

Judge Righteous Judgment I

(Day 4—FOT)

Fred R. Coulter—October 1, 2015

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to day four of the Feast of Tabernacles! What is one of the most important things that we will be doing during the Millennium? We've covered some of them already, but what is one of the most important things?

Rev. 20 is a case where we read something and we're focusing on part of what it says, and we miss the other part:

Revelation 20:4: "And I saw thrones... [places of rulership] ...and they that sat upon them, and **judgment was given to them...**" That's quite an important thing. **Judgment is given to us!** We will be in a spiritual capacity very similar to what the judges were over Israel when they first went into the land and settled it.

The judges were rulers. There were different judges in different areas of Israel. They all didn't reign consecutively. Many of them reigned concurrently: some in the north part, some in the south part, some in the west and some in the east. We have a chronological chart of that in the back of the Bible.

Where are we going to learn judgment? *We will compare that to God!* We will see that God sure enough is judged. Yes, indeed!

How to Get Wisdom

Here we have some basic instruction on how to get wisdom. Wisdom is something that is acquired over a period of time. We have to apply ourselves in the manner that is here. This is really a key thing as to why we need to study, so we can learn the Word of God and then 'rightly divide the Word of God' and learn how to make decisions.

We will see later that that's what God has given to all human beings. That's what free morally agency is all about. We have to be trained and educated. That's what we're in now: *training and education*. You might call what we are doing *The University of Eternal Life!* Here's how you gain judgment; we'll see the steps:

Proverbs 2:1:"My son, **if** you will receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you." For us, where the laws and commandments of God to be? *Written in our heart and mind!* So, we treasure them up there.

Verse 2: "So that you incline your ear to wisdom..." How can you judge unless you have wisdom? That's where it's going to end up. Then it

shows *how to get wisdom*:

"...and apply your heart to understanding" (v 2). These things are actively involving our thinking, comparing, choosing and putting together. Here is how it starts to get wisdom and understanding:

Verse 3: "Yea, **if** you cry after knowledge *and* lift up your voice for understanding." That's praying about understanding the Word of God. We are admonished by Peter to grow, increase, in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2-Pet. 3). This is why we are to diligently do it:

Verse 4: "**If** you seek her as silver and search *for* her as for hidden treasures"—to understand all the things in the Word of God. Think about what God is going to teach us after we're resurrected! Imagine that!

- spirit body
- spirit mind
- God is going to teach us

We're going to learn things that are going to be absolutely amazing, that will help us better to teach the people and to rule with Christ.

Verse 5: "**Then** you shall understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God." That's how we are to make judgments, by the knowledge of God, the Word of God.

Verse 6: "For **the LORD gives wisdom**; out of His mouth *comes* knowledge and understanding. **He lays up sound wisdom for the righteous...** [that's what we are to be] ...*He is* a shield to those who walk uprightly. He keeps the paths of **right judgment** and preserves the way of His saints. **Then** you shall understand righteousness and judgment and equity, every good path. Wisdom shall enter into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasing to your soul; discretion shall preserve you and, understanding shall keep you" (vs 6-11). This is what we're going to teach them during the Millennium.

Let's see what God says about judgment Himself. First of all, we need to understand the very power of God, His very creative powers and all of those things are absolutely incredible. Look at what He's done in creating the universe, the earth, human beings and everything on it, in it, under it—**God made it all!** That's quite a thing for us to understand and keep in mind.

God throws this challenge out to all the

‘wise ones’ in the world, who think they’re wise, but actually—because they get rid of God—are fools! A challenge to man, whomever you are, wherever you are, if you think you know anything, try this on for size:

Isaiah 40:12: “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span?...” [there are the stars in a section of the universe] ...And who has comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure... [Isn’t it amazing what a little speck of dust looks like?] ...and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, and who was His counselor that he might instruct Him? With whom did He take counsel, and **who instructed Him and taught Him in the path of judgment...**” (vs 12-14).

We’re going to see that judgment is really important. It involves:

- thought
- righteousness
- understanding good and evil
- understanding everything that we need to know about a certain situation in order to make the judgment
- choices

“...and made known the way of understanding to Him?” (v 14).

Here’s how God looks at everything on the earth; quite an incredible thing when you think about it: how men exalt themselves and how great they are:

Verse 15: “Behold, the nations *are* like a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the scales; behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing.” That’s amazing!

