

FACING JUDGMENT

You are now facing judgment before the Supreme Court of the Universe. Therefore, I hereby present you with a summons to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. This summons is to be presented to each one sitting here before me, and the all-important question is: "Are you ready?"

In 2 Cor. 5:10 we read: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." It makes no difference who you are, what you are or where you live, you must appear before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.

We can hide some things from men, but we cannot hide a thing from God. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:14. God has a complete record of our lives, and it is all to be reviewed in the judgment. If we think we can hide anything from God, we are deceiving ourselves. God knows the innermost secrets of our minds, and He looks into the deep recesses of our hearts.

The story is told of a woman who plotted to get the insurance of her invalid husband. She drove a long narrow finishing nail into his brain, wiping away the blood and combing his hair neatly over the place. The family doctor was unsuspecting, and the blood was not evident, so he pronounced her husband dead from natural causes. It appeared that she had committed the perfect crime.

However, years later it was necessary for the operators of the cemetery to dig up the remains of some of the deceased. It so happened that one of the graves that was to be opened was that of this woman's husband. When they dug up the body, they found the nail piercing through the skull.

The authorities were informed of the discovery, and they immediately went to the woman to question her of their findings. When she was presented with the evidence that her crime had been discovered, she cried out: "God has found me out at last." In actuality, God knew about her crime all the time. Nothing can be hidden from God. He can read our very thoughts, and has a complete record of every act that we have ever committed.

It is impossible to hide anything from God. Those things that we think we have hidden from the Lord will be revealed in the judgment, and as in the case of this woman, it will be a bitter experience when our sins are exposed. Then we will see the results of our choice. Our whole lives will be presented before us, and then the world's pleasures, riches, and honors will not seem nearly so important.

How much easier and better it is to confess our sins to the Lord now, in the day of His mercy. Then when the judgment comes, our sins will be covered with the blood of Jesus, and never will they be revealed. Many have the idea that when Jesus comes there will be a period of some twenty-four hours in which all will be lined up to file

past His throne to be judged. But this is not what the Bible teaches.

Startling as it may seem to some, the judgment is going on in heaven at the present time. It is a solemn fact that right now God is weighing in the balances the lives of those who profess to believe in Him. The Bible reveals that when the Lord comes, He is coming to EXECUTE judgment. When the lost see Jesus coming in the clouds of glory, they will be condemned in their hearts. All of the mistakes that they have made and harbored in their subconscious minds, will come up before them to condemn them.

Every court case must have an investigative trial before the judgment is actually executed. After all the facts are known, and the jury deliberates, the verdict is rendered. Then the individual is either freed or punished, whichever the case may be. Truly, God is not going to sentence any man or woman without a fair trial. But divine justice will be meted out at last.

Right now God is pleading with the human race to accept the cross of Jesus Christ which is the only hope for freedom and eternal life. In the hour of judgment either our sins will be blotted out of His book of records by the blood of Jesus or we will forever lose our place with the people of God. There will be no future probation in which to prepare for eternity. It is now that we must accept Jesus as our Saviour.

Both John the Revelator and Daniel the Prophet saw in vision the solemn judgment scene that is going on in heaven today. The Revelator says in Rev. 5:11: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." About the throne gather the holy angels, a vast unnumbered throng.

John further describes this impressive scene as follows: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." Rev. 20:11. Such a solemn scene! Sad will be the retrospect in that day when men stand face to face with eternity. Then when it is too late, the sinner will see that the righteousness that he despised is alone of value.

John then tells us how this investigative judgment is conducted: "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." Rev. 20:12. If the dead are already enjoying the bliss of heaven, or writhing in the flames of everlasting hell, what need is there of a future judgment? No, dear Friends, the dead are not being punished now, but will receive their reward or punishment in that great day of final award.

The Bible makes it very plain that all the dead,

every man, woman, and child will be judged. For it says: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man to their works . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:13, 15. The book of record in heaven, in which the names and deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decision of the Judge.

