

In this article the old-fashioned words of the KJV have been modernised, and in some instances, the man-made punctuation has been altered for greater understanding. Some of the comments are adapted from books in my library. No recognition is given because they are not intended as authorities, but are used because they express my understanding clearly. All the ideas expressed in these articles, right or wrong, are my own.

## The second judgment

### Query:

Revelation 20:

<sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image [the copy], neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

<sup>5</sup> But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Who is doing this judging, and when will it be?

### Response:

We saw last month that the Son of man came to His Father in 1844 and began the judgment of those who had claimed that they were followers of His. It was during this process that He PROVED to the people of the universe that those who passed the test would be suitable to come and live among them. Eventually, He will come to the cases of the living righteous, and this of course, is in the future for us.

But at the end of that section it will be said,  
“He that is unjust, let [allow] him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let [allow] him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let [allow] him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let [allow] him be holy still [it’s their choice]. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man [and woman] according as his [her] work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last”. Revelation 22:11-13.

Therefore, it will be with the acceptance and authority of the inhabitants of heaven (as well as His Father’s) that He comes to the earth for the resurrection of His saints. In this way it will have been pre-determined who will be in the first resurrection.

And that’s what our query text says: “This is [a result of] the FIRST resurrection”, so it is these redeemed people that the query refers to when it is written, “And I

saw thrones, and they [the redeemed] sat upon them, and judgment was given TO them . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years”.

They AND their Saviour preside over the second part of the judgment.

During that time, sometimes called “The Dispensation of the Fullness of Times” (Ephesians 1:10) or “The Times of Restitution” (more commonly known as The Millennium) the saints will judge the rebels of the world, whom our text says are all dead until the end of the thousand years. Paul wrote to some of his brethren regarding that time, “Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know you not that we shall judge [the rebel] angels?” 1 Corinthians 6:2-3. (So they too, are not present at their investigative judgment.)

In the meantime, Peter told his listeners on the Day of Pentecost (and therefore us also), “Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out [forgiven, and then cleansed from the records] when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the LORD; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached to you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began”. Acts 3:19-21.

It can also be known as “The Age of Repairs” for during that period there will be many misconceptions and errors on doctrine which will need to be straightened out. All this will take 1,000 years!

Their activity during this period had been mentioned while the Son of God was on earth.

“Then said He also to him that bade Him [to a dinner], ‘When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brothers [and sisters], neither your kinsmen, nor your rich neighbours; lest they also bid you again, and a recompense be made you. But when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and you shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense you: for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just’. And when one of them that sat at meat [at the table] with Him heard these things, he said to Him, ‘Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God’.” Luke 14:12-15.

“Then [on another occasion] answered Peter and said to Him, ‘Behold, we [the apostles] have forsaken all, and followed You; what shall we have therefore?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Verily I say to you, That you which have followed Me, in the

regeneration [The Age of Repairs] when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging [leading] the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that has forsaken houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But [then He added, However] many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first' [for things are different in God's kingdom, so watch your motive]." Matthew 19:27-30.

Then He told them a parable:

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\*\*\*\*\* (Begin Quote)

Matthew 20:

<sup>1</sup> For the Kingdom of Heaven is like to a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning [about 6am] to hire labourers into his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day [normal wages], he sent them into his vineyard.

<sup>3</sup> And he went out about the third hour [9am], and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup> and said to them; "Go you also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you". And they went their way.

<sup>5</sup> Again he went out about the sixth [midday] and ninth hour [3pm], and did likewise.

<sup>6</sup> And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said to them, "Why stand you here all the day idle?" <sup>7</sup> They said to him, "Because no man has hired us [they had not been there for his earlier calls]". He said to them, "Go you also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall you receive".

<sup>8</sup> So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard says to his steward, "Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last to the first".

<sup>9</sup> And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny [for one hour's work].

<sup>10</sup> But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. <sup>11</sup> And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, <sup>12</sup> saying, "These last have wrought but one hour, and you have made them equal to us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day".

<sup>13</sup> But he answered one of them, and said, “Friend, I do you no wrong: did not you agree with me for a penny? <sup>14</sup> Take that [which is] yours, and go your way: I will give to this last, even as to you. <sup>15</sup> Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good? [and give everyone the same pay]”

<sup>16</sup> So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.  
\*\*\*\*\* (End Quote)

The thing to note here is that there is only one pay! It is the same for every one who works for Him, for the householder's dealing with the workers in his vineyard represents God's dealing with the human family. It is contrary to the customs that prevail among men. In worldly business, compensation is given according to the work accomplished. The labourer expects to be paid only that which he earns.

But in the parable, Christ was illustrating the principles of His kingdom – a kingdom not of this world. He is not controlled by any human standard. The LORD says, “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways . . . For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts”. Isaiah 55:8-9.

