

Loris First Baptist Church
“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”

Doctrine #48 – The Judgment of Israel and the Nations

Note: Most information based on pages 344-349 of the book “Major Bible Themes” by Lewis Sperry Chaffer.

Introduction

1. In connection with the second coming of Jesus Christ, judgments on both Israel and the nations are included in the great events which establish His kingdom on earth.
2. The judgments begin apparently with the judgment of resurrected saints of the Old Testament, both the Israelites and the Gentiles, and resurrected saints of the tribulation period, both Israelites and Gentiles.
3. Attending the event also, however, are a separate judgment of those among Israel still living on the earth and another judgment for Gentiles still living on the earth.
4. These latter judgments have to do with the separation of those counted worthy to enter the kingdom from those who are counted unworthy and are excluded.

The Judgment of Resurrected Israel and the Gentiles

1. The doctrine of resurrection is a familiar truth of the Old Testament, as discussed in doctrine #47. In addition to the resurrection which takes place at the rapture of the church, there is also a resurrection of righteous dead in connection with the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom.

Daniel 12:2 “*Multitudes WHO SLEEP IN THE DUST OF THE EARTH WILL AWAKE: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*”

Isaiah 26:19 “*But your dead will live, LORD; THEIR BODIES WILL RISE—let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy—your dew is like the dew of the morning; THE EARTH WILL GIVE BIRTH TO HER DEAD.”*

Job 19:25-26 “*I know that MY REDEEMER LIVES, and that in the end HE WILL STAND UPON THE EARTH. And after my skin has been destroyed, YET IN MY FLESH I WILL SEE GOD; I myself will see Him with my own eyes—I, and not another.*”

2. Resurrection of Israel is also seen in connection with the restoration as a nation at the time of the Second Coming.
 - a. In Ezekiel 37 in the vision of the valley of dry bones, we learn that while the restoration of the dry bones to a living body is symbolic of the restoration of the nation Israel, it is also the time when Israel will be brought out of their graves.

Ezekiel 37:12-14 *“Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I AM GOING TO OPEN UP YOUR GRAVES AND BRING YOU UP FROM THEM; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and BRING YOU UP FROM THEM. I will put my Spirit in you and YOU WILL LIVE, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.’”*

- 1) Here the symbolic and the literal seem to be combined. In the same chapter David is pictured as a resurrected person serving as a king over Israel under Christ.
 - 2) In general, the Old Testament gives a firm faith to all who would believe in the resurrection from the dead.
- b. In Revelation 20 the resurrection of the martyred dead of the tribulation time is said to take place in connection with the second coming of Christ. It probably is combined with the resurrection of the Old Testament saints.
- 1) Those resurrected are said to live and reign with Christ a thousand years and are apparently rewarded much in the same way as the church is rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ.

Revelation 20:4 *“I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. THEY CAME TO LIFE and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”*

- 2) Their faithfulness to God even unto death and their service rendered are recognized in their sharing in the reign of Christ upon earth.
- c. Some confusion has arisen because of the fact that the church is also said to reign with Christ. Scripture seems to indicate that all the righteous raised before the Millennium will share in some way in the millennial reign, each in his own order and according to the sovereign purpose of God.
- d. The church will reign as the bride of Christ; the resurrected saints will reign in their respective capacities as saved Israelites or saved Gentiles.
- e. An illustration is afforded in the Book of Esther, where Esther reigned as queen while Mordecai reigned as the king’s prime minister.
- 1) Both Esther and Mordecai reigned, but in different ways and in different capacities. So it will be in the Millennium.
- f. Accordingly, it may be concluded that the righteous dead of both Israel and the Gentiles will be raised at the time of the second coming of Christ, and this resurrection will include all who are not involved in the resurrection and translation at the rapture of the church.

The Judgment of Living Israel

1. When Christ returns in His second coming, He will also deliver His people Israel from their persecutors.
2. Many will have already been put to death, but those who survive will be delivered by Christ when He comes.

Zechariah 13:8-9 “*In the whole land,’ declares the LORD, ‘two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet ONE-THIRD WILL BE LEFT IN IT. This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. THEY WILL CALL ON MY NAME and I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are my people,’ and they will say, ‘THE LORD IS OUR GOD.’”*

Romans 11:26 “*And in this way ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED. As it is written: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob.’”*

3. All the Israelites who are delivered from their enemies, however, are not worthy to enter the kingdom, as some of them are unsaved.
 - a. They will be gathered before the Lord and judged.

