



Judgment of The Kingdoms

David Clayton



BACKGROUND ISSUES

One of the most misunderstood doctrines in the Bible is the doctrine of the judgment. The judgment is generally understood to be an event in which the destiny of men is decided. The life of every individual human being is put on display and examined, those who pass the judgment will receive eternal life, those who fail will go to eternal damnation. There is some element of truth to this understanding of the judgment, but the problem is that it ignores something far more significant.

The judgment is not primarily about the destiny of human beings. Yes, that is involved, but it is a secondary issue. The truth is that the real target of the judgment is God himself! The great conflict which is presently taking place in the universe did not begin on earth, it began in heaven in a confrontation between the Lord God Almighty and a created angel by the name of Lucifer.

That original confrontation is what has laid the foundation for the conflict which continued in the controversy taking place here, on earth.

Of course, any conflict between God and any created being, cannot be a conflict which is based on strength, or force of might. God is almighty, nothing and nobody can stand before him if all that is involved is the question of who has the greatest strength. Therefore it is obvious that the contention between God and Lucifer was not something that could be settled by force of might. In actual fact it was an ideological battle, a conflict which was based on information.

Jesus said of Satan that he was a liar from the beginning, and that he was the father of lies (John 8:44). This indicates that in the beginning, Satan's conflict against God was carried out by the telling of lies. In fact if we look at how Satan deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden, we get a fairly good picture of how he went about his warfare with God. Satan accused God of being a person who had selfish intentions in the way he was treating Adam and Eve, and that in fact, he was actually keeping them from developing into better people. He outrightly accused God of being a liar because God had told them that if they ate of the fruit they would die. Satan persuaded them that this was a lie (Gen 3:4,5).

The Bible reveals that Satan attacked God in three areas:

1. He attacked God's character. He accused God of being a selfish person who was only thinking of his own interests, and who did not care for the beings that he had created.
2. He attacked God's government. He suggested that God's government, and God's system of government was flawed, and proposed that he himself could provide a form of government which promoted freedom, and was better than God's government.
3. In this way he attacked God's justice and tried to make it appear that God was unfair in the way he dealt with his creatures. Of course he promoted himself as being the ultimate victim of God's unfairness.

As we have seen, the life and the death of the son of God forever settled the question of what kind of character God possessed. God's true moral nature was displayed in the life and ministry of Jesus and it was put to the greatest test when Jesus died on Calvary, when he chose to lose his life rather than to abandon the very people who were killing him. Jesus was the begotten son of God, born from the very substance of God and therefore possessing the same exact moral nature as his Father, so when Jesus was put through those terrible trials, it was not simply Jesus who was

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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being tested, it was the nature of divinity that was being tested! God's nature was being put on trial, and was displayed in God's son, for all the universe to see. It was there that the true character of God was revealed to the universe and at the same time the true character of Satan. So Jesus answered the first accusation of Satan against God and the question was answered so decisively that Satan was permanently thrown out of heaven.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Rev 12:10)

This was a great victory for God and for his kingdom, but it was not the end of the conflict because of course there was a second accusation to be dealt with, the accusation that God's kingdom kept people in bondage and that he Lucifer, could design and implement a better system which would allow true freedom.

This is the reason why sin has continued so long on earth. It would seem that since Jesus already gained the victory 2000 years ago, this age of sin should

have ended, God should have put a stop to it. But the reality is that only one of the issues has been settled, the other is still outstanding, the battle is not over and Jesus still has work to do.

THE REMAINING ISSUE IN QUESTION

The issue in question is, which system of government produces a better society? This is not explicitly stated in any individual text in the Bible, but we see verses that when we put them together, show us this truth very plainly. In Isaiah 14 we find a passage which reveals Satan's intentions and enables us to form some conclusions about the issues which were involved in the conflict:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (Isa 14:12-14)

When Satan said, "I will be like the



Most High," he revealed his intention to be like God Almighty. We saw that he could not desire to be like God in power, he could not desire to be like God in abilities. That's an intention that even Satan is not stupid enough to aspire to. The only way he could be like God

is if he could obtain the loyalty of the universe – bring them over to his side. If he could work by deception and lies, and get created beings to adopt his form of government – that's how he could be like God. So we can come to the logical conclusion that Satan proposed a better society, a better government than God's.

