



GOD'S JUDGMENT

QUEST LESSON E-7

The Problem: The story is told of a businessman who was arrested for the murder of an accountant who worked in his office. He did all he could to convince the police that he was innocent, but all to no avail. They put him in prison, and the district attorney arranged for a murder trial. Now the fact is, that man was, indeed, innocent. He did not murder his employee. All those long weeks that he was in prison, he knew that he was innocent, despite what people were saying about him, and despite the slanted stories that appeared in the news media. After weeks in prison, he was brought into court for the trial. It was a long hard ordeal. It lasted three weeks. Every day of that terrible trial the man was brought from prison to the courtroom, and as he sat there before the judge and jury and listened to the lawyers' arguments for and against, he knew he was innocent.

Then came the final speeches for the prosecution and the defense. The innocent man listened while the prosecuting attorney depicted him in the worst possible colors. He was tempted to question his own sanity as he heard himself implicated in a murder plot that he had nothing to do with. His defense attorney did a good job of discounting the evidence. But what would the jury decide? With solemn faces the jurors left the courtroom and everyone waited for two days for their final decision. The innocent man couldn't sleep or eat. He waited in agony of soul for a verdict that would either ruin him forever or make him a free man.

On the morning of the third day after the jury had gone into seclusion, they filed back into the courtroom. The innocent man and his loved ones waited tensely for the verdict. They hardly dared to breathe. The sober looking jurors took their seats. The foreman stood to his feet. The judge asked, "What verdict do you bring?" The foreman calmly announced, "We find him innocent!"

Imagine the paroxysms of joy that overwhelmed the man's loved ones and friends! Imagine the enormous relief that swept over his soul!

But he was innocent all along; and he knew it! At the time of the arrest, during those long weeks in that miserable prison, and during the three agonizing weeks of the trial, he was innocent. Yet he was a captive. He couldn't go home to his dear ones, and he couldn't go to work. Not until the judge said, "You are free to go!" was he a free man. For weeks he had been an innocent man in bondage. Now he was both innocent and free!

This illustrates, at least in part, the investigative judgment that takes place in heaven before Jesus comes. The Bible says that believers in Jesus are innocent. Romans 8:1 says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." In Christ, we are innocent, and God does not condemn us. But we have sinned, and the devil and his demons do condemn us, and claim us as theirs, even though God has forgiven us. We are in this old prison-house of a world, fallen human beings, subject to suffering and death. We are innocent, but still in prison. Paul put it dramatically when he wrote that "we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:23). So we are innocent but bound in fallen natures in a fallen world.

The Bible teaches that only when the heavenly court hands down a verdict of eternal acquittal for those who are consistently believing in Jesus, only when the Judge of all the earth pronounces us His for eternity, are we free to leave this old world of sin and go with Jesus to the heavenly Kingdom. Then we will be both innocent and free!

But why would there be any need for an end-time judgment? God knows everything. He knows all about everyone of us. In fact, He knew it all ahead of time, because the Bible teaches that He sees the end from the beginning. Then why

should the Lord convene a court session in heaven to decide who should be saved and who lost? He knows already who will be saved and who will be lost.

It is important to realize that God is not concerned only with His own attitudes and reactions. If He had been content to satisfy only His own claims, Satan and his evil angels would have been destroyed as soon as they rebelled in heaven. That surely would have been just, and God had every right to do it. The reason that God did not do it but allowed these fallen demons to tempt and torture mankind for centuries, was that He wanted the unfallen angels and the inhabitants of unfallen worlds, as well as the inhabitants of our world, to serve Him from love, not from fear. The angels were created beings with limited insight. Many of them probably had some doubts about whether Satan's claims were totally false and evil. For God to destroy the devil immediately would have involved the criticism that He was hasty and unjust.

Because God is concerned that sin should not rise up again after the wicked have been destroyed at the end of time, He wants all the inhabitants of the unfallen universe to be thoroughly convinced that the people He takes to heaven at the second coming of Jesus have a right to be there. And God wants the unfallen angels to understand without any doubt at all that every person whom He judges to be unworthy of heaven is justly condemned to eternal death.