Daniel the Prophet describes this impressive scene as follows: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire." Dan. 7:9. Before the throne of His Father, Jesus appears to plead His blood in behalf of penitent believers.

Daniel, as well as John, saw the angels ministering before God's throne. For he says: "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7:10. Those angels who have guided, protected, and led us in our struggle against evil and sin, will be there to bear witness either for or against us.

Dear Friends, the great supreme court of the universe has been called and is meeting this very moment in an investigation of the records of our lives: "AND THINKEST THOU THIS, O MAN . . . THAT THOU SHALT ESCAPE THE JUDGMENT OF GOD?" Rom. 2:3. Many people have put off their surrender to Christ and have refused to obey Him. There are many who call themselves Christians, but do not live what they profess. None of these can escape the judgment. The judgment is as certain as the dawn.

When those who profess to be Christians, but who do not live up to their profession, find out at the end that they are lost, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7:22, 23. Good works do not save anyone. We must believe in Jesus and obey His commands.

NOW is the time to put away our sins. When Jesus comes, it will be too late to confess our mistakes. We must make our peace with God TODAY. Tomorrow may be too late. Do not wait for a more convenient time, but do it NOW. Make everything right with God today. It is in this life that we are to put on the robe of the righteousness of Christ. This is our only opportunity to form characters that will be able to stand unafraid in that great judgment day.

The Prophet Daniel was very much interested in the work of Jesus as our High Priest. As the earthly sanctuary was just a copy of the sanctuary in heaven, so the work of the earthly priest was a representation of the work of Jesus as our High Priest. The angel told Daniel just when, in the history of the world, the last phase of Christ's work would begin. In Dan. 8:14, it says: ". . . unto

two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

The last work of the earthly priesthood each year was the cleansing of the sanctuary, or temple, and this took place on the Day of Atonement. So the last work of Jesus as our High Priest, is the cleaning of the heavenly sanctuary, or the final disposition of sin. There was a definite time for the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary, the tenth day of the seventh month each year. (Lev. 16:29). So we can expect that there is given us a definite time for Jesus to begin His work of atonement in heaven.

The Prophet Daniel predicted a definite time for the entrance of Christ into the last phase of His work as Priest in the heavenly court. Jesus was to begin His work in the heavenly sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days. These are prophetic days, each one stands for a year, for in Eze. 4:6, it says: ". . . I have appointed thee each day for a year." So this 2300-day prophecy referred to in Dan 8:14 actually represents 2300 years. This 2300-year span of prophecy is the longest time prophecy in the Bible.

The angel told Daniel that the prophecy would have its beginning at the time of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. In Ezra 7:12 we find that this decree was made by King Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign, which was 457 B.C., the date for the beginning of this great prophecy. At the end of this period of time, 2300 years later, Christ began His work as High Priest in the judgment hall above. The cleansing of the sanctuary represents the cleansing of the temple of God of the sins that have been sent up in the prayers offered by God's children through the centuries.

In this amazing prophecy of the 2300 Years, the angel told Daniel that the first 69 weeks, or 483 literal years of prophetic time, were to reach to the Messiah, the Prince. "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 seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." Dan. 9:25. This amazing revelation gives us the very year in which Christ was to appear as the Saviour of the world.

Since the 2300-day prophecy began in 457 B.C., and since it was to be 69 weeks or 483 literal years until the time that the Messiah, the Prince, would come, we can know for a fact that Christ was to appear in the year A.D. 27. And Christ did appear at that time, and was baptized in the River Jordan that very year by John the Baptist.

Christ knew that He had come exactly on time, for we read in Mark 1:14, 15, ". . . Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, THE TIME IS FULFILLED . . ." Many people do not realize that the Bible prophesied many years before the coming of Christ the very time when He would appear. This prophecy silences the infidel and baffles the Jew.

Not only does the prophecy reveal the time of Christ's coming, but it further reveals that in the middle of the 70th week, or 7-year period, Christ was to be crucified. (Dan. 9:25-27). At the end of

that prophetic week the Jews as a nation were rejected, and the disciples began to labor for the Gentiles. So in A.D. 34 the Jews ceased to be a favored people, and since then have stood on an equality with all other people before God. All have the same rights and privileges.

