

Foundations Principles: Judgements



Slice D1.6

Judgements

Slice Content

1	<i>Judgements</i>	2
1.1	The Judgement of Believers' Sins	2
1.2	The Believer's Self-Judgement	3
1.3	Divine Discipline	3
1.4	The Bema Judgement Seat of Christ	4
1.5	Does Jesus also Promise us Crowns as a Reward for Service?	6
1.6	The Sheep and Goats Judgement	8
1.7	The Tribulation Judgement	10
1.8	Judgement of Angels	10
1.8.1	How will the Church Judge Angels?	11
1.9	White Throne Judgement	12
1.9.1	The Lake of Fire – Gehenna	14
2	<i>Where do the spirits of People go When they Die?</i>	16
3	<i>What about Those who have never Heard the Gospel?</i>	18
4	<i>Proclamation</i>	20
5	<i>Prayer</i>	20
6	<i>Assignments</i>	20

Foundations Principles: Judgements

1 Judgements

The definition of a judgement in our legal system is a decision of a court regarding the rights and liabilities of parties in a legal action or proceeding. Judgements also generally provide the court's explanation of why it has to make a particular court order.

In Scripture, the simple definition of judgement would be to ascertain the truth and to call to account.

There are several judgements mentioned in the Bible because “God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccles. 12:14). Our God is a God of justice, as the psalmist says, “A sceptre of justice will be the sceptre of your kingdom” (Psalm 45:6). The Lord Jesus Himself who is the Judge of all the earth:

John 5:22 (ESV)

“22 The Father judges no one but has entrusted all judgement to the Son.”

Revelation 5:5 (ESV)

“5 Jesus alone is worthy to open the scroll.”

There are several judgements mentioned in Scripture, to bring clarity, each one must to be dealt with individually:

1.1 The Judgement of Believers' Sins

The judgement of a believer's sin was paid for on the cross by Jesus, as was prophesied by Isaiah 800 years before it happened:

Isaiah 53:4–8 (ESV)

“4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds, we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—everyone—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgement he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?”

The author of Hebrews confirms that the Crucifixion of Jesus was a payment for sin writing:

Hebrews 2:9 (ESV)

“9 He suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

Foundations Principles: Judgements

This payment for sin is therefore available to all, who need simply to place their sins at the foot of the cross in faith.

Romans 8:1 (ESV)

“1 There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

1.2 The Believer's Self-Judgement

1 Corinthians 11:31 (ESV)

“31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.”

1 Corinthians 11:17–34 records Paul's rebuke of the church in Corinth, for their abuse of the Lord's Supper. The wealthy had turned it into a drunken feast, while the poor in the church went hungry. Paul gives the church a sober warning, that communion should be a time of self-reflection, a repentance of our sins, and a reminder that Jesus paid the ultimate price for our salvation. The neglect of this reverence could be seen in the Corinthian church, as some of those who had failed to honour the communion had fallen sick and others had died.

Paul's warning to believers is that we are to be brutally honest with ourselves before joining in the Lord's Supper. We must be fully aware of the price that was paid for our sins. This extends to our prayer time, when we come before God, confessing our sins, and asking for forgiveness.

1.3 Divine Discipline

Clear evidence that believers are held accountable for their actions is seen in both the Old and New Testaments:

Psalms 89:27-33 (NKJV)

“27 Also I will make him My firstborn... **30** “If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgements, **31** If they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, **32** Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. **33** Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him.”

Hebrews 12:5–6 (ESV).

“5 My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. **6** For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

On accepting Jesus as our Lord and Saviour we become children of God, so as a good father will lovingly correct and discipline. The Lord will also bring about measures that bring us to repentance and restoration when we sin. The believer is not judged at the

Foundations Principles: Judgements

White Throne of Judgement, we have the gift of salvation and the forgiveness of sin. Any rebellious behaviour is therefore dealt with on earth. This distinguishes us from the world:

1 Corinthians 11:32 (ESV).

“32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.”

Revelation 3:19 (ESV)

“19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline...”