Verse 17: “**All** nations... [each and every one] ...before Him *are* as nothing; and they are counted by Him as less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will you compare God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him?” (vs 17-18). Then He challenges those who make idols! They are *nothing!* They can’t do anything!

Verse 21: “Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood *from* the foundations of the earth? **It is He** who sits above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers; **it is He** Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in; **Who** brings the rulers to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth as vanity” (vs 21-23)—***because they have rejected the Word of God!*** How can they make *righteous judgments*?

Verse 25: ““To whom then will you compare Me, or who is My equal?” says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, **Who** has created these *things*, **Who** brings out their host by number? He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power; not one fails” (vs 25-26). Quite an interesting thing!

Remember: ***ALL righteous judgment comes from God!*** Judge righteous judgment! We have to exercise that in our lives today, as well as prepare—when we do exercise right judgment—for spiritual life at the resurrection. The Bible is full about judgment and God in judging and setting up the judges. We’ll even see what the qualifications are for judges. Then we can ask ourselves: Are we being qualified?

Psalms 75:7: “But **God is Judge**; He puts down one and sets up another, for in the hand of the LORD there is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices; and He pours out from it; but the dregs of it, all the wicked of the earth shall drain its dregs and drink them” (vs 7-8). That’s His judgment for the wicked.

We’re going to go through quite a few Scriptures and let the Bible explain to us what it is about judgment.

Psa. 96 ties right in with what we are doing, right in with the Millennium. Psalm 96:13: “Before the LORD; for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with His Truth.” Those are very important ingredients in *understanding what is judgment and how to judge righteous judgment*.

We are going to see how the very center of all judgment is at the throne of God and goes out into all the universe into all the earth and, of course, *for us*. We will see that we’re being judged now.

Paul writes in Hebrews 12:22: “But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the* Church of *the* Firstborn, registered *in the Book of Life* in heaven; and **to God, the Judge of all...** [We are going to see that is the same in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.] ...and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected” ...” (vs 22-23).

Psa. 50 talks about God will come, He is going to judge and He is going to bring righteousness:

Psalm 50:3: “Our God shall come, and He shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the

earth, so that He may judge His people” (vs 3-4). We’re going to see not only His people, but also everyone on earth. Quite an important thing!

God is the Judge of all! Let’s understand something about God and His way:

- God is perfect
- His Law is perfect
- His way is perfect
- His judgment is perfect

We need to understand also that just because God is love, it does not mean that He is passive. It does not mean that He is going to let the wicked go free. *No, indeed!* We’re going to learn some very important things here. Notice how all of this fits together. This is why God wants us to:

- study
- pray
- live God’s way
- be able to make the right choices
- make the right decisions

This is how we develop *the character* and *the wisdom* of judgment.

Psalm 19:7: “The Law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.... [notice what this is leading to]: ...The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the LORD are pure, enlightening the eyes” (vs 7-8).

Why then would Protestants want to do away with the Law of God? If you had a great diamond, ruby or sapphire—beautiful, the biggest ever found, the original—and over here you had a counterfeit. The counterfeit looks like it’s a pretty good thing. You make the wrong decision and get rid of the authentic one and you choose the counterfeit one. That would be analogous to what the Protestants do in throwing away the Law of God, and the precepts, testimonies of God, etc.

“...the commandments of the LORD are pure, enlightening the eyes.... [that’s opening the mind to understanding]...The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; **the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether**” (vs 8-9). Think about that!

In His judging, God does an awful lot of destroying—does He not? What did we read for the seven last plagues, how horrible and devastating they were. The angel said, ‘True and righteous are Your judgments, O Lord!’ Right when He was in the middle of destroying the wicked!

- God is active

- *He’s not passive*
- His love is active
- His correction is active
- His judgment against the wicked is active
- His judgment for the righteous is active

Think about this: When you want to know, if a doubt ever comes in your mind that you’re really loving and serving God, or that you ought to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days, remember what Jesus said: *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father but by Me!*

Psalm 18:30: “As for God, **His way is perfect...**” You can’t make it any better. Look at all the people who want to revise the Bible to *their own liking*.

- the Word of God is pure
- the Word of God is perfect
- the Word of God is righteous
- the Word of God judges us

How can we, as imperfect human beings with imperfect thinking, want to improve upon a perfect God who has made and created everything? *Well, we can’t!* “...His way is perfect...”

“...the Word of the LORD is tried...” (v 30). Every generation tries to get away from it, but they never can.

