

Will Justice Be Done?



The following notes contain some of the material presented in the series "Is God for Real?"

Daily we hear of stories that cry out for justice. Whether it's on Facebook, the nightly news or within our own families, we see the desperate need for wrongs to be put right. With so much suffering in the world is it possible for justice to prevail?

The Bible describes a time of judgement when justice will finally be done, and that is good news for God's people, good news for freedom and good news for the security of the universe.

Perhaps you have witnessed, or even been the subject of, a miscarriage of justice where the facts were distorted and false accusations made. You longed for the time when the truth would be told. In the Biblical Judgement God will right every wrong. There is a courtroom that is impartial, just and transparent where right will triumph over wrong. But it is also a place where forgiveness is in abundance. Perhaps you have done wrong to others and recognise that in such a judgement you would be found guilty. There is good news for you, because in the heavenly judgement God offers forgiveness and pardon through Jesus Christ to any willing to receive it.

The Bible reminds us that God "has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained," Acts 17:31. This was written many years after the cross, and yet the writer, Paul, places this judgement day in the future, from his perspective. Notice he also has a definite period of time in mind, when he says, "He has appointed a day..." This judgement day does not involve just a few people. Everyone is involved, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad," 2Corinthians 5:10. Romans 14:12 also acknowledges this, saying that "each of us shall give account of himself to God."

This judgement takes place, not in any earthly courtroom, but in heaven itself. In the Old Testament book of Daniel, we see the heavenly court scene described. God, called here the Ancient of Days, takes His seat on the throne. He is surrounded by multiple thousands of angelic beings. Then we read, "the court was seated and the books were opened," Daniel 7:9-10. What are these 'books?' They are records of words and deeds done on earth. The Bible mentions such books elsewhere: The book of Remembrance, (Malachi 3:16), where our good deeds are recorded. The books of judgement, (Revelation 20:12), and the book of Life, (Revelation 3:5). Those who have accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour have their names written in the Book of Life.

Next in Daniel chapter 7 we see the Son of man being brought before the throne, Daniel 7:13. This 'Son of man' is none other than Jesus Christ. Jesus used the phrase "Son of man" to describe Himself many times when He was here on earth, and the religious leaders of His day knew that he was identifying Himself with the 'Son of man' referred to in Daniel chapter 7.

In a typical courtroom you have a Judge, a Defence lawyer or Advocate, and a Prosecution. But who is the Judge in the heavenly court? Many would presume God the Father. However, John 5:22 reveals that, 'the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.' This means that Jesus Christ is our Judge, and that is good news. So, who then is our defence? In one of his letters to the church John writes about our Advocate, 'if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,' 1John 2:1. If Jesus is our Advocate and our Judge, then all we

need is Him. If we have Jesus, we have everything. If Jesus is our Judge and our Advocate we cannot lose. This is the good news of the Judgement. But who then is the prosecution? Sadly, many have thought that God is the prosecution, seeking to condemn us, but Jesus revealed that, 'the Father Himself loves you,' John 16:27.

The prosecution is actually Satan. The Bible describes him as 'the accuser.' In Revelation 12:10 we read, 'the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.' So, in the great court of heaven it is imperative that we have Jesus stand as our Advocate. But when does this judgement take place? The Bible is clear that this judgement in heaven takes place after the time of the New Testament, but before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. By comparing the prophetic time periods in Daniel chapters 7, 8 & 9 and applying the day for a year interpretive principle, the Bible identifies the judgement as beginning after the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14. This period begins in 457 BC and would therefore bring us down to 1844 AD as the starting date for the heavenly Judgement.

But why have a Judgement in heaven anyway? Surely God knows everything, even our thoughts and our motives. The judgement isn't for God's benefit. However, remember the thousands upon thousands of heavenly angelic beings surrounding the throne of God at the judgement? Daniel 7:10. They are intensely interested in what is taking place during the judgement. Why? The Bible tells us that long ago a third of the angels were cast out of heaven with the Devil for rebelling against God, Revelation 12:7-9. Now God is planning to bring sinners, human beings, back into the realms of heaven, and through the judgement He is demonstrating that those who have accepted His Son Jesus Christ have altered the course of their lives and are safe to save. They also demonstrate by their changed lives that God was right in choosing to forgive them and give them the gift of salvation. The judgement reveals the goodness of God, and also reveals who has accepted His grace and who has rejected it. Jesus said, 'by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven,' Matthew 7:20-21. In the end it is we who decide whether we will be in heaven. God has already revealed His desire. On the cross Jesus said, 'Father forgive them for they do not know what they do,' Luke 23:34. Furthermore, He also said, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life,' John 3:16. That word 'whosoever' means anyone who will respond. That is why the judgement is good news for those who have accepted Christ. When the final verdict is handed down the judgement finds in favour of God's people. Notice what Daniel 7:22 says, 'judgment was made in favour of the saints of the 'Most High.' Once the judgement is over Jesus will return to take His children home to heaven. The promise of everlasting life will become a reality there.

Ever since Satan succeeded in tempting Eve and Adam in the garden of Eden there have been miscarriages of Justice in our world. The judgement will result in every wrong being put right. Perhaps the greatest example of injustice the world has ever seen was the trial of Jesus. Even though the Judge, Pontius Pilate, could find no fault in Him, the crowd demanded that He be condemned, sentenced and crucified. He took our penalty, He took our place. He took our death and gave us His everlasting life. He offers forgiveness and everlasting life to whoever will receive it. Will you place your life in the hands of Jesus Christ – your Saviour, Advocate and Judge?

If you would like to know more about this subject, or others in the series, 'Is God for Real?' then please contact one of our staff and they will be happy to help you.