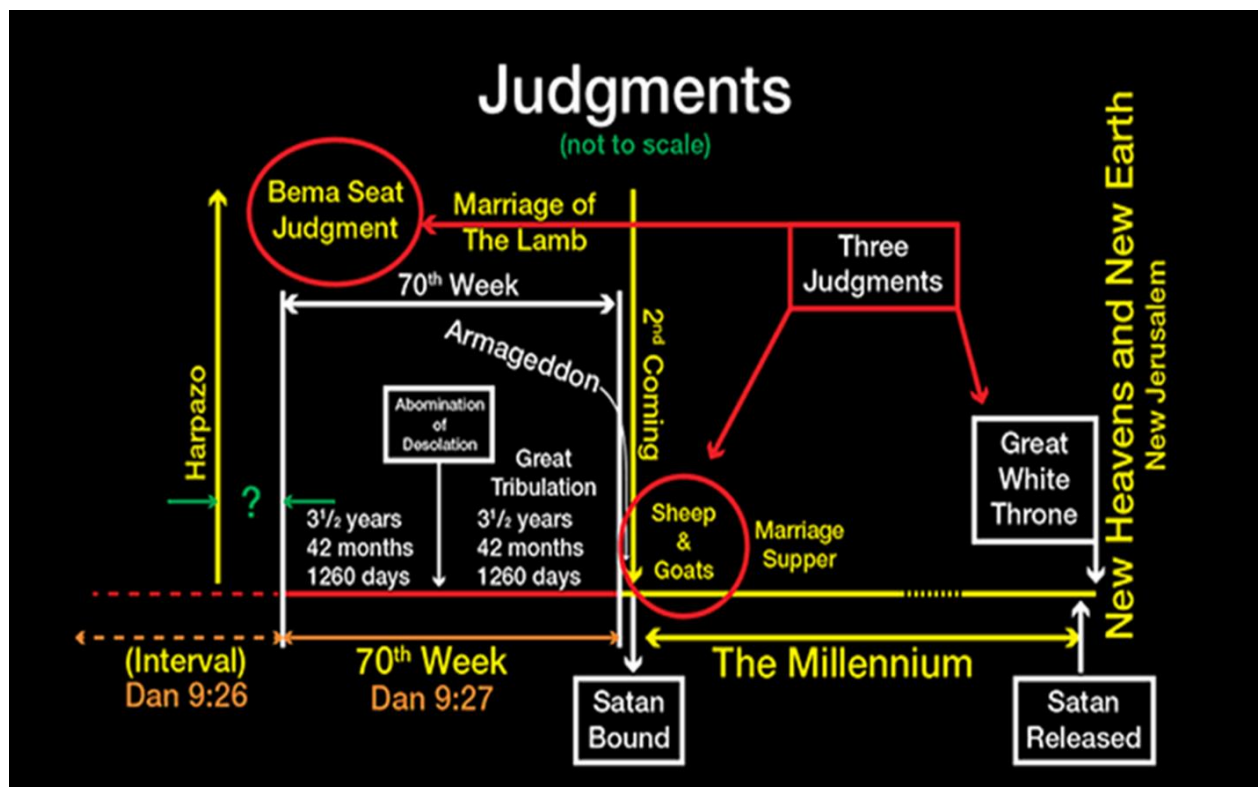
1.4 The Bema Judgement Seat of Christ

In English, the Greek word used for “Judge” carries two meanings:

- The condemnation for wrongdoing.
- The handing out of rewards.

In heaven there will also be two judgements, first, believers will be judged at the Bema Seat of Christ, a judgement of rewards. Then, later, there is the White Throne judgement of the unsaved, a judgement of condemnation.

The Bema was an elevated platform used by an athletics judge in ancient Athens. Athletes would line up before the podium to receive their rewards, depending on how well they had done. The Bema judgement is only for the Bride of Christ and occurs immediately after the rapture.



Foundations Principles: Judgements

In his second letter to the Corinthians Paul includes a warning about the reward for works for Jesus by believers here on earth:

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)

“10 For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.”

All believers will stand before Jesus and be individually judged. Paul’s warning is to emphasize the importance of being eternally minded, to not focus should not on worldly gain, but rather on earning eternal rewards. Jesus made this clear when He told the parable of the rich fool, who stored up all his wealth in barns only to die the next day (Luke 12:13-21). Jesus summarized the parable by saying, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.”

“According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire” (1 Cor. 3:10-15).

In the passage above, Paul is expanding on the point that Jesus is the Foundation of the Church, and on how each person must build their "works" on that foundation. Paul further stresses that these works are subject to judgement, to determine what has eternal value. Precious metals and jewels symbolise lasting works committed in love and self-sacrifice, while the combustible materials symbolise works done with a focus on self and pride – dead works.

The warning is clear, at the Bema Judgement seat our “works” will be tried by fire. Those who have laboured at adding to the construction of the Church will have eternal rewards, while those who have focused their lives on their own wants and needs, will be left with a pile of ash for eternity. They will “suffer loss,” but will still, because of their belief in Jesus as their Lord, go on to live with Him in eternity. They are saved through the fiery test.

Foundations Principles: Judgements

EVERYONE MUST
CHOOSE ONE OF
TWO PAINS:
THE PAIN OF
DISCIPLINE OR
THE PAIN OF
REGRET.