Let’s see what Jeremiah says about God, and how important that this is. Let’s put it in the context that it is here: *to Israel*. Read through the whole book of Jeremiah. There’s a lot of doom, gloom and destruction. There’s also hope and time for a reprieve. Remember this: *Before God does something, He always gives warning and brings a message of repentance!* If there is repentance God will hold back.

Here’s what God says, Jeremiah 3:22: “Return, O backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. ‘Behold, we come to You; for You are the LORD our God. Truly, in vain is salvation hoped for from the high hills, *from* the multitude of mountains. Truly, in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel. The shameful thing has eaten up the labor of our fathers from our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters” (vs 22-24).

We can say that of what is happening here in America. Truly, *truly, truly sin* is devouring everything! Now we are living in a condition of lawlessness that *we in the United States have never experienced before!* Look at what happens when lawlessness reigns unbridled. Look at the Middle East:

- killing
- shooting

- looting
- stealing
- rape
- destruction
- death

That's what sin does!

- Wrong god!
- Wrong premise!
- Everything about it is wrong!

Yet, they are dedicated to it with a zeal to kill!

Verse 25: “We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.” All of those things are choices. So, God sets before them a way of repentance. He’s giving them an opportunity.

We don’t know how long the time of the end is going to be. We don’t know how long we’re going to go through many of these things that we have been experiencing. We don’t know how absolutely compounded that these terrible sinful things are going to bring about. What is the penalty of it? God says in effect, ‘Stop doing all the things that are terrible and evil; come to Me!’

Jeremiah 4:1: “**If** you will return, O Israel,’ says the LORD, ‘Return to Me. And **if** you will put away your abominations out of My sight...” The *if* and the *choices*.

- What about our lives?
- What are we doing?
- Where are we going?
- How are we growing and overcoming?
- Are we developing the character of God so we can be righteous judges?

“...**then** you shall not be removed... [that applies to us, because that day is coming] ...**and will swear, ‘As the LORD lives’...**” (vs 1-2). This is not the ‘hip-pocket God’ for convenience to make you feel good. This is the powerful God Who created the heavens and the earth, everything that there is. This is God’s character.

“...in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; then the nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him they shall glory” (v 2).

- Will there be repentance?
- How many people will turn away?

It’s just like the article that we advertised in *The Washington Times* this past summer: [What Happens When a Nation Forsakes God?](#) That’s what we’re looking at. God’s judgments come! That’s

what happens!

Let’s see what else it says about God and His judgment. Here is what God is looking to; this is us. You want God on your side, then you get on His side. God isn’t coming to your side; you have to come to Him.

Isaiah 57:15: “For thus says the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name is Holy; ‘I dwell in the high and Holy place, even with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’”

Yes, He is there to do this, to bring us back and to serve God in every way. That’s what God wants.

God loves **righteous** judgment. He loves to practice righteous judgment Himself. God loves righteous judgment, do you? Sometimes righteous judgment may not necessarily seem fair, but nevertheless, it is righteous. This is what God is going to do in reigning on the earth:

Psalms 99:4: “The strength of the King also **loves justice**... [judgment; a judgment is made to bring justice] ... You **established uprightness**; You have **executed justice and righteousness** in Jacob.” That’s what we’re going to do. When Christ is on the earth this is exactly what we’re going to do. We’re going to show the people of the world:

- how to live
- who is God
- how to worship Him
- how to serve Him
- what are His laws
- how we are to worship Him on the Sabbath
- what is that we do on the Holy Days

I imagine that we’re all going to learn a whole lot more about the Sabbath and Holy Days when the whole world is keeping them. Think about what that’s going to be like.

Not only does God love justice and judgment, but He also love righteousness. He created us and given us His Spirit so that we can be righteous.

- we have to be instructed in the way of God
- we have to be led by His Holy Spirit
- we have to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being

All of those things tie into *judgment!* It’s much like this: *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks! As a man is in his heart, so he is!* Likewise, if we learn the things of God, understand the Word of God, then we will be able to make

righteous right judgment. We need to do it in our lives now. How many times do we get ourselves in trouble because we don't think it through? I know that happens to me. It happens to you. Those are called mistakes, wrong choices. We all suffer from it.

Psalm 11:7: "For the LORD is righteous, **He loves righteousness**; the upright will behold His face." You can put in there Rev. 22; who is going to enter into *the City*:

- those who are righteous
- those who love God
- those who serve Him
- those who have God's name written in their forehead

That's showing that you belong to God, and we will see God face-to-face. 'They will behold Him.' That's quite a thing.