The only way to convince the unfallen universe of His complete justice is to allow them to look into the records of people's lives, so that they can know for themselves who have genuinely believed in Jesus and who have not.

There is another point that is equally as important. As we shall see in a moment when we turn to the Scriptures, God wants His living people at the end of time to have victory over sin. He cannot take to heaven people who refuse to receive the Holy Spirit as the power to overcome sin. The heavenly judgment before Jesus comes is an on-going scrutiny of people's lives, so that all heaven can know who is growing in Christ and who is refusing to grow. Our Lord promises to give us unlimited power to serve Him and overcome all evil. The judgment decides who at the end of time is availing himself of that power, and who is not. The record of the lives of the dead is closed, so it is easy for heaven to know where they stood in relation to Christ at the point of death. But it is not so easy to know what ultimate decisions the living are likely to make. God can foresee all this, but His unfallen created beings cannot. He gives every last day living soul a chance to know Him sufficiently to be saved. He wants each one to make a final, unvarying decision to serve Him. When such a decision has been made by an individual, God will seal him for eternity, and the heavenly judgment will declare that his name should be kept in the book of life for eternity. Then he is taken to the heavenly Kingdom at the second advent of Jesus.

So the pre-advent judgment is intended by God to be a great incentive to last-day people to turn to Christ and receive His Spirit into their hearts, so that their innocence in Christ will make it possible for the heavenly court to decide that their names should be kept in the book of life for eternity. The Lord wants to pronounce you eternally vindicated, because you have accepted Jesus and are living consistently by faith in Him. God wants you to be one of those whom He will seal at the end of time (Romans 7:1-3), because, by His grace, you are consistently maintaining your born-again experience, and having victory over sin through the power of the indwelling Christ.

Now let us turn to the Scriptures and read its solemn and exciting messages about the pre-advent judgment.

Objectives

First, we shall read a description of the pre-advent judgment scene.

Second, we study the prophecy that pinpoints for us when the judgment began.

Third, we shall consider the pre-advent judgment as the antitype of the High Priest's ministry in the most holy place of the ancient Israelite sanctuary on the Day of Atonement.

Fourth, we must consider the question, why is the judgment important to you?

I. The Judgment Scene Described

In lesson E-3 we considered the outline of history given by Daniel in chapter 7 of his prophetic book. Daniel saw in a vision four beasts rising up out of the sea: a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a nondescript beast. Those four beasts represented the four great empires that would dominate the eastern Mediterranean and subjugate the people of God for centuries. They were Neo-Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. On the head of the fourth beast, Daniel saw ten horns. He was told that ten kings would arise out of the fourth empire. The Roman Empire was divided exactly as Daniel's prophecy predicted. In the 4th - 6th centuries the so-called "barbarian" tribes dismembered the Empire. Daniel had seen a little horn grow up on the head of the fourth beast. This little horn pushed up three of the original ten horns and it did terrible things against God and His people. Daniel 7:24-25 enable us to identify this little horn power as the medieval Papacy. For 1,260 years ("a time and times and the dividing of time") this little horn power (the Papacy) maintained ecclesiastical supremacy. From A.D. 538 to 1798 it usurped the authority of Christ and opposed His truth and people. Daniel predicted that shortly after this period of Papal supremacy God would convene a judgment in heaven that would condemn the little horn power and vindicate His faithful people.

The Word

1. What scene was Daniel shown right after the vision of the little horn power? Daniel 7:8-9-10, 21-22, 25-26.
2. What kind of session did Daniel say would be conducted in heaven? How many unfallen angels would be present? Daniel 7:10.
3. Who was presented before God the Father as the Advocate or Attorney in this judgment? What was given to Him in this judgment session? Daniel 7:13-14.
4. What happened at the end of this heavenly judgment? Daniel 7:22 (last clause), 27; 12:1.

Explanation: After the Papacy had functioned as ecclesiastically supreme for centuries, then began the heavenly judgment. That is very clear from a comparison of Daniel 7:8-9 with verses 21-22, and verses 25-26. The period of Papal supremacy ended in 1798 when the Pope was taken prisoner by Napoleon's general. This act simply marked the end of a process in the French Revolution during which the Papacy lost its iron grip on the governments of western Europe. We know that the heavenly judgment began shortly after this. In fact, as we shall see, in the next chapter of Daniel we are actually given the year when this heavenly judgment commenced.

