

The Judgment of Yahweh

Happy Sabbath to all.

This week, I would like to discuss with you a topic that is most relevant for the current time, and that is, “The Judgment of Yahweh.”

Now, if we ask most people what this means, they will say, “This is when God judges human beings, to determine if they are saved or not,” or some variation of this idea. And while that is certainly a true definition, it is not the only one... and in terms of the universal Controversy, it is not even the most important meaning.

Consider the term “the faith of Yahshua.” We find it in this verse and a few others: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Yahshua.” (Rev 14:2) Again, if we were to ask what this term means, many would reply that it is accepting Yahshua as one’s personal Savior, in order to escape the coming wrath. They might even find some Scriptural support for this, such as, “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Yahshua the Messiah, even we have believed in Yahshua the Messiah, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal 2:16)

But just as with the phrase we are examining tonight, this is not the only, or even the most significant, meaning, of those words. As we have discussed before, having the faith OF Yahshua means quite a bit more than simply having faith IN Him. Of course, we have faith in Him to keep us from falling, and to preserve us unto our everlasting inheritance... but the way in which He does this is not externally, rather it is internally. In other words, some see the Savior as an external power, pulling us up to Heaven. In such a case, it is not we who rise to Heaven’s standards, but rather we are “taken” there even if (and some make this a major doctrine of their religion) our characters and spirits are entirely unlike that which essentially defines our Father’s Kingdom.

Biblically, however, Yahshua does not draw us up to Heaven from some outside place, but instead we see this: “Yahshua answered and said unto him, ‘If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.’” (John 14:23) “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev 3:20)

What we see here is an intimacy beyond which most Churches are willing to consider. The Son of Yah dwells within us – by His Spirit – and (in us) ascends to Heaven even as He did in His physical form following the resurrection. This is one of the advantages of having a proper understanding of the Godhead, rather than that held by the Trinitarians. It is far easier for us to understand that it is the Son Himself that dwells within us, as many passages say, when we speak of being “Spirit-filled.”

This is what it means to have the faith OF Yahshua, for it is His own faith, manifested in us, lived out even in this sinful flesh, and producing a life free from all sin.

Now, when we speak of the Judgment of Yahweh, we can look at those words in much the same way.

Ultimately, who is it that is being judged? As Adventists, we have great advantages over nominal and deceived Christianity. We have the true and living Witness, which the Savior has promised would be with us “even unto the end of the world,” (Mat 28:20) and over the ages this Witness has provided us with great light to help us to understand more deeply, and apply more perfectly, the testimony of the Biblical writers.

One of the most insightful blessings we have received from this Witness is the book called *The Great Controversy*, and it outlines the dispute between Christ and Satan, but also in terms of the “bigger picture” between the Law, which is the manifest character of the Father, and sin. In a “judgment,” a decision is being made. Evidence is weighed, testimonies are heard, and eventually a conclusion is reached. In a “controversy,” there is a dispute, which leads to the necessity of a decision. With that in mind, this book might as easily be called *The Great Judgment* with no loss of meaning, because what is really happening, and the very reason why Satan has been allowed to have this earth as his kingdom for the past few millennia, is to give human beings and other intelligences the opportunity to decide.

We are given the opportunity to “judge” between the Law and sin, and to decide which we will choose for ourselves, remembering that the Law is the very character of the Father. Now, we are given full disclosure regarding the consequences. We know that harmony with the Law leads to life, “For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.”(Pro 6:23) We know that the “wages of sin is death;” (Rom 6:23) and as it is written, combining these ideas, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Yahshua hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom 8:2)

In a very real sense, we are being invited to “judge” our Father, and not only that, to be active participants in the trial by bearing witness either for Him or against Him. If this seems strange, consider the following verse: “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” (Mat 7:2) The Father, as we know, judges the whole earth, and does so through the Person of His Son unto Whom He has committed all judgment. And yet, the Son Himself has taught us that as we judge others, we are also judged ourselves by that same measure. Now, just as Yahshua came to earth to be our example, and to perfectly represent each principle of the Heavenly Kingdom, so He perfectly exemplifies this aspect of judgment as well – that all, including the judges, are ultimately judged themselves.

The Scriptures have actually been telling us this all along. We read: “Hear ye, O mountains, Yahweh’s controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth, for Yahweh hath a controversy

with His people, and He will plead with Israel. ‘O my people, what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.’” (Mic 6:2, 3)

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve Yahweh, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh.” (Josh 24:15)

“Let us choose to us judgment; let us know among ourselves what is good.” (Job 34:4)

Yah says, “But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.” (Neh 1:9)

Now, for some versions of Christianity, this conception of our Father, one who is chosen BY us even as He chooses us, is considered a limitation on His sovereignty. Some say, “Yahweh chooses us, because He is supreme. He chooses those whom He will, and those who are chosen cannot resist His call, even as those who are not chosen cannot ever become righteous.”

In this, they reveal that they do not understand the difference between “power” and “force.” They do not understand the difference between “authority” and “compulsion.” Yahweh is all powerful, and has absolute authority; however, because of His character, because “Yahweh is Love,” (1 John 4:8) He does not exercise this authority or this power arbitrarily, to force mankind to serve Him, to compel obedience through direct control or even through intimidation and fear.

The carnal mind criticizes Yahweh for holding back, and letting us work out our own salvation, our own understanding of His will. But imagine what Satan would do, and what his servants would say, if Yahweh was always before us as a pillar of cloud and fire.