-JIM ROHN-

What will your eternal reward look like?

Gold , silver and Jewels

or

Wood, hay and straw



1.5 Does Jesus also Promise us Crowns as a Reward for Service?

The Greek word used for “Crown” is *stephanos* and relates to the athletic games where the victor was crowned with a laurel wreath. The name of the first Christian martyr Stephen is derived from this term for a crown. This word is then used figuratively in the New Testament, for some of the rewards received at the Bema Judgement.

The New Testament indicates there are five separate heavenly crowns awarded to individual believers:

Imperishable Crown – “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate [disciplined] in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an **imperishable crown**” (1 Corinthians 9:24-25). Paul

Foundations Principles: Judgements

emphasises the commitment of a believer to service in their church by comparing it with an athlete's dedication to training. Just as an athlete must be "disciplined in all things," to be competitive, so too must believers exercise self-control and self-denial to win a crown that will fade or perish.

The Crown of Rejoicing – "For what is our hope, or joy, or **crown of rejoicing**? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" (1 Thessalonians 2:19). The crown of rejoicing will be given to those who engage in the evangelism of those outside the Christian Church. Paul asks the Thessalonian believers what he most anticipated and what would give him his greatest joy, what crown would he wear, and what would make him most proud. For Paul the answer is without question his sharing of the Gospel message with the unsaved.

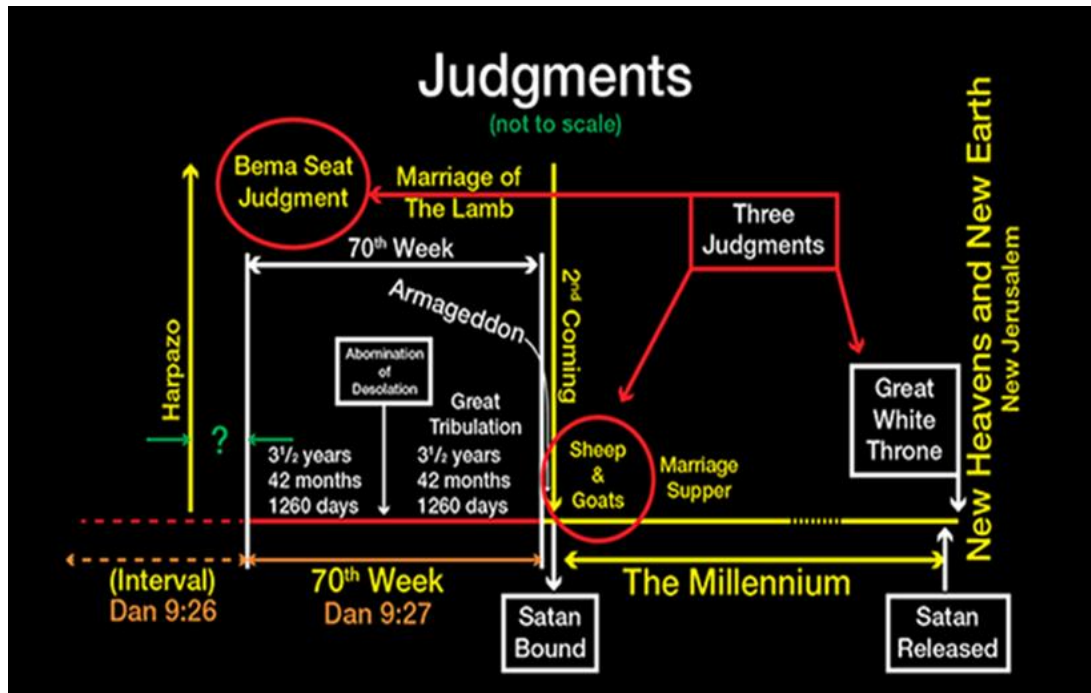
The Crown of Righteousness – "Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:8). This crown is given to those who are eternally minded, living lives of dedicated service, and longing for the return of the Lord. They are the believers who "watch and pray," they are prepared and actively take part in God's unfolding plan for the establishment of His Kingdom.

The Crown of Glory – "Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading **crown of glory**" (1 Peter 5:1-4). The crown of glory is often seen as a crown given to elders of a church; it should however be seen as a crown given to all who fulfill the role of shepherd. This definition ranges from the Sunday school teacher to the counsellor, to the homegroup leader, and to all who teach and preach God's word.

The Crown of Life – "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the **crown of life**" (Revelation 2:10). This crown is often wrongly termed as the martyr's crown, because of the reference to it in the letter to the church in Smyrna. However, it is a crown awarded to all believers who persevere under trials (James 1:12).

