

The Judgment Shall Sit

The word **judgment** has several meanings. (1) The sentence or decision of a judge. 1 Kings 3:16-28. (2) Discernment between right and wrong. Luke 12:57; Acts 4:19; 1 Cor. 6:1-6; 11:28-32. (3) God's punishments upon wicked people. Prov. 19:29; Ezek. 23:26. (4) Trial, and sentences inflicted at the (the) last day. Eccl. 12:14; Jude 6:14, 15. Heb. 10:27

The judgment we are interested in most, or at least should be, is that which decides our eternal state. Perhaps one of the most discussed texts in regard to the judgment is found in Rev. 14: 6, 7 as follows:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for **the hour of his judgment is come**: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

That the expression, "**The hour of his judgment is come**," does not refer to the final judgment is certain. The first angel which declared that "**The hour of his judgment is come**," also declared the "everlasting gospel." This message began in the days of Christ and the Apostles, and still continues.

To teach that an investigative judgment began about a hundred years ago is a great mistake. As the "everlasting gospel" began in the apostolic days, so did the message of "the hour of his judgment is come" begin at that time; and as the "everlasting gospel" still continues, so does "the hour of his judgment is come" proclamation still continue.

Just what did the Revelator mean when he said "**The hour of his judgment is come**"? What judg-

ment did he refer to, since he did not refer to the final judgment? What about the books; and what about the final judgment?

Peter was proclaiming the first angel's message when he said, "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?" Jesus said, "For judgment I am come in the world." Jno. 9:39. "Now is the judgment of this world." Jno. 12:31. To clarify the meaning of this judgment still further, I will quote the following texts:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Jno. 3:36. "He that believeth on him is not judged: He that believeth not **hath been** judged already," because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." Jno. 3:18. A. S. V.

If unbelievers are **judged already**, God knows it (He is Omniscient.), and there is no use for Him spending about a century before Christ's second advent in examining books to determine who are prepared for the kingdom of God.

The **book of life** is mentioned in the following places: Dan .12:11; Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; and 22:19. Names are evidently entered into this book of those who change from sinners to saints—when they become new creatures in Christ. "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20; see also Phil. 4:3.

Besides the book of life, we read of other books that are to be opened (Rev. 20:12). The Scriptures, or the law, are given to man now, in this life to be guided by, and will be open in judgment.

When the gospel is brought to an individual, it is

his privilege to either accept or reject everlasting life. The choice he makes decides his case, and **the hour of judgment is come to that party.** Such was Paul's conclusion too, when he said, "Seeing. . . you have **judged** yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:44-46.

The words **judgment**, and **condemnation** can be used interchangeably, and are so translated in several instances by different translators. I believe we would do no violence to the Scriptures to read some of these passages, "The hour of condemnation is come;" that is, the time had come when people condemned themselves (judged themselves unworthy) if they rejected the gospel; or, on the other hand, they judged themselves worthy if they accepted the truth, and this message is still true today.

James, also, understood that such was, and is, the case. "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door." Jas. 5:9.

Paul again: "For if we judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." 1 Cor. 11:31, 32.

So they all agree, Jesus, James, Peter, and Paul, that **the hour of judgment came in their day**, and it is still effective. The judge was, and still is standing before the door. Sinners are reprov'd of sin, and so examine their own lives. If they repent, and accept the necessary qualifications they will attain eternal life; but if they reject salvation's terms they judge themselves unworthy of eternal life. The foregoing is the investigative judgment—if you wish to call it such. It consists of self-examination or investigation when reprov'd of sin by the Judge that standeth before the door, or by the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion, I wish to call your attention to the final judgment which begins when Christ comes.