What is the nature of this judgment? What kinds of decisions does it make?

1. First, we know that it is in heaven. Verse 9 says that God ("the Ancient of days") took His place upon His throne, and assistant judges took their places upon thrones also. God's throne throughout the Scriptures is in heaven.
2. Second, we are told that this judgment involves a court Session in which the books of record are examined (Verse 10). That is why we call it an "investigative judgment." Books of record are investigated, and decisions are made based on what is found in them. The phrase "investigative judgment" is not in the Bible, but it describes accurately the judgment that Daniel has depicted for us. The word "Trinity" is not in the Bible either, but it correctly refers to the three Persons who comprise our one God. There are many terms, that are not in the Scriptures, used by Bible students to describe truths that are thoroughly Scriptural. Hence, we use the term "investigative judgment" because it correctly describes what happens in heaven in the pre-advent judgment.
3. Third, we are told in Scripture that records of every human life are kept. It is on the basis of these records that the judgment can be conducted. There are three kinds of records that the Bible mentions:

- a. The book of life contains the names of all those who at any time have been born-again Christians: Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 20:12.
 - b. The sins of every human being are also recorded. They are recorded as forgiven for those who have accepted Christ's forgiveness (1 John 1:9). But they are recorded as unforgiven for those who have refused Christ and His forgiveness: Matthew 12:36-37; Jeremiah 2:22; Revelation 22:12.
 - c. A book of remembrance is kept in which God records the works of faith performed by His believing people: Malachi 3:16-17.
4. Fourth, we are told that the "Son of man" is the defense Attorney in this judgment (verse 13). The title Son of man was Jesus' favorite name for Himself. (See Matthew 8:20; 9:3; 11:19; 16:13; 18:11; 20:28; 24:27 etc.). Daniel 7:13 says that the Son of man came "with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of days." Some people have concluded that this must be a reference to the second advent of Jesus, because He comes with the clouds of heaven. (Compare Matthew 26:64). But here in Daniel 7:13 we are not told that the Son of man comes to this earth. He comes to the Ancient of days. Where is the Ancient of days? Verse 9 said that He is on the throne in the heavenly court. The coming here is Christ's coming to the heavenly court at the beginning of the pre-advent, investigative judgment. He functions as our Advocate or Attorney. The clouds of heaven surround the Son as He enters the heavenly court for the judgment. The Aramaic word for cloud used here is 'anan. It is not only used in references to the second advent. It is often used in passages describing the Deity. Where God is, there is the cloud surrounding Him (See for example Exodus 13:21; 24:15-16; 33:9-10; 40:33-34; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Psalm 97:1-2). It is very significant that in the description of the Day of Atonement given in Leviticus 16 we are told that Aaron was not to go into the Most Holy Apartment of the sanctuary every day; only on the Day of Atonement. The Lord added that this was "lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat" (Leviticus 16:2). The only time the High Priest, who represented Christ, saw that cloud was on the Day of Atonement.
5. Fifth, Daniel 7:14 says that in this judgment Christ receives His kingdom, that is, the names of those who are His for eternity. This parallels what we discovered in our study on the seal of God (Lesson E4). There we learned from Revelation 7:1-3 that in the last days the angels of heaven are instructed to hold back the winds of strife in our world, "till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The servants of Christ are sealed because in this heavenly pre-advent judgment described by Daniel the decision is made that their names can be kept in the book of life. Daniel 12:1 makes that very plain. At the end of the judgment Michael (Christ, the Son of Man) stands up. That means that He ceases His work of intercession and judgment. Then comes a time of terrible, unprecedented trouble in our world. But "at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). This is the only other place in Daniel, apart from 7:10, where books in heaven are referred to. The names of born-again Christians are always placed in the Book of Life in heaven (Luke 10:20; Hebrews 12:23). But in the pre-advent judgment the decision is made whose names can be kept there and whose names should be taken out. The names of those who have lost their born-again relationship with Jesus are removed from the book of life. These are the ones who are lost when the judgment ends and put to death for eternity. But those who have their names retained in the book of life are sealed with God's seal, sheltered in the time of trouble following the close of probation (when Michael stands up), and taken to heaven with Jesus when He comes again. Since it is the pre-advent judgment which decides who these people are, it is in this judgment that Christ receives "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom" (Daniel 7:14).
6. Sixth, the pre-advent judgment is not convened merely to condemn the little horn power. It also vindicates the faithful people of ae who have been saved by grace, and who are living Victorious lives by faith in Christ. Daniel 7:22 says that when the Ancient of Days comes to this judgment, "justice" is given "to the saints of the most High." The Aramaic word for "judgment" (KJV) is dina'. It means "justice, vindication, a court session." (Compare Daniel 4:37) This word is used two other times in Daniel chapter 7. In Verses 10 and 26 it refers to the court session being convened, which, according to verse 22, has as its purpose the provision of justice for the maligned people of God.

