

Judgment

Judgment is a huge subject and the passages cited below are just a few of many. In fact, in some ways you could say the entire Scripture is about judgment. I encourage each of you, in your own studying of God's Word, to read the Word and meditate upon judgment as a subject and may the Lord open your understanding that you may be able to stand rightly in Him on this important matter. Briefly, in this seminar, I anticipate us addressing three aspects of judgment:

- (1) How judgment is exercised in the Kingdom of God
- (2) How judgment always precedes revival and
- (3) How a believer ought to make judgment a part of his/her daily life.

As an introductory matter, I want to make a few things clear.

Introduction

First, God is known by His judgment.

Ps 9:16 The LORD is known [by] the judgment [which] he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

Second, God loves judgment.

Ps 37:28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Isa 1:17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Isa 1:21 How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

Isa 1:27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

The contrasting point, when there is an absence of judgment, is made further evident in Isaiah 59

Isa 59:8 The way of peace they know not; and [there is] no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

Isa 59:9 Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, [but] we walk in darkness.

Isa 59:11 We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but [there is] none; for salvation, [but] it is far off from us.

Isa 59:14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

Isa 59:15 Yea, truth faileth; and he [that] departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw [it], and it displeased him that [there was] no judgment.

Third, God wants you to know and walk in His judgment.

Ps 25:9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

Ps 37:6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Ps 106:3 Blessed [are] they that keep judgment, [and] he that doeth righteousness at all times.

Proverbs 1:1-7

1 ¶ The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

5 A wise [man] will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

6 To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

7 ¶ The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of knowledge: [but] fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 2:6-9

6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth [cometh] knowledge and understanding.

7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: [he is] a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; [yea], every good path.

Pr 21:3 To do justice and judgment [is] more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

Pr 21:15 [It is] joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction [shall be] to the workers of iniquity.

Pr 28:5 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all [things].

Isa 54:17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [that] shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This [is] the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness [is] of me, saith the LORD.

Isa 56:1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation [is] near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

Judgment in the Kingdom of God

1. How judgment is exercised in the Kingdom of God

A. Under the Levitical Priesthood, we find three distinct periods, (1) Israel under the Judges from Moses to Samuel, (2) Israel under the Kings and (3) Israel when there was no King. All shared certain common elements, but there were also differences that are informative.

1. Israel under the Judges.

This period is described in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges and I Samuel. During this period the Lord was Israel's King and they were to submit themselves to Him as their ruler. Central to their submission to Him was their submission to His line of authority that worked like this

A. **Judge (e.g. Moses, Joshua, Samuel).** The Judges that God established during this period of time were not hereditary, but they were over all, including the priesthood. God expected the Levitical Priesthood to recognize the Judge He established and to submit themselves to that Judge, just like they had done to Moses and Joshua. These would be equivalent to the Watchman Called of God as described in Ezekial 33.

- B. **The Levitical Priesthood.** Under the Judge was the Levitical Priesthood, with the sons of Aaron at its head. Each of the positions in the Levitical priesthood were hereditary from the High Priest down.
- C. **Sanhedrin.** This group of 70 elders was established during the time of Moses and continued all the way to the days of Jesus and His disciples, though by then it was so far from the faith that it crucified the Lord of glory and persecuted/killed His disciples.
- D. **Lesser Judges/Rulers.** These rulers were generally chosen by the people. Sometimes that might be geographically based (i.e. serving a particular town). Other times it might be numerically based (i.e. captains over 50s, 100s, 1000s, etc...). See Exodus 18, Deuteronomy 16:18. These were equivalent to the Watchman called of the people, as described in Ezekial 33.

2. **Israel under the Kings.**

When Israel, during the days of Samuel, rejected God as their King and wanted a king like all the other nations had (read I Samuel 8 and 10:17-27), things changed in the sense that the office of "Judge" was taken away. It was replaced by God with His Prophets.

When the King submitted himself unto God, it was reflected by his heeding the instruction of God's prophets and submitting himself unto the Levitical Priesthood. David, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah are leading examples of this and God moved mightily through them (and those they established in authority) to minister His judgment unto the people. Saul and all the kings of the divided kingdom of Israel (divided from Judah) were examples of those who did not.

The promise of God to Israel, relating to their Kings, was also set forth plainly by Samuel, the last Judge in Israel, in I Samuel 12. Specifically in verses 14-15 he says:

14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:

15 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as [it was] against your fathers.

3. **Israel after the Kings until Christ and the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.**

During most, if not all, of this time period Israel was under foreign Kings. To varying degrees they were able to maintain the other elements of the orders, as God had originally set them up under Moses, particularly after the returned from captivity and rebuilt the temple.

B. In the New Testament, we see God's government in His Kingdom working in and through the Church, not through the governments (civil) organized by man.

1. **Authority.**

His line of authority (i.e. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers as well as Bishops, Deacons and Elders) mirrors, in many ways (leaving aside the hereditary nature of the Levitical Priesthood, which was done away with), what Moses laid out in the old testament. See e.g. John 17, Ephesians 3:1-5, 4:11-13 and Romans 13.