Yahweh, who is unforced Love as well as absolute Power, invites our judgment of Him. He invites us to evaluate Him and, having seen His goodness, to receive Him as our God and our Father. (Rom 2:4) And having received Him, we are then called to testify to others, to bring them to the “trial” where they will be judged for Heavenly Service, and where they also will judge between righteousness and unrighteousness for their own souls’ eventual destiny.

Now, we do need to be somewhat cautious, because the word “judgment” is used a couple different ways in the Bible. For example, we read, “But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” (1 Cor 2:15) The word here is used in the sense of “condemnation,” of which there is none for those who are born again. (Rom 8:1)

None can “judge” Yahweh in this sense and yet be righteous – to pronounce judgment on Him is to consider ourselves to be in a position of authority over Him, which is the very definition of the term “blasphemy...” and many who are not taught to pray properly do this in ignorance. Others

curse Him and condemn Him, and in this way they judge both Him and themselves falsely. But all are called to “judge” Yah in terms of seeing Him as He is, and deciding whether or not they will love His Law and His character. Judgment in this sense is necessary for both conversion and sanctification, and this is the very reason He has allowed the great controversy to play out in so public a manner.

Now, knowing this, that Yahweh is the one truly being “judged” in the Great Controversy – not that His creation has any authority whatsoever over Him, but that He submits Himself willingly for judgment – what shall we say, and what shall we do?

First, we must follow His example. We must not fear the judgment, as we have discussed in several studies before this one. We must, like our Father, willingly say to the universe, “Testify against me.” We must step into the judgment of the living, which is our Day of Atonement and the spirit of the New Moon, knowing ourselves clean in all which we are aware, and willing to learn more fully of righteousness. Like our Father, and like His Son, we have nothing to fear from judgment if our hearts are willing, and our commitment to righteousness is sure. We must say, with David, “Search me, O Yah, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.” (Psa 139:23)

Second, we must become “Laodicea” in its true, non-modern sense. Today, the word “Laodicea” is used to represent a Church in spiritual decline, in laziness and complacency, exhibiting lukewarmness and slow to grow. Many Churches, amazingly, claim this title (in this sense) with pride, saying, “We are the last generation of believers,” because this Church was mentioned last in Revelation’s early chapters.

But they do not realize, foolishly, that Laodicea as a state of mind is the stage just before utter ruin and rejection. What we must become is Laodicea as the word means, as the Church was intended to be, that is, “A people of judgment.”

We must be a people who are not only willingly judged of Yah ourselves, and found righteous, but also a people that represent Yah’s judgment, that speak His judgment, that draw others closer to His judgment, so that they can see Him for themselves, and judge Him “good.” And this we do, for our Father has called us to do it. The people of this Laodicea, the purified Church with a spirit NOT like the Biblical condition, speak such words in testimony of the Father, “O taste and see that Yahweh is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O fear Yahweh, ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger, but they that seek Yahweh shall not want any good thing. Come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of Yahweh.” (Psa 34:8–11)

As we speak this judgment of our Father, who has given Himself for our sakes, not only through His Son, but also through His longsuffering, His willingness to await our choosing, we vindicate his character before the universe. We fulfill the mission of the latter-day Elijah, who teaches just

this message, “to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” (Luke 1:17)

Let us consider these things prayerfully. Just as it was presented before us last week that we must be successors, rather than merely inheritors, of the light we have been given, and just as it was presented before us the week before that we must understand the “other half” of the chain of character...

so we must meditate on these things so that, even if the words cannot be easily recalled in time, and even if the specific examples fade, the growth we experience will be real, and our picture of our Father ever clearer to His everlasting honor and glory. The Great Controversy is ultimately about Him, but because of His righteousness, and because He gives us of His glory through His Son, we are all of us victorious through His name.

Next: The Justice of Yahweh (He does not wait forever, but this also shows love!) Like to share with you some thoughts regarding the passage (keeping mercy/no means clear guilty) last week spoke of mercy, but we need to understand that true love is not all about mercy either. There are limits of patience, and standards, that are ultimately FOR the best good of all.

So last week we spoke of Yah’s longsuffering, His patience with us, His willingness to allow His own creation to bring Him to judgment, and to decide for themselves that He is who He is. Certainly, the Son allowed the world to judge Him, and having judged Him falsely, the world and fallen religious folk (?) judged themselves thereby.

When I asked, “What should we do, knowing this,” one attendee replied, “Fall on our knees,” and I thought, what is it about Yah’s mercy that would cause us to do so? Worship His character, express gratitude, but also have reverence and fear, knowing that as merciful as our Father is, so faithful also is His justice.

Wickedness will never go unpunished (but see Job regarding the delay) and we realize that even we who are His are “scarcely” saved, and that only because our Father hides His face from sin for a time. But His longsuffering does not last forever, not because there is any limit to His mercy or patience, but because He knows there is a “proper time” for the universe to be cleansed.

People ask, why good happen to bad, why me? Although often asked in painful times, as I said last week, we must realize that the Great Controversy is NOT about us, but about our Father, and if we understand this, seeing the greater picture, then we realize that we don’t always see all the factors, or know all the facts, but we do trust that all is being done as well as possible for the revelation of our Father to the universe, the vindication of His name, and ultimately the salvation of not only our world, but all worlds.

Sin must be judged, and destroyed. Those who choose sin, judging themselves thereby, are destroyed along with it, because sin must not be allowed to remain in the universe, not in the

fallen angels, and not in rebellious humanity. It is the mercy of Yahweh that saves individuals. It is the justice of Yahweh that saves all creation.

Because of His character, both must be present. If Yah were all justice, sinners would immediately be destroyed, and individuals who might have repented would be lost. If Yah were all mercy, sinners might be saved in the course of time, but sin would remain in the universe eternally, and creation would continue to suffer its presence indefinitely.

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