God's system of government is very clearly outlined in the New Testament. When we look at God's plan of recovery for the human race, we see his method for delivering us from the bondage of sin. This method is wonderfully simple and remarkably effective. We can see it described in the following verses:

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (Col 1:27)

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20)

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1John 3:9)

It should be very obvious that God's way of government is through the process of living inside his people. Look at the verses and it should be very clear. Christ in you, Christ living in me producing the fruit of the spirit, being born of God. These speak of Christ living inside his people, and from within governing them, causing them to behave in a way that is pleasing to God. This is God's way of government and it is reasonable to conclude that this is the way in which God has always governed, not just after men committed sin, but from the very beginning of creation. The system of Christ is that He lives in His people, governing from within. Christ takes control, yes, but remember it is by permission. It is not by forced entry. It's not a dictatorship. It is by our permission. He says, "I will live through you."

So when Satan raised up rebellion against God's government, it is clear that he not only questioned the principles and the laws which might have existed in God's kingdom, but more importantly he questioned the very method by which God governed! He presented God living inside and governing from within, as a system of enslavement which took away the freedom of created beings to function in an independent way.

This is why the question arises, which system works best, is it God's system or Satan's system? Is it the system of self-government which Satan promotes, or is it the system of God living within each individual, the system established by Christ? This question has to be answered and this is why there is to be a judgment to determine which system produces a better society, a better people.

Of course, if there is a system of self-government, it must be monitored and controlled by law. Why? Because when everybody is looking out for himself, the result is going to be anarchy. So in a system where self is the governor, you have to be monitored. You have to have rules, and you have to be watched. Satan's system of government – self-government – necessitates external law to watch you. It necessitates a policeman. It necessitates outside government. Because self only looks after its own interest. That's the principle of Satan's system of government – it is self-centered rulership, monitored and restrained by legal law.

WHICH SYSTEM IS BEST?

This two-party system, if I may refer to it that way, is to be judged – not by God, because God is one of the candidates. Both parties are vying for the loyalty of the universe, it is a contest which involves every single living being.

The idea of God being judged sounds really silly to somebody who is being exposed to this thought for the first time. But ask yourself the question: why are we still here? Why is Satan still alive? Why has God permitted evil to continue? The answer is obvious, it is because there are issues that are not

settled. It is obvious that God already knows everything, so if God were the only person to be considered, there would be no need of a judgment. There would be no need to allow sin to continue, He should have ended the sin problem two thousand years ago. Satan should have been destroyed. We should all have been in paradise two thousand years ago. Why are we still here? It is clear that what is going on in the universe is not based on force of might. There are other issues. God and God's kingdom are being judged – that's the real reason for the delay.

JUDGMENT ANSWERS QUESTIONS

The book of Daniel is the first place where we have a clear indication of this judgment where God's government is judged.

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. 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 7:9-10)

At first glance it may seem that this passage refers to the last great judgment after the thousand years when all who have ever lived will stand before God at the very end of time. However, careful examination will show that this is not correct. The judgment described here follows a series of events in the following sequence:

1. There is a great beast with horns on its head
2. One of these horns speaks blasphemous words against God and persecutes the saints
3. While the horn is speaking these words, then the judgment sits.

Notice, this is not the end of time, it is while the horn is still speaking these blasphemous words that the judgment sits. In other words, this judgment is something which is taking place in heav-

en, while the conflict between good and evil is still taking place on earth.

The best way to understand what this judgment is about, is to look at the **verdict** which arises from this judgment. The Bible is very clear, there are **two** sentences which arise from the judgment and they are as follows:

I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. (Dan 7:11)

First of all, the beast with its horns, is



destroyed and given to the burning flame. This is the first decision and consequence which arises from the judgment, but it is not the only one.