Foundations Principles: Judgements

1.6 The Sheep and Goats Judgement



In the parable of the sheep and the goats (Mt. 25:31-46), Jesus indicates that there will be a judgement of individual Gentiles for their treatment of the Jews during the Tribulation (referred to by Jesus as “brethren”). In Matthew 25:40 Jesus says, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.” A judgement will occur at the time of Jesus’ return to earth to set up His kingdom, and all nations will be judged on how they treated the Jews during the seven-year Tribulation.



Foundations Principles: Judgements

There are then three categories in the parable of the sheep and the goats:

1. The sheep who will be blessed under the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, for their care of the Jews during the Tribulation. They will go on to live during the Millennial period, repopulating the earth.
2. The goats are those who persecuted the Jews and will go on to Sheol/Hades (temporary place of the dead) to await the Great White Throne of eternal judgement. This will result in their being thrown into the Lake of Fire (Mt. 25:33; 41).
3. The Tribulation period is a time of sifting for the Jews, and those who reject the Antichrist after he claims godhood will realise that Yeshua is their true Messiah. Those Jews who continue in worship of the Antichrist will die during the judgements of the last months of the Tribulation. Jesus' brethren (believing Jews) are restored to their Messiah at the return of Yeshua to earth (Romans 11:26).



God has said of the people of Israel, that whoever "touches you touches the apple of (my) eye," (Zech. 2:8). This refers to the aperture of the eye and bluntly stated means when you persecute the Jews, you poke God in the eye. This should be a serious warning to all.

This of course includes the Church; God will also judge the Church on how they treat the Jews before He judges the nations. The evidence of this is that the individual Christian receives his or her 'judgement' for sinful behaviour here and now (Psalm 89:30-34). God deals with us as His children. If our behaviour is wayward, He will bring methods to correct our behaviour here and now; we do not have a judgement in heaven for sin when we are washed by the blood of the Lamb. Likewise, the Church will be judged for its treatment of Israel before the nations of the Gentiles are judged. There will be a sifting of the Church. God is using Israel as an anvil against false teachings within the Christian Church. To be on the wrong side of God when He is dealing with His everlasting covenant is a dangerous place to be. God requires us to support Israel through prayer, material blessing and public vocal support. To receive His blessing the Church must identify itself with the nation of Israel. "The true Church lines up with God's prophetic plan as outlined in the Bible. The

Foundations Principles: Judgements

true Church blesses the Jewish people. The true Church is the faithful and wise servant, living in the blessed hope, patiently waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus and the marriage supper of the Lamb” (1).

(1) McTernan, John P. As America has done to Israel. Whitaker House, 2006.

1.7 The Tribulation Judgement

In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus judges the Gentile nations. Jews, whether believers or non-believers are not included, while in Ezekiel 20:37, Malachi 3:2-3 and Psalms. 50:4-7, there are prophecies of the future judgement of Israel, regathered from the nations at the time of the Messiah’s coming.

The seven years of Tribulation before the return of the Lord to set up His Kingdom are called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7). It is a time set aside by God to determine who among the Jews will enter the kingdom blessing. The Scripture in Malachi 3:2-3 warns of the trial by fire that will take place during the Tribulation, “But who can endure the day of His coming? Who can stand when He appears? For He will be like a refiner’s fire or a launder’s soap.” Those who prove worthy during the time of refining will be the Jews who survive the Tribulation and go on to live with Jesus and establish Millennial Israel. These Jews Paul is referring to in Romans 11:26 where he says, “and so all Israel will be saved.” Just as Joseph tested His brothers during the seven years of drought, to see if they had changed from the jealous, self-centered men who had sold him into slavery, so will Jesus test the Jews during the Tribulation. Then, just as Joseph revealed his circumcision (the covenant wound) to his brothers, thus (revealing his identity to them and restoring his relationship with them), so will Jesus on His return to earth reveal the nail wounds in His hands and feet (Zech. 13:6). The wounds He received on the cross are the wounds of the New Covenant, and through this Jesus will restore His relationship with the Jews.

1.8 Judgement of Angels

The moral standards of the Corinthian church were shocking, and there were several factors Paul needed to address in his letters to them. One of these factors was that there was strife between members of the congregation, and the members were taking each other before civil courts. Paul is utterly disgusted by this, as it is an extremely poor reflection of the Church. He admonishes them to deal with conflict within the church, and then tells them that believers will one day not only judge the world but also judge angels:

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 (ESV)

“**2** Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world ... **3** Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life”.

The message is clear if we are to be responsible for such an honoured position, we need to begin to behave as if we deserve it.

