

# SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER    ISA.55:10    FOR THE EATER  
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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# THE KINGDOM JUDGMENT

In religious literature the term "general judgment" is quite common, but no such thing is to be found in Scripture. Men may speak of "the great consummating judgment to come," and of "the great assize," which is supposed to be the gathering together at the bar of justice all who have ever lived upon the earth, but this idea is the product of human imagination and has no foundation in the Word of God. It is a flagrant error to think of future judgment as being one great assize, taking place at the end of the world, when all human beings, saints and sinners, Jews and Gentiles, the living and the dead, shall stand before "the great white throne," and there have their destiny settled as to whether it will be "heaven forever" or "hell forever." Those who put forth the idea of one so-called "final and universal judgment" simply reveal that they have not been firsthand students of divine revelation.

It has to be recognized by the careful student of Scripture that there are various future judgments which are separated as to time, subjects, and circumstances. Many attempts have been made to distinguish between these as will be seen in the *Scofield Reference Bible*, notes on Rev. 20:12; but it seems that Scofield's teaching was developed out of certain passages and made to fit in with his dispensational ideas. This is far from being satisfactory, as can be seen in the fact that one of the most important passages concerning future judgment is ignored. This passage is 2. Timothy 4: 1, which in the *King James Version* reads:

**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.**

The strange thing about this passage is that it does not fit in with and is even contradictory to all present ideas concerning things to come. Those

who make "His appearing" (*epiphaneia*) to be "His coming" or "the rapture" are very much embarrassed by this verse because of the universal judgment of mankind that is to take place in accord with this event. In view of this there has been an enormous amount of trifling with the Greek text of this passage, and this questioning of the text is usually set forth in comments on this verse when interpreters are forced to deal with it. Most commentators ignore it altogether. This can be seen in *Chafers Systematic Theology*, which claims to be exhaustive, where there is no reference to it in the index, even though much space is given to the consideration of judgment. If the reader will check other commentators, he will see how weak they become in dealing with this passage.

This is truly a most important kingdom passage, and one with which the student should be completely familiar. It must be given a prominent place in all our thinking concerning the kingdom of God. In considering it we should note that the terms "God, and the Lord Jesus Christ" refer to the same person. No man can serve two masters. The construction here is such that it should read, "God, even Christ Jesus," the word "Lord" not appearing in most Greek texts. "Who shall" in the Greek is "the One about to be" (*mello*) and is used in Scripture of those things which will come to pass by fixed necessity or divine appointment. The word *judge* in this passage does not have to do with settling the final destiny of either the living or the dead. Many of the dead who are judged at this time will have to wait until the end of the thousand years of His parousia before they are raised and their final destiny is settled (Rev. 20:5). To judge is to review and consider a matter and come to a conclusion concerning it.

The "quick" is an old English word that means the living. The word "at" is *kala* which means "according to" or "in harmony with." "Appearing" is *epiphaneia*, which means a blazing forth but always is indicative of a favorable intervention. "Kingdom" (*basileia*) means "government." The words *epiphaneia* and *basileia* are so related here that one defines the other. Even as the coronation is the beginning of the reign of a king, so the *epiphaneia* is the beginning of God's government, the one great difference being that the *epiphaneia* of the Lord Jesus will have a lasting effect upon and influence the course of the kingdom of God from beginning to end. In view of all these facts I will furnish my own carefully studied paraphrase of the Greek text:

**I am solemnly charging you in the sight of God, even Christ Jesus, who will be judging the living and the dead in accord with His favorable**

## **intervention, even His kingdom.**

The plainest message in the Bible is that when God assumes sovereignty and the manifest kingdom of God becomes a reality, He does not begin with some ferocious attack on mankind, not even the wicked portion of it. In order to gain the victory He desires, He sends forth judgment (Matt. 12:20), which means enlightenment and understanding for every man. Apart from these there can be no judgment. Furthermore, the long reign of death comes to an end and a gift of health and healing becomes the portion of every living man. However, a gift of light, understanding, and health does not mean that all will be allowed to live to enjoy these blessings and the magnificent glory of an earth that is being governed and continually blessed by God. (Read here, 1 Cor. 6:9-11). There must be a judgment of all who are living, and this judgment will determine if they are to be allowed to continue on earth.

I trust that the reader recognizes and believes in the ability of God to bring the entire life of any man in review before Him, and to make an instantaneous judgment concerning him. If not, then your God is too small. There being no past or future with God, He can at any time He desires, see our entire lives as a present fact. This He will do when the kingdom comes with all its attendant blessings. He will judge all who are living. The purpose of this judgment will be to determine continuance in or exclusion from the kingdom of God. However, it will also determine the place, the privileges, the honors, and the glory of all who are to continue to live under God's government.

Permit me to say personally, and I trust all my readers can say it, that if I should be among the living (and I very much would like to be) when God assumes sovereignty and my life comes in complete review before Him, one fact will stand out, like Mt. Everest, above everything else. This fact is that I have done the work of God which is demanded of all such in my state and condition, I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believed in Him in a day of unbelief, believed in Him without seeing, believed in Him wholly on the basis of His written word, completely apart from any sign or miracle save those which are recorded in Scripture. I have believed, and I do now believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And I will permit no man or demon to diminish aught from the promise and hope that He gave to me, that believing I shall have life through His name.

Following the judgment of the living there is to be a review of the dead. The total life of every man that has ever lived and died will be looked upon by God and a determination will be made as to who should be raised from the dead to begin life anew and enjoy it when this earth is governed by God. Note carefully that they are not raised and then judged, otherwise this too would be a judgment of the living. They are judged to determine if they deserve to be raised, to live as citizens under God's government. If so they will be raised in accord with the order and arrangement that God will establish. The Bible does not teach a general resurrection of the righteous at the beginning of the kingdom. It will be, "**Every man in His own order**" (I Cor. 15:23).

All of this is in harmony with His favorable intervention, even His kingdom. The order is (1) His blazing forth in a favorable intervention, (2) His government in reality, (3) a judgment of all living, (4) a judgment of all who are dead, (5) the resurrection of those who are granted entrance into His kingdom.

A place in the kingdom of God is the hope of mankind. There is no other hope held out to anyone in the Word of God. Our positions may differ, our rewards may differ, our services may differ, but it will be upon this earth when God governs. The Bible teaches that the destiny of men is in a redeemed society living on a transformed earth. The Biblical hope is always an earthly hope. The Psalmist declares that such as be blessed of Him shall be given a place and enjoy a portion upon the earth; and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off (Psalm 37:22). The judgment that takes place at the inauguration of God's government will determine all of this.

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