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan 7:13-14)

This is the second verdict of the judgment. The Son of man, (Jesus Christ) is to receive an everlasting kingdom and dominion which is to last forever. This is a decision which arises as a result of the judgment. So it is clear that the judgment determines two things:

1. the destiny of the kingdom of the beast.
2. the destiny of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

NOT GOD ALONE

The book of Daniel is a very special book and it was designed by God to give us insights into this very issue of the judgment. Although Daniel is a short book of only twelve chapters, there are at least two other passages in it where we see judgment taking place. These other incidents give us valuable insights into the judgment of the two kingdoms which is seen in Daniel 7.

The first of these judgments is in Daniel chapter 4. In this chapter, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon becomes a madman who walks around naked for seven years, behaving like a wild beast with his hair and nails grown like those of an animal. God had warned Nebuchadnezzar of this coming judgment which would come upon him because of his pride and arrogance. However, Nebuchadnezzar did not change his attitude and so the prophecy was literally fulfilled on him.

What is very interesting is the statement which was made to him by the heavenly messenger who told him about what was to come upon him. The angel said:

This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. (Dan 4:17)

So judgment comes upon Nebuchadnezzar, but we see that God is not the only one who actually makes this decision concerning the king. There are others involved in this process of judgment, there are other beings who are referred to as “watchers” and “holy ones.” God already knows the hearts of all men, God already knows all things. God is able to make the wisest decisions in the universe, so why does He need to have others helping Him to make decisions? Why are there “watch-

ers” and “holy ones,” making these decisions relating to judgment?

This shows us clearly that God involves others in the decisions that are made so that it may be seen that He is not a dictator, so that it may be seen that His decisions are just and fair. It is important to Him what others think and therefore, His citizens are involved in the decisions made by Him so that any questions about His government are easy to answer.

JUDGED, THEN OVERTHROWN

The other judgment incident in the book of Daniel, is found in Daniel chapter 5. Here we have the story of the overthrow of Babylon during the time of king Belshazzar. At that time the city of Babylon was under attack by the kingdoms of Media and Persia. Under the leadership of the kings, Darius and Cyrus, the armies of Medo-Persia were camped outside the walls of Babylon. In spite of this, King Belshazzar had a great feast in Babylon during which time he praised the idols of wood, gold, silver and stone, while at the same time he blasphemed the name of the Jehovah, the God of Israel.



In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were

loosed, and his knees smote one against another. (Dan 5:5-6)

This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. (Dan 5:26-28)

A messenger from God appeared in the hall where the king was having his celebration. All they could see was a hand writing on the wall. The terrified king with all his guests could only look on in astonishment while they trembled in fear. The message was simple, but full of meaning.

Belshazzar's kingdom had been judged. This is what was meant by the fact that the kingdom had been numbered, also “weighed in the balances.” In other words it had been evaluated, assessed and it had come short of the mark. The result was that it had been broken apart (divided) and it was given to the Medes and Persians. That very night the sentence was carried out, the Medo-Persian army broke into the city and conquered it, killing Belshazzar himself in the process.

Who weighed Babylon? Who evaluated it and found it wanting? Based on what we saw in chapter 4, we have to conclude that it was the “watchers” and the “holy ones.” This was not an arbitrary decision made by the Sovereign God, it was a decision made by the heavenly tribunal so that every decision was transparent and open to the examination of all.

This is an interesting story, but more important is the lesson which we may learn from it. Before the decision was made that the kingdom was to pass to the Medes and the Persians, Babylon was first Judged. It was “weighed in the balances,” It was numbered. God did not allow Babylon to be overthrow before it was first judged.

JUDGMENT IN DANIEL 7

With this understanding, we can now turn to Daniel chapter 7 where we see the most significant judgment of all

taking place. From what we have learned already, we are now able to get a much better understanding of what this judgment is all about.