Foundations Principles: Judgements

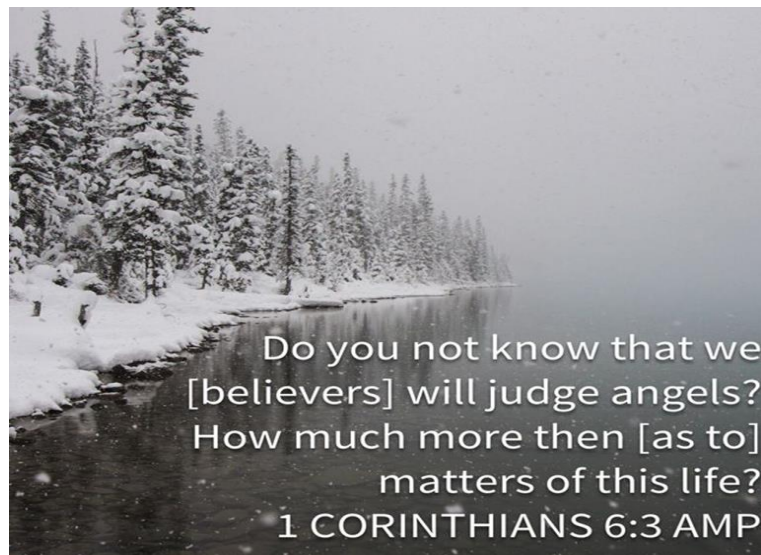
What we can draw from Paul's rebuke of the Corinthian church, is that as Children of God, we will hold a higher position in heaven than angels. Angels were not created by God in His image and likeness, and they have not been redeemed by Jesus (Hebrews 1:14; 2:16). Believers are created in the image of God, this likeness seems to extend to authority over angels. Also, the role of the angels has been to serve the saints of God (Hebrews 1:14; See also Psalm 34:7; Psalm 91:11), as we have eternal life this service will continue into eternity.

1.8.1 How will the Church Judge Angels?

Most believers do not fully understand Paul's statement, that believers will be present at the judgement of Satan and his demonic horde. To them, it seems only just that the victims of demonic persecution should be present at their judgement. This is only partially true, as the Greek word for "judge," *krino*, also means "to rule or govern." So, believers will participate in the judgement of fallen angels. Paul is also implying that believers will have angelic aid during the Millennium rule with Jesus, when believers will rule with Him:

Revelation 20:6 (ESV)

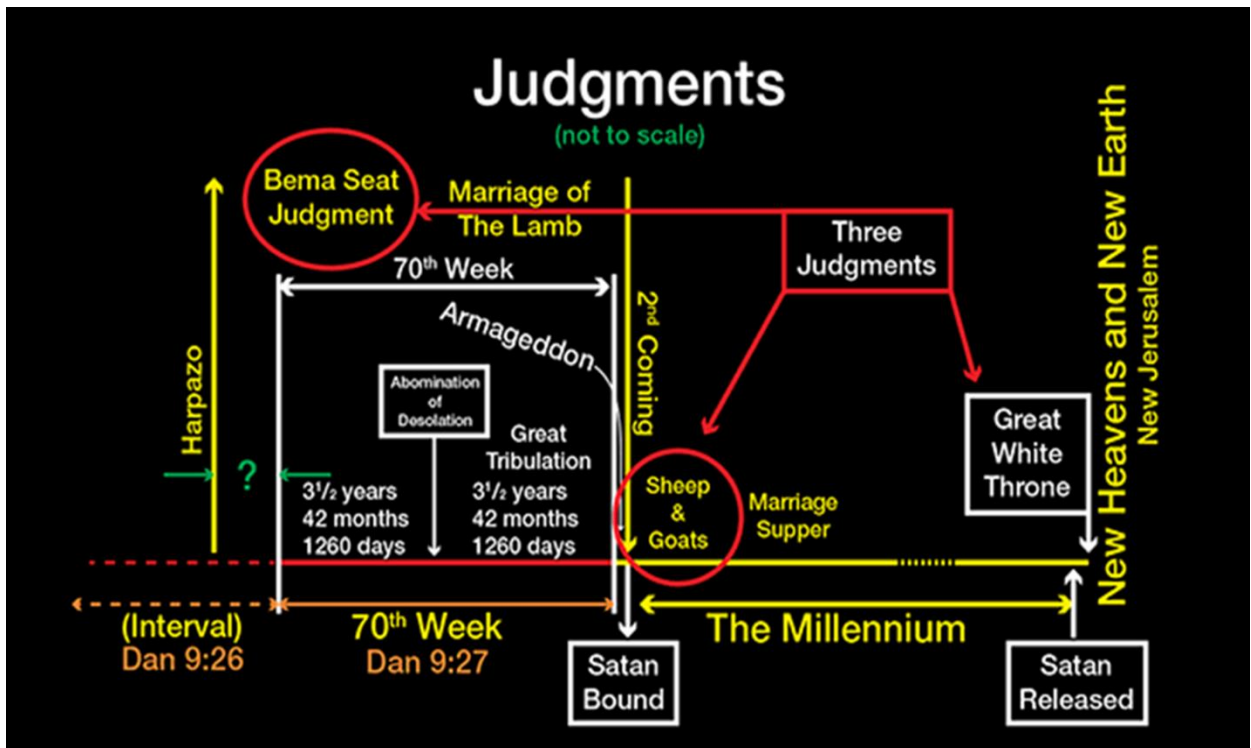
"6 ... but they (believers) will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years" (Cf. Matthew 19:28; 2 Timothy 2:12).



