

Distinct Judgments

- The fact that there are separate judgments for the Gentiles, Israel, and the Church reaffirms the Bible's consistent distinction between these three separate people groups
- When we consider future judgment, it is important to remember that the Bible does not speak of one general judgment. There is not a time when all the people of the world will simultaneously stand before God to be evaluated
- Instead, the Bible speaks of several judgments that differ greatly in who is judged, when they are judged, the type of judgment, and the place of judgment
- However, in all cases the judge whom they stand before is the same. It is the Lord Jesus Christ
- "For the Father judges no one but has committed all judgment to the Son." (John 5:22)

Distinct Judgments

- The word “judge” has the idea of an evaluation: of a person’s words; actions; attitudes; and motives. It can be a judicial evaluation with a purpose to sentence the condemned or it can be a commending evaluation to reward the believer
- The Bible says believers will be judged for commendation and to determine rewards while unbelievers will be judged for condemnation and punishment
- It is best to distinguish these judgments by asking the common questions of who, what, where, and when along with considering the possible outcomes of each judgment

Judgment of the Church

- Who?
- “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.” (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- “But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Romans 14:10)
- In both references Paul uses the personal pronoun “we.” He is a believer and is speaking to believers and includes himself as one of those who will be judged
- In Romans 14:10 the word “brother” is used which shows again that he is speaking of believers

Judgment of the Church

- Therefore, the participants in the judgment seat of Christ are members of the body of Christ and none are exempt
- Those who have trusted Christ as Savior from the Day of Pentecost, until the coming of Christ for His church will all appear before Him
- Though the whole body of Christ is judged it is an individual judgment. There is no collective judgment for the Church but every individual will answer for their life after becoming a believer

Judgment of the Church

- When and Where will this Judgment Occur?
- After the Rapture - in the air before the Lord escorts us to heaven or later in heaven
- “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so, shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
- “In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” (John 14:2-3)
- “And behold, I am coming quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to everyone according to his work.” (Revelation 22:12)

Judgment of the Church

- What is Judged?
- “Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” (1 Corinthians 3:13-15)

Judgment of the Church

- This judgment evaluates our Christian life and work for Christ. All believers are servants of Christ and will have their service evaluated and rewarded
- It will be an awards ceremony, not a time for our sins to be brought up because Christ has already dealt with our sins. He has cast them into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). He has redeemed us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13)
- There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)
- Everyone at this judgment has no fear when it comes to their salvation
- But some after going through the fire of the Lord's judgment will have little or no works left to be rewarded. But they themselves will be saved

Judgment of the Church

- The phrase “judgment seat” is translated from the Greek word “bema.” In Paul’s time, in the large Olympic arena, there was an elevated seat on which the judge of the games sat. After the competition the winners would assemble before the bema to receive their rewards or crowns
- The Christian life is a race, and Christ is the judge. Each believer will appear at the bema for Christ to examine them and give them their rewards and crowns
- The word “appear” carries the idea of being made manifest. The believer’s life and service will be brought out into the open. Nothing will be hidden. The totality of our service will be revealed: it’s quantity, its quality, and the hidden motives behind our service

Judgment of the Church

- Faithfulness will be key

“Moreover, it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” (1 Corinthians 4:2)

Judgment of the Church

- We must also be careful in the present not to judge another believer's service for the Lord
- "Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God." (1 Corinthians 4:5)
- Only Christ can see beyond the outward and observe the motivations and spiritual qualities of our service
- "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:13)
- At that appointed time, the One who sees all will praise each believer who deserves it

Judgment of the Church

- Our motivation for service should be out of love for the Lord and a desire to bring pleasure to Him both now and at the judgement seat of Christ
- “Therefore, we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.” (2 Corinthians 5:9)
- From this desire to please Him comes a desire to be rewarded by Him on that day with various crowns and rewards as well as those precious longed-for words, “*well done thou good and faithful servant.*”
- “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Judgment of Israel

- When?
- Chronology of the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25)
(Dwight Pentecost)
- (1) the tribulation period (24:4-26)
- (2) the second advent of Messiah to the earth (24:27-30)
- (3) the regathering of Israel (24:31)
- (4) the judgment on Israel (25:1-30)
- (5) the judgment on Gentiles (25:31-46)

Judgment of Israel

- When?
- The judgment of Israel follows the second advent of Christ to the earth and the regathering of Israel as a nation. (Matthew 25:1-30)

Judgment of Israel

- "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face. Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you," says the Lord GOD. "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD." (Ezekiel 20:33-38)

Judgment of Israel

- At that time, He will rescue the believing remnant (Zechariah 12-14)
- After the Armageddon campaign, the judgment of Israel will commence. It is specifically the living people of Israel that will be judged at this time to determine who will enter the Millennial Kingdom
- These individual Jews who are alive at the end of the seven-year tribulation period will be judged; some being allowed entry into the kingdom and the others banished to hell to await the resurrection of the lost at the end of the millennium

Judgment of Israel

- Where?
- Since this judgment takes place after the Lord's return it must occur on earth. This is appropriate because Israel is an earthly people
- But where on earth? Ezekiel 20:35 it says they will be brought to the "wilderness of peoples" or "desert of the nations"
- It makes a comparison to the time the Lord redeemed Israel out of Egypt and brought them to the wilderness
- In a similar way in this end-times exodus the Lord will regather Israel from the nations where she has been scattered but this time it will be to judge them

