

# Eternal Judgment

By the logic of the scriptures, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment are bound together. Eternal judgment always follows resurrection of the dead. Resurrection always precedes eternal judgment.

## Two Aspects of Judgment

There are two aspects of Eternal Judgment:

1. General revelation of God as judge of all, and
2. The main principles which administrate God's judgment.

Hebrews 12:22-24     But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, (23) To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, (24) And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

There are three main parts to these scriptures:

- A) Description of God's dwelling place
  1. Mount Zion
  2. city of the living God
  3. the heavenly Jerusalem
- B) Listing of those who dwell there with God
  1. innumerable company of Angels
    - a) Angels who kept there first estate
  2. general assembly and Church of the first-born
    - a) new testament saints
  3. spirits of just men made perfect
    - a) saints of previous ages
- C) Presentation of God Himself
  1. God, the Judge of all
  2. Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant
  3. the Blood of sprinkling

These scriptures reveal GOD THE JUDGE

which leads us to JESUS THE MEDIATOR

which leads us to THE BLOOD--the means and price of reconciliation.

The blood of Abel contrasted with the blood of Jesus:

<b>Abel</b>	<b>Jesus</b>
1. blood shed without his consent	1. blood freely given
2. sprinkled on the earth	2. sprinkled on the mercy seat in heaven
3. cries out for vengeance	3. pleads mercy and forgiveness

The revelation of God as judge of all is tempered by the revelation of God's mercy and grace manifested in Jesus as our mediator and his shed blood. This is in harmony with the total revelation of scripture on this theme.

### **God, the Father, as Judge**

Throughout the entire Bible it is plainly stated that, by sovereign, eternal right, the office of "Judge" belongs to God Himself.

Genesis 18:25	That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: <u>Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?</u>
Psalms 58:11	So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is <u>a God that judgeth in the earth.</u>
Psalms 94:2	Lift up thyself, <u>thou judge of the earth</u> : render a reward to the proud.
Isaiah 33:22	For <u>the LORD is our judge</u> , the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us.

However, even though God is judge, His nature is to be long-suffering.

Isaiah 28:21	For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, <u>his strange work</u> ; and bring to pass his act, <u>his strange act.</u>
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There are two Hebrew words translated by the same English word "strange". The meaning that they have in common is "alien". The administration of wrath and judgment is *alien* to God's own nature.

This concept is also born out in the New Testament.

2 Peter 3:9	The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
John 3:17	For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

The reluctance of God to administer judgment finds expression also in the way in which God's

judgment will ultimately be carried out.

1 Peter 1:17            And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

### **Jesus, the Son, as Judge**

God, the Father is Judge; however, He has delegated judgment to the Son.

John 5:22-23            For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: (23) That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 5:26-27            For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; (27) And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Two reasons the office of Judge is transferred from the Father to the Son:

1. because with the office of Judge goes the honor due the judge--men will be obliged to show the same honor toward God, the Son, as they would God, the Father.
2. because Christ is also the Son of man as well as the Son of God; i.e., he partakes of the human as well as the divine nature, and, therefore, in His judgments He is able to make allowance from His own experience, for all the infirmities and temptations of human flesh.

However, the Son is also unwilling to administer judgment.

### **The Word as Judge**

The Son of God has transferred the final authority of judgment from Himself to the Word of God.

John 12:47-48            And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. (48) He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

The final authority of all judgment is vested in the Word of God. This is the impartial, unchanging standard of judgment to which all men must one day answer.

Psalms 119:160            Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.

God's principles and standards of judgments are contained in His Word and like the Word endure forever.

### **Principles of Divine Judgment**

Romans 2:1-12            Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:

for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. (2) But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. (3) And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? (4) Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (5) But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; (6) Who will render to every man according to his deeds: (7) To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: (8) But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, (9) Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; (10) But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: (11) For there is no respect of persons with God. (12) For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law:

There are 4 principles of divine judgment in these scriptures.

*"according to truth"* -- has to do with those who judge others by one standard and themselves by another standard. John 17:17 says "Thy word is truth." The revealed standard of God's word applies to the judge and the judged.