This authority will then extend to the establishment of the New Jerusalem, our reward for self-sacrifice and service on earth will include our status and authority in heaven for eternity. This authority will therefore also include our ruling over angels. One can only imagine the thoughts of angels as they observe our failed state on earth and understand that we will have authority over them for eternity.

Foundations Principles: Judgements

1.9 White Throne Judgement



The author of Hebrews bluntly states "... for it is appointed for all men to die once, but after this the judgement" (Hebrews 9:27). Ecclesiastes 12:14, promises that "God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." In Romans 2:5-6, Paul warns of the day of God's wrath "when his righteous judgement will be revealed. God will give to each person according to what he has done." Scripture is clear, everyone will be held accountable for their actions – believers at the Bema judgement seat, the unsaved at the White Throne Judgement. The previous foundation principle on resurrection revealed to us that everyone will be resurrected in body, but that it is only the unsaved who will go before the White throne Judgement seat.

Revelation 20:11 (ESV)

“11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.”

Revelation 20:13-15 (ESV)

“13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. **14** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire (Born twice die once – born once die twice). **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Foundations Principles: Judgements



The White Throne judgement must not be confused with the Bema rewards judgement for believers. Here those who have rejected God's provision for salvation will have no place to hide, all will be brought before the Judgement seat of Jesus (Matt. 19:28; John 5:22-30; Acts 17:31). Before the throne, they will face Jesus, who was the provision for their salvation that they rejected, He now stands as their Prosecutor.

The book of Revelation then describes books being opened that will play a critical role in the judgement of each believer.

Revelation (20:12)

"12 And I saw the dead, great and small (spiritually dead), standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done."

Many people brought up in western countries have a deistic belief in God, that He exists, but is distant from His creation, allowing mankind to get along with their own lives. They convince themselves that in heaven their good works will be weighed up against their bad works. The Book of Revelation records a very different standard. There appear to be three books that will be opened on the judgement of each individual person:

- The Bible, speaks in detail all the requirements a person needs to follow to attain salvation. There are two options, follow the Law without breaking any of the commandments, being pure and holy, or attain salvation through the Blood of the Lamb of God – Jesus: "There is no remission of sin, but through the blood" (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22).
- The book of your life – which records every detail of a person's life: "There is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open (Luke 12:3)."

Foundations Principles: Judgements

- The Book of Life is the final book opened. If it reveals that the individual's name is not recorded there, they will not have access to heaven.



Matthew 11:23-24 (ESV)

“**23** And you, Capernaum... You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. **24** But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgement for the land of Sodom than for you.”

Jesus indicates that there are degrees of punishment at the final judgement seat. This means that each sinner will receive the consequences of their life. Jesus gives this insight not only to confirm the reality of the Lake of Fire but also to affirm the justice of a righteous God. We all need to remember that it is each person's free will choice that determines their ultimate destination. Through the sacrifice of His son Jesus, God gives every person the opportunity to access all that heaven can provide.

The warning is that rejection of God results in going to where none of the beauty and majesty of God is present. God is love, there is no love in the Lake of Fire; God is peace, there is no peace in the Lake of Fire; God is Joy everlasting, there is no Joy in Lake of Fire, and so on. To contemplate a life that was lived in rejection of God is torment enough, but to live in a place devoid of all that God is, will cause wailing and gnashing of teeth!

1.9.1 The Lake of Fire – Gehenna

The lake of fire – Gehenna, must not be confused with Hades. The Lake of Fire is the final destination of the unrepentant sinner. The term “Lake of Fire” is used in only a few verses in the book of Revelation (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8). Jesus also refers to Gehenna/hell several times (Matthew 10:28; Mark 9:43; Luke 12:5), as well as an “outer darkness” (Matthew 8:12; 22:13). These all seem to be different references to the same

Foundations Principles: Judgements

thing. Hell, Gehenna, the lake of fire, and outer darkness are all terms describing the final destination of those who reject Christ. This is a state of complete separation from God, never-ending and inescapable.



