

The Day of Judgment

by George Kulp

The sermon emphasizes the importance of considering the final judgment, where all men will be judged according to their works, and the consequences of being separated from God forever.

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, Matthew 12:36, Matthew 24:36, Matthew 25:31, Romans 14:12, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 9:27, 2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 20:12

Topics: "Final Judgment", "Eternal Destiny"

Description

George Kulp preaches a powerful sermon on the final Judgment as described in Revelation 20:12-15, emphasizing the importance of reflecting on this inevitable event that will determine the eternal destiny of every individual. He highlights historical instances where people prepared for the end of the world, urging listeners to consider the impact of the Judgment on their lives. Kulp stresses the solemnity and urgency of being ready for this ultimate day when all will stand before God to be judged according to their works, emphasizing the need for repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as the only way to escape condemnation.

Transcript

"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. 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 according to their works. And death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Rev. 20:12-15

These words of our text refer to the final Judgment -- the most solemn subject to which our attention can be called--one in which we are all interested -- for "it is appointed unto man once to die, but after that the Judgment." It is important that we should bear this in mind for it is impossible for man to think upon this fact without it having an influence upon his life. In the year 1000 it was generally believed the world would come to an end, and as men entered upon that year they grew solemn, transacted business as though under some great pressure, and retired at night fearful and apprehensive lest they should be awakened by a summons to judgment. As the months rolled on, the solemnity and the horror increased until, toward the close, business ceased, and men awaited the awful hour. When the year passed by and still no summons, they drew a long sigh of relief and passed out from under an awful burden.

In the seventeenth century it had been prophesied in England that the world was coming to an end, and among the people of all classes there were many who believed it. Old French novels were thrown to one side, light literature was discarded, people hastened to the book-stores and purchased Bibles and Jeremy Taylor's book entitled "Holy Living and Dying." Seventeen hundred couples who had been living as man and wife without any marriage ceremony ever having been performed, hurried before the clergy to be lawfully joined in wedlock; they did not want to be found in their adulteries when Jesus should come to them in judgment.

This is one of the most interesting subjects revealed in the Word of God -- an event that will terminate the remedial dispensation, when the preacher will no longer proclaim the Gospel, mercy will no longer be offered, the Spirit no longer plead, the Son of God no longer occupy the mediatorial throne, the hours no longer hang heavily on the idler's hands, but moments be seen in their true value, as the angel of God, with one foot upon the sea and the other upon the land, shall declare "time shall be no longer."

To this Judgment scene I desire to call your attention. The believer need not fear The Rock that shelters him now will prove sufficient then, and if, by contemplation of this dread subject, we can persuade the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, we will not have spoken in vain. "He that believeth not is condemned already." For this reason the sinner fears the Judgment. The man under indictment and innocent cares nothing for court day nor judges nor juries; he knows he is innocent; while the guilty man dreads every bit of time that brings near the awful hour. He cannot sing, "No condemnation now I dread;" he is already condemned by his own heart, and, if his own heart condemns him, he knows that God will condemn him, for God is greater than his heart.

That this subject DEMANDS your consideration is evident from the words of Jesus: "Watch. for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." "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. And before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" We are all going to judgment, old and young, rich and poor, learned and unlearned.

Some years ago I stood on Sixth Avenue in Philadelphia, opposite the old court-house. The prisoners that day who had been tried and convicted were brought up in the "Black Maria" to receive their sentence. There was the old man grown gray in sin, the young man just a few years in sin, with the boy taking his first step in crime. There was the woman marked by licentiousness and vice, and the young woman just departed from rectitude. The lookers-on were interested, their sympathies were aroused. "God pity that old man, help that boy, sustain that girl's mother" -- and they needed sympathy. But listen! Here is a race under condemnation, going forward to judgment to receive sentence upon its evil works. We are all going; your family and mine, going before a just Judge. Is it not foolishness to be spending time in eating and drinking, catering to things of time and sense, and neglecting the things that pertain to Eternity?

There is scarcely a religious truth, except the being of God, that is more universally accepted, than that of a Judgment after death. On the monuments of old Egypt they had sculptured their belief in this, long before Jesus had uttered those terrible, soul-alarming truths found in Matthew 25th chapter. There was the picture engraved in stone of the traveler from time approaching the river of death. Awaiting his approach was the ferryman who would convey him over. On the other, or Eternity, side were six judges, before whom he and his life record must pass. If he was found to have done more good than evil, he was

assigned to the regions of the blest; but if he had done more evil than good, he went to the confines of the lost.