*"according to deeds"* -- repeated many times in the scriptures: 1 Peter 1:17, "according to every man's work"; Rev. 20:12, "according to their works". Records are kept of each man's life, not just actions but also the thoughts and intents of the heart.

*"as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law"* -- each person is judged according to the measure of moral light and understanding available to him.

Romans 1:20            For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

**Example: Matthew 11:20-24**--Jesus is comparing Tyre and Sidon and the light they had received with the cities of His day and the light they received. Judgment would be easier on Tyre and Sidon than on the current cities.

We should take note of this because we live in a time and a country when more moral knowledge is more easily available than ever before in history. We are held accountable for the light which we have received and that which is available to us. To neglect or to not receive the light which is available does not relieve us from the responsibility and the accountability that goes with the Word. Just as the cities of Jesus time did not receive the light and understanding available to them and as a consequence will receive a stricter judgment than even Sodom and Gomorrah,

America will, I believe, be held even more accountable than the cities of Jesus time.

## **God's Judgments in History**

God administers judgment to the human race in two stages:

**God's judgment in time**--that is, that part of God's judgment that is carried out on the scene of human history.

**God's judgment in eternity**--that is, that part of God's judgment that is carried out in eternity, after time and history have ceased.

### ***Scriptures of Historical Judgments:***

Exodus 20:4-6      Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: (5) Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; (6) And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Jeremiah 32:18      Thou showest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is his name,

In certain cases the sins of one generation can cause the judgment of God to come upon succeeding generations even to the third or fourth and, conversely, the righteousness of one generation can cause the blessing of God to come upon many thousands of their descendants.

### ***Scriptures on Eternal Judgment:***

Ezekiel 18:1-4      The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying, (2) What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? (3) As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. (4) Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

God, through the prophets, rebuked Israel for their sinful and backslidden condition. The people tried to blame the previous generation for their present conditions, thereby excusing themselves.

God doesn't allow this. When one stands before Him, he can't blame his parents for his problems with morality. Although it may have been true that the national decline was due to their ancestors, God still holds each accountable for his moral condition. Each one will be judged, in eternity, solely for his own character and conduct. Each one of us has a will with the ability to choose what is right or wrong and God has provided His Word to be to us the standard by which we can exercise our will to make the correct choice. God leaves us without excuse; when judgment day comes, our deeds will speak for us.

Ezekiel 18:20           The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

This is not judgment of a nation or a family; this is the judgment of each individual soul--the judgment by which the destiny of each soul is settled for eternity.

Ezekiel 18:24           But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

“... in them shall he die.” indicates that God is speaking of the condition in which each individual soul passes out of time into eternity. the condition of the soul at that moment determines the destiny of that soul for eternity. The soul that dies in sin can never thereafter be admitted into the presence of God. Jesus made this clear when He was speaking with the Pharisees.

John 8:21               Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

Ecclesiastes 11:3       If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

The tree falling corresponds to a man dying. The position in which the tree falls determines the position in which it will thereafter lie.

The previous three scripture passages all deal with eternal judgment of God upon each individual soul. The destiny of each soul is settled by the condition in which it dies.

From these we can draw two conclusions:

1. in history---the behavior on one generation has an important effect, for good or evil, upon the course of the succeeding generations.
2. in eternity---each soul will answer to God solely for his own character and conduct.

## **Examples of God's Judgments in History**

### ***Sodom and Gomorrah:***

2 Peter 2:6             And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly;

This clearly displays god's attitude towards the sins of which these cities were guilty. His judgment was given to provide us an example, that is, a pattern, of the conditions which will bring His judgment.

What were the basic moral and social conditions which produced the decline of Sodom?

Ezekiel 16:49            Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

Four basic causes of Sodom's decline:

1. pride
2. fullness of bread
3. abundance of idleness
4. lack of concern for the poor and needy

Out of these four basic causes there grew up that particular form of sexual perversion which has, ever since, been called by the name of "sodomy". In our current population centers, the same moral and social causes are producing the same forms of sexual perversion.

***Ananias and Sapphira:***

Acts 5:1-10            But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, (2) And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. (3) But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? (4) While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. (5) And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. (6) And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. (7) And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. (8) And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. (9) Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. (10) Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

These were what we would call "religious hypocrites". They sold a possession and brought part of the price to the apostles as an offering to the work of God; however, they pretended that the money that they brought was the full price of the possession that they sold. They did this to gain the praise and favor of the apostles and their fellow Christians.

