

Bible Study # 106
April 13, 1993
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Hebrews 6 Series—Doctrine # 6: Eternal Judgment

This evening we **are continuing in this Bible study series**. This evening we **are dealing with the sixth doctrine of the doctrines outlined in Hebrews chapter 6, and that is the doctrine of eternal judgment**. Last Bible study we went into the doctrine of the resurrection; tonight we are going into the doctrine of eternal judgment.

Now the two doctrines—the doctrine of the resurrection and the doctrine of eternal judgment—are very much linked together because you can't fully understand one without the other.

They are quite in variance with what is generally assumed and considered in the world around us. The approach on this subject that is extant in most of the Protestant and Catholic religions involves sort of a marriage of concepts from the Bible with pagan concepts from the Greek and Roman philosophers. There is a problem in the presentation they normally have. They talk about the resurrection and about judgment, but they also talk about the immortality of the soul—that you have an immortal soul that goes flitting off to heaven or hell when you die. Now, since the Catholic Church at least recognized that they needed to sort of do something in-between, the doctrine of purgatory was developed because they recognized that most people really didn't deserve to go to heaven and probably knew that they didn't. Besides, when it comes to getting out of purgatory, that's turned out to be a whole lot better fundraiser than selling oranges ever was.

The Protestants sought to claim that they were rejecting the approach that the Catholic Church had added to the Bible. Nevertheless, the Protestants held on to the fundamental error—the doctrine of the immortality of the soul—which we went into last time when we looked at the doctrine of the resurrection. You see, if you are an immortal soul and you go flitting off to heaven or hell when you die, where is the need for a resurrection and future judgment?

I can remember as a child being confused because you would hear both concepts. You would hear, on the one hand, the preacher telling you that if you died tonight and you weren't saved, you were going to go straight to hell. So, you had better come down the aisle and give

your heart to the Lord. On the other hand, they would from time to time read scripture about the judgment—the time of judgment, the White Throne Judgment—and the resurrection. Of course, if you thought about it, it never made sense. What was the purpose of a future judgment if you were already in heaven or hell and had been there for who knows how long? Were you going to get someone out of heaven and check to make sure that they were supposed to be there? Maybe they sort of sneaked in the back gate and should have been in the other place all this time—or vice-versa. Of course, that's silly and nobody really thought that. What they had was one concept that came out of the Bible and another that came out of pagan mythology. When they tried to marry the two and teach both, they wound up with two incompatible doctrines, which each rendered the other sort of needless.

The Scriptures do teach the mortality of the soul—the fact that when you die, you are dead. But after death, there is a resurrection. When we get into the doctrine of eternal judgment, as we are this evening, we will find that there are different resurrections for different purposes.

The terms that relate to judgment derive from a term in the Greek language which means “to divide,” “to sunder” or “to separate.” It has to do with dividing out what is accurate from what is inaccurate and coming to a conclusion—a period of separation. That is what “judgment” is. It involves separating fact from fiction.

There have been a couple of well-publicized cases in the news recently that a jury has considered. Of course, their responsibility in a situation like that is to separate out all of the information that they hear. They are to sort it out and separate between what is true and what is false, what is accurate and what is not. Now, judgment involves more than simply a verdict. Judgment can be the process of deciding and coming to a conclusion.

There are a number of things from which we can take note. Let's begin in John 9.

John 9:39-41, “And Jesus said, ‘For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.’ Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, ‘Are we blind also?’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, “We see.” Therefore your sin remains.’”

Turn back to John 7. If we notice the context, we find that this section of Scripture is dealing with the Last Great Day.

John 7:37, “On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.’”

He goes through John 7, 8 and 9 in the context of what He addressed on the Last Great Day. It is in this context that Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world.” ‘I have come into the world for the purpose of discernment, of judgment, of making and drawing distinctions and making decisions.’ One of the things He brought out in this context is that those who did not see would be able to see because it is in the context of the Last Great Day that all humanity ultimately will have an opportunity to really see the truth.

Of course, the Pharisees raised the question and said, ‘Well, You consider us blind?’ And He said, ‘Well, if you were blind, you wouldn’t have any sin and you wouldn’t be responsible in the way that you are. You say, “We see.” Therefore your sins remain.’

It is a matter that we are responsible.

James 4:17, “...to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

In Acts 24, we find Paul on trial. He had been arrested and brought before Felix.

Acts 24:24-25, “And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about [What did Paul speak about?] righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid [KJV, “trembled”] and answered, ‘Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.’”