In this vision Daniel saw four wild animals arising from the sea. These four animals had the appearance of a lion, another like a bear, the third like a leopard and the fourth, a fierce creature different from any known animal. He was told that these animals represented four great kingdoms, or empires which would arise on the earth. By comparing this vision with the record of history, we can conclude that these four empires were, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

The fourth beast, the one that was unlike any other animal, the one that represented Rome, was seen to have ten horns on its head. Out of the midst of those ten horns another horn appeared which uprooted three of the other horns and grew to the place where it was bigger and stronger than the others. This horn began to make war against God's people and spoke blasphemous words against God. We cannot now go into details to explain all the specifications of these beasts and horns and to explain what everything means. However, we will focus on what is important to this present study.

Daniel continued watching in his vision and he saw something else happening.

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. 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 7:9-10)

Let us take careful note of the sequence of events: While the horn is speaking great words against God and persecuting the people of God, thrones are put in place and God takes a seat. The judgment begins and books are opened. This is not the end of the world, this event

actually takes place while the beast is still alive on earth and the horn is still carrying out his blasphemous deeds. This judgment is actually taking place in heaven. The thousands of thousands who are standing before God are actually angels who are present at this judgment, they are witnesses, watchers and holy ones.

I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. (Dan 7:11)

As a result of this judgment, the beast is slain, his body destroyed, and he is given to the burning flame. It is the judgment that makes this decision while the horn is still speaking his great words. Again, we can see that this judgment is taking place in heaven while the beast and the horn are still making war against God on earth. But after the judgment (in heaven), the sentence is passed and carried out. The beast is to be given to the burning flames.

This beast represents the kingdom of Rome, so we can see that this last great empire on earth, Rome, is also to be judged just as God judged Babylon before it was overthrown. In fact, we can establish this as a principle:

God does not allow a kingdom to be overthrown before it is judged. Every kingdom is allowed a time to display what it is made of, to reveal its fruit and then it is judged. No kingdom was proven to be worthy to continue existing, every one was overthrown, one after the other and each time another kingdom succeeded it. However, this last kingdom, Rome has no successor.

As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. (Dan 7:12)

All the other kingdoms were overthrown, but they were not completely destroyed. Although another kingdom gained the supremacy, the overthrown kingdom continued to exist for a while. However, it is not so with the fourth

kingdom, Rome. When this kingdom is finally overthrown, it is final and complete, it is not succeeded by another beast. It is given to the flame, the end is total and complete, it does not continue to exist for a while afterwards. This time the judgment has come to an end as far as kingdoms are concerned. They have all failed and there is no more to come.

But that is not the complete truth. There is no other **WORLDY** kingdom to come, they have all been tested, weighed in the balances and found wanting, and all overthrown. But the judgment passes another verdict. Daniel tells what he sees next in his vision:



I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan 7:13-14)

In actual fact, there is another kingdom, there is one to come after Rome. This fifth kingdom is the kingdom of the Son of man, Jesus Christ. Notice that the decision to give Jesus this everlasting kingdom is one of the verdicts of the judgment. This is not just saying that Jesus becomes king, it is saying that the judgment decides that He is to be made king, and that His kingdom is to last for ever and ever. It is not to be

succeeded by another. This decision is made during this judgment!

So we can conclude that there are two decisions made in this judgment taking place in heaven; the first is that the beast is to be totally destroyed, and the second is that Jesus is to inherit the kingdom of this world for all eternity. Nothing happens arbitrarily, God does nothing in terms of the setting up and overthrow of kingdoms, unless it is first decided by public judgment. This is one of the great truths we learn as we study the events and prophecies outlined in the book of Daniel. This is true even of the kingdom of Christ. His kingdom also must pass the test of the judgment. God is fair, every decision must be tested and proven before heaven's tribunal.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

It should be clear to us that if Christ is to receive an everlasting kingdom, one which is to last forever, then it must be that His kingdom is also to be examined, to be weighed in the balances. This is the pattern we see with the other kingdoms in the book of Daniel. We also see that the decision that Jesus is to receive an everlasting kingdom is also a verdict of the judgment, so it is clear that Christ's kingdom is also examined in this judgment.