However, by the supernatural revelation of the Holy Spirit, Peter discerned their hypocrisy, and charged first Ananias and later Sapphira, with lying and seeking to deceive the Holy Spirit and each fell down dead at Peter's feet.

## **The Seats of Judgment**

The New Testament reveals 3 main, successive scenes upon which eternal judgment will be carried out. Each of these is marked by the type of seat that the Judge sits upon to execute judgment:

1. the judgment seat of Christ
2. the throne of Christ's glory
3. the great white throne.

Different groups of people are judged at each seat of judgment.

## **The Judgment Seat of Christ**

2 Corinthians 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.

The language and context make it clear that this scripture is addressed to Christians. It may seem surprising that Christians are going to be judged at all. Popular thought seems to say that the Judgment Day is for the unbelievers. However, look at the scriptures.

1 Peter 4:17-18 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? (18) And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Judgment must begin at "the house of God", "at us" which is obviously Christians. The first judgment will be that of the true Christians.

Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Paul's use of "brother" and "every one of us" shows that he is speaking of Christians. Each will give an account of himself.

2 Corinthians 5:10 tells us that the Christian is judged for "the things done in his body"; that is, the acts and the behavior of each Christian during his life here on earth. These acts will fall into one of two categories--"good" or "bad". There is no third category of neutral. Every act of a Christian has definite value of some kind--either positive or negative, good or bad. Every act that is not performed in faith and obedience, for the glory of God, is unacceptable to God, and therefore, "bad". It is upon this simple basis that each Christian must expect to be judged.

It is clear that the judgment of Christians is not a judgment of condemnation.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on

him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Romans 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.

Therefore, the believer does not face judgment where the outcome will be final condemnation. The believer will not be judged for sins. Sins were blotted out when the person received Jesus as Savior and confessed him as Lord.

Isaiah 43:25            I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

Isaiah 44:22            I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

1 John 1:9             If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:1-2            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: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Christians are not judged for condemnation but for reward. Not in respect of righteousness but in respect of service to God. The Christian's righteousness is not his own but Christ's.

1 Corinthians 1:30      But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

2 Corinthians 5:21      For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Christian judgment is for reward:

1 Cor. 3:11-15          For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (12) Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; (13) Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (14) If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. (15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

This is not a judgment of every man's soul but of every man's work. Quality is of more importance to God than quantity.

Three points to consider:

**Motive**--are we pleasing ourselves for our own satisfaction and glory or are we sincerely seeking to glorify Jesus and do His will?

**Obedience**--are we serving according to the principles and methods revealed in the Word of God or are we fashioning our own forms of worship and service?

**Power**--are we serving in the inadequacy of our own carnal will and strength or have we been renewed and empowered by the Holy Spirit?

## **Principles of Christian Judgment**

We have principles for which we are held accountable given by Jesus in two of the parables.

Matthew 25:14-30 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. (15) And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. (16) Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. (17) And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. (18) But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. (19) After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. (20) And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. (21) His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (22) He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. (23) His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (24) Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: (25) And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. (26) His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed: (27) Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. (28) Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. (29) For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. (30) And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

A talent was a considerable sum of money, possibly as much as 15 years of wages. Each was given an amount according to his ability. He was not given less nor more than his ability would allow him to care for appropriately. Each was judged by the percentage of increase not by the net gain. Each that was equally faithful received the same reward. The unfaithful was judged and cast out of the Lord's presence.

We can see from this that reward is based on faithfulness. Each received the maximum his ability could handle and each was equally faithful to produce the maximum increase (100%); therefore, each received the same reward.

Now, let's look at the other parable:

Luke 19:11-27      And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. (12) He said therefore, A certain noble man went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. (13) And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (14) But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. (15) And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. (16) Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. (17) And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. (18) And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. (19) And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. (20) And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: (21) For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou laidst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. (22) And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: (23) Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? (24) And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (25) (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) (26) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. (27) But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

A "pound" or "mina" is about 3 months wages. Apparently, these all had equal ability since they each received the same amount. However, they were not equally faithful. The first produced twice as much compared with the second and as a result received twice the reward plus the commendation of his Lord.