Gehenna refers to the Lake of Fire and derives its name from the Hebrew *Ge Hinnom*, meaning “valley of Hinnom.” This was the valley at the Southern end of Jerusalem, where garbage was continually burned. The site also became the location where children were burned as sacrifices to the Ammonite god Moloch. Fire in Scripture is a repeated symbol of God’s judgement, as seen in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24), and the destruction of Elijah’s enemies (2 Kings 1:12). There are also depictions of fire by Prophets, coming from the throne of God, symbolising His holy punishment of sin (Daniel 7:10; Isaiah 30:33). The first two thrown into Gehenna at the end of the Tribulation are the Antichrist and the False Prophet. Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire after being defeated by Jesus at the end of the Millennium.

Revelation certainly also describes eternal punishment for the Devil and the Antichrist:

Revelation 20:10 (ESV)

“**10** and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

“There would be no way possible in the Greek language to state more emphatically the everlasting punishment of the lost than here in mentioning both day and night and the expression ‘forever and ever,’ literally ‘to the ages of ages’” (John F. Walvoord).

The word **Hades** is the Greek term for the Hebrew **Sheol**, a temporary place of the dead, where souls await the final resurrection.

Foundations Principles: Judgements

in Greek mythology, **Tartarus** was an abyss below Hades, where the truly evil of the world were sent. In Scripture it has become synonymous with Hades. Peter uses the word in referring to the place of judgement for evil angels:

2 Peter 2:4 (ESV)

“4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell (Tartarus) and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgement.”

Jude, the brother of Jesus, refers to a place for sinning angels, calling it a place of “eternal chains”:

Jude 6 (ESV)

“6 And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgement of the great day—.”

Jude thus indicates that Tartarus is the same place as the abyss or the pit. Tartarus is therefore not a place for humans and should not be referred to as hell in Bible translations. The only New Testament use of Tartarus is in 2 Peter. When taken in context with the Greek meaning, it implies an abyss below Hades where certain fallen angels who are notoriously evil are now confined.

Although Sheol (“the place of the dead”) is often referred to by Christians as Hell, this is an incorrect use of the word, the true Hell is Gehenna the Lake of Fire.

2 Where do the spirits of People go When they Die?

In Scripture Sheol is the abode of the dead or of departed spirits, and contains a righteous compartment referred to as “Abraham’s bosom,” and an unrighteous compartment termed Hades. Jesus gives us a glimpse into this realm when he speaks of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31). This is not a parable as Jesus did not use people’s names in parables. To spare his family from the grief and shame of knowing their loved one is in Hades the rich man is not named.

Foundations Principles: Judgements



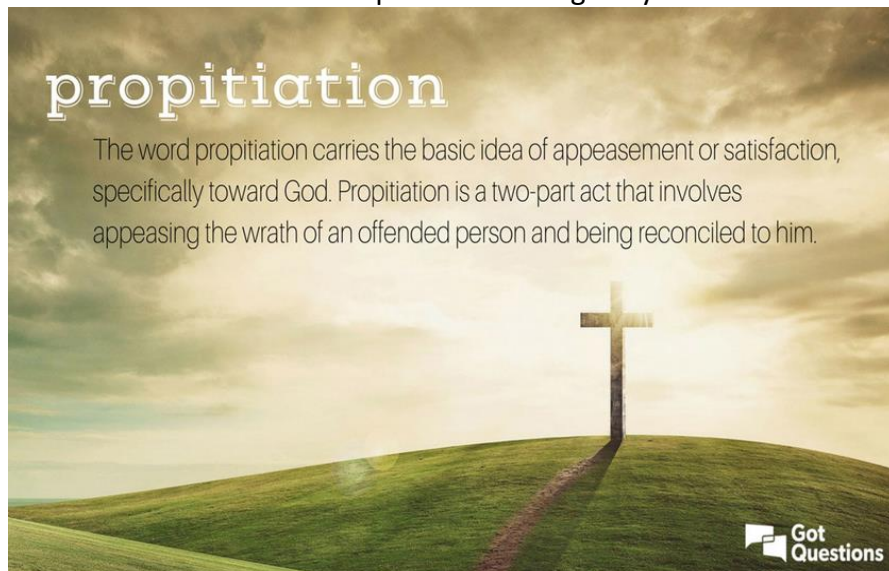
Pope Gregory I initiated the teaching of purgatory in AD 593, and in AD 1439 the Council of Florence made this official. The Catholic Church defines purgatory as, "all who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, they are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death, they undergo purification, to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Roman Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification..." (Catechism page 268, para #1030, 1031). Purgatory is a place of torment, so the stages of "purification" referred to in their definition, require that the individual undergoes a cleansing process that involves suffering.