In the parable the first labourers agreed to work for a stipulated sum, and they received the amount specified, nothing more. Those later hired believed the master's promise, “Whatsoever is right, that shall you receive”. They showed their confidence in him by asking no question in regard to wages. They trusted to his justice and equity. They were rewarded, not according to the amount of their labour, but according to the generosity of his purpose.

So God desires us to trust in Him who justifies the ungodly. His reward is given not according to our merit but according to His own purpose, “which He purposed in Christ Jesus our LORD”. Ephesians 3:11. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us”. Titus 3:5. And for those who trust in Him He will do “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think”. Ephesians 3:20.

Why?

It is not the amount of labour performed or its visible results, but the spirit in which the work is done that makes it of value with God. Those who came into the vineyard at the eleventh hour were thankful for an opportunity to work. Their hearts were full of gratitude to the one who had accepted them; and when at the

close of the day the householder paid them for a full day's work, they were greatly surprised. They knew they had not earned such wages. And the kindness expressed in the countenance of their employer filled them with joy.

They never forgot the goodness of the householder or the generous compensation they had received. Thus it is with the sinner who, knowing his unworthiness, has entered the Master's vineyard at the eleventh hour. His time of service seems so short, he feels that he is undeserving of reward; but he is filled with joy that God has accepted him at all. He works with a humble, trusting spirit, thankful for the privilege of being a co-worker with Christ. This spirit God delights to honour.

This parable does not excuse those who hear the first call to labour but who neglect or refuse to enter the LORD's vineyard. When the householder went to the market place at the eleventh hour and found men unemployed he said, "Why stand you here all the day idle?" The answer was, "Because no man has hired us". None of those called later in the day were there in the morning therefore they had not refused the call. Those who refuse and afterward repent, do well to repent; but it is not safe to trifle with the first call of mercy.

Then the record continues:

\*\*\*\*\**(Begin Quote)*

Matthew 20:

<sup>17</sup> And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way [for a private conversation], and said to them, <sup>18</sup> "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, <sup>19</sup> and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him: and the third day He shall rise again".

\*\*\*\*\**(End Quote)*

He knew all this because He had studied the ceremonies given to Moses as prophecies for Him.

"In the fourteenth day of the first month [the first of a group of three days] at even is the LORD's passover [and He was crucified that day]. And on the fifteenth day of the same month [the second of the three] is [the beginning of] the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD: seven days you must eat unleavened bread. In the first day you shall have a holy convocation [a "rest" day]: you shall do no servile [ordinary] work therein [and so He rested in the grave] . . ." Leviticus 23:5-7.



And it is this that separates the sheep from the goats, the saints from the rebels!

It is in this spirit that the redeemed will undertake the judgment of the rebels! Not to condemn, but to see if they can lighten the load that the rejecters must bear! Sadly, however, they must face the fact that the inevitable result of sin is that it “pays” out in proportion to the gravity of it. “As you sow, so shall you reap”.

But the main thrust of the period of 1,000 years is that the redeemed and the inhabitants of heaven shall be able to see WHY the rebels did not respond to the call of the first resurrection. So, again, names will be called, records investigated, but this time there will not be any names which are accepted into heaven! God does not make any mistakes in His judgments and now all will see that He has been accurate in His assessment of their characters. In addition, all will be able to see, not just once or twice, but the innumerable times that He tried through the Spirit to get these rebels to change their ways and be saved – all to no avail! They didn’t want to live with Him or follow His ways then, and they never did.

But our God leaves nothing to the imagination: faith in His word is good, but at the end of that second portion of the judgment He will propose to SHOW the universe that the rebels will not accept salvation even when they see and understand what rejection means. Again the words of judgment must be said, “He that is unjust, let [allow] him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let [allow] him be filthy still,” but this time there is no bright ending to His statement!

That naturally leads us to the last part of the judgment.

### Conclusion:

It is not the length of time we labour but our willingness and fidelity in the work that makes it acceptable to God. In all our service a full surrender of self is demanded. The smallest duty done in sincerity and self-forgetfulness is more pleasing to God than the great work when marred with self-seeking. (The thief on the cross is a classic example of this: the only work he did was in the words he spoke to Christ! Luke 23:42. But look how that incident has brightened the lives of many Christians!)

God looks to see how much of the spirit of Christ we cherish, and how much of the likeness of Christ our work reveals. He regards more the love and faithfulness with which we work than the amount we do. Only when selfishness is dead, when strife for supremacy is banished, when gratitude fills the heart, and love makes

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fragrant the life – it is only then that Christ is abiding in the soul, and we are recognized as labourers together with God.

And that is what is missing from the rebels.