Ezekiel 20:33-38 “*As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will reign over you with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath. I will bring you from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered—with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath. I will bring you into the wilderness of the nations and there, face to face, I WILL EXECUTE JUDGMENT ON YOU. As I judged your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will judge you, declares the Sovereign LORD. I will take note of you as you pass under my rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. I WILL PURGE YOU OF THOSE WHO REVOLT AND REBEL AGAINST ME. Although I will bring them out of the land where they are living, yet they will not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”*

- b. Fulfillment will first be made of the re-gathering of every Israelite from the entire world.

Ezekiel 39:28 “*Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land, NOT LEAVING ANY BEHIND.”*

- c. On the basis of above Scriptures, re-gathered Israel is divided into two classes of people—
 - 1) Those who have accepted Jesus as their Messiah and Savior and are counted worthy to enter the kingdom, and
 - 2) Those who are still rebels, unbelievers, and are excluded and put to death.

- d. While Israel as a nation is a favored nation, and while God has showered special blessings upon them, personal salvation still depends upon individual faith and a relationship with God.

Galatians 3:6-11 *“Consider Abraham: ‘He believed God, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ Understand, then, that THOSE WHO BELIEVE are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would JUSTIFY THE GENTILES BY FAITH, and ANNOUNCED THE GOSPEL IN ADVANCE TO ABRAHAM: “All nations will be blessed through you.’ So those WHO HAVE FAITH are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.’ Clearly NO ONE is justified before God by the law, because, ‘THE RIGHTEOUS WILL LIVE BY FAITH.’”*

- e. As it has been through ages past, so at this time there are those who are counted “true Israel” (that is, saved) and those who are Israel only in name, who are unsaved.
- 1) As Paul expresses it in **Romans 9:6**, *“For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.”*
 - 2) In **Romans 9:8**, he describes the unsaved as *“the children of the flesh”* who are *“not the children of God.”*
 - 3) The purging of the rebels will leave in Israel only the truly redeemed, and it will be their privilege to enter the land and possess it, in contrast with the unsaved, of whom God states, *“They shall not enter into the land of Israel” (Ezek. 20:38).*

The Judgment of Living Gentiles

1. The judgment of the nations concerns God’s individual judgment on the Gentiles in contrast with His judgment on Israel.
2. This judgment is described by our Lord in **Matthew 25:31-46** as a judgment which immediately follows His second coming.
 - a. In **verse 31**, it is said to occur in this way: *“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.”*
 - b. In the description which follows, the Gentiles are described as sheep and goats intermingled and gathered before a shepherd.
 - c. Differing in kind, they are divided one from another, the sheep being placed on the right hand of the King and the goats on the left.

d. Then the King invites the sheep to enter the kingdom. To them he states:

Matthew 25:34-37 *“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘COME, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’”*

e. When the sheep ask the question as to when these deeds of righteousness were done, the King replies in **Matthew 25:40**, *“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, YOU DID FOR ME.’”*

f. Then the King turns to those on the left hand and declares unto them, *“Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (v. 41).*

3. The King goes on to say they have not done these same deeds of kindness which He has ascribed to the sheep.

a. The goats respond, *“Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?” (v. 44).*

b. The King replies, *“Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, YE DID IT NOT FOR ME.” (v. 45).*

c. The goats are then declared to be cast into everlasting punishment, but the righteous are ushered into the blessings of eternal life.

4. This passage has created some misunderstanding because of the emphasis on works.

a. A superficial study would seem to indicate the sheep are saved because of their works, and the goats are lost because of their lack of works.

b. The Bible, however, makes clear that salvation is never by works in any dispensation.

c. Even the Mosaic law which emphasized works never had among its promises salvation as a reward for faithful works. Rather, the norm for all dispensations is stated in **Ephesians 2:8-9**: *“FOR IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED, BY FAITH—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— NOT BY WORKS, so that no one can boast.”*

5. Because of man’s innate depravity, being born with a sinful nature, and because of his position in Adam, his first parent who sinned against God, “all” men are born “lost” and in themselves are without hope.