7. Seventh, Revelation 3:53; 6:9-11; and 19:7-8 throw additional light on what happens in this pre-advent judgment:

- a. Revelation 3:5 says: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." Only the names of those who are clothed in "white raiment" will have their names retained in the book of life in the investigative judgment now going on in heaven. Others, who once knew Christ, but who have lost their born-again relationship with Him, will have their names removed from the book of life. Salvation depends on maintaining our relationship with Jesus. "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13).
- b. Revelation 6:9-11: After centuries of martyrdom, blood of the dead martyrs cries out metaphorically from the ground, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" They are not yet eternally vindicated, and in a symbolic sense they are crying for justice. This proves that they were not judged at death, or at any time prior to this.

In the next verse, the heavenly court vindicates them: "And white robes were given unto every one of them" (verse 11). That is the judgment of the dead. In view of their relationship with Christ at the time of their death, they are eternally vindicated in the pre-advent judgment. We know this judgment of the dead is pre-advent because of the next phrase. "And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season" (verse 11). After being judged and vindicated, the righteous dead are told to rest a little while until Jesus will come, raise them from the dead, and take them to the heavenly Kingdom.

After the vindication of the dead, something happens to their living brethren. The dead, who are asleep in their graves, were told metaphorically that they should rest a little longer, "until their fellow servants and their brethren, who are about to be killed as they were, might be made complete (might be made perfect). That is an accurate, literal translation of the Greek. [The English translations all read much as does the Revised Standard Version: "until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been." In fact, the word "number" does not occur in the Greek text, nor is it usually a part of the verb pleroo, as it is used throughout the Greek Scriptures. The text is not saying that the righteous dead are to remain in their graves until a certain number of their living brethren have been put to death. The message is that the dead are to rest on until their living brethren have been made complete in Christ. The Lord wants to give the living believers victory over sin through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9-10). Then He will call off the judgment, allow the time of trouble, and come to deliver both righteous dead and righteous living.

Revelation 19:7-8: This chapter is written from the perspective of the end of the judgment. Now Christ's work of vindicating His people has been completed. Verse two indicates that God "hath judged the great whore [Babylon; the little horn power] ... and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." In Revelation 6:9-10, the dead had cried out, "How long... dost thou not judge and avenge..." In Revelation 19 we are told that it has now happened. God has judged and avenged. Then, looking back, John explains what happened to the faithful people of God during the pre-advent judgment (verses 7-8). He calls it the "marriage of the Lamb." What John says can be literally translated from the Greek: "...for the marriage of the Lamb came, and his wife made herself ready. And it was given to her that she might be clothed with fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints."

So during the pre-advent, investigative judgment (the marriage of the Lamb), while the heavenly court session is in progress, God's living people are being prepared for the divine seal that will be given to them when they have received the righteousness of Christ into their hearts as the source of victory over sin. Righteous deeds (dikaionomata) are possible only to born-again Christians (John 2:29). Only as we are filled with the righteousness of Christ by the Holy Spirit can we do anything that is righteous in God's

sight. Then it is possible because Christ is living out His righteous life through us (Galatians 2:20). Righteousness within results in righteousness without. Righteous deeds are motivated and empowered by righteousness in the heart (i.e. Christ within by the Holy Spirit). This is the qualification for eternal vindication in the pre-advent judgment, and it is the qualification for the seal of God that is given to all those whose names are kept in the book of life by the heavenly court.