Psa. 145 begins what we will be a part of for all the ages of eternity. That will be in love, righteousness, goodness and truth. God is going to create a new heaven and a new earth. What is that going to be like? For His family and all the nations that are saved? That is a fantastic thing to contemplate. Now you can see why God hates religion.

Psalm 145:13: "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD upholds all who fall and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon You, and You give them their food in due season" (vs 13-15).

We need physical food and spiritual food, and spiritual food in due season. We're learning how to make righteous judgments so that we can help rule in the Kingdom of God, which is a kingdom that is an everlasting kingdom.

Verse 16: "You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. **The LORD is righteous in all His ways and loving in all His works**" (vs 16-17). That's quite a thing, think about that, how fantastic that is! Let's think about it today!

God Judges the Nations:

The account of Jeremiah is very interesting, indeed! God kept warning Israel to 'turn from your ways and serve Me. Get rid of your idols, your post-birth abortion and sacrifices of your children to Baal and Molech. Turn to Me; I'll forgive you. I will give you understanding and truth. I will bless you and blot out your sins.'

Here we see as it is with God, He judges every human being on earth. That is happening all

the time though the laws that God has created. Here we see that He judges the nations collectively. It's quite interesting that there was an account of a nation that repented.

Think about your life, what you're doing with it, and ask yourself: **Are you yielding to God so He can mold and build His character in you?** He wants us to rule and reign as kings and priests. He's given us the instruction book on how to do it in His Bible, His Word.

Jeremiah 18:1: "The Word, which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 'Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.' Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he was working at his wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was ruined in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*. Then the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'O house of Israel... [put your name there] ...can I not do with you *even* as this potter?' says the LORD. 'Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hands, *so are you* in My hand, O house of Israel'" (vs 1-6).

Then He gives a very profound part of the Bible. I want you to think about the things that were prophesied in the book of Daniel: the rising up of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Think about how that happened down through history and what God has said is going to take place in the book of Revelation at the end-times. ***God is coming to judge the world!*** And look how it's going to be. Revelation is an awesome book, indeed!

Verse 7: "If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy *it*." Last year at the Feast of Tabernacles I gave the cycle of human behavior. Human behavior never, never changes ***unless it is converted and remains diligent, zealous***. Then we can avoid the pitfalls and problems. God says that He destroys and takes down a kingdom.

- Did He take down the ten tribes of Israel? *Yes!*
- Did He take down Judah and the Jews and destroy Jerusalem? *Yes!*
- Did He take down Babylon? *Yes!*
- Did He take down Persia? *Yes!*
- Did He take down Greece? *Yes!*
- Did He take down Rome? *Yes!*
- Is He going to take down the *beast power* when Christ returns, that's going to rule the whole world? *Yes!*

He says that He always gives warning and conditions, v 8: "If that nation, against whom I have spoken, **will turn from their evil...**" That's what

He was asking the Jews and Israelites to do. Why do people refuse to turn from evil? *Think on that!* What is it going to lead to?

“...I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them” (v 8).

- Are we beyond the point of no return here as nation? *Could be!*
- Are you beyond that point in your life? *I hope not!*

Remember, God always honors Godly repentance.

Verse 9: “And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant *it*; if it does evil in My sight, that it not obey My voice, then I will repent of the good with which I said I would do them good” (vs 9-10). It works both ways.

Think of this individually, family, community, state, nation, world. It all applies, and God applies it.

What we are going to find, in the book of Jonah, is really astonishing, indeed! Israel *never* repented! Some of the kings of Judah did repent when they sinned, such as David. However, none of the kings of Israel repented.

The closest we have come to it here in America is under the leadership of Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. He said, ‘This is upon us because of our grievous sins.’ How long ago was that? *About 150 years ago!* What do you think those sins have grown to today?

Jonah—here we find that God told him to go to Nineveh and warn them of what was going to happen. Jonah didn’t want to do it and went in a ship to try to escape. He couldn’t escape. There’s another lesson: *You can never escape from God!*

Then the crew threw Jonah overboard to cause the storm to cease that God brought against the ship. Then God created a giant fish to swallow up Jonah and take him to where he wanted to go, where he needed to go and God wanted him to go. Jonah came up on shore and the fish spit him out.

Jonah 3:1: “And the Word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out to it the proclamation that I am declaring to you.’ And Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the Word of the LORD. And Nineveh was a very great city of three days’ journey across. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried and said, ‘Yet, forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!’” (vs 1-4).