Now, it didn’t take long for Felix to hear all the sermons that he wanted to hear because Paul addressed three topics: righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come. When he spoke about righteousness (the standard by which God ultimately will judge), self-control (that we should be exercising control upon ourselves) and judgment (that there is ultimately an accountability to God), we find that Felix trembled. Felix became very nervous and very upset.

Here is why.

Verse 26, “Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.” He called him in and it gave him a chance to bribe him. Felix wanted a bribe! Here was Paul talking about

righteousness, temperance and the judgment to come, and old Felix (sort of the “Edwin Edwards” of the day, as far as governor) was there and waiting to see what Paul was going to give him to turn him loose. He became nervous when Paul discussed the judgment to come, and he said, ‘You know, look, we better talk more about this later.’ The judgment to come—there is an accountability; there is a time of decision. There is a time of judgment that is to come, and it will come with consequences that will last forever. You know, man’s courts make a decision and that decision has impact right now, but there is coming a judgment that has consequences that go way beyond right now.

Romans 2:2-3, it says, “But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?”

Verse 1 says, “Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.” Here were people who stood ready to judge and condemn others, yet, they were themselves doing the same things.

We are reminded that the judgment of God is according to truth. It’s not based on rumor; it’s not based on hearsay; it’s not based on circumstantial evidence. The judgment of God is according to truth. Those who are quick to condemn others, while they themselves are doing the same things, are not going to escape the judgment of God. There is a judgment with eternal consequences. We, of course, read over that a number of times in Hebrews 6.

Hebrews 6:2, “...of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” A judgment with eternal consequence—the doctrine of eternal judgment.

The purpose of the resurrection is because there is accountability. Man is not simply an animal that lives his life as just a blimp on the screen, just an accident. Man is part of a grand purpose and design that God is working out. There is accountability because man is made in the likeness and image of God.

1 Peter 4:17-18, we notice a little more about judgment, “For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now ‘If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?’”

The time has come that judgment must begin at the house or household of God. So, the time of judgment is not necessarily all future tense. **The time of judgment for the people of God is now.** God is judging the Church right now. The time has come when judgment must begin at the house of God. If it starts with us, where is it going to lead for those that obey not the Gospel of God? There is this judgment of God. The judgment that comes begins with the people of God. It is a judgment for those in the Church. There is a judgment that is in process right now. There is a judgment to come for others.

Revelation 17:1-2, “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication [speaking of this great false religious system], ...’” It says, ‘I will show you the judgment that is going to come to pass, what will occur.’

As we come on down in Revelation 18, we find the story of this judgment.

Revelation 18:2, “And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!’”

Verse 10, it says, “‘standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’”

The judgment of Babylon the Great is yet future. The judgment of the house of God is present. The judgment of Babylon the Great is coming.

Come on a little further in Revelation.

Revelation 20:1-3, we find, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more....”

Verses 4-5, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the

thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

Here, we see thrones and they that sat upon them. Judgment is given to them. Judgment is something that Jesus Christ came to bring about. Judgment—there is a judgment to come. There is a judgment and accountability to God. There is currently judgment upon the Church. There is future judgment upon this world’s system—upon Babylon the Great.

During the thousand years, the saints are going to reign with Christ and judgment will be given to them—the authority to make decisions and make judgments. So, a part of what we are being trained for is to take part in judgment—to take part in judgment that has very far-reaching consequences—eternal consequences, if you will. And, of course, the basis of that judgment is the basis of all of the judgment that we are given, that we are told. Jesus instructed His disciples to judge righteous judgment.

John 7:24, Jesus said, “‘Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.’” What is righteous judgment?

Psalms 119:172, it says, “My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments are righteousness.”

Back in verse 144, it says, “The righteousness of Your testimonies is everlasting;”

Verse 142, it says, “Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth.” Come on down in Psalm 119.

Psalm 119:160, “The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.”

When we are told that we will sit on thrones, we will be in the process of judging, of exercising judgment. The kind of judgment we are to judge is righteous judgment, which is judgment that is based on the law of God—the commandments of God.

Notice back in Isaiah 32.

Isaiah 32:1, “Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.”

We are going to sit on thrones judging; judgment will be given to us. That is what it says, “a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.”

Verses 16-17, coming on down in, it says, “Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.” You see, there is a consequence to righteousness. Righteousness produces peace.

When people are obeying the commandments of God, there will be peace because nobody is going to be coveting, stealing, trying to do violence to his neighbor, engaging in immorality or spreading lies and deceit. You know, when you eliminate those things, then you eliminate the very things which are the basis of all of the strife and the trouble. So, there is a consequence here. We will administer. In order to make judgment, in order to exercise judgment, we will administer the basis of God's judgment. The basis of God's judgment is God's law—God's Word. The world will be judged by the Word of God.

