THE

## FOUR JUDGMENTS.

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## THE FOUR JUDGMENTS.

T is a very general opinion that every one, good and bad, must appear beore the great judgment-throne, and that his good deeds are to be weighed in one scale and his bad deeds in another, and his fate decided accordingly. If you come to speak to many people about their hope of salvation, you will find that is what they ar looking forward to.

I now want to direct your attention to a word which I am sure every believer knows well, and which has been much blessed lately both to the conversion of sinners and the strengthening of believers. You will find it in the fifth chapter of John and the twenty-fourth verse, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Mc, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [Indement]; but is passed from death unto life."

Now, what is the meaning of that,—shall not come into judgment"?

This is an important thing for believers to know. I thought for a long time, for I was brought up with the idea that we should all be judged together before the great white throne, but I see it written here that they who believe "shall not come into condemnation." In the sixth of Romans I learn that I have been crucified with Christ, and I therefore know that my sins have been judged already; "for in that Christ died, He died unto sin once;" and we are thus to reckon ourselves "to be dead indeed unto sin." In the eighth of Romans we read, "There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus;" for God, sending His own Son, "condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." My sins are judged and condemned already, and therefore, consequently, so far as they are concerned,

my judgment-day is passed. I look back to the judgment-day instead of forward, for I was judged as a sinner on the cross of Jesus. He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities; every thing that was against me has been judicially settled in Him; my sin was judged in His flesh, and there is therefore now no judgment to them which are in Christ Jesus.

2. But this does not mean that there is no "judgment-seat" at which believers are to appear; for in 2 Cor. v. 10 we are told that "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ."

There is, you see, then, a judgment-seat before which the believer must stand. At the time of the Great Exhibition, if any one wanted to become an exhibiter, it had to be settled beforehand whether he was to be admitted as one or not; and then after that, his goods were judged as to whether they were worthy of a gold

medal, a silver medal, or of nothing at all.

We have been admitted—we are inside the ark, and we are not to be judged as to our salvation, for that is settled forever by Jesus' death for us, and our faith in Him as our Substitute; but we are to appear before "the judgment-seat of Christ," "to receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This is the judgment of Christians; this is the reward or loss of works; and all works, whether good or evil, will be brought up before the judgment-seat of Christ, and dealt with according to His perfect knowledge of their quality and number. We shall never have to stand before the judgmentseat of friends or relations, as many dear believers seem to think, but we shall all have to stand before the judgment-seat of CHRIST. It is important for us to remember that each work will be tested there. "Every man's work shall then be

made manifest; "and "if his work abide, he shall receive a reward; but if any man's work be burned, he shall suffer loss, yet he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Is it our one object now, in all we do and say, to meet the approval of the Lord Jesus on that day? or are we busying ourselves about a number of works for which we shall then have to "suffer loss"? It should be our only object down here to do those works which shall abide; every thing else is rubbish in the sight of God, and it will be manifestly shown to be so at the "indoment-seat of Christ."

I came up yesterday in the train with two dear friends who were leaving their children behind them at home. The father's exhortations to them were that they should all try to please him while he was away. He did not tell them to please each other, but to act so as to please him.

We, too, beloved friends, are to obey

our Father rather than to please the family—to please Jesus our Lord rather than our brethren. I can imagine this father having said to those children, Now, little children, do not go near the river, for there is great danger in doing so. After he was gone, five of the children went down to the edge of it; but one little fellow said, My father told me not to go near the river, and I won't go. I can imagine the others calling him a little schismatic, because he separated from them, whereas they were the schismatics, because of their separation from the directions of their father. Schism is separation from the truth, not separation from error. When Luther separated from professing Christians of his day, they branded him as a schismatic; but he was not so in the sight of the Lord.

In this day of much confusion, error, and disobedience to Christ, let us who are justified by the blood of the Lamb bring every thing respecting doctrine and practice to the test of the Word of God, remembering that we are to appear before "the judgment-seat of Christ," and that our only aim should be to meet the approval of our adorable Lord.