Judgment of Israel

- Verse 38 it says the rebels shall be purged and prevented from entering the land of Israel
- This indicates that the judgment will occur somewhere outside of Israel (vv.35,38)
- Since they are brought from other countries, including pre-millennial Israel this judgement could occur near the borders of Israel
- Just like the rebels died in the wilderness in Moses' time, prevented by God from entering the Promised Land, so these rebels will be prevented from entering the land and be banished to hell to await the resurrection of the lost at the close of the Millennium

Judgment of Israel

- What is judged?
- The passages in Ezekiel 20 and in Matthew 25:1-30 clearly shows God is separating believing Israel from the rebels
- In the Ezekiel passage, twice the term “fury poured out” is used. They will pass under the “rod of judgment,” the rebels will be purged and not allowed to enter land
- They will be judged for their sin and banished to everlasting punishment
- But the believing remnant will be saved and enter the land to participate in Christ’s millennial kingdom
- Verse 37 says that the Lord will bring them “into the bond of the covenant” which speaks of the New Covenant

Judgment of Israel

- When God restores Israel at His return only true believers who were waiting like the wise virgins of Matthew 25 will enter the land. The individual's works will be brought into judgment. Their actions will reveal clearly the spiritual condition of their hearts, and this judgment will make it manifest
- Both the references in Matthew and again in Ezekiel show the two phases of their punishment. Ezekiel says they shall be brought out of their countries, including pre-millennial Israel but then they shall not enter the land
- There is no place on earth for them and there is no place in the kingdom

Judgment of Israel

- “And so, all Israel will be saved: as it is written, the Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” (Romans 11:26-27)
- *God is going to regather the nation Israel at Christ’s return and divide the saved from the unsaved. The unsaved will be cut off and the saved living Israel will be taken into the millennium under the New Covenant
- “And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'” (Zechariah 13:8-9)

Judgment of Israel

- “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

Judgment of Israel

- “For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.(Ezekiel 36:24-28)

Judgment of Israel

- Judah and Israel will be joined back together as one (Ezekiel 37:15-28)

Judgment of the Nations

- Who?
- Individuals from the Gentile nations that are still alive on earth at the end of the tribulation
- The word “nations” in Scripture speaks of existing Gentile nations on earth and the individuals that belong to them
- Therefore, when it says that all nations will be gathered to Christ for judgment it is referring to living individual Gentiles and none are exempted

Judgment of the Nations

- When?
- The prophet Joel reveals that the judgment of Gentiles will take place after the Lord regathers, judges, and restores the nation Israel to their land, which is immediately after His return to earth
- “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land.” (Joel 3:1-2)
- The chronology of Matthew 24 and 25 reaffirms Joel’s account. The judgment of the Gentiles in Matthew 25:31-46 follows the regathering, judgment, and restoration of Israel, after the return of Christ to the earth
- In verse 31 it says that the Son of Man will come in His glory. Then it says in verse 32 that all nations will be gathered before Him. Further, it must occur before the millennium, for those accepted in this judgment are taken into that kingdom (Matthew 25:34)

Judgment of the Nations

- Where?
- Since it follows the second advent, it must take place on the earth
- This is another difference between this judgment and the Great White Throne Judgment which occurs after the destruction of the old heaven and earth and before the creation of the new heaven and earth
- But where on earth will it occur. It is not entirely clear
- Joel 3:2 states that this judgment will take place in the “valley of Jehoshaphat.” But there are differences of opinion on where that is

Judgment of the Nations

- And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley: Half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.” (Zechariah 14:4)
- “Perhaps the solution as to the place involved is given in Zechariah 14:4 where we are told that at the Lord’s return to the mount of Olives a great valley shall be opened. A valley which is not in existence today shall come into being at the time of the second advent. Since the name Jehoshaphat means “Jehovah judges,” it may be that the newly opened valley outside Jerusalem will bear that name because of the momentous event to transpire there.” (Dwight Pentecost)
- The momentous event Pentecost is referring to is the judgment of the nations

Judgment of the Nations

- What is Judged?
- “And I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land.” (Joel 3:2)
- This passage indicates that the judgment of the Gentiles is on account of His people Israel. In other words, how did these Gentiles treat the Jewish saved remnant during the tribulation period?

Judgment of the Nations

- Some feel that Christ's brethren in this passage is referring to the Jewish believers in general while others say it is the 144,000 Jewish witnesses that are sealed by God at the beginning of the 7-year tribulation period
- These witnesses will testify to the gospel and the soon return of Christ and His kingdom. Many are redeemed while even more will oppose them (Revelation 7:9-17)
- This judgment is to determine the spiritual condition of these living Gentiles. It is to determine whether the one judged is saved or unsaved. Though on the surface it seems that this judgment is based on works, this cannot be true because it would violate the clear biblical teaching elsewhere in Scripture that works never determine anyone's eternal destiny
- At this judgment, these individual Gentiles are having their eternal destiny decided
- "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." (Matthew 25:46)

Judgment of the Nations

- A majority of Jews will be persecuted and killed (Zechariah 13:8-9; Revelation 12:13-17)
- Under these circumstances, if a Gentile befriends a Jew to the extent of feeding and clothing and visiting him, it could only mean that he's a believer in Jesus Christ and recognize says the Jews as the chosen people. Thus, in this context such works become a distinctive evidence that the Gentiles described as sheep are those who are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ
- “Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.” (Daniel 7:14)
- This judgment will divide the Gentiles into two groups. The one group, the sheep are taken into the kingdom to become subjects of the King, while the other group, the goats, are excluded from the kingdom and consigned to hell

Great White Throne Judgment

- ...But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished... (Rev. 20:5)
- Unbelieving dead of all ages
- Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face **the earth and the heaven fled away**. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and **Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them**. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then **Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.** (Revelation 20:11-15)