Isaiah 33:5-6, speaking of this time, it says, "The Lord is exalted, for He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness. Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation; the fear of the Lord is His treasure."

"Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times." We have the basis for stability in a very unstable world because we have wisdom and knowledge that originates from God.

Psalms 119:98-99, David said, "You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation." We have the basis of wisdom and of proper knowledge.

Psalms 111:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments." David addressed all those subjects.

We are going to exercise judgment and that judgment is going to be based on the Word of God. Eternal judgment means that there is a judgment to come. Jesus Christ is going to come to judge the world. Judgment right now, though, is on the House of God. We are being judged by the same standard that the world ultimately will be judged by, and that standard is the Word of God—being judged by things which are written here in this Book.

Notice Matthew 19.

Matthew 19:27-29, "Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?' So Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My

name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit everlasting life.'"

They were to sit, as He said, "in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here, we find a time of judgment. Now, this time of judgment was not going to be just a time of sentencing; judgment is a process of dividing or separating, of making a decision. It goes way beyond simply rendering a verdict because there is that time of judgment coming.

Let's notice John 3.

John 3:17, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world [The word that is translated "condemn" is the same word as "judge." "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world" or "to judge the world."], but that the world through Him might be saved."

Verse 18, "He who believes in Him is not condemned [judged]; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The point is that Jesus Christ did not come the first time for judgment; He came for salvation. He came to make possible our salvation. He is going to return to judge the world, and the saints of the most high will share that judgment and Kingdom under Him. That's why we're in the process of being converted, of being transformed, being renewed in our inward man—Christ living and dwelling in us.

We are told in John 5....

[Tape ends on side 1.]

[Editorial Comment: The material in brackets is missing on the tape.]

John 5:22-24, we're told, "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.'"]

Verse 25, we are told, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live."

Verses 28-29, it says, "...for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation (KJV, "damnation")."

The term is "judgment." In fact, interestingly, the word in the Greek language is a word that we would spell out in English as "k-r-i-s-i-s." Now, if you look at that, it looks like "crisis," except it is spelled with a "k" instead of a "c." We pronounce the "c" in "crisis" as though it were a "k." "Crisis," or "*krisis*" in the Greek, is a term that is used in some places for "judgment," and it focuses in on the verdict that ultimately will be rendered. We use the term "crisis" in the context of an illness when it reaches the point where it's going to go one way or the other—the person is either going to die or they are going to get better. That was the crisis.

The same is used in the context of battles, where it was going to go one way or it was going to go the other. We find, as we look at some of the places this word is used, that God allows events to come to a point where they will go one way or another. One of the statements refers to the end-time as the "crisis at the close of the age" or "the judgment at the end" because when events of the magnitude that are going to happen do happen, it forces people to make decisions and go one way or another. God allows circumstances in that way. There are times of separation; there are times of decision-making.

In Matthew 10, we will note some things about a time of judgment, a time of verdict.

Matthew 10:15, "Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" —Speaking of the city that would not receive Christ's disciples (v. 14). Here, we find a time of future judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their judgment was not total, not all finished. There is a time of future judgment for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Matthew 12:39-42, Jesus said, "...An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and

condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."

We find it clearly stated that there is a future day of judgment. **There is a time of judgment in which people of all generations, backgrounds and ethnic groups will arise.** There is a time of judgment. We know the men of Nineveh, who flourished perhaps eight centuries prior to the time of Christ, were prophesied to rise up with the generation He was addressing right here. The Queen of the South, who flourished nine centuries after the people of Sodom and Gomorrah—who flourished perhaps 17 or 18 centuries before—all of them were prophesied to rise up with the generation that Christ was addressing. Here are people separated by time and space. People who spoke different languages, who came from different cultures and backgrounds, who were separated by vast distances of time, they are all going to rise together in a future period of judgment. There is a judgment of far-reaching consequences that is going to come. We will look a little further and see even more about this judgment that is to come.

We saw Jesus addressed the subject in John 3:17-18. His first coming was not coming for judgment; it was coming for salvation.

John 5:22, we also find, "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son."

Let's notice a little bit about the judgment.

John 12:42-43, "Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

Here is one of the crucial points of understanding judgment: Whose approval are we seeking? The doctrine of eternal judgment is very important because it reminds us of the fact that there are consequences for our decisions and our actions that go far beyond right here and right now. It's not enough to win the approval of people. It's not enough to get people to agree with you. There are things that are far greater than that because there is a time of judgment.