3. There is also another judgment-seat spoken of in the twenty-fifth of Matthew. where the sheep are to be on the right hand and the goats on the left. Now, I always used to think that I was to be in this judgment; but I find that when the Son of Man shall come in glory to assume His personal reign, "before Him shall be gathered all nations." Here you see that it is the living nations who are to be then brought up before the Lord. This is prophesied of in the third of Joel,-"I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them for My people and My heritage Israel; . . . for there will I sit to

judge all the heathen round about."

It is evident that all this refers to the nations who are then living on the earth, and not the Church of God, or all who have ever lived, both small and great.

4. But then I found further, on reading the Word, (for this was all new to me,) another judgment, which is to take place after all this. After the close of the millennial reign of Christ there is to be the judgment before the great white throne; and, dear friends, they are all to be judged "according to their works." "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. xx. 12.) These are the dead. But there is no judgment then for the living; their names are written in the book of life-the blaze of glory will show that they are there—"and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

I wanted to bring out these four judgments clearly,—The judgment of our sins on the cross, to which we look back instead of forward; the judgment-seat of Christ, where we who believe in Him shall appear in glorified bodies; the judgment of the living nations at His glorious appearing; and the judgment of dead souls at the end of the millennium.

I dare say many know these things, but there may be some new-born souls who may not be aware of them.

May the Spirit of truth guide us into all truth, and enable us to live as in the immediate presence of our Lord, and as those who shall yet stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; "for every one of us shall give account of himself unto God."

T. W. T.

## SEVEN STEPS OF PROGRESS.

- 1. "FORGIVENESS OF SINS" (Col. i. 14). The work of Christ is the righteous basis on which God forgives. The Cross is where sin was put away from before the throne (Heb. i. 3). The blessing becomes ours the moment Christ is received as a personal Saviour. By faith in God's testimony, sin is then put away from the conscience (Heb. x. 2, Acts xiii. 38, 39).
- 2. "DEAD TO SIN" (Rom. vi. 2, 6, 8). Sins were not only atoned for but "our old man" is crucified with Christ. Our sinful, guilty past has been closed up in death—"dead with Christ." This is true of every believer. (Col. iii. 3.)
- 3. "SIN CONDEMNED IN THE FLESH" (Rom. viii. 3), is a further lesson, and

when learnt is the secret of a life of holiness. Sin (the root) is not forgiven, but condemned. Thus three things, true of each believer, took place at the Cross: Sins were put away; our old man crucified; and sin condemned.

- 4. "RECKON YOURSELVES DEAD TO SIN" (the root—Rom. vi. 11). Reckon is faith on the believer's part, in accepting God's judgment on ourselves (not realization) and is the secret of the full enjoyment of the three former blessings and the key which unlocks the door of deliverance out of Rom. vii., and puts one in the green pastures of Rom. viii.
- 5. "BEARING ABOUT IN THE BODY THE DYING OF THE LORD JESUS" (2 Cor. iv. 10). Here we get experience, realization, the giving up my will to that of another; owning His perfect claims over me, thus yielding ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead (Rom. vi. 13).

- 6. "DELIVERED UNTO DEATH" (2 Cor. iv. 11). God comes in to assist us in this work; is fully with us in our desires, etc., and permits trials to come across our path as Jesus had when here, and thus we share His path, have fellowship with Him; all this for His glory, and for our help and blessing.
- 7. THE LIFE OF JESUS MANIFEST IN OUR MORTAL BODIES" (2 Cor. iv. 6-11). God's purpose is now complete as regards us on earth. The end is reached. "The path of the just is as a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." We commence at the cross (the basis); faith,—the opened hand which receives the blessing; practical experience in our path; then last, but not least, Christ seen and manifested in us (partially of course); when He comes, this last will be perfect. This is what we are saved for.

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