But how can there be an examination of the kingdom of Christ if Christ does not even receive His kingdom until the time of this judgment in heaven, when the beast is also judged?

Two thousand years ago Jesus did establish His kingdom. At that time, the kingdoms of this world were not given to Him, they were still under the dominion of Satan's agencies, but He did set up a kingdom in the hearts of those who received Him. A very real kingdom where He has been ruling as king. This is the kingdom which the New Testament speaks about over and over. When John started preaching, when Jesus started preaching, their message was very clear, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt 3:2; Matt 4:17; Matt 12:5-7). Many people misunderstand and are confused by these statements which speak of the kingdom being imminent

in the time of Jesus. At one point Jesus even said that there were people standing in His audience who would not die before they saw the kingdom come with power! (Mark 9:1). When we understand that He was speaking of the kingdom to be set up in the hearts of His people, those statements take on an entirely different meaning.

Revelation 12:10 points us to the moment when this kingdom was established. In this chapter we see Jesus returning to heaven, then there is a war between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels. Satan is cast out of heaven and John tells what he saw next:

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Rev 12:10)

Notice what it says came: Salvation, strength, **the kingdom of our God** and the power of His Christ! This was the setting up of the kingdom of Christ. From that time until now, that kingdom has been here on earth, growing and developing for the past two thousand years. This is the kingdom which is judged, in that judgment seen in Daniel 7. This is a judgment that takes place in heaven during the last days of this earth's history, when the kingdom of the beast and the kingdom of Christ are both judged, both examined by the heavenly tribunal. The verdict will be that the kingdom of the beast is to be utterly destroyed, given to the burning flame, while Christ is to not only remain as King in the hearts of His people, but His kingdom is to overthrow all the kingdoms of this world, and He is to become ruler here for ever and ever.

A FAIR, TRANSPARENT PROCESS

This makes perfect sense now. Both of these kingdoms have been growing side by side for the past two thousand years. God has allowed the kingdom of the beast to possess all the advantages that this world can offer. The wealth, the

political and military power, the scientific advantages, the highest forms of education that are available – all of these have been dominated and controlled by the system represented as the beast. That kingdom has had every advantage possible to enable it to produce the best system of government, the best people that the world has ever seen.

On the other hand, the kingdom of God has been given very little of those advantages. God's true people have mostly been poor and persecuted, possessing little of the goods and advantages that the world has to offer. Yet, there has been one element available to those in the kingdom which has set this kingdom apart from all other kingdoms. It is the one great element which marks the people of God and makes them different, the one great element which separates God's government from all others; that element is Christ in you, the reality that the King, the governor lives inside His people! This is the difference with God's government. This is the government which is to be weighed in the balances and it's fruit examined in the judgment.

What will be the outcome of that examination? We are left in no doubt, the beast-kingdom will be condemned, proven to be an utter failure, it will be destroyed and given to the burning flame. The government of Christ on the other hand, will be demonstrated to be the best possible system of government. Christ living in His people will produce a glorious kingdom, filled with the best people that have ever been seen on planet earth. Therefore, Christ will be made king forever, He will be given an everlasting kingdom, one which is never to pass away, never to be succeeded by another. In Christ's kingdom, the cycle finally will come to an end. Thanks be to our all-wise God.



Benefits of Iodized Salt

Lenworth Frankson



Iodized salt is salt that contains small amounts of sodium iodide or potassium iodide. This is normal salt that has been sprayed with potassium iodate. It looks and tastes the same. The majority of table salt used nowadays is iodized, and it comes with many benefits.

Iodized salt is essential for your health, but you should have it in moderation. Iodine is a trace mineral common in dairy products, seafood, grains, and eggs. People combine iodine with table salt to reduce iodine deficiency. There are many other health benefits to using iodized salt in your diet, as well. Here are a few:

BOOSTS THYROID FUNCTION.