Here are individuals who were not willing to take a stand because they didn't want to be put out of the synagogue. The Pharisees who controlled the synagogue had already made up their minds. Christ mentioned in Matthew 23:2 that the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. They exercised quite a bit of authority. They had

already made a decision that if anyone were to acknowledge that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, this was going to be grounds to put them out of the synagogue. Here were individuals who were sure that He probably was the Messiah, but they were more concerned about what people thought than they were about what God thought. That is a very fatal decision.

John 12:44-50, “Then Jesus cried out and said, ‘He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.’”

The point is that while Jesus Christ did not come to judge the world at that time, there is a time of judging. There is a time of judgment! And one of the things we recognize, if we really understand the doctrine of eternal judgment, is that God’s evaluation is far more crucial than the evaluation of people. It is something which we must be far more concerned with than simply what people think. People tend to be concerned about what other people think because that is who they can see. They look around and they can see other people. People can say things and do things, and we live in a world where we are impressed by what we see.

In 2 Corinthians 5:7, God tells us we must walk by faith, which involves being impressed by what we can’t see. Recognizing that even if no one sees what you do, God sees and knows. *We live our lives before God—not simply before human beings.* A lot of people think they can really put something over if they manage to do something, keep it covered up and other people don’t find out. They don’t understand the doctrine of eternal judgment—there is an accountability that we have. That accountability isn’t simply to people; it’s to God.

In Acts 17, the Apostle Paul speaks of that as he is addressing the Athenians on Mars’ Hill.

Acts 17:22-24, he told them, “...‘Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and

considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the one whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it [This is the Creator God, the God that made the world.],”

Verse 26, “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their habitation...”

Verses 28-29, “for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’” Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.”

Verses 31-32, “because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.’ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked,”

They thought that was crazy. They didn’t believe in the resurrection. They believed that the last thing you wanted to do was to resurrect the body. They believed that death separated this pure, immortal soul from this old evil body. This was, of course, the doctrine of the Greek philosophers, certainly going back to Socrates and Plato.

So, Paul addressed the subject of the resurrection and the subject of judgment—that the Creator God had appointed a day in which He would judge the world. He would do so in righteousness, and He would do so through an Individual He had already testified to through raising Him from the dead. The resurrection—raising Him from the dead—was God’s stamp of authenticity that Jesus Christ was exactly who He said He was.

Well, the Athenians were not impressed. But we learn here, again, that there is a time of judgment, and that judgment is going to be administered through Jesus Christ. He is the One that has been appointed to that office.

Let’s notice one other place.

2 Timothy 4:1, “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom...” We find that Jesus Christ will judge the world. He will judge the living and the dead at the time of His appearing—the time of His Kingdom. There is a time of judgment. God has appointed a time of judgment to come.

We saw in the book of Revelation the statement that the judgment of the Great Whore would come.

Revelation 17:1, "...‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters...’"

Revelation 18:4, "...‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’"

Verse 10, "...‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’" There is a time that God is going to judge this world’s system.

God steps in to judge the world with those events that are called the Day of the Lord. The period called the Great Tribulation is called the time of Satan’s wrath directed against physical Israel (It’s called, in the book of Jeremiah, “the time of Jacob’s trouble.”) and against spiritual Israel—the Church.

Revelation 12:17, we read, “And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” He goes to make war with the rest of her offspring. The Tribulation represents Satan’s wrath, but God is going to step in and He begins to pour out His wrath in that final year called the Day of the Lord.

Joel 3:14, that’s why we read, “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.”

Verse 12, “‘Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations [KJV, “heathens”].’”

Verse 12 talks about the Valley of Jehoshaphat and in verse 14, it is called the valley of decision—the valley of judgment.

When all of these armies converge and the great God steps in, it is the valley of decision—or the valley of judgment—because God is going to judge the world. He will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31). The sinful nations will be judged as the plagues of the Day of the Lord are poured out. That is described in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 11:15, “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever!’”

Verse 18, “‘The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged,’” It is, of course, a time when the nations are angry and God’s wrath

is come, a time when the nations shall be judged. There will come a time of accountability that we find here. We could go on through all of the description that is given here of the time of God’s judgment. But the judgment that God pours out on the sinful nations sets the stage of conquest for the beginning of the Millennium. It merely sets the stage for what is to come.

Revelation 19:1-2, we read, “After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.’” Here, we have God’s judgment referenced.

Verse 11, “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.” We find Jesus Christ returning to judge the world.

Revelation 20:4, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them.... And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”

Verse 6, we are told, “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” Here, we find the role of the resurrected saints as priests and to reign with Jesus Christ for the thousand years. They sit on thrones judging the nations.

The twelve apostles specifically will be judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28). God is a God of order and organization. There’ll be structure and organization set up.