Let’s understand something very important,

that’s very hard for people to grasp. God uses other people and other nations to do His correcting. He does not come down and do it personally. Although He is going to do what He’s going to do, He brings a message of repentance *first!* This is what we are looking at.

See if you can find this in the Old Testament: that the people of Israel believe God and repented. No! But you find it here with the Ninevites.

Verse 5: “And the people of Nineveh believed God. And they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them, for word came to the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne. And he laid aside his robe from him, and covered himself *with* sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his great ones, saying, ‘Do not let man or beast, herd or flock taste anything; do not let them feed, nor drink water. But let man and animal be covered *with* sackcloth, and cry mightily to God. And let them each one turn from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands. Who knows? God may repent, and He may have pity and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we do not perish’” (vs 5-9). That’s exactly what happened! It was 120 years later that the judgment came upon them. ***God does judge! He is the Judge of all the earth!***

(go to the next track)

- we have seen that God is Judge
- we have seen how He carries out His Word to anyone

That if He gives a judgment and a sentence, ***if*** they repent, God will not carry out the judgment. What happens when there is no repentance?

Genesis 18:17: “And the LORD said, ‘Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For **I know him...** [God knows us! The Spirit of God is dwelling in us!] ...that he will command his children and his house after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do **justice and judgment**, that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which He has spoken of him’” (vs 17-19).

It doesn’t depend on Abraham alone, it also depends on the descendants of Abraham, physically and spiritually.

Verse 20: “And the LORD said, ‘Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down

now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which has come to Me. And if not, I will know.”

So, God comes down and checks things out first. He makes sure that if He executes judgment that it will be *righteous* judgment, *fair* judgment and *proper*.

Verse 22: “And the men... [the two angels with God] ...turned their faces away from there, and went toward Sodom. But Abraham still stood before the LORD. And Abraham drew near and said, ‘Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?’” (vs 22-23). This is quite a conversation—isn’t it? Here’s Abraham—righteous, loving, obedient, fearing God, trusting God—who comes to God and says, “...Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”

Verse 24: “‘Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city....’” It makes you wonder in some cities, is there any righteous at all?

“‘...Will You also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous who are in it?’” (v 24). Then Abraham continued in his discussion with God: 54, 40, maybe 30, then Abraham is getting a little afraid:

Verse 31: “And he said, ‘Lo now, I have taken upon myself to speak to the LORD. Perhaps there shall be twenty found there.’ And He said, ‘I will not destroy *it* for twenty’s sake.’”

Abraham knew what Sodom was like. He knew that his nephew Lot was living there and he didn’t want Lot destroyed. So, Abraham came to God very boldly:

Verse 32: “And he said, ‘Oh do not let the LORD be angry, and I will speak only once more. Perhaps *only* ten shall be found there.’ And He said, ‘I will not destroy *it* for ten’s sake.’ And the LORD went His way as soon as He had left off talking with Abraham. And Abraham returned to his place” (vs 32-33).

You know the story. Two angels went down there and Lot’s sons wouldn’t believe it. The men of Sodom and Gomorrah were so evil that they wouldn’t take Lot’s daughters; they wanted to take the angels. This is also quite a prophecy about how militant homosexuality and their judgments are. They will have their way, and their way alone, and nothing else counts. We see the effect of it today!

It was all the angels could do to get Lot, his wife and two children out of there—his sons-in-laws didn’t believe him—and they escaped. They were told to not look back. Here comes all the fire and brimstone down and Lot’s wife couldn’t resist, so

she looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt.

How important is it that we ***obey the voice of God?*** An angel sent to do the work of God and the angel says something, it is as good as the voice of God! Remember what happened to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, when he questioned the angel Gabriel? *Gabriel told him, you’re going to not speak until after the child is born!* His tongue was locked up and he couldn’t speak. So, yes, God’s judgments are true and righteous!

Judgments or decisions or discernment is part of choosing. God made us—because we’re made a little lower than God—to think, understand and talk. All the attributes of humans—love, anger, goodness—God has made and created. He wants us to make the right choices. God has given every human being free moral agency. God will *never* take that away. We must choose! When you stop and think about it, every day we make many choices:

- when we decide to do something, that is a choice
- when we go someplace, and we want to go there, that is a choice
- to pray is a choice
- to study is a choice
- to live by the Word of God is a choice
- to be evil is a choice
- to choose the lifestyle—as in Sodom—that’s a choice

Let’s see what God has set before every human being, and it also began with Adam and Eve. This is so important. Remember, ***everything you act upon is a choice!*** ***IF*** you do not make a choice, that lack of a choice is your choice. Think on that!