Your thyroid gland relies on iodine to increase the production of thyroid hormones, like triiodothyronine and thyroxine. These hormones are vital to your health, as they regulate blood pressure, body temperature, and heart rate. Proper bone and brain development in pregnancy and infancy are also dependent on these thyroid hormones. Lacking iodine in your diet may also cause enlargement of your thyroid gland. This condition is called goiter.

THE THYROID AND WEIGHT.

There is a complicated relationship between thyroid disease, body weight and metabolism. Metabolism is the process of turning food into energy. It can be measured by how much energy the body uses over time. At rest, this is known

as the Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR). BMR affects energy balance, which is the relationship between calories eaten and calories used by the body. When the BMR is high, more calories are burned, which could lead to weight loss. When the BMR is low, less calories are burned, which could lead to weight gain.

In thyroid disorders, high thyroid hormone levels raise BMR and low levels decrease BMR. However, BMR does not tell the whole story about weight and thyroid. There are many other hormones, proteins, and chemicals that also factor into weight changes.

SUPPORTS HEALTHY PREGNANCY.

Not only does iodized salt assist in bone and brain development, it can also help combat cretinism, which affects both the mental and physical growth of the unborn child. After birth, cretinism may lead to loss of speech and hearing as well as affect a child's body movements. A balanced iodine level in pregnant women can also help prevent miscarriages and hypothyroidism. Hypothyroidism happens when the body can't make enough thyroid hormones. Any problems with the thyroid gland can start or worsen during pregnancy, and can often be helped by raising iodine levels.

TOXINS AND BACTERIA.

Iodized salt has a counter effect on harmful metals like mercury and lead. It acts to repel these toxins and restore the right pH level in your body. Iodized salt also helps prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying in the intestines. Research shows that harmful bacteria can cause fatigue, constipation, and headaches.

PROMOTES HEART HEALTH

Iodized salt helps create the hormones that regulate heart rate and blood pressure. It also helps to burn extra fat de-

posits that could lead to heart disease. Salt promotes healthy hydration levels and creates a balance of electrolytes. This balance is crucial for the proper functioning of the cells, muscles, tissues, and organs. All the body components require water to function, and salt helps maintain the proper water levels. Dehydration makes you more prone to dizziness, fatigue, and muscle cramps.

RISKS FROM DEFICIENCY

Not having enough iodine amounts can lead to severe health conditions including:

- Impaired fetal and infant development
- Difficulty in learning during childhood
- Fibrocystic breast disease
- Radiation-induced throat cancer
- Hair loss
- Fatigue
- Goiter
- Weight gain
- Increased sensitivity to cold
- Dry skin

HOW MUCH IODINE?

The amount of iodine you should consume in a day depends on your age. If you are female, pregnancy and breastfeeding also play a crucial role. Here are the suggested recommended amounts of iodine one should take in a day:

- Birth to six months: 110 micrograms
- Infants 7 to 12 months: 130 micrograms
- Children 1 to 8 years: 90 micrograms
- 9 to 13 years: 120 micrograms
- Teens 14 to 18 years: 150 micrograms
- Adults: 150 micrograms
- Pregnant women: 220 micrograms
- Breast feeding women: 290 micrograms

Do not consume salt in high amounts as it can pose a danger to your health.



The Purpose of The Covenants

When we consider the subject of the covenants as presented in the Bible, it is very easy to become caught up in the details and to lose sight of the main point. We can spend a great deal of time discussing the Old covenant and the New covenant, the law, circumcision, sacrifices, the sanctuary and all the other things connected with the subject, while missing the simple question which lies behind all of it: **What was God trying to accomplish?** What did God really want when He entered into covenant with human beings?

The answer is really very simple. God wanted to restore the relationship which had been lost when man sinned. From the beginning, God's desire was that human beings should live in fellowship with Him, that they should know Him, trust Him and receive their life from Him. Sin destroyed that relationship, and everything God has done since then has been aimed at bringing His children back to Himself. The covenants were never intended to be an end in themselves. They were arrangements through which God was working toward that great purpose of restoring the relationship between Himself and humanity.