There is a time of judgment coming, a time we read of in Isaiah 32.

Isaiah 32:1 when, “Behold a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.” It is a time of judging the nations. This is not just a matter of sentencing the nation. Here are individuals that will be judged, that will be separated out. The role of the priests and the king was to administer God’s judgment and to teach the people the basis of that judgment. That is our function through the thousand years.

Now, that’s not the end of the story because what about all the people who have lived and died down through the centuries, all “the dead small and great” (the significant and the insignificant)?

Revelation 20:11-12, “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face

the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.” Here, we find a time of judgment, a time that will be after the thousand years.

Verse 5 tells us, “...the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”

Those who are in the first resurrection are called blessed and holy.

Verse 6, “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” They are those who are Christ’s at His coming.

Judgment is now of the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). We are under God’s judgment now.

Revelation 22:12, Jesus Christ says, “‘And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.’” Christ is going to come back and His reward is with Him. He says, ‘I come quickly and My reward is with Me.’

We are saved by grace and rewarded according to our works. We could go through various parables and different things Christ gave illustrating that principle. The point is that our time of judgment is now. The judgment of the nations will begin during the final year leading up to Christ’s return, called the Day of the Lord. The time when the plagues begin to be poured out on the Beast and the Beast system culminate when Christ returns, and then there will be judgment that will begin to be exercised over the nations. We will share in that process of judging. There is a time to come, a time when all the dead, small and great, will stand up and will stand before God. We find that referenced in Revelation 20:12.

We already read Matthew 10 and Matthew 12 where Jesus spoke of a time when people separated by centuries of time and by hundreds of miles and location would all rise together in a time of judgment. And He spoke of the fact that it would be better for some—of course, for Sodom and Gomorrah or the people of Nineveh or the Queen of Sheba—than for the generation He was addressing.

Let’s understand a little bit about the judgment that is described here because there are **three resurrections** that are described in the Bible.

The **first resurrection** is the one we commonly focus on. It is the resurrection to glory—the resurrection of those who are Christ’s at His coming. It is the resurrection of the saints who will rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years. That is the best resurrection, the better resurrection (Hebrews 11:35). Those who are in that resurrection are called blessed and holy because they are part of the first resurrection and don’t need to fear death ever again because they have been resurrected to immortality.

But what about the people of Sodom, the people of Nineveh and the people of Jesus’ day? Are they going to be resurrected to immortality? Well, no. Why would that be?

There is an interesting account given back in Ezekiel 37, which is the **second resurrection**.

Ezekiel 37:1-5, “The hand of the Lord came upon me [Ezekiel] and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. And He said to me, ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ So I answered, ‘O Lord God, You know.’ Again He said to me, ‘Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, “O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: ‘Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live.’””

Verse 7, “So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone.” –Leg connected to the knee bone and all the way up.

Can you imagine this vision? Ezekiel was transported in a vision, in likeness as though he was there. He gazes out and sees a giant valley just full of dry bones. When he makes this announcement, all of a sudden, the bones are shaking and rattling and all this noise and commotion is going on. He looks and here are all these bones that are coming together. Can you imagine what this must have looked like? Even if it was a vision, it must have scared the daylight out of him to see this—all these bones beginning to rattle and shake and begin to come together! He saw that and before long, it was like there were skeletons all over the place where just before, it had been a jumble of dry bones.

Then he did as God told him and sinews and flesh came upon them—skin covered them. So, all of a sudden, from skeletons—it’s like he could see it step by step—the veins and internal organs appeared, the flesh came and covered

them, then the skin covered them and the valley was littered with corpses. They were dead. There wasn't any breath in them (v. 8).

Verses 9-10, he was told, "...Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.''" So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army."—An exceedingly great multitude. They were alive.

Verses 11-14, "Then He said to me, 'Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: 'Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My....'"

[Tape ends on side 2.]

[Editorial comment: The material in brackets was taken from a sermon Mr. Ogwyn gave on June 23, 1990, which completes this topic.]

[Verse 14, "....'...Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it,' says the Lord."]

God will restore the whole house of Israel to life. Matthew 12:41-42, "The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."—Resurrection to judgment.

Over half of all the people who ever lived on earth are alive right now.

The **third resurrection** is described.

Revelation 20:13-15, "The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found

written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."—The second death.

Malachi 4:1-3, "For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,' says the Lord of hosts, 'that will leave them neither root nor branch. But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves. You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this,' says the Lord of hosts."

Hebrews 10 explains who will be in the second death.

Hebrews 10:26, "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins..."

Appreciate and value the knowledge God has given us. Set your heart on fulfilling the great purpose God is working in our lives.]