- I don’t know
- I can’t tell
- I won’t do it
- I can’t decide

All of those are expressions of choice.

Let’s see what God has set before us. This is important to understand, but not only to understand but to see it working in our lives. Free choice is so important that God basis it on the heavens and the earth, though we apply it individually to each one of our lives. Think about that!

Moses is talking to the whole nation of Israel, but the group is formed of individuals. Likewise with us, we’re in a group, and there are individuals. The Word of God is to all, and all includes each and every one.

Deuteronomy 30:15: “Behold... [pay attention and listen] ...I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil.” That’s what God

sets before every human being. Children are born into the world, parents need to teach them right from wrong, to obey, to make good decisions, to make good choices. Not to do dumb, stupid and foolish things that children do. However, sometimes that continues right on into adulthood, as well.

Here's a commandment from the Lord, v 16: "In that I command you this day to love the LORD your God... [a choice, a decision] ...to walk in His ways... [a choice, a decision] ...and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply...." That's what God wants so that we will be fruitful, productive. Human beings are really not satisfied nor happy until they are productive and doing what is right, the right way. That's how God created us.

- How do you feel when things go wrong?
- How do you feel when you make the wrong choices?
- How do you feel when you make the wrong decisions?
- How do you feel when things go really badly?

Terrible! That's why He commands us to do so! Then He gives a warning:

Verse 17: "But **if** your heart turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them." Go your way and leave God? *A choice!*

Here's the warning, v 18: "I denounce to you this day that **you shall surely perish**; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it." When people go against the laws and commandments of God they go *their* way and make the wrong choices and decisions and their lives are cut short and they die. Whether they know God or not, this works in their lives, because this is not just for Israel, not just for the Church, but for all people.

That's why all people need the Word of God so they can understand:

- What do I need to do?
- How do I need to live?
- What choices do I need to make?

Remember that *every choice is a judgment*. You've thought about it and decided to do it. Some people get carried away and do things in anger. They've not made the choice to contain their anger. They go on a rage and rampage and it generally ends with destruction. Maybe even physical things destroyed, lives ruined because of all the anger and hatred.

- every choice is a decision
- every choice is a judgment
- *whether for good or bad*

This is so important, that God tells us, v 19: "**I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live.**" That's exactly what God wants.

He wants us to live. For those of us in the Church, He wants us to live *forever*. Then He also tells us how we should live our lives, and this is the first and foremost thing. Remember two things that Jesus said:

1. Man—or woman—shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God!
2. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and being!

To do what God wants and make the choices, these are the choices that are set before us:

Verse 20: "That you may love the LORD your God, **and may obey His voice...**" We have everything that God has spoken that He wanted to pass on to the whole world recorded in the Bible.

"...and may cleave to Him; for He is your life... [God is Lifegiver] ...and the length of your days... [eternal life] ...so that you may dwell in the land... [Kingdom of God] ...which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them."

Didn't we read that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be sitting on thrones? *Yes, indeed! Where? In the Kingdom of God!*

See how the Word of God really connects together. The unity of the Word of God is absolutely a magnificent thing. We're going to see some very interesting things along this line, as well.

In the first part of Luke 13 Jesus says concerning the Tower of Siloam that fell on the 18 and killed them, 'Do you think they were sinners above all in Jerusalem that they died. I tell you *no* and unless you repent you shall likewise perish.'

Let's see how Jesus explains the choices we need to make. Of course, everything about salvation is based upon our choices. Every choice we make is a judgment. We're going to see this principle applied.

Luke 13:22: "Now, He was going through *the* cities and villages teaching, *while* making progress toward Jerusalem. And one said to Him, 'Lord, *are* those who are being saved few?' Then He said to them" (vs 22-23)—to the whole crowd. Think about the effort that we need to choose to put forth.

Remember, all of our choices are based upon what God says, and backed up by the heaven and the earth. We need to understand that those are pretty powerful things to make God's Word very effective in our lives. All the way through the book of Deut. God said:

- *IF* you will *diligently* keep My commandments
- *IF* you will *diligently* hearken to Me—listen to obey

Here's the choice; here's what Jesus said is the important thing:

Verse 24: "Strive with *your* whole being to enter in through the narrow gate..." Many are called but few are chosen. We know that according to the Last Great Day God is going to take care of the vast majority of people.