But a general Judgment where the proceedings are before an assembled world is taught only by the Word of God, hence to that Word we appeal -- for by it we are assured of the certainty of a general Judgment. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, whether it be good or whether it be evil." "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the Judgment." "We must ALL stand before the judgment seat of Christ." "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thine youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment."

That day is spoken of as "the day of the Lord." The Apostle says "the day of the Lord is at hand." This is your day. Today you can do as you please. I say it reverently, God cannot compel you to serve Him. You are a free moral agent. You can reject the Word of God, you can count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, you can trample it under your feet, you can grieve the Holy Spirit, you can despise the prayers of the interceding Christ, scorn the mourner's bench, push God, and Church, and friends all to one side in your mad rush Hell-ward, but in that day your probation will end. The messengers of Omnipotence will hale you before the bar of God. They will find you; you may make your bed in Hell, you may take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, but there is no escape. Criminals from justice may flee to some country with which the United States has no extradition treaty, and there, living with birds of a feather, they can spend their ill-gotten gains in riotous living, beyond the reach of Uncle Sam's long arm. But there is no place in all the Universe but God's summons will reach the sinner, and hale him to judgment.

That day is God's day and fearfully will it be ushered in. I do not wonder men do not want to think of it, do not like sermons on this line. I remember one time in Philadelphia, while I was yet a lad, there was a fearful hurricane. The wind traveled with great velocity. The sound of it was like the roar of many trains of cars. Houses were unroofed; church steeples blown down; great destruction wrought. A house across the street from where I lived was unroofed, and the roof hurled against the dwelling of our next door neighbor, and as it struck with terrific impact, the son rose up in bed and shouted at the top of his voice: "Mother, is this the day of Judgment?" God, in His own Word, fearfully pictures it. Can you think of it and not tremble? The sun will refuse to shine, while the heavens will be turned into blood, and stars withdrawing their light will cease to shine and fall from the heavens. Man, terror-stricken by the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds, will seek a refuge and none be found.

During the last century there was an event known as "the falling of the stars." Down in Kentucky at that time there was a dance in progress at a country hotel. The dining-room had been cleared of tables and chairs, and the old fiddler in one end of the room was swinging his bow and merrily calling off the numbers. The boys and girls were having a good time, as the world goes, when, oppressed by the atmosphere in the room, a young lady went to the door and looking out saw the falling stars, and, affrighted, fell to the floor, crying: "My God, it is the day of Judgment!" Another seeing her fall, went to the door to see the cause, and beholding the falling stars, she, too, fell with the same exclamation: "My God, it is the day of Judgment!" The old fiddler had his curiosity aroused by this time, and walked across the floor, fiddling as he went, until he came to the door, when, seeing the same thing, fiddler and fiddle and bow went down in a heap at the door as he cried out: "My God, it is the day of Judgment!"

The same night a slave had stolen a horse from his master, and was making away with it along the road, when the stars began to fall. Thinking it was the day of Judgment, he whipped the horse, and retraced his steps back to the master's stable, not wanting to be found with stolen goods at such an awful time. But on this great day of the Lord, not in one little corner of God's domain, but everywhere, the stars will fall from the heavens, showing signs of Nature's approaching dissolution. Not the heavens alone, but earth also, will reel to and fro like a drunken man, and earthquakes will prevail in all places.

God put forth His little finger and touched one part of the Pacific coast, and San Francisco was in ruins, thousands homeless, and hundreds hurried into Eternity. He touched the islands of the sea, and Mt. Pelee blew its head off, while the Island of Martinique quivered under the power of the wrath of an angry God, as the lava and hot mud flowing down the mountain-side swept forty thousand souls into Eternity. But in this great day of the Lord earthquakes will prevail in all places.