Relevance: The message of the pre-advent, investigative judgment, described in Daniel 7:9-14, vitally concerns the salvation of every one of us. The crucial question we all must ask ourselves is, "Am I right with Christ? Am I living by faith in Him? Do I have the Holy Spirit continually dwelling in my heart? Am I allowing Christ to live out His life through me? For people who can answer "Yes" to those questions, the pre-advent heavenly judgment is a wonderful blessing. This is the time when Satan's claims over our lives are finally and eternally denied. The Lord wants to seal every one of us as His chosen servants, in whose hearts the power of evil has been broken.

II. The Time Of The Judgment Pinpointed

The prophecy of Daniel chapter 8 provides a foreview of history from ancient times to the second coming of Jesus. It covers substantially the same extensive period of history that is covered in Daniel 7. The symbolism is somewhat different, and some other events are emphasized. But the two prophecies are, for the most part, parallel.

THE WORD

5. What event mentioned in Daniel 8 is parallel to the pre-advent judgment of Daniel 7:9-14? Daniel 8:14.
6. After what period in time would this event begin? Daniel 8:14.
7. What period was "cut off" from the 2,300 days? Daniel 9:24.
8. When did both the 70 weeks and the 2,300 days begin in history? Daniel 9:25.
9. How do you know that the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 must represent years? Daniel 8:17, 19.

Explanation: "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14). This important verse tells us in what year the heavenly pre-advent judgment was predicted to begin:

1. Daniel 8:14 parallels Daniel 7:9-14. The same investigative judgment is spoken of in both passages. Daniel 7 outlines the history of the world up to the pre-advent judgment. Does 8:14 do likewise. The two outlines can be placed side by side like this:

DANIEL 7

The bear = Medo-Persia

v. 5

The leopard = Greece

v. 6

The nondescript beast = Roman Empire

v. 7

The little horn = Papacy

v. 8

Judgment scene = pre-advent judgment

vs. 9-14

DANIEL 8

The ram = Medo-Persia

v. 3

The he-goat = Greece
vs. 5-8

The little horn = Roman Empire
vs. 9- 12

The little horn = Papacy
vs. 9-12

Sanctuary cleansing = pre-advent judgment
v. 14.

In Daniel 7, the little horn represents only the Papacy. In Daniel 8 it represents both the Pagan Roman Empire and the Papacy. The work of the Roman Empire was so close to that of the Papacy that followed it, that the prophecy uses one as the type of the other. And the Papacy grew out of the Empire in the West, as we have seen in previous studies. (See lesson £3).

Daniel 8:14 calls the pre-advent judgment (7:9-14) the cleansing of the sanctuary. The reason for that will become much clearer as we proceed. In brief, we can say that it is because the heavenly pre-advent, investigative judgment is the antitype of the ancient Israelite Day of Atonement. But we will postpone our discussion of that until the next section of this lesson.

