, and this is “man.”

There is Ecclesiastes 9:5, which declares that,

The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything.

It does not say dead “bodies” know not anything, but “the dead,” i.e., dead people, who are set in contrast with the “living.” As one of these “living,” David says, by the Holy Spirit (Psalms 146:2; 104:33):

While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

There would be no praising the Lord after he had ceased to “have any being.” Why? Because “princes” and the “son of man” are helpless (Psalms 146:3-4). They return to their earth; and when they die, their “thoughts perish” and they “know not anything.”

This is what God says about death. He explains it to us Himself. We need not therefore ask any man what it is – and if we did, his answer would be valueless, inasmuch as it is absolutely impossible for him to know anything of death, i.e., the death-state, beyond what God has told us in the Scriptures.

Not Forsaking the Assembling of Ourselves Together

by – Charles H. Welch (1888-1967)

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (Hebrews 10:25).

The usual interpretation of this passage associates it with attendance at a Christian place of worship.

The word “assembling” (*episunagoge*), and its cognate (*episunago*), are never used of an “assembling” in the sense of attending service at church ... The only other place where *episunagoge* occurs is II Thessalonians 2:1.

*The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our **gathering together** unto Him.*

The apostle, by the use of the word “forsaking” evidently glances back to such passages as II Chronicles 24:18, where the “forsaking” of the house of the Lord meant *apostasy*, and was visited with wrath, and also to Nehemiah 10:39 and 13:11, where adherence to the house of God indicated loyalty. The “*gathering together of ourselves*” has value only as it foreshadows the hope of “*our gathering together unto Him.*” At the present time faithfulness to truth and to the blessed hope sometimes cuts us off from Christian assemblies, and this passage must never be used to justify compromise. The present Dispensation knows no “place of worship” except where “*Christ sitteth at the right hand of God,*” for God “*dwelleth not in temples made with hands*” ...

The added words, “*so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,*” confirms the thought that the hope and its gathering together is all the while in view.

A further confirmation of this higher and fuller meaning is found in the argument that immediately follows. The forsaking of the assembly is called a “*willful sin after the reception of the truth,*” and for

such “*there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.*”

Under the law sins were placed under two heads:

- (1) Sins of omission, ignorance and inadvertence (Leviticus 4:2, etc.).
- (2) Sins of presumption, high hand, malice aforethought (Numbers 15:30-31).

Apostasy from the profession of the hope had the character of presumptuous sin, for which the law made no provision. That David (as in Psalm 51), for example, could be forgiven, shows that a fuller Sacrifice is found under the gospel than under the law, but the apostle does not bring this forward, neither does he mitigate the severity of the judgment that is pronounced against such.

“*Fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries,*” “*died without mercy,*” “*of how much sorer punishment,*” “*vengeance is Mine,*” “*it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*” – all stress the extreme severity of the penalty. “*Trodden under foot the Son of God,*” “*counting the blood of the Covenant unholy,*” “*doing despite to the Spirit of grace*” – these terms reveal the enormity of the sin of turning back to Judaism.

In this light, Hebrews 6:1-8 is to be read, to which the word “*illuminated*” of 10:32 evidently refers. These are the only occurrences of *photizo* in Hebrews.

Perfection or Perdition:

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sinner's death, even though he be unrepentant and indifferent to Divine love, but one minute after death that His love is changed to anger, and He pursues the sinner with relentless and resistless fury for evermore.

How opposite this is to the Shepherd who seeks "till He find it," to the Father who waits until the last boy away from the homestead returns. The truth in these glorious words is, that "for the ages" – so is the phrase – He is the same: SAVIOR of men, seeking the lost with undiminished compassion; JUDGE of mankind, arraigning every transgressor before His bar, pulling down that He may build, destroying that He may plant: KING of the ages, HOLDER of the keys of *hades* and of death, VANQUISHER of death, SPOILER of His enemies; WORKER of all things new, HEAD of His ransomed race, unsatisfied, unconquered, and unwearied until, with its subjects penitent, subdued, adoring and satisfied in Him, He delivers up His kingdom to His Father that God may be "All in All."

Let the reader ponder again that parable of husbandry which God gave to His people of old, when they could not believe that He would bring to pass "His strange act" of judgment upon them (Isaiah 28:23-29). He pictures the ploughshare doing its rough work, until the cartwheel bruises the harvest, and He enunciates the principle of His judgments in the words "He will **NOT EVER** be threshing it."

Nay, not one grain shall fall to earth. He is the same yesterday, and today, and for the ages. Judgment shall "return unto righteousness." The storms of Divine wrath will finish their work, and there will be a great calm. They began at Calvary, and, through the administration of One Who bought the right to save through His sufferings for a world, *LOVE WILL CONQUER.*

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

*God in Creation, Redemption, Judgment and
Consummation*
London, England

No Law but Love

Christ Abolished the Law

Having **abolished** in His flesh the enmity, even **the law of commandments** contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of two one new man, so making peace (Ephesians 2:15).

We Are Delivered from the Law

But now **we are delivered from the law**, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:6).

We Are Not Under the Law

For sin shall not have dominion over you: **for you are not under the law**, but under grace (Romans 6:14).

We Have Been Made the Righteousness of God

For He has made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made **the righteousness of God** in Him (II Corinthians 5:21).

The Law Was Not Made for a Righteous Man

Knowing this, that **the law is not made for a righteous man** ... (I Timothy 1:9).

Nothing Is Unclean of Itself

I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that **there is nothing unclean of itself**: but to him who esteems any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean (Romans 14:14).

All Things Are Pure unto the Pure

Unto the pure **all things are pure**: but unto them who are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled (Titus 1:15).

All Things Are Lawful

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any (I Corinthians 6:12).

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not (I Corinthians 10:23).

Love Is the Fulfilling of the Law (Reaches It's Goal)

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he who loves another has fulfilled the law ... Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:8-10).

For, brothers, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; "You shall love your neighbor as yourself..." (Galatians 5:13).