"...for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, but shall not be able.... [because they make the wrong choices] ...Once the Master of the house has risen up and has shut the door... [going to close the gate for salvation] ...and you begin to stand outside the door and knock, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us'; then shall He answer *and* say to you, 'I do not know you *or* where you are from'" (vs 24-25). Why? *Because*

- you didn't listen to God
- you didn't strive to enter in
- you didn't pray to Him
- you didn't study His Word

Who are you? "...I do not know you *or* where you are from."

Verse 26: "And you shall begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets.' And He shall say, 'I tell you, I do not know you *or* where you are from. Depart from Me, all *you* workers of unrighteousness'" (vs 26-27).

A lot of people think—just take the world for example—that all the holidays of the world doesn't make any difference. 'It's a lot of fun and it's for the kids.' They never think that it's Satan's plan to teach kids to lie. But nevertheless, they think they're doing right.

- they may have heard that it's pagan, *in one ear and out the other*
- they may have heard that the Sabbath is the day to keep, *in one ear and out the other*

Here are these people who saw Jesus when He was here in the flesh and they didn't pay any attention to it.

Verse 28—at the judgment: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see

Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves are cast out." All based upon *choice!* They chose not to strive with all their being. They chose *their way* instead of God's way.

Verse 30: "And behold, there are *the* last who shall be first, and *the* first who shall be last."

Let's look and see concerning something very important, Let's look at the patriarch Job. Quite an interesting thing! We've got a series on the book of Job; you might want to write for it.

A lot of people read the first part of it. Like we just read in Luke 13, 'Will there be few who are saved?' Let's see what Job was doing. He was watching out for his children, praying for his children. He was a mighty righteous man. Yes, indeed, but very few people understand about the righteousness of Job. You look at it and you see that everything that he did was commanded by God, which is an important clue. We will see what His problem was.

How could God bring this upon Job and all that he went through if he did what God commanded? Well, because he made the wrong choice as to who should get credit for what he did. We'll answer that when we get through with this.

Job 1:1: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job. And that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and turned aside from evil." Why should he go through all that trial then?

Verse 2: "And there were born to him seven sons and three daughters." He had lots of possessions (v 3).

Verse 4: "And his sons went and feasted in their houses, each one on his day. And they sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And when the days of feasting were concluded, Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all. For Job said, 'It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' Thus Job continually did so" (vs 4-5).

He was very righteous. Even Satan didn't understand what Job's problem was, so he thought that in his bargaining with God that he could cause Job to fail.

Satan came and appeared before the Lord, v 7: "And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' Then Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.' And the LORD said to

Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil?’ And Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, and around his house, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has *is* in your power....’” (vs 7-12).

Satan went out and did it! Look at all the calamities that came: lost his sons and daughters; lost everything that he had.

Verse 21: “And he said, ‘Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there....’” But he didn’t charge God foolishly or curse. He didn’t sin.

Job 2:1: “And again it came to pass on a day... [another day] (v 2): ...And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ And Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.’ And the LORD said unto Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a blameless and an upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil? And still he is holding fast to **his** integrity, although you moved Me against him to destroy him without cause.’ And Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Skin for skin, yea, all that a man has he will give for his life. But indeed put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse You to Your face’” (vs 1-5).

Verse 6: And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life.’” So, Job was struck with boils from head to toe, the worst kind. He was in misery, pain and agony; he was in terrible, terrible pain and his three friends came and were arguing back and forth: ‘You must be a sinner. You must have done this,’ etc.

In one place Job said, ‘This is so miserable and you fellows are just so rotten toward me, I wished there were an umpire between me and God so that he can put his hands on both of our shoulders and settle this matter. I have not sinned. I’ve done none of the things that you have said.’ Whoa! That’s something!

Elihu didn’t want to speak because he listened to these three men speak to Job and they hadn’t answered Job. Then Elihu spoke in Job 32-34.

Think about this: I want you to see what Job’s attitude was, and his sin was though he was doing everything right, **he did not give God the credit! Job did not say**, ‘I do these because this is from God. He gets all the credit, honor and glory.’ **NO!** He said, ‘**I am so good I did it myself.**’ So, Elihu says to Job, right to his face:

Job 35:2: “Do you think this to *be* right, you *that* say, ‘My righteousness *is* more than God’s?’” Whoa! Pretty strong words! Yes, indeed!