2. The cleansing of the sanctuary (Daniel 8:14) was to begin after 2,300 days. There are some vital facts about this period of time that we must notice:
 - a. The phrase that is translated "days" means a 24-hour period. The Hebrew phrase is Ereb Boger. It means literally "evening-morning." "Some "form of this phrase is used 22 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. When a 24-hour period is intended the phrase is always "evening-morning," never "morning-evening." (See Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; Exodus 27:20-21 etc.). When the offering of the morning and evening sacrifice or the offering of incense is referred to, the phrase is always "morning-evening," never "evening-morning." (See 1 Chronicles 16:40; 2 Chronicles 2:4 etc.). In Daniel 8:14, 26 the phrase is evening- morning, a 24-hour period. The reference in Daniel 8:14 is not to the morning and evening sacrifices of the sanctuary. The reference is to 2,300 24-hour days which are used here as a prophetic symbol.
 - b. The 2,300 literal days of Daniel 8:14 are symbolic of 7,300 years. The prophet was told that the work of the little horn power would continue till the end of time (Daniel 8:17, 19, 25-26). 2,300 literal days would not reach to the end of time. The 2,300 days must refer to a period of centuries, not just to a period of 6 years 4 months.
 - c. The relationship between Daniel 8 and 9 enables us to prove that the 2,300 days are years and provides us 'the beginning date for the period. "The vision of Daniel was given in 538 B.C. 3 years after the vision of Daniel 8 (551 B.C.) Daniel was having trouble reconciling his vision of chapter 8 with Jeremiah's predictions recorded in Jeremiah 25:11. He prayed for light (Daniel 9:1-19). Gabriel came to explain more fully the vision of chapter 8 (Daniel 9:21, 23). Gabriel told Daniel that "seventy week's (Hebrew "seventy sevens") were to be "cut off" (Hebrew: hathak) from the 2,300 days. These "seventy sevens" must refer to 490 years, because they were to reach down to the time of the Messiah, (Christ). So 490 years were to be cut off from the beginning of the 2,300 days. You cannot have 490 years cut off from 2,300 literal days (6 years 4 months). Therefore, the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 must be a prophetic symbol of 2,300 years.
 - d. What was the beginning date for the 2,300 years (Daniel 8:14) and the years (Daniel 9:24)? The answer is found in Daniel 9:25: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be..." Both periods were to begin

with the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem. When was that? Ezra 6:14 indicates that God's commandment for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the restoration of the temple and its services, and the re-establishment of the Jewish state was put into effect by the decrees of three Persian monarchs. They were Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes. Cyrus's decree for the return of the Jews was enacted probably in 537 B.C. That of Darius 1 was passed about 519 or 518 B.C. The decree of Artaxerxes I Longimanus was certainly put into operation in the autumn of 457 B.C. [See S. H. Horn and L. H. Wood, The Chronology of Ezra 7 (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald 35s.

Since God's command for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the restoration of the state of ancient Israel was put into operation by three human decrees, we must use the third date, 457 B.C. 2,300 years from 457 B.C. brings us to 1844. Since the decree of Artaxerxes was put into effect in the autumn of 457 B.C., we can know that the cleansing of the sanctuary, the heavenly pre-advent judgment, would begin in the autumn of 1844.

2,300 Years

457 B.C.
Command to
Rebuild Jerusalem
(Dan. 9:25;
Ezra 6:14).

1844 A.D.
Beginning of
pre-advent judgment
(Dan. 7:9-14; 8:14).

Relevance: Bible prophecy is delightfully specific in the way in which it identifies events to take place in the future. We can have confidence that such remarkable prophecies as this came from God. He alone can predict the future with such accuracy (Isaiah 46:9-10). We can be sure that we are living in the time of the heavenly pre-advent, investigative judgment. It began in 1844. Our Lord is waiting and working to bring people into such a close relationship with Himself that by the end of the judgment they will be sealed (Revelation 7:1-3), because the heavenly court will be able to keep their names in the book of life for eternity. What did we discover to be the prerequisite for this? The continuing presence of Christ in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. The new birth is to be our uninterrupted experience, so that Christ's righteousness can be counted as ours in the heavenly judgment.

III. Why Is The Pre-Advent Judgment Called The Cleansing Of The Sanctuary?

The cleansing of the ancient Israelite sanctuary (or temple) occurred on the Day of Atonement (the 10th day of the 7th month. The pre-advent judgment is the end-time antitype of that event.

The Word

10. What were the main events of the Day of Atonement? Leviticus 16:6-10, 15-22.
11. What was the purpose of the High Priest's ministry in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement? Leviticus 16:30, 33.
12. What does the Bible call the place where Christ ministers? Does it need cleansing? Hebrews 8:1-2; 9:23.