When the 70 weeks or 490 prophetic years were cut off from the 2300 years, it still left 1810 years. When we add 1810 years to 34 A.D., it brings us to A.D. 1844, the date which marks the end of the 2300-year prophecy. The prophet Daniel says: "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Dan. 8:14. Christ's solemn work of judgment began in 1844 A.D. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of fallen man.

In Acts 17:30, 31, we read: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but NOW commandeth all men everywhere to repent; Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Paul tells us here in positive terms that God had appointed a day in which he would judge the world. We are living in that great day of judgment. Let us search our hearts that we may repent before it is too late.

As Paul told others of the wonderful love of Jesus—" . . . he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and JUDGMENT TO COME . . ." Acts 24:25. Paul understood well that the great day of Judgment was at some future time. James also speaks of that day, for he says: "Behold, the judge standeth before the door . . ." Jas. 5:9. It is of utmost importance that we thoroughly investigate this subject, that we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption.

The judgment of this world had its beginning in the year 1844. Many students of Bible prophecy interpreted Dan. 8:14 to mean that the earth was to be cleansed at that time. Therefore, there were many in all parts of the world who believed that the Lord was going to come to destroy sin and sinners in 1844. But, although Christ did not come to the earth, He did go into the presence of His Father in a special way to act as the Mediator and High Priest for the world.

The cleansing of the Temple of God in heaven of all the sins that have been confessed down through the ages is going on at this present time. Paul says "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24. By virtue of the atoning blood of Jesus, the sins of all truly penitent will be blotted out of the books of heaven.

Paul explains the work that Christ is doing in our behalf in heaven in these last days as follows: "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 9:25, 26. Attended by heavenly angels, our Great High Priest appears in the presence of

God to make atonement for all those who are entitled to its benefits.

Paul continues his explanation of this work of the Mediator: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:27, 28. Our Saviour was not to be sacrificed a second time. It is only necessary for those who seek the blessing of His grace to ask in the name of Jesus, and their sins will be covered by His blood.

Think of it, Friends, Christ has been doing the work of cleansing the temple in heaven for over 100 years by blotting out the sins that have been confessed in His name, or in some cases blotting out the names from the Book of Life of those who have failed to live the true Christian life. God is seated on His throne, Jesus is there as our Intercessor, and the angels are there, thousands and thousands of them. The books have been opened. The records are being reviewed.

Yes, God has books wherein records are kept. He has a Book of Life in which are entered the names of those who claim to be His followers. "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 are judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20:12. This makes it plain that only those whose names are in the Book of Life, only those who have been professed Christians will be judged at this time.

In addition to the Book of Life, we are told that God has a Book of Iniquity. All our sins are recorded in this book. "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God." The angels have a complete record of all our iniquities and they are marked in this Book of Iniquities. All the names and deeds of man are recorded here, and this record is to determine the decisions of the judgment.

There is also a third book. It is sometimes called the Book of Remembrance. It contains a record of all the good things we say and do. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name." Mal. 3:16. I hope that God has a long list of good things under my name in the Book of Remembrance—and under yours.

We can clearly see that God has three books: The Book of Life, the Book of Iniquity, and the Book of Remembrance. If you are a follower of His, your name is in the Book of Life. Your sins are recorded in the Book of Iniquity, and your good deeds in the Book of Remembrance. If you have confessed all of those sins that have been listed in the Book of Iniquity, they will be blotted out by the blood of Jesus, and your name will be retained in the Book of Life.

However, if there are sins unconfessed, that you have failed to forsake, when your name is

called in the judgment that name will be blotted out of the Book of Life. It tells us in Rev. 3:5: "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." Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted and rejected.

By what standard will we be judged, you ask? Well let us read what the Bible says: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:13, 14.