Job did not learn the lesson that through all of our lifetime that **we live, move and have our being is from God!** And that **we have nothing that we didn’t receive!**

One of the things that Job said after these three men couldn’t answer him, ‘Oh, I wish God would speak to me. I would let Him know what I’ve really done.’ Well, Job got his answer!

Job 38:1: “Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, ‘Who *is* this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now gird up your loins like a man; for I will demand of you, and you shall answer Me.’.... [Notice where God starts]: ...‘**Where were you** when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare it, if you have understanding!’” (vs 1-3). Yes, Job, you’re so smart, you’re so good, you’re so righteous...

Read all of Job 38 & 39. Let’s see how God continues in Job 40. This is quite a thing! Notice how similar this is to Jesus correcting the scribes and Pharisees. They thought that they deserved to have the Messiah aligned with them because:

- they had *their* traditions
- they had *their* laws
- they were *the ones* at the temple
- they were *the ones* who were teaching the people
- ‘*we deserve to have God come to us*’

Christ didn’t do that—did He? **No!** He came to call sinners to repentance; likewise with Job. Job didn’t understand that even though you can do all of these things that God says, yet, if you do not give God the glory and if you are not thankful to God that you’re able to do these things...

- See the choices?
- See the choices involved?
- See the decisions that he had to make?

So, **God intervened to help Job come to the knowledge of the Truth**, and for him to understand that through all that he went through he was only flesh and blood. Though he did all the things that God said, unless you give God the credit, glory, honor and realize that everything has come from

God, then you become self-righteous and narcissistic, and that's exactly what Job became though he was blameless in the letter of the Law.

Job 40:1: "And the LORD answered Job and said, 'Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*?... [note Isa. 40] ...He who reproves God, let him answer it.' And Job answered the LORD and said, 'Behold, I am vile!... [now he's getting the point] ...What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.' And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 'Gird up your loins now like a man. I will demand of you, and you declare unto Me.... [listen to this all of those who reject the laws and commandments of God] ...Will you even annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous?'" (vs 1-8).

All right, Job, try this on for size, v 9: "And *have* you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?" What Job was doing was making himself like God. He was worshipping himself! 'Look at all the good that I do. Aren't I wonderful.'

Then God challenges him. 'Job, if you're really a god, can you do this? Verse 10: "Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him" (vs 10-11). Let's see what you can do, Job.

Verse 12: "Look on everyone *who is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in darkness" (vs 12-13).

If you can do this, Job, v 14: "**Then** I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you." In other words, you can be God!

- What happened to Job after God got done with him?
- What were the accomplishments of Job?

Even keeping the laws of God in the letter of the Law compared to the majesty and creativity of God? the power of God? the might of God? the love and kindness of God?

Job 42:1: "And Job answered the LORD and said, 'I know that You can do all things, and **that no thought can be withheld from You.**'... [think on that one for a minute] ...*You asked*, 'Who *is* he who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore, I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea, which I did not know" (vs 1-3). *Repentance!* The repentance was hard to come by. Look what he had to go through. He chose to aggrandize himself rather than give credit to God.

Verse 4: "Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, 'I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me.' I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; **but now my eye sees You.**... [the mental eye of the mind] ...Therefore, I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (vs 4-6).

- all of this because of *choices*
- all of this because of *judgment*

So that Job could learn the judgment of God, so he could be humbled, repent and yielded to God. That's all important in **judging righteous judgment!**

Scriptural references:

- 1) Revelation 20:4
- 2) Proverbs 2:1-11
- 3) Isaiah 40:12-15, 17-18, 21-23, 25-26
- 4) Psalm 75:7-8
- 5) Psalm 96:13
- 6) Hebrews 12:22-23
- 7) Psalm 50:3-4
- 8) Psalm 19:7-9
- 9) Psalm 18:30
- 10) Jeremiah 3:22-25
- 11) Jeremiah 4:1-2
- 12) Isaiah 57:15
- 13) Psalm 99:4
- 14) Psalm 11:13-17
- 15) Psalm 145:13-17
- 16) Jeremiah 18:1-9
- 17) Jonah 3:1-9
- 18) Genesis 18:17-24, 31-33
- 19) Deuteronomy 30:15-20
- 20) Luke 13:22-28, 30
- 21) Job 1:1-2, 4-5, 7-12, 21
- 22) Job 2:1-6
- 23) Job 35:2
- 24) Job 38:1-4
- 25) Job 40:1-14
- 26) Job 42:1-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Peter 3
- Revelation 22
- Job 1:3; 32-34; 39

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