Specifically, much like the Judges (and later the Prophets) were over all God has set His Apostles. They represent the Watchman Called of God described in Ezekial 33. From there, you see the line of authority fill out moving downward to prophets, evangelists, pastors and then teachers. The pastors being akin to the Watchman called of the people as described in Ezekial 33.

Bishops, deacons and elders being akin to the numerical and geographic rulers established by Moses.

Even the priesthood (so-called) follows many of the same attributes with music ministers, ministries of helps (i.e. maintaining the building and grounds), deacons serving more senior ministers much like non-commissioned officers in an army, etc...

2. Discipleship.

All believers are called to be disciples. Discipleship, as taught by Jesus, is a form of on the job training or apprenticeship. It is how you learn to identify and then walk worthy of the vocation wherein you are called.

Discipleship also implies discipline. You find Jesus often judging, rebuking, exhorting and reproofing His disciples. The early Church did likewise. I and II Timothy as well as Titus provide the framework for how much of this is going to work. The commitment, however, is total. After all did not Jesus say:

Lu 14:26 If any [man] come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Matthew 16:24-26

24 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Do you think He has changed His standards?

2. **Judgment always precedes revival, both individually and collectively.** The revival comes as the people acknowledge the truth of their own error and repent, then God's mercy (which rejoiceth against judgment) is poured forth and revival comes. There are many examples, some of which take quite some time to manifest. Here are a few for you to meditate upon.

A. Moses (judgment) to Joshua (revival). See also Hebrews 3-4.

B. Samuel

1. Eli / Israel

2. Saul / David

3. Solomon

- C. Jehoshaphat / Ahab
- D. Isaiah (Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah). See e.g. Isa. 1:17, 21 & 27
- E. Jeremiah/Ezekial to Daniel and his fellows, Esther/Mordecai, Ezra and Nehemiah
- F. Jesus, John the Baptist and Jesus' Disciples all preached (as recorded in the Gospels) to repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand. Good examples of this are when Jesus sent the 12 and then the 70 out. See Matthew 10:5-15 (relating to the 12) and Luke 10:1-12 and 17-20 (relating to the 70). He told His disciples that if people receive you it is because they have received me. Stay and heal the sick, etc... If people reject you it is because they have rejected me and it shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them.
- G. Peter's first two sermons after Jesus' resurrection. See Acts 2:14-47 and Acts 3 to 4:1-4.
- H. Paul (every where he went, always began in synagogue and then to Gentiles)

3. **Judgment as a part of a believers daily walk in Christ**

Paying attention to God's Holy "feedback loop" is critical to all believers walk in Christ. After all the Scripture is clear that the just shall live by faith and how without faith it is impossible to please Him. The Scripture further highlights what the walk of faith looks like, Jesus being the perfect example, followed the many men and women in the Scripture whose lives exemplify what the walk of faith looks like. See e.g. Hebrews 11, the Gospels and the Book of Acts to name a few.

Paul makes plain that there must be "heresies" amongst us that those that are approved may be made manifest. I Corinthians 11:19. What is this approval and how do you find out where you stand? At its most basic level, the question is did God show up (i.e. make Himself manifest that He is with you) by moving in and through you by His power to the accomplishment of His will? There are two fundamental ways for you to know.

One is through discipleship. When you bring your "works" (i.e. that which you say, do, etc...) to your discipler, you are bringing them to the light to be "judged" whether they be wrought in God or not. See John 3:16-21. This should be a regular part of your life if you want to serve the Lord.

The second is by paying attention to God's feedback loop. When you stand before man to proclaim God's Word, does He back the Word that you speak by His power? If not, then something is wrong and you need to seek the Lord to find out what that is.

The importance of God's feedback loop, whether it come to you directly or through the medium of discipleship cannot be overstated. After all, are we not all going to have to stand before God's judgment seat where He will either say "enter in" or "depart from me" into everlasting fire. I don't know about you, but that seems to be a pretty serious matter to me. The way we come to stand before Him on that day is by embracing His judgments every day.

Brother Rick, put together a few examples of what we call God's logic, a logic that closely follows a common logic employed by computer programmers, namely IF _____, THEN _____, ELSE _____. Here are a few of those for you to meditate upon.

God to Adam in the Garden (Genesis 2:16-17) followed by Adam's fall.
Genesis 3

Promise of God's power to believers on the Gospel and damnation to those who do not believe. Mark 16:15-20, John 14:12 and I John 4:17 (as He is, so are we in this world).

Blessings vs. Cursings as set forth in Deuteronomy 28.

If you are dead to sin (i.e. walk not after the flesh nor being carnally minded), then you will no longer live in sin, but rather you will live in Christ by faith (i.e. be "spiritually minded") and manifest the fruit of the Spirit, which is love in its various attributes because God is love. See Romans 6-8, Galatians 5, etc...

If tithe and offer blessed, else curse. Malachi 3:7-12.