6. Only on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ could anyone be saved in the Old or New Testament.

Romans 3:25-26 *"GOD PRESENTED CHRIST AS A SACRIFICE OF ATONEMENT, through the shedding of His blood—TO BE RECEIVED BY FAITH. He did this to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance HE HAD LEFT THE SINS COMMITTED BEFOREHAND unpunished— He did it to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the One who justifies THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH IN JESUS."*

7. The law of works is only a road to condemnation, whereas the law of faith is the way of salvation.

Romans 3:27-28 *"Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. For we maintain that A PERSON IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH APART FROM THE WORKS OF THE LAW."*

8. If this is well established in other Scripture, how can the judgment of the sheep and the goats be explained?

1. The principle involved in this judgment is of works as an "evidence" of salvation, not of works as the "grounds" of salvation.
2. While faith alone can save, it is also true that faith without works is dead, that is, it is not true faith.

James 2:26 *"As the body without the spirit is dead, SO FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD."*

9. The works of the sheep are especially significant in the context of the Great Tribulation through which these people have passed.

- a. In this period there will be worldwide anti-Semitism, and many Israelites will be killed. Under those circumstances, for a Gentile to befriend a Jew, even *"one of the least of these my brethren"* (**Matt. 25:40**) would be significant.
- b. In fact, for a Gentile to befriend a Jew at a time when Jews are being hounded to death would be to endanger his own life and freedom.
- c. The only possible reason for such kindness under these circumstances, in a time of great satanic deception and hatred of the Jews, would be that the Gentile is a believer in Christ and recognizes the peculiar position of Israel as the chosen people of God.
- d. Accordingly, while kindness to a Jew might not be especially significant under ordinary circumstances, in this context of worldwide suffering for Israel, kindness to a Jew becomes the unmistakable mark of true salvation in Christ.
- e. Thus, while the sheep are not saved on the basis of their works, their works demonstrate that they are saved. It is the principle of being known by one's fruit.

10. In this judgment the righteous Gentiles are allowed to enter the kingdom.

- a. They are not given the Promised Land, which belongs only to Israel, but they are allowed to live in the millennial earth, in a time of unprecedented blessing for both Gentiles and Israelites.
- b. The goats, on the other hand, are cast into everlasting fire.
 - 1) Whether this means they are cast into Hades, to be resurrected later and cast in the lake of fire, or whether it refers to immediate entrance to the lake of fire is not entirely clear.
 - 2) In any case, the goats (i.e. “unsaved Gentiles that are alive at the end of the Tribulation”) go to everlasting punishment and are denied the privilege of being citizens in the millennial kingdom.

11. The judgment of God upon the Gentiles is another reminder that God observes our works and that our works should demonstrate our faith.

- a. Even small deeds of giving water to the thirsty and food to the hungry are not unnoticed by a loving God who is concerned for His people.

Matthew 10:41-42 *“Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet WILL RECEIVE A PROPHET’S REWARD, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man WILL RECEIVE A RIGHTEOUS MAN’S REWARD. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, HE WILL CERTAINLY NOT LOSE HIS REWARD.”*

- b. This passage is another reminder that proper recognition of human need about us, and kindness and good will to our fellowman, are some of the evidences of a transformed heart that comes through faith in Jesus Christ which in turn produce “good works” that are rewarded by Him.

12. The God who does not allow a sparrow to fall to the ground apart from His will is also concerned about all the small problems of His creatures; one who has the heart of Christ will have a heart for the people of God.

13. Taken as a whole, Scripture makes clear that at the second coming of Christ, all the righteous will be resurrected and judged before the millennial kingdom is fully inaugurated.

14. Only the wicked remain in the grave, awaiting their judgment at the great white throne at the end of the Millennium.

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1. Read Pages 1-7 from the Doctrine#48 Study Guide by next Wednesday.
2. Answer the following Questions about “The Judgment of Israel and the Nations” as you read:

a. Introduction

- 1) True or False. Judgments on both Israel and the Gentile nations are an important part of what will happen in connection with the second coming of Jesus Christ before He established His kingdom on earth. (page 1, top)

- 2) Based on Scripture, what are the two groups of people who apparently are the first to face judgment for what they have done on this earth? (page 1, top)

b. The Judgment of Resurrected Israel and the Gentiles

- 1) True or False. Old Testament Scripture hints of the resurrection of the “righteous dead” in connection with the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom.
(page 1, bottom; Daniel 12:2; Isaiah 26:19)