In Charleston, S. C., during the earthquake men and women rushed into the streets from their homes, and falling on their knees began to pray. How they will pray as the earth reels, and shakes, and quivers, while God summons men to judgment! The islands will flee away and the mountains topple from their bases to destruction. The waves of the sea shall roar and men will stand aghast at the awful work of destruction when God comes to judge. Then amid the wreck of matter the Judge shall come surrounded by myriads of His holy angels, seated upon His throne of glory, while the archangel commissioned by Omnipotence, placing one foot upon the sea and the other upon the dry land, shall declare in trumpet tones: "Time shall be no longer! Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Then the sea will give up its dead, death and Hell will be emptied, as all nations, all kindreds, all peoples, all tongues, all the small and all the great, shall stand before Him for judgment. It will be a Universal Judgment. Every son and daughter of Adam's race will be there that day. Old Xerxes sat on the side of Mt. Athos and saw his Persian host, two millions of men, march by as they went to conquer Greece. Tears flowed from his eyes, and one said: "Sire, why do you weep?" And he replied: "I weep when I think that in a few years all these men of this mighty host will be in the grave." But more solemn and more alarming still the truth, all men will be here at this judgment scene to receive for the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil. Then the die is cast, then the tree must lie even as it has fallen. Too late now to repent! Nothing can be reversed. The lie cannot be undone; the oath cannot be recalled. Judas would fling away his price of blood, saying, "I have betrayed innocent blood," but it is too late! Achan would part with his wedge of gold, his Babylonish garment. Ananias would pay the whole price; but it is too late! Baalam would let go the wages of unrighteousness, and Demas forsake the world; but it is too late! Pilate would now acquit the innocent; but it is too late. Christ is on the throne and he before it. The gambler and his tool, the adulterer and his paramour, the betrayer and the betrayed, the licensed saloon-keeper and the license voter who made his sin legal, the white-washed sepulchre and the moralist who boasted of and relied upon his morality, all will be there for judgment before an impartial Judge. No double standard of virtue here; no law for the rich and another for the poor; no one with a "pull" in this court; but ALL to receive "according to the deeds done in the body."

The Ghost of Caesar said to Brutus: "I will meet thee again at Philippi." So men's sins go before them to judgment and will meet them there.

A rum-seller had committed a crime with a young man, a beginner in evil. The youth was taken sick and the illness proved fatal. By his bedside sat his companion in crime, fearful lest the act should be confessed; lest, under the stress of an aroused conscience, he should reveal the crime. When death came, the rum-seller took off the mattress, shook out the pillow, removed the quilts and searched, for fear

some scrap of paper had been left that would contain the secret. But listen! Sin may be unrevealed in this life, but that day is a revelation of righteous judgment, and God has said, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Every word; aye, every idle word -- every thought that ever crossed your mind, every deed of our life, will be there to witness against you. Every moment of time wasted, every opportunity murdered, every invitation rejected, will be there. God's Book of Remembrance will not fail!

But oh, awful thought to the sinner, Christ will be the Judge. The despised Galilean will be on the throne. He who hung upon the cross will now be on the judgment seat. Once He said: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Once He cried: "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out," but now He commands: "Come to judgment!" Oh, the weeping and the wailing in that hour of the sinner's woe! Hear him as he cries: "Oh, for an hour of time! Oh, for an offer of mercy! Oh, for one more invitation! Oh, for another prayer-meeting -- for one more Gospel sermon! Time, come back! come back! Lost opportunities, come back! Thou despised, insulted, rejected Holy Spirit, come back once more! Rocks, mountains, fall upon me and hide me from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne!"

Here is a backslider. Once he knew the joys of sins forgiven; once he put his hand to the plow; once he was a witness for Jesus; once he had the testimony of a good conscience that God was pleased with him -- but, in an evil hour, he yielded to temptation, he turned his back upon his Lord, he counted the blood an unholy thing, he did despite unto the Spirit of grace, and now he is face to face with the Lord he misused. Hear him scream in his agony of soul: "Oh, thou blackness of an eternal Hell, if thou hast any place that can hide me from the Son of God, welcome, thy deepest depths!"

Here is an unfaithful minister. He filled a pulpit, had an opportunity an angel might covet, faced dying men and women who looked unto him as a very ambassador of God to men, but, for the sake of their gold, for love of their applause, he withheld the message, he failed God. He became a popular preacher, but he awakes in Eternity to find he has lost his soul. He screams, he weeps, he prays, he seeks death, but nothing will nor can avail. There is nought for him but wrath and anguish of soul, and a continual looking forward to eternal wrath.

But this is not all -- This day is a day of separation. "Then shall He return," says the prophet, "and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." "As a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, so shall He separate the righteous from the wicked." Separations in this life are hard to bear. Some years ago God gave a precious babe to a Christian mother. She took the child before the Lord and dedicating him, said: "O God, you can have him anywhere, in any field. I dedicate him to Thy service. The babe grew, the boy was of great promise, passed through the schools, gave God his heart, arrived at man's estate, was called to the Christian ministry, and then called to Africa. But there was one thought that came to him, "How will I ever tell mother? She will be broken-hearted." One day he said to her: "Mother, I have something important to tell you; something I am afraid you do not expect. You say that God's grace is always sufficient, now you will test it. Mother, I am called to Africa. I feel God wants me there." Weep? That mother weep? Nay, a smile spread over her face, and she said: "My son, God bless you, that is just what I have been expecting. I gave you to God when you were yet a babe for anywhere He wanted you, and I have never taken you back." He went to Africa, and in six months was stricken with the coast fever, and died, leaving this message: "Tell mother Heaven is just as near Africa as Philadelphia," and in that city she waited, watched for the Master's coming, and did His will. She knew that in a little while He that should come, "would come and would not tarry," and the separation would be but for a little while. But listen! The separations at the Judgment are eternal. The righteous from the wicked: The righteous father from the wicked son; the mother that served Him from the

daughter that served Him not.