Notice that the commandments of God will be the standard by which we will be judged. It is the ONLY standard that God has ever had for us. It is no wonder that Satan is so determined to make men break one of God's commandments, for he knows that if he succeeds in this, it will condemn them in the judgment. All heaven is interested in the fate of each name.

God says that if we break one of the least of His commandments, we will be found guilty, GUILTY of all. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." Jas. 2:10-12.

You can see that we are going to be judged by that law that says: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and that says: "Thou shalt not kill." Jesus says in John 14:15: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Do we love Jesus enough to obey Him? The answer to this question will determine whether or not our names will be retained in the Lamb's Book of Life. In the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every unfulfilled duty, every secret sin. Let us show our love to Jesus today by keeping all His commandments and overcoming every temptation.

It is true that the commandments cannot save us. They are merely a standard for us to go by. They show us what sin is. When we see that we are breaking one of God's commandments, we are to ask the Lord to forgive us, and then mend our ways. You may be sure that God will investigate to see if you have been an obedient child of His. The Lord will not permit anyone to enter heaven who is rebellious or disobedient. There has already been one rebellion in heaven, and God does not want another one up there.

The Bible tells us that: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17:9. As God looks down into your hearts tonight, He can see just what is there. God is able to read our very thoughts. He knows all about our lives. He knows if we are honest. He knows if we have stolen, or if we have bad tempers, or lying tongues, or hatred in our hearts. Yes, the Lord reads our hearts as an open book.

Friends, God can change these hearts of ours. He has offered to give us a heart wherein dwelleth

righteousness. Why don't you let Him give you this precious gift TONIGHT? Remember, dear Friends, if you are WILLFULLY breaking one of God's commands, He will have your name blotted out of the Book of Life. Oh, Beloved, don't be rebellious or disobedient. Confess your sins, return what you have taken, make all the wrongs right.

The Bible says: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out . . ." Acts 3:19. When your name is called in the great supreme court of the universe in heaven, will Jesus stand before His Father and plead your case? No matter how many sins you may have committed, if you have confessed them in His name, He will plead for you. On the other hand, if you willfully persist in known sins, the blood of Jesus can never cover such disobedience.

If you know that you have unconfessed sins on God's record book, you cannot eradicate them in any way except they be covered with the blood of Jesus. If you fail to claim His shed blood, Christ will have to remain silent when your name is finally called in the judgment hall. He will not be able to stand and plead YOUR case.

Christ is our only Mediator. He is the ONLY ONE who can help us. There is no attorney that we can hire; there is no price that we can pay; there are no works that we can perform to gain salvation. The only ONE who can successfully plead for us is Jesus. And He can plead for us only if our sins are forgiven and put away. Let us hope that your sins and mine are blotted out of the Book when our names come up in judgment.

Abraham Lincoln had a son called Tad. He was very proud of his son. The lad was chatting with a soldier in the outer office of the White House one day. The soldier was waiting to speak to the President. The President's secretary finally came out and announced that the President was through seeing people for the day.

The soldier who had been visiting with Tad informed the lad that he could not come back again, and that he had an urgent matter to take up with the President. He was greatly grieved over the fact that he could not see him. When Tad heard this he said: "You mean you want to see my father?" The soldier was surprised to learn that the lad was the son of the President. He said, "Yes, I would like to see him very much."

The lad said, "Wait a moment." Then he hurried into the inner office and soon came back and said, "Come in, please, my father wants to see you." The son of the President got him in. My dear Friends, only the Son of God can get us into heaven. Only Christ can successfully plead for us before the throne of the Father.

The Bible tells us that: ". . . Judgment must begin at the house of God . . ." I Pet. 4:17. Beginning with Adam, the Lord started the work of the investigative judgment in 1844. Just how far down the ages of time the Lord has come in this great work, we do not know. Who knows but that He may come to the names of some of us this very day. Suppose your name should be one of those called tonight, WOULD YOU BE READY?

I would like to hope that when my name is called, I might be on my knees in prayer. I cer-

tainly would not want to be in one of the resorts of pleasure at that time. Nor would I wish to be committing some sinful act, or gossiping, or criticizing someone, or having a fit of violent temper or jealousy. I truly hope that I will be ready when my name is called.

