

A study of Jesus Christ

Last week we started with the final degree of Christ's glorification, which is the Final Judgment.

First we inquired whether there will be a Final Judgment and we divided this topic into six categories to show that it will definitely happen: 1. Scripture's declarations; 2. God's decree; 3. God's omnipotence; 4. God's justice; 5. The reason God created man; and 6. God's glory.

We looked at point #1 last week and studied what Scripture had to say about the Last Judgment. Today we will look at following points.

2. The decree of God, by which he ordained, and determined with himself, from everlasting to raise the dead. Enoch, Elijah and Christ are examples of it. But the most compelling is this clear prophecy from Ezekiel. Without the Holy Spirit Ezekiel couldn't have known this so many years in advance.

Eze 37:1- 28 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones. ²He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry. ³He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know." ⁴Again He said to me, "Prophecy over these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.'

⁵"Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life. ⁶I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the LORD.'" ⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

⁸And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then He said to me, "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 come to life.'" ¹⁰So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army. ¹¹Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up and our

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hope has perished. We are completely cut off.' ¹²"Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

¹³"Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people.

¹⁴"I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it," declares the LORD.'" ¹⁵The word of the LORD came again to me saying,

¹⁶"And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.'

¹⁷"Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. ¹⁸"When the sons of your people speak to you saying, 'Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?' ¹⁹say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'"'

²⁰"The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

²¹"Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²²and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms.

²³"They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. ²⁴"My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.

²⁵"They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince

forever. ²⁶"I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. ²⁷"My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. ²⁸"And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.'"

3. The omnipotence of God by which He is able to accomplish things which are impossible for us to comprehend. Christ uses this argument in refuting the Sadducees.

Mat 22:29-31 But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹"But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God: ³²'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

4. The justice of God, which demands that it be well with the good, and ill with the wicked, and that perfectly. But this does not come to pass in this life. There must be another life in which God will render full justice to everyone.

It is in this way that Paul comforts himself, and all the godly under the trials to which we are exposed. "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you And give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well.

This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels."1

2Th 1:6-10 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed.

Luk 16:23-26 In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.' ²⁵But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'

5. The reason God created the human race. The purpose of God is never thwarted, He always obtains his end. He created man for this purpose, that he might be the temple in which He would dwell, and that He might communicate joy and blessedness to man.

But this does not take place here in this life; neither can it take place here. Since God would not create so excellent a creature as man for perpetual misery, we may infer with certainty that there will be a change. God is never disappointed in His purpose, nor will He permit the temple of the Holy Ghost to be given over to perpetual corruption.

This happiness, too, is a part of the image of God in which man was created, and as it was destroyed by the devil, God, who is greater than the evil, will restore it. Therefore, it is not only probable, but it is most certain that man was not created to suffer these evils but for a better end, which will be attained when Christ comes again.

The resurrection and happiness of our bodies is also confirmed by this passage:

1Co 6:19 , 20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

6. The glory of God. God created man that he might forever praise and glorify Him, which cannot take place without the resurrection and the judgment.

Eze 39:21, 22 And I will set My glory among the nations; and all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed and My hand which I have laid on them. ²²And the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God from that day onward.

Rev 14:6, 7 And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; ⁷and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

Now that we have established that there will be a Final Judgment, we should proceed to inquire what this judgment will be.

2. What is this judgment?

In every court case here on earth we have the accused, the accuser, the judge, the case, the trial, the law according to which a decision is given, the sentence of acquittal or condemnation, and the execution of the sentence according to the law.

From this it is easy to give a definition of the Final Judgment which God will execute through Christ. The judge, in this case, will have no need of accusers or witnesses, inasmuch as He himself will make the works of all known, being himself the searcher of all hearts.

There will then merely be the judge, the law, the guilty, the sentence and its execution. The final judgment is, therefore, that judgment which will take place at the end of the world, when Christ the judge will descend in a visible manner (Acts 1:11) from heaven in a cloud in the glory and majesty of his Father and the holy angels, when all men who have lived from the beginning of the world will be raised. Those who will then be living shall be suddenly changed.

All will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, who will pass sentence upon all, and cast the wicked with the devils into everlasting

punishment. He will receive the godly to himself, that they may with him, and the blessed angels, enjoy eternal felicity and glory in heaven.

Let's break the doctrine of the Last Judgment out into six logical units and study each one. The Last Judgment, then, consists of the following:

1. It is the disclosure of all hearts.

1Co 4:5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

2. It is the revelation of all those things that men have done.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

3. It is a separation of the righteous and the wicked.

Mat 25:31, 32 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³²"All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

This separation will be made by God himself and therefore, be most holy and righteous. Is God unjust? Certainly not!

Rom 3:5, 6 But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.) ⁶May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?

This judgment will be effected through Christ because...

Joh 5:21-23 ...just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. ²²For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, ²³so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Act 17:30, 31 Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, ³¹because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in

righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.

4. Christ will pronounce and execute sentence upon all according to the law and gospel:

Mat 25:34 Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'

Mat 25:41 Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.'

It will result in

5. the perfect deliverance of the church, and
6. the banishment of the wicked and devils into everlasting punishment.

Mat 25:46 These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

The righteous and wicked will be judged according to the law and the gospel, which means that they will be declared righteous or wicked at the court of Christ. The acquittal of the righteous will be according to the gospel and confirmed by the law. The condemnation of the wicked will be mainly by the law and confirmed by the gospel.

Sentence will be passed upon the wicked according to their own merits but passed upon the righteous according to the merits of Christ applied to them by faith, the truth of which will then be made known by their works which shall be brought to light.

The righteous themselves will then also confess that their reward is not of merit, but of grace in that which they shall be heard to say "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" (Matt 25: 37-39)

We are by nature all subject to the wrath of God. Yet, we shall be pronounced blessed, not in Adam, but in Christ, the blessed seed. It is for this reason that sentence shall be passed upon the righteous according to the gospel.

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Judgment will be rendered even to the elect according to their works not because their works are meritorious, but because they are the effects of faith. They shall receive according to their works, which are the effects of their faith, that is, they shall be judged according to their faith, which is the same thing as to be judged according to the gospel.

The judgment which Christ will execute will be more according to the effects of faith than according to the faith itself, because he will have it made known why he judges the way he does, in order that the wicked may not challenge his righteousness as though he bestowed eternal life unjustly upon the faithful.

He will prove from the fruits of their faith that it was a true faith they possessed, and that they are the persons to whom eternal life is due according to the promise.

He will exhibit to the wicked the works of the righteous, and bring them forward as evidences for the purpose of demonstrating to the ungodly that they have applied unto themselves the merits of Christ. God will also render to the faithful according to their works, that we may take comfort from it in this life, having the assurance that we shall be placed with him on His throne where He sits at the right hand of the Father.