- 2) What can we learn from the “symbolism” of the vision of the valley of dry bones coming to life in Ezekiel 37? (page 1, bottom; Ezekiel 37:12-14)

- 3) What group of people are specifically mentioned as being resurrected in Revelation 20:4 in connection with the second coming of Christ and His judgments before His Millennial Kingdom? (page 2, middle)

- 4) How are those who were “faithful unto death” during the Tribulation period rewarded?
(page 2, middle; Revelation 20:4)

- 5) True or False. Based on Revelation 20:4, it is obvious that the “church” (the “bride of Christ”) will not participate in the Millennial Kingdom, much less “reign” with Christ.
(page 2, bottom; see also 2Timothy 2:11-13)

- 6) Who are two Old Testament characters who serve as good illustrations how both the “church” and the “resurrected saints” will possibly reign with Christ in His millennial kingdom? (page 2, bottom)

- 7) True or False. The church, which consists of those believers who are still alive and those who are “dead in Christ”, will be “translated” (i.e. “given new spiritual bodies”) or “resurrected” from the dead at the very same time that Old Testament Israelite and Gentile saints are resurrected from the dead. (page 2, bottom)

c. The Judgment of Living Israel

- 1) When Christ returns in His second coming, who will He specifically deliver from their persecutors?
(page 3, top; Zechariah 12:10-14, 13:8-9, 14:1-5; Romans 11:26)

- 2) True or False. Once Christ returns to the earth, He will resurrected all of the dead Israelites and return all of the living Israelites to the land of Israel. All of them will thus be “saved”, forgiven of their sins, and live forever as children of God because they are descendants of Abraham? (page 3, middle-bottom; Ezekiel 20:33-38; Zechariah 13:8-9)

- 3) On the basis of Scripture, what two classes of people are included in the regathering of Israel?

- 4) While Israel as a nation is a favored nation, and while God has showered special blessings upon them, personal salvation still depends upon “what”? (page 4, top; see Galatians 3:6-11)

- 5) Finish Paul’s amazing revelation that he received from God: “*For they are not all Israel...*”
(Romans 9:6)

d. The Judgment of Living Gentiles

- 1) True or False. The Gentiles that have survived the Tribulation Period and are alive at the Second Coming of Christ will be judged at the same time and in the same way together.
(page 4, middle)

- 2) In what verses of Scripture did Jesus give an explanation of how the judgment for Gentiles will occur at His second coming for those who survive the Tribulation Period? (page 4, middle-bottom)

- 3) According to Jesus, Gentiles will be separated into what two groups when they stand before the Son of Man to be judged for what they have done “*to the least of these*” in His kingdom?
(page 4, bottom; Matthew 25:33)

- 4) True or False. The “sheep” (i.e. “Gentiles on His right”) are “saved” and “allowed to enter His kingdom” because of the righteous deeds they had done while on earth.
(page 5, middle-bottom; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:25-28)

- 5) According to Romans 3:28, a person is “justified” (i.e. “saved” and counted “worthy” to enter the kingdom of God) how?

- 6) What is the “principle” involved in the Son of Man’s judgment of the sheep and the goats which lead to the sheep being “rewarded”? (page 6, top; Matthew 25:31-46; James 2:26)

- 7) During the Great Tribulation Period where anti-Semitism will be widespread, what is something significant about the “Gentile” sheep which indicate they were already “saved” before their judgment? (page 6, top-middle)

- 8) What is the only possible reason for Gentiles to make significant acts of kindness and sacrifices on behalf of Jews during the Great Tribulation Period? (page 6, middle)

- 9) True or False. The Gentile “sheep” that prove they were believers in Christ “by their works” during the Tribulation Period receive living in the The Promised Land (i.e. “The Land of Israel”) as their reward. (page 6, bottom)

- 10) What happens to the “goats” (i.e. “Gentiles who do NOT prove they are saved by their works”) when they are judged by the Son of Man at Christ’s Second Coming? (page 6, bottom; Matthew 25:41-46)

- 11) The judgment of God upon the Gentiles is another reminder of what? (page 7, top)

- 12) Who are the “only” people who remain in their graves awaiting their judgment at the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the 1000 year reign of Christ? (page 7, middle)