The belief that souls must pass through stages of cleansing before being able to attain heaven, is a common belief that in various forms of paganism. The Bible, however, has no mention of a need for such cleansing, as this is done by the blood of Jesus after a person accepts Jesus as their Lord (Romans 8:1; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:1-3).

Foundations Principles: Judgements



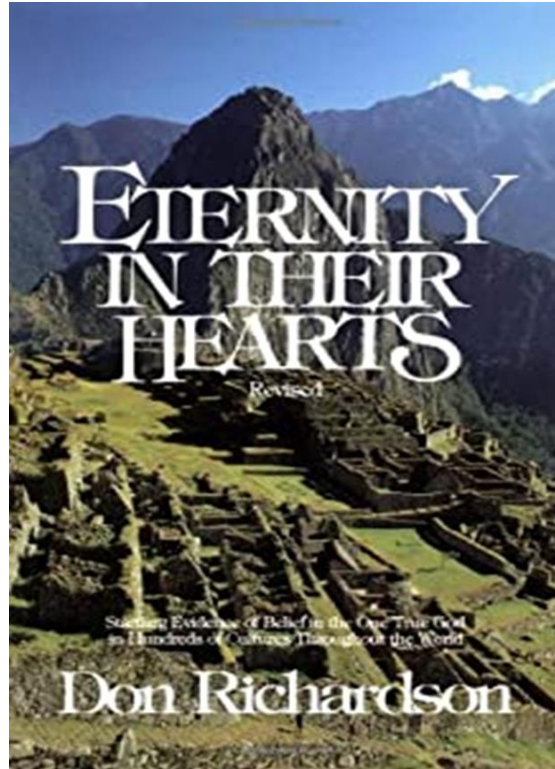
Artists Impression of Purgatory



3 What about Those who have never Heard the Gospel?

Two main scriptures that deal with this question, the first is found in Ecclesiastes 3:11, “(God has) set eternity in the hearts of men.” In other words, every person is a spirit being who has an internal knowledge of the existence of God. It is important to understand is that if anyone in the world, at any time in history, truly sought the true God. He would reveal himself to that person. Don Richardson confirms this in his book “Eternity in Their Hearts,” where he compiles testimonies from missionaries from around the world, who have experienced this phenomenon. Our spirit is created by God and seeks after Him. Satan puts temptations in our way, to distract us from coming to know the true Great Creator God.

Foundations Principles: Judgements



The second scripture is Romans 2:12-16, where Paul writes that each person's conscience will be the judge for those who have not heard the Gospel. Conscience can be defined as that voice from our spirits that guides us as to what is right and what is wrong. Every person is born with a conscience and will be judged according to their obedience to their consciences.

All people are accountable to God, whether they have "heard about Him or not." Christians who believe that those who never hear the gospel message are granted mercy from God, face a terrible dilemma. For if this is true it is then better that we do not obey the great commandment from Jesus to "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), by doing so we would, according to this logic, be condemning multitudes who reject the message to an eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Foundations Principles: Judgements

- ***Memento mori*** is a Latin phrase translated as "Remember your mortality", "Remember you must die" or "Remember you will die". It names a genre of artistic work which varies widely, but which all share the same purpose: to remind people of their own mortality

4 Proclamation

I recognise that true faith in Christ always produces good works, and to truly honour my Saviour I must build upon the works of those who have gone before me. I will therefore be continually eternally minded, understanding that this life determines my position of authority in eternity. I acknowledge the reality that my commitment to service will be scrutinised at the Bema Judgement and that I will be held accountable. I also acknowledge the great responsibility of sharing the Gospel message which includes the reality of the White Throne Judgement.

5 Prayer

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that through your great sacrifice, I will escape the wrath of the White Throne judgement. I pray that I may be a witness to your gift of salvation, so that many others may escape that wrath. I ask that I may fulfil the plans and purposes you have for my life through your Holy Spirit. That my life will be used to bring You honour and glory, and that when I stand before You, I will hear the words "Well done my true and faithful servant."

6 Assignments

Judgements

1. Name and give a short description of the judgments a believer will be
 - a. (1) involved in, and
 - b. (2) a witness to, after the rapture occurs, making sure they are given in the correct order?**(8)**
2. Give the correct definition of the Biblical hell and in your answer distinguish between Hades, Sheol, Tartarus, and Gehenna?**(2)**

Total (10)