

MSB 205

MORE Seed and Bread

BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF 'TRUIH MINISTRY

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THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

by David R. Hettema

When the events concerning the trial and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus are reviewed we read that in the process of the trial he was brought to the Roman hall of judgment (John 18:28). This enclosed building was the place where the accused were questioned and inquisition was made in regard to their guilt or innocence, and sometimes, as in the case of our Lord very cruel and painful torture was inflicted. Just outside the entrance of the judgment hall and before a large pavement (called Gabbatha in the Hebrew, see John 19:13) was the judgment seat where the one vested with authority would sit to pronounce sentence upon the one on trial. Pilate was the high Roman authority at Jesus' trial and he made it clear that his authority included the life or death decision for Jesus. He was the one who must determine and announce from the judgment seat the fate of the Prince of life. It was clear that Pilate realized this one standing before him was more than a mere man, but he caved in to the pressure of the enemies of Jesus and made a judgment that was, as we say in our time, "politically correct" even though it meant the death of an innocent man.

So it is with the judgments of men, but not so with God whose judgments are proclaimed as being true and righteous, a truth that is declared again and again throughout the scriptures.

GOD WILL JUDGE THE WORLD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

The book of Psalms is rich in that thought. *Psa 9:7-8 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world*

in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

These prophetic Psalms speak of the time and conditions that will characterize the Kingdom of God upon this earth, when the unbending righteousness of God will be known throughout all nations and peoples. ***Psa 98:2,9 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen nations. For he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.***

The Bible is the book of the kingdom and within its pages we find many prophecies and promises of the Messiah that will rule the world not as men might rule, but in righteous judgment. Isaiah, over 700 years before Jesus' birth, writes of the quality and character of His coming government. ***Isa. 11:4 With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.***

The Kingdom of God opens the curtains on the salvation of the world, which has been made possible by the victorious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ who is the very personification of salvation. This world system (*kosmos*) will be rescued, delivered and made safe by his great sacrifice. The highest honors in heaven and earth are his due for his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross.

Phil2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,' And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The exaltation of Christ Jesus positions him as the one in whom all power is vested, the highest authority in heaven and earth, all things are subject to him. ***Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*** All judgment is his exclusive right; ***John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:***

The promise of Divine intervention which could come at any moment is described as God intervening in the affairs of men, God interrupting the present evil flow of sin and death by His great outflow of life and light that will bring abundance and blessing to this earth. It also brings that crucial time when the living and the dead must have their order set by the Judge of all the earth, ***the Lord Jesus***

Christ, who shall judge the quick (living) and the dead at his appearing and (even) his kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1).

ALL MUST STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

2 Cor. 5:10 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

All descendants of Adam, living or dead, will have their day in court, have their future determined as to whether or not they will have a place or portion in God's beneficent government. This great time of judgment will begin at the first day of God's government and conclude when, at the Great White Throne Judgment (described in Revelation chapter twenty), the earth and the sea have given up all the dead and none remain. Thus the time frame for the Judgment Seat of Christ covers a period of almost 1500 years, although during the 1000 years of Christ's personal presence there are no resurrections.

It will be *every man in his own order (1 Cor 15:23)*. For the living it will be an immediate event, but for those in the state of death it will be their awakening experience when their order is called, some sooner than others.

. In 2 Cor. 5:10 the statement is made that when each individual appears (*Gr. phaneros*, be known / manifest) their judgment is based upon the "things done in body" (*Gr. soma*) referring to the practices (*Gr. prasso*, habitually / perform repeatedly) of life, whether they be good (*Gr. agathos*, always rendered "good"), or bad. (*Gr. phaulos*, foul or flawed, usually rendered wicked or evil).

We do not have to be transported somewhere to stand in appearance before the Judgment Seat of Christ, it will take place right where we are, when God's Spirit touches us whether we are among the living or the dead. In the blink of an eye the "setting in order" takes place. The perfect health experience in a recreated body, the absolutely clear mind and renewed conscience, the accurate memory of our past, the record of our lives laid up alongside the standard of righteousness that God's Spirit will place within us. Some men's life records will pronounce their own judgments when seen in the bright light of God's righteousness. The realization of how short they have come to what God demands will bring self condemnation even to lashing themselves with their own tongues as Psalm 64 depicts. The Judgment seat of Christ brings about a separation of individuals who will or will not live to enjoy the blessings of God's great salvation.

It must be said here, that for the time in which we live, the Word of God makes it abundantly clear that God's offer of salvation to men is based on faith or belief in something that God has said concerning them. Faith is taking God at His word and responding accordingly. *Eph. 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

The status of one who has taken God at His word and responded accordingly is that of a believer, a position that means a great deal according to the twice repeated statement of Jesus Christ in the gospel of John: *Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:15 and 16).*

The believer in Christ Jesus is an ungodly one that has been justified, his faith has been counted for righteousness. To be in Jesus Christ is to be accepted of God. God imputes righteousness to the believer for his faith. (See Rom. 4:5-8).

THE BELIEVER'S RECORD OF SIN IS WIPED CLEAN

When the believer stands in judgment, there is no record of sin to be brought against him. He finds his completeness in Jesus Christ who *has forgiven him all his trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col 2:13,14).*

Eph. 1:7 verifies this wonderful truth also: *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

Rom. 8:1 There Is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

THE SALVATION OF THE BELIEVER IS ASSURED BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION OF HIS FAITH.

WHAT IS BUILT ON

THAT FOUNDATION MUST BE TRIED

In 1 Cor. 3: 9-15 The life of faith is compared to a building, (*ye are Gods building*) a structure being built on a sure foundation. In verse 10 Paul warns: *let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.*

1 Cor.3: 11-15 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious

stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day (the day of Christ, God's government) shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Among the building materials described in this passage it becomes obvious that those indestructible and of the most value would have to do with the things of God. Since in this dispensation we are shut up to the Word of God alone, it follows that if we continue in His Word, we are building with the best materials.

The thief on the cross whose faith was acknowledged by the Lord was executed before he could build on that foundation, but when he is resurrected to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, he will be among those saved, yet so as by fire. This should give pause to those of us who as believers, have been given many years to build. Are we building upon the foundation? Will our efforts as a believer prove to be rewarding in the Kingdom of God?

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