Explanation: Two goats were taken by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. One represented Christ and the other represented Satan. The one that represents Christ was slain, symbolizing Christ's death on the cross. Some of its blood was collected by the High Priest and sprinkled on the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place, on the altar of incense in the Holy Place, and on the altar of burnt offering in the court. Thus, every part of the sanctuary was symbolically cleansed of the record of pardoned sin. The sins of the people, who had brought their sin offerings during the year, had been forgiven already (Leviticus 4:26, 31, 35). But by the sprinkling of blood in the daily service the pardoned record had been symbolically retained in the sanctuary. This record of pardoned sin defiled the sanctuary, so that it was necessary to cleanse it on the Day of Atonement.

While the High Priest was sprinkling the blood in the Most Holy Place, right in the presence of God Himself, the people were out in the court examining their hearts to be sure that all their sins had been confessed and put away. It was a time of self-examination to be sure that all sin had been put away from the life. (See Leviticus 16:29; 23:29). While a ministry was going on in the sanctuary, a divine work was taking place in the hearts of the people in the court. The Day of Atonement was an annual judgment day, on which both the sanctuary and the people were cleansed.

This once-a-year Day of Atonement was a symbol of the great work being done for the people of God from 1844 to the time when probation closes just prior to the second coming of Jesus. The world's great Day of Atonement is the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary by the ministry of Christ our High Priest in the Most Holy Place of heaven. The books of record are being examined to be sure who, as born-again Christians, have sought Christ's forgiveness for the past and, by His grace, have put away all sin from their lives. During Christ's judgment ministry in heaven, God's people on earth are coming ever nearer to Him, so that the born-again experience will be a daily, uninterrupted one. Through the power of Christ they are applying the counsel of 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." That has been God's wish for His people in every era of history. And in this time of judgment it is an especially vital work, because living believers, who are sealed with the seal of God, are to have victory over all sin, so that after the close of probation, when Christ's heavenly mediation has ceased, they will be filled the Holy Spirit and kept from sinning. (Compare Revelation 8:5; 22:11; 3:2, 5).

Relevance: Since we are living in the last remnants of time, when Christ's Most Holy Apartment judgment ministry is in progress, we must seek the Lord with all our hearts, so that He can purify us by taking away our sin and give us the wonderful, cleansing filling of the Holy Spirit.

IV. Why Is The Judgment Important To You?

We will let the Lord answer that question through His Word.

The Word

13. Why does God call everyone to repent? Acts 17:30-31.
14. What importance does the Lord give to our works in this judgment? 2 Corinthians 5:10.
15. How are we prepared for the judgment? 1 John 4:13-17.

Explanation: Since God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31), since that day has arrived and the heavenly judgment is in progress, since we are judged by our works (2 Corinthians 5:10), and since our works are right in God's sight only as we are filled with the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:13-17), it is of first importance that at this very time we draw very near to Christ. To delay coming to the Lord could very well involve us in eternal ruin. Only as we enter into the fullest possible relationship with Jesus will we be sheltered from the deceptions of the last days. Only as He is dwelling in our hearts by the Holy Spirit will we be kept from sinning and empowered to live as Jesus asks. The pre-advent judgment will decide every person's eternal destiny. Those who receive Christ's victory over sin will have their names kept in the book of life, and will be sealed with the seal of the living God. Those who refuse Christ's victory will have their names taken out of the book of life, and will receive the mark of the beast.

Relevance: Where do you stand, dear friend, at this solemn time of judgment?

"The judgment has set,
The books have been opened.
How shall we stand in that great day
When every thought, and word, and action,
God, the righteous Judge, shall weigh?

O, how shall we stand that
moment of searching,

When all our sins, those books reveal?
When from that court,
“ In each case decided, shall be granted no appeal?”

The question is one that only you can answer. But we plead with you to give your life totally to Christ, so that He can present His mercy and righteousness for you in the judgment. Will you come to Him today?

Review Questions

1. True or False
 - a. Daniel 7:9-14 is speaking of a judgment in the first century A.D.
 - b. Daniel 8:14 refers to the antitypical Day of Atonement.
 - c. The pre-advent judgment began in 1844.
 - d. The works of our lives have no bearing on the outcome of the judgment.
2. Discuss: In the light of the message we have just found in the Word of God, can you see the importance of Jesus' message in Matthew 22:11-14?