

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT

Eccl 11:9, 12:14; Mt 25:31-46; Rev 20:11-15

I. THE BIBLICAL WITNESS

- A. OT: Eccl 11:9, 12:14; Dn 12:2; Ps 96:13
- B. NT: Mt 25:31-46; Rom 2:16
- C. Creedal certainty: finale: CHRIST “will come again to judge the living and the dead;” when He comes “all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account for their own works” (*Quicunque Creed*)
- D. Angels too will be judged

II. THE RESURRECTION PRELUDE—All who have lived will appear before the Judgment Seat—embodied and fully human; “The last judgment is the judicial act by which on the last day, immediately upon the resurrection of the dead, Christ in great majesty and glory will pronounce sentence on all men, will separate the elect from the reprobate, and adjudge the former to life eternal, the latter to unquenchable fire” (Bucanus).

III. CHRIST WILL JUDGE—the Father “has entrusted all judgment to the Son” (Jn 5:22)

- A. GOD the FATHER will oversee the process—thus perfect criteria & consequences, for He Is Just
 - 1. FINAL! No further appeal
 - 2. RIGHTEOUS! Right blend of mercy & justice
- B. GOD the SON will orchestrate/execute the process—the Incarnate One fully knows our frame
- C. JUSTICE will be perfectly realized—“And being present at His judicial decision, all, both men and angels and demons, shall utter one voice, saying, ‘Righteous is your judgment’ (Ps. 118:137). “Of which voice the justification will be seen in the awarding to each that which is just; since to those who have done well shall be assigned righteously eternal bliss, and to the lovers of iniquity shall be given eternal punishment” (Hippolytus, *Against the Greeks*, c. 3).
 - 1. Satisfying our inner hunger for final justice for all—freely assent to verdicts
 - 2. Enabling us to fully forgive—as forgiven & reconciled, ready to follow suit
 - 3. Justifying our efforts on earth to live rightly—heavenly rewards rightly distributed
 - 4. Ratifying our evangelistic efforts to reach the lost
 - 5. Accounting for total ramifications of our works (including influence on others & successive generations)

IV. JUDGMENT PRINCIPLES CLEAR (cf Rom 1:5-7)

- A. GOOD (words, works, secrets, etc) rewarded—eternal life, bliss, joy
- B. EVIL (words, works, secrets, etc) punished—everlasting sorrow, pain,
- C. Some believe there will be diverse categories, rendering judgment on the basis of person’s following “light”
 - 1. Heathen—Natural Law—Rom 1 & 2
 - 2. Jews—OT
 - 3. Christians OT + NT—Heb 10:29
- D. Others believe only those who have consciously accepted Jesus as Savior will be saved

V. ULTIMATE TRUTHS REVEALED

- A. Self-Revelation—book re life opened (Mt 6:4, 6; 12:36 ff.; Heb 4:13 re Word revealing)
 - 1. Some think even forgiven sins will be made known—Rom 2:16
 - 2. Others think forgiven sins will be concealed (covered/cleansed by the Blood of Christ)—Eph 5:27
- B. Separation—dividing line (*krisis*) clear & reasonable & absolutely just
- C. Condemnation of wicked—depth & consequences of evil evident & abhorrent
- D. Confirmation of salvation process
 - 1. Particular Judgment re-affirmed—faith in Jesus crucial
 - 2. All consequences of life revealed
 - 3. Joy finalized as Grace made clear

VI. RIGHT REWARDS for the RIGHTEOUS

- A. Degrees/differences appropriate for every person—equity, not equality
- B. Joy for all the redeemed as understand and approve God’s good judgments