We can conclude from these parables that faithfulness in this present age in service to the Lord will result in our continued service to Him in government and administration of His Kingdom in the next age.

We can also conclude that to do nothing with what the Lord has given us is classified as

“wicked”. The sins of omission are just as serious as the sins of commission.

The difference between the “unprofitable” servants end in these parables and the one who suffered loss mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 3:11-15 is that even the one who built out of wood, hay and stubble was attempting to serve God and do something even though it was mis-guided and, therefore, he was not cast out of the Lord's presence.

## **The Throne of His Glory Judgment Seat**

The second Judgment Seat is the throne of His glory.

Matthew 25:31-33     When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: (32) 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: (33) And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

It is the nations which are gathered before Christ and they are separated as sheep and goats. The sheep enter the Kingdom (here this would be the 1000 year reign of Christ) and the goats go into everlasting punishment (the Lake of Fire).

Before we proceed further with this, let's look at how God divides the human race into three groups of people: the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God.

1 Corinthians 10:32     Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

God deals with these groups separately during His judgments. The Jews are a special nation. The Gentiles are the rest of the nations. The Church is not considered a Jewish nation nor a Gentile nation but a new nation of those in Christ. This new nation is under the government of the King. The Church is dealt with at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Gentiles (the nations) are dealt with at His Throne of Glory. When are the Jews dealt with?

It is clear that the Judgment of His Throne of Glory is for the Gentile nations only. There will be no Jews nor Christians in this particular judgment. The Christians have already undergone judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Jews, by this time, as a nation have undergone their own special judgment. Those who have passed through this special judgment have acknowledged Jesus as their Savior and Messiah. This will complete God's historical work for the nation Israel that has been progressing now about four thousand years. The completion of the judgment of Israel and the judgment of the Gentile nations is the transition between historical and eternal judgment.

The Jews, Israel, is a special nation and a special people to God. There are many prophetic scriptures which reveal God's dealings with Israel. From these we can derive two fundamental principles about blessing and punishment:

**Blessing**--God normally blesses the Gentiles through the Jews, but He blesses the Jews directly.

**Punishment**--God normally punishes the Jews through the Gentiles, but He punishes the

Gentiles directly.

These two principles are operative in the Old Testament and the New and will continue to be operative through the close of this age.

In the closing stages of the great tribulation God will judge and punish Israel for the last time as a nation through the instrumentality of the Gentiles. God, Himself, intervenes directly when this final judgment of Israel is complete and executes judgment on the Gentiles. Jeremiah describes this final judgment on Israel after they have returned as a nation to their own land.

Jeremiah 30:3-9      For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. (4) And these are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah. (5) For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. (6) Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? (7) Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. (8) For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: (9) But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.

Notice the order of events as foretold by Jeremiah:

God will bring Israel back to their own land.

There will be for Israel a time of national peril and distress more terrible than any that they have previously passed through.

The Lord, Himself, will eventually intervene against the foreigners--the gentile enemies of Israel--and will save Israel from them.

The national Kingdom of Israel will be again restored upon the throne of David, under the supreme government of the Lord, Himself. This period of the restored Kingdom will be the millennium.

This end-time gathering against Israel by the Gentile nations and the Lord's intervention is further described by Zechariah.

Zechariah 12:3      And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

Zechariah 14:2-4      For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (3) Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. (4) And his feet

shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

As a result of the Lord returning to the Mount of Olives, to the exact point from which He ascended into Heaven, all rebellious elements will finally be purged out of Israel and those who survive this final purging will then be ready to be reconciled in repentance and humility to their God.

Ezekiel describes this final purging and how the Lord deals with it.

Ezekiel 20:37-38      And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: (38) And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

The phrase "to pass under the rod" describes the process of a Shepherd inspecting the sheep before admittance into the fold. All rebels will be purged by this process and the remaining sheep will enter into a new covenant relationship with the Lord--through the new covenant in Jesus Christ.

How the Lord deals with the Gentile nations who are enemies of Israel is described in Zechariah.