This is why it is so important to understand the true nature of sin. Some believe that sin is simply the action of transgressing the law, this is why when they think of a restored relationship, they focus primarily on the question of how to keep the law. But when we understand that the true nature of sin is separation from God, a state in which we do not possess the life of God and live in separation from Him, then the goal changes. Instead of the law, we now look to Christ as the goal.

THE GOAL - TO KNOW GOD

Religion can become a matter of rules, doctrines, ceremonies, organizations and correct behavior, while a person may still hardly know God at all. But this was never God's purpose. God's objective was not simply to produce people who behaved correctly. He want-

ed children who knew Him. This comes out very clearly in the promise of the new covenant:

"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them..." (Jeremiah 31:34)

Notice where the covenant is intended to take us: **"They shall all know me."** This is the destination. God wants a relationship in which His people know Him personally. They do not simply know about Him, they do not merely know His commandments, they do not simply belong to a group which carries His name; they know God Himself. Jesus expressed the same truth when He said:



"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

So eternal life is not presented simply as living forever. Eternal life is connected with knowing God and knowing His Son. The relationship is the central issue.

THE PROBLEM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

But there was a problem which stood in the way of that relationship, and that problem was that man was not right with God. That state of unrighteousness

involved several things:

1. Man was naturally afraid of God
2. Man's carnal nature created natural disharmony between Him and God
3. Man's record of continual sinful behavior created a legal obstruction

Before the relationship between God and man could be restored, it is obvious that there had to be a restoration to righteousness.

At its simplest, righteousness means being right, we don't have to make it a complicated word. It simply means being in the state where things are as they ought to be. If a man is right with God, he is righteous. The important question therefore becomes: **What does it take for a person to be right with God?**

God is the One who determines the answer to that question. Human beings cannot decide for themselves what makes them acceptable to God. We cannot create our own standard and then declare ourselves righteous because we have satisfied it. If the problem is our relationship with God, then God must tell us what is necessary for that relationship to be restored. Very early in the Bible, God made the answer remarkably clear.

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

Abraham provides one of the clearest examples of the principle upon which God intended to establish His relationship with humanity. Genesis tells us:

"And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." (Genesis 15:6)

That statement is amazingly simple. Abraham believed God, and God counted that faith as righteousness. Abraham trusted God, and on the basis of that trust he was accepted as being right with God. This is important because it happened before Sinai, before the Ten Commandments were written on stone, before the sanctuary system, before the Levitical priesthood and before the great body of laws which governed Israel.

The basic principle had already been established. God had already demonstrated the foundation upon which a person could be right with Him.

Abraham trusted God. That trust placed him in a right relationship with God and God called that righteousness. This was the foundation of the everlasting covenant.

WHY WAS THE LAW ADDED?

This naturally raises an important question. If the principle was already established with Abraham, why did God later give the law at Sinai? If righteousness could be obtained by trusting God, why introduce a system which placed so much emphasis upon commandments, regulations, ceremonies and human behavior?

Paul asks almost exactly this question in Galatians:

“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions...” (Galatians 3:19)

Notice the word **“added.”** The law came afterward. Paul had already explained that the covenant with Abraham came first, and that the law, which came 430 years later, could not cancel the promise which God had already made. This means that the law was not the original foundation of God’s covenant relationship with humanity. It was something added later for a particular purpose. It was added because of transgressions, a temporary system to restrain the bad behavior of the Israelites until God’s true plan was implemented with the arrival of Jesus.

AN IMPOSSIBLE WAY

Under the system of law, righteousness was presented in terms of behavior. The principle was very straightforward: if you do what is right, you will be considered righteous. If you perfectly live according to God’s requirements, then your behavior demonstrates that you are right. Of course nobody succeeded in becoming righteous by that method.