I often think of the solemn judgment scene in heaven. Satan does not want us to think about it, but it is important that we do. Some day, or night, the angel will come to my name in the Book of Life. Stanley Harris, will ring out in the judgment hall. Then the Book of Iniquities will be opened. There under my name are the sins that I have committed. Next to those sins is the record of my confession in the name of Jesus. It is my determination that every one of my sins will have been confessed in His name.

The angel with great joy gives the word that all the sins have been confessed, forsaken, and forgiven. I can see Jesus moving close to His Father and holding up those nail-pierced hands: I can hear Him plead, "Father, My blood, My blood is sufficient for Stanley Harris. Father, I will that he may be with me where I am." I see the Father bow in acknowledgment of His Son's request. Then the angels burst forth in joyful song. Oh, Friends, I truly want it to be that way, don't you?

Then the name of John Doe is read. Immediately the Book of Iniquity is opened, and there is the record of John Doe's sins. There is cheating, there is a record of a bad temper, there are some lies that were told, there are deceitful things that he did. After each of these sins is marked "confessed" and "forgiven."

But finally there is one sin that John Doe has not confessed. John Doe willfully clings to it. The word is passed along that John Doe has not confessed and forsaken his sin. The angels bow their heads in grief. Jesus does not move to plead his case. The Father is grief-stricken. Christ cannot plead for John Doe. His sacrifice for him has been in vain.

The Bible says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9. It will be our own fault if we haven't confessed our sins and made all things right with God. We will have no one to blame but ourselves, if we are found willfully disobeying one of God's commands.

When the judgment is ended, Christ will make the final decree that will settle every man's fate for all eternity. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. 22:11. How important that we contemplate often the solemn scene when every individual must stand in judgment for the things he has done.

The Bible tells us that when this great work of the investigative judgment is finished in heaven Christ, who is now our High Priest, will lay off his priestly garments, and put on His kingly robes and crown, in preparation for returning to this world to redeem His saints. "And behold, I come quickly;

and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

When Jesus comes in the clouds of glory, His reward is with Him to give every man according to His works. He comes as King of kings and Lord of lords. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." Ps. 50:3, 4.

The day of Christ's coming will be a terrible day for those who are lost. But it will be a wonderful day for the saved. "And it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God: we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is our Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25:9. The wicked are condemned in their own hearts by their sinful deeds and rebellious spirits, but the righteous are so happy that Jesus has returned to take them away from this sin-sick, troubled world to the glories of the home of the redeemed.

The wicked will run from the presence of the Lord to seek to hide. "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Isa. 11:4. I want to ask you, my Friend, "Is your name in the Lamb's Book of Life?" It is more important for your name to be there than in any Who's Who volume! All should want their names in the Book of Life, for it means the difference between eternal life or eternal damnation.

A man was riding through town in his wagon one day when suddenly his horses became frightened and with a leap and a jerk started running in a frenzy of fear. The man lost his grip on the reins, and the runaways rushed headlong toward a catastrophe. A big man came running out into the roadway and leaped forward, caught hold of the horses, and finally dragged them to a halt. The man in the wagon thanked the big man profusely for saving his life.

Later on the man whose life had been saved committed a terrible crime and was called before the judge to be sentenced. As he looked up into the judge's face, he recognized him as the man who had stopped his runaway horses and saved his life some weeks before. He asked the judge, "Don't you remember me? I'm the man whose life you saved several weeks ago. Can you not do something to save me now?" The judge answered him, "Then I was your saviour, but now I am your judge."

Today, Christ is our Saviour. Some day soon He is coming as a judge to judge the world. Today He is the Mediator between God and man, and stands ready to plead your case, if you will ask Him. Do you sincerely want Jesus to act as a Mediator for you? If you do, will you please raise your hand? Yes, I see many hands. May God bless you and may He seal this decision for eternity. Shall we pray?