Zechariah 12:9-10      And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. (10) And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

As you can see, those who survive reconcile to Jesus when they realize their error.

Paul says it very clearly.

Romans 11:26      And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

After Israel has passed through the fires of the great tribulation and been reconciled to God, there will be no further need to judge them. All that would remain would be the judgment of the Gentile nations which survived this process.

So, after the Lord sets up His Kingdom and the Throne of His Glory, all that remains is the judgment of the Gentile nations which survived the tribulation.

## **Judgment of the Gentile Nations**

Jesus gives us a picture of this judgment.

Matthew 25:31-33      When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with

him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: (32) 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: (33) And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

This separation is between those whom God accepts and those whom God rejects. Those accepted by God will enter the Kingdom for the 1000 year reign of Christ. Those rejected don't go to sheol, hades, or hell but go directly into the Lake of Fire as final judgment.

The basis for acceptance or rejection here is how the gentile nation treated the brothers of Jesus, the Jewish people.

This is also described by Joel.

Joel 3:1-2                      For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, (2) I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

“Plead with them” means to “enter into judgment with them” and it is “for (or on account of) my people”.

First, God brings them back to their land. Second, God gathers the nations against Israel. Third, He will enter into judgment against the Gentiles. This is in accordance with Matthew 25. When the sheep have been separated from the goats, the judgment of the Gentile nations will be complete.

By this time, all who have been considered worthy to enter Christ's earthly Kingdom will have been purged by the refining judgments of God--Israel through the fires of the tribulation, the Gentiles by the direct intervention and judgment of Christ at the close of the tribulation.

After the purging of both the Jews and the Gentiles, there will be a thousand years of peace and prosperity with Christ as King ruling over the earth.

After the thousand years, Satan will again stir the nations against Israel in rebellion against Christ and His Kingdom, but this rebellion will be brought to an end by the direct intervention of God.

Satan will then be cast into the Lake of Fire to join the Antichrist and False Prophet who are already there.

By now, all of the rebellious among those living on the earth have been purged out. All that remains is the judgment of the dead from previous ages. All the dead who have not previously been resurrected will be called forth for judgment. The stage is set for God's third and final judgment seat.

### **The Great White Throne Judgment Seat**

Revelation 20:11-15      And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.  
(12) 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. (13) 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. (14) And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. (15) And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

This is the final judgment. The Jews have already been judged. The believers in the atoning work of Christ have undergone their own judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Therefore, this judgment is for all of those who don't fit into the previous categories. The criteria is whether or not the person's name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. It stands to reason that most of those in this judgment are rebellious sinners, and unbelievers and will be cast into the lake of everlasting fire. However, there is reason to believe that there are at least two categories of people who will have their names written in the Book of Life and will escape condemnation and enter into eternal life.

The first group is mentioned by Jesus:

Luke 11:31-32      The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. (32) The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here.

In each of these examples it is clear that the men of this generation (who rejected the mercy offered them through Jesus) will rise up (be resurrected) for the judgment of condemnation. Together with them, however, two groups will be resurrected who will receive mercy at the judgment: the queen of the South and the men of Nineveh.

Unlike the saints of the old testament, these two groups were not granted a revelation of Christ's atoning sacrifice--fore-shadowed in type and prophecy--in which they could trust for salvation. Consequently, they will not be included in the resurrection of those who are Christ's at His coming. They did, however, respond in faith to the limited measure of light that came to them. At the close of the millennium, therefore, they will be delivered from condemnation and enter into the resurrection of life.

Will there be others in this category? Only God knows. It is futile and foolish for us to try to quantify others in the resurrection. That is the exclusive domain of God.

The second category of people who will be delivered from condemnation at the final resurrection will be the righteous who have died in faith during Christ's millennial reign on earth.

Isaiah 65:20      There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.

The picture given here is that although human life will be greatly extended, both the righteous and the sinner will still be subject to death. When the final enemy, death, is put under the feet of Jesus, He will turn the Kingdom over to the Father (1 Cor. 15:25-28). This, apparently, doesn't occur until the end of the Millennium.

Will there be others besides these in the Lamb's Book of Life? That is locked within the omniscience of God. We should adopt the attitude of Abraham.

Genesis 18:25            That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?