

The
BUSY MAN'S
TRACT

Read in three minutes

SUBJECT:

“THE RESURRECTION AND
THE ETERNAL JUDGMENT”

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Reorganized
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter Day Saints

GENERAL CHURCH HEADQUARTERS
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI
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THE RESURRECTION AND THE ETERNAL JUDGMENT

Texts: "The dead in Christ shall rise first."— 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

"He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world."— Acts 17: 31. "The doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection, and of head, and of eternal judgment."—Hebrews 6: 2.

God threw King Belshazzar into the balances and weighed him and declared that he was "found wanting." (Daniel 5: 27.) That ended the reign of Belshazzar. When God tires of the folly of a king it is an easy matter to take him from the palace and set him to sawing wood in Holland or brooding with the sea gulls on Saint Helena.

If kings are not spared, how may ordinary mortals hope to escape? In fact, God is "no respecter of persons," and king and peasant will be treated without partiality.

A Day Set

There is to be a great final time of judgment, happy for some, sad for others.

"He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in

righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.”—Acts 17: 31.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”—Revelation 20: 12.

“Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”—Daniel 7: 10.

Events Preceding the Judgment

Certain momentous events are to precede the final judgment. First is the second personal advent of our Lord. Jesus told his disciples: “I will come again.”—John 14: 3.

This coming is to be personal. The angels said: “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven.”—Acts 1: 11.

Closely associated with his coming is the “first resurrection.”

“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.”—1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

Then follows the millennial reign of a thousand years:

“And they lived and *reigned with Christ a thousand years*. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.”—Revelation 20: 4-6.

Following the thousand years reign comes the resurrection of the wicked:

“And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the *rest of the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were finished.”—Revelation 20: 4, 5.

The idea of two resurrections is carried out in other scriptures:

“They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”—John 5: 29.

“A resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”—Acts 24: 15.

“Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”—Daniel 12: 2.

We have then the following events in their order: The second coming of Christ; the resurrection of the just;

the millennial reign; the resurrection of the wicked; and then the great judgment pictured by John.

Theological Blunders

Concerning this judgment many blunders have been made in the name of God. Not the least of these was the old dogma of predestination which fain would have sent some men and angels to hell and others to heaven quite irrespective of anything they might have done—merely “for the glory of God.”

Another blunder is the idea that there are but two places, one for endless torment, one for endless bliss, and all men divided into two classes.

Let us in imagination arrange a line of men before us for judgment. At one end of the line is the meanest man that ever lived. At the other end is the best man that ever lived. They are graded down morally from the best to the worst, and stand scarcely an inch apart physically and morally.

Where can you put your hand down in this line and say that all on this side shall go to heaven and all on that side shall go to hell?

If God fixes the dividing line between two certain men, will he say that this man who has missed hell

only by the thickness of a hand shall go into heaven and share celestial glory equally with the best man who ever lived? And that this other man who has lost heaven by an inch shall go to hell and suffer the same punishment that is meted out to the worst man who ever profaned the human form?

We do better than that here, in our high schools and our police courts. We at least try to give reward in proportion to merit, and mete out punishment according to degree of guilt.

As a matter of fact, God has an infinite variety of rewards and of punishments to meet the needs and deserts of all men.

Another blunder is to assume that the mere profession of religion is the determining factor. Here is a case from actual life: Henry Clay Bates murdered his young wife in cold blood. On the eve of his execution he called for a minister, "accepted Christ," was told that he was "saved," and said, "I die happy." Theologians send him to heaven with John the Beloved and Stephen the Just. His poor wife, though a good woman, had not accepted Christ, so perforce, she is consigned to torment forever and forever.

No, there is quite a different basis of judgment, and profession is not the only factor.

The Basis of Reward and Punishment

That judgment is to be absolutely just. No errors will be made. Rich and poor, small and great, will have justice. And this is the basis of judgment:

“And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, *according to their works.*”
—Revelation 20: 12.

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man *according as his work shall be.*”
—Revelation 22: 12.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body . . . *whether it be good or bad.*”—2 Corinthians 5: 10.

This idea of merit as a basis of reward appeals to common sense. It is just, as God is just.

The Glory of the Stars

The rewards that God will bestow are as diverse as the sun, the moon, and the multitudinous stars.

“The glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is an-

other. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.”—1 Corinthians 15: 40-42.

Paul tells us that every man shall be rewarded according as he has builded of “gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or stubble.” (1 Corinthians 3: 11, 15.)

It is clear, too, that God will differentiate in punishment as in reward. Jesus said of certain people: “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.” (Matthew 10: 15.)

The human race has long struggled to develop and attain justice. The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is glad and proud to proclaim a gospel of justice and judgment.

We warn you of judgment to come. Accept Jesus—he makes salvation possible. Obey his gospel, for it redeems and regenerates. Diligently give yourself to works of righteousness, for by your works and by the word of God you will be judged; and *according to your works* you will be rewarded.

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