I was in the office of the directors of Girard College in Philadelphia. A mother was there who desired to secure the admission of her fatherless boy into the institution. She had many questions to ask the secretary. "Will he be well clothed?" "Yes, ma'am." "Will he have nutritious food?" "Yes, ma'am." "Will he have a warm bed?" "Yes, ma'am." "Will he have proper companions? Will he be watched over in this regard?" "Yes, ma'am." And then her chin quivered, the tears came and she said: "Can I see him once in awhile?" "Once in three months, ma'am." Her mother-heart took fright. See her boy only once in three months! Separated so long as three months! But listen! The separations of the Judgment are eternal.

I was called to preach at the funeral of a young man who had been fatally injured by the kick of a wild horse in Greely, Colorado. The family in Martin, Michigan, had been notified, and a sister of the young man at once went to his bedside. After his decease she came back those many miles bringing with her the remains. At the funeral service when the friends passed by the casket taking their last look at the dead, this sister came, and we will never forget the cry of anguish from that heart as she leaned over that loved one and said, amid her tears, "Oh, Teddy, why can't I go all the way with you?" But she could go no farther; for awhile they must part -- must be separated. Death separates the righteous from the wicked forever. Tell me, my Lord, must the righteous father be forever separated from his unrighteous boy? The righteous from the wicked. Must the godly mother be separated from the daughter, the child of so many prayers? The righteous from the wicked.

But is there no joy at the Judgment? Is it all dark? Yes, there is joy at the right hand of that Judgment throne. In old Rome, after a campaign in which her soldiers had been victorious, they would have a triumphal entrance. These men had been hundreds of miles away from home, for years doing battle, suffering privations, seeing their comrades die by the weapons of the enemy, standing by new-made graves, but at last they had won the final victory and were marching home. Just outside of Rome they would halt while the city prepared to receive them. Every home was decorated, triumphal arches erected, and seats prepared for the Roman senators, while the populace, in holiday attire, flocked to the gates to bid them welcome. Here they come, their general at their head. Laurel crowns and flowers are thrown upon them as they pass by. Music welcomes them home, accompanied by the cheers of the throngs who rejoice that victory was theirs. By the reviewing stand on which the Emperor sits, there is a crier, who calls aloud the feats of arms and the places at which these armies fought. "These are the heroes of Spain -- these fought on the fields of Africa -- these upheld the honor of Rome amid the barbarians of Gaul" -- and thus, while Roman soldiers marched by accompanied by their captives and bearing the proofs of their victory, Rome welcomed her soldiers. 'Twas a great day when a triumphal entrance, decreed by the Senate, came to pass, but there is a triumphal entrance coming to pass before which all others pale into insignificance. "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger and ye took Me in; naked and ye clothed Me; I was sick and ye visited Me; in prison and ye came unto Me," and then shall the blessed of the Father march in, with Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, at their head, while angels of God who kept their first estate, will crowd the avenues of the skies to see the hosts of the redeemed, clad in garments white, march in to take possession of their blood-bought inheritance, while all the bells of Heaven will ring for joy. Earth's sorrows and trials will then fade away; "one moment in glory will make up for all."

One scene more. "Then will the King say unto them on His left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed." Have you ever been in a court-room when a prisoner was sentenced to death? The judge enters, takes his place

on the bench, and the prisoner is commanded to stand up. The spectators look on in awe -- a fellow being is about to be condemned to die. "Prisoner at the bar, you have been tried by a jury of your fellowmen; everything has been done by your counsel that could be done in your behalf. Due weight has been given to all the evidence offered in your behalf. You have been found guilty, and it is now my painful duty to pronounce upon you the sentence of the law. You will be returned to the jail, and there confined until such a day as the Governor may select, when you will be hung by the neck until you are dead, dead, dead, and may God have mercy on your soul." As the sentence closes, women faint, strong men grow pale, a half-suppressed sob is heard throughout the court-room. A human being sentenced to die! But in that great day when probation has ended, when judgment has been pronounced, unto that throng who rejected mercy, refused pardon, passed unrepentant into Eternity, the King will say: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment" -- away to eternal despair, eternal remorse, to an eternal Hell, to realize eternally what it means to be LOST. Sent by the power of Omnipotence into immeasurable wastes of darkness, blackened with the curse of God. "To be lost in the night -- in Eternity's night!"

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