This is the point Paul makes so forcefully in Romans. The law is “holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12), but fall-

en humanity is not. The law can demand righteousness, but it cannot produce righteousness. It can tell a sinner what he ought to be, but it cannot change what he is.

This is why trying to achieve righteousness by law inevitably ends in failure.

And this was the lesson which the era of law was intended to make clear.

IT WAS ALWAYS THERE

However, while the system of law was operating, the original principle had never disappeared. God’s everlasting covenant was still there in the background. It was always true that a genuine relationship with God depended upon faith rather than upon men’s ability to produce righteousness by their own efforts. Men and women throughout the Old Testament demonstrated genuine faith in God even while they lived under the system of law. Hebrews 11 gives us a long list of such people. What made them outstanding was not that they perfectly kept a system of rules. What distinguished them was faith.

So there were really two principles visible throughout the Old Testament period. There was the system which had been added at Sinai, with its commandments, ceremonies and external requirements, and behind it was the deeper and older principle which had been demonstrated in Abraham: **the just shall live by faith.** The law had a temporary purpose. The everlasting covenant did not.

WHEN CHRIST CAME

This is why the coming of Jesus was such a major turning point. Jesus did not come simply to make a few adjustments to the system of law. He came at the time when that temporary system had accomplished its purpose.

Paul says:

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” (Galatians 3:24–25)

The schoolmaster had a purpose, but the schoolmaster was never the destination. The law pointed forward to something better. It demonstrated the problem, illustrated the principles involved and prepared people to understand what God would finally accomplish through His Son.

When Christ came, the everlasting covenant principle which had been demonstrated in Abraham came again into the foreground. Righteousness was not obtained by human beings struggling to meet God’s requirements. It was received by faith.

SOMETHING MORE

Yet, there was something in connection with this covenant that even Abraham had not possessed or experienced, Abraham could believe God, Abraham could trust God’s promise, Abraham could be counted righteous by faith, but the work which God intended to accomplish through Jesus had not yet taken place.

Jesus came not only to demonstrate a righteous life, but to **create** a victorious human life. He entered our humanity, faced the problem of sin, overcame it and produced in Himself a human life in which sin had been conquered. This was something which no other human being possessed. But having produced that victorious life, Jesus could now share it with others. This is tremendously important because the New Covenant is not merely about God changing the way He looks at us. God intends to change what we actually are. The New Covenant therefore offers more than forgiveness. It offers life. This is why the New Testament places such tremendous emphasis upon being **in Christ.**

Jesus told His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go away because, if He did not go, the Comforter would not come.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you...” (John 16:7)

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it

seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (John 14:17)

This was not a small addition to the gospel. It was essential to what God had been working toward from the beginning. God's goal was relationship, but how close a relationship did He desire? Not simply God beside us, not merely God speaking to us, not simply God giving us instructions from heaven, no, God intended to live **in us**. This is the great reality of the new covenant. The relationship which had been broken by sin is restored at the deepest possible level. Through Christ, God comes again to dwell in His people.

This is why Paul describes the great mystery of the gospel as:

"Christ in you, the hope of glory."
(Colossians 1:27)

The law stood outside and told us how we ought to live. Christ comes inside and gives us the life which the law could only describe.

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE OF CHRIST

This brings us back to the original purpose of the covenant.

God wanted His children back. The obstacle was sin. Righteousness was necessary because a relationship with God cannot exist where man remains committed to independence and sin. But God's solution was never simply to give humanity better rules and demand greater effort. His solution was Christ.

The law described righteousness as a kind of behavior, something requiring good behavior, but Jesus brought righteousness to us as a living reality. He did not merely tell us how a righteous

person should behave; He became our life. Through the Spirit, the victorious life of Christ is imparted to those who believe.

This was the purpose behind the covenants from the beginning. The goal was not law, the goal was not ceremony, the goal was not even correct behavior as an end in itself. The goal was **God and man together again**. And everything else was simply part of God's way of bringing us home.



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