



The BibleKEY Correspondence Course

LESSON 12 - BIBLE TEACHING ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY & JUDGMENT

"As many as have sinned under law shall be judged by law . . . in THE DAY when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel" Romans 2:12-16

TRADITIONAL CHRISTIANITY HAS TAUGHT - and continues to teach - the concept that all mankind are rewarded (or punished) immediately at death by being sent either to heaven or hell; and then, thousands of years later, being brought back to re-enter mortal bodies & stand before Christ for judgment to see what their reward (or punishment) should be!

These lessons have illustrated many times that the Divine message contained in the Bible is logical and consistent; the challenge, therefore, is for anyone to show the logic or consistency in the above theory of traditional Christianity. If death is actually a continuation of life, and the reward is settled & received as that portal is passed through, then where is the logic for the scriptural doctrine of last day resurrection and last day judgment?

However, the Scriptures do give a clear simple picture, telling us that the dead know nothing, but sleep unconsciously in the grave, awaiting Christ's call back to life by bodily resurrection to be judged, and **THEN** rewarded. This is beautiful, harmonious and fitting.

NOT ALL WILL RISE FROM THE DEAD

God will not bring every human being to individual account. The vast majority of mankind fall into the group described in Psalm 49 --

"Man being in honor abideth not; he is like the beasts that PERISH . . . Like sheep are they laid in the grave . . . Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away . . . He shall go to the generation of his fathers . . . They shall never see light . . . Man that is in honor and understandeth not is like the beasts that PERISH."

This is reasonable and just. To bring the helplessly ignorant to judgment by a law they did not know is not reasonable.

JUDGMENT IS BASED ON RESPONSIBILITY

Judgment has its basis in responsibility. Our responsibility to God comes from our having come in contact with His law, our ability to understand good & evil, and our power to control our actions according to this understanding. The Bible is the only source of sound knowledge regarding the principles and conditions of responsibility to God. Philosophy and human theory are useless.

ADAM FELL - GOD'S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION

Adam was made responsible for his acts because his actions were under his control and he was instructed what to do. He knowingly disobeyed, and God's law of condemnation took hold of him. He and all his descendants have been under the power of sin and death since that time. But God did not intend that His purpose of filling the earth with His

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“If death is actually a continuation of life, and the reward is settled & received as that portal is passed through, then where is the logic for the scriptural doctrine of last day resurrection and last day judgment?”

BibleKEY definition:

"resurrection" - a term used in scripture to describe the event of coming forth from the grave in a literal physical revival from the death

BibleKEY fact:

“Adam was made responsible for his acts because his actions were under his control and he was instructed what to do”

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glory should terminate with mankind's failure. In God's great mercy & benevolence He conceived and is working out a plan of salvation for mankind, while preserving and maintaining His honor and holiness and righteousness and justice; a law involving 'Glory to God in the highest: as well as 'good will toward men.' This plan of redemption, outlined in the Bible through various promises, precepts and commandments, re-opened a relationship between God and man, and brought man under moral responsibility to God again.

It is a divine principle that this result is only for those who come within the sphere of the law of God. Those who do NOT are in the class referred to in Psalm 49 (quoted on page 1).

LIGHT (KNOWLEDGE) BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

The apostle Paul said in his letter to the Romans -

"Where no law is there is no transgression." (Romans 4:15)

And he told the Athenians -

"The times of ignorance God winked at" (Acts 17:30).

Christ informed Nicodemus -

"This is the (basis of) condemnation (krisis, judgment), that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light." (John 3:19)

To the Jews who rejected him, he said -

"If ye were blind (that is, ignorant), ye should have no sin." (John 9:41)

The Scriptures uniformly represent 'light' as the ground of responsibility and resurrectional judgment -

"To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17)

"Better not to have known the way of righteousness than, after they have known, to turn from the holy commandment" (2 Peter 2: 21).

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin. But now they have no cloak (RV: excuse) for their sin" (John 15:22).

Under the Law of Moses, which Paul quotes as an example -

"Every disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Hebrews 2:2).

Those to whom this command was given were not asked if they were willing to become subject to Moses' Law. They were **told, commanded**. Similarly in the beginning with Adam: he was not asked if he wanted to make an agreement: he was **commanded**: put under law at God's decision; and held accountable for disobedience. This command is now to 'all men everywhere' (Acts 17:30); and every disobedience will likewise receive a just recompense of reward. We can be certain that when the Scriptures make a statement such as this, it will happen; and we know it does not happen in this life: we see it does not, and we are told it does not (Ecclesiastes 7:15; Job 21:7,13,30)

When people are in a state of ignorance, they are not held personally accountable for their actions, and are therefore not liable to personal condemnation. God ignores ('winks at') their doings, just as He does that of the beasts of the field. They are without light (knowledge) and without law. They are on a par with the beasts: through ignorance sunk beneath the level of light & responsibility. That is the state of most of natural mankind, as stated by Paul to the Romans --

BibleKEY fact:

“When people are in a state of ignorance, they are not held personally accountable for their actions, and are therefore not liable to personal condemnation. They are on a par with the beasts: through ignorance sunk beneath the level of light & responsibility.”

BibleKEY definition:

"resurrectional judgment" - the scriptural doctrine of being raised from the dead by Jesus Christ and brought to stand before him at his judgment seat to give account for deeds done in this life

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*"As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law."
(Romans 2:12)*

If it is true (as the Scriptures state) that from those to whom much is given much is required, then logically it should also be true that from him to whom nothing is given shall nothing be required. Christ said that if he had not come and spoken to his generation, they had not had sin, for they would have been in helpless ignorance (John 15:22). The same would apply to any to any generation called through the Gospel message. Therefore he said (John 12:48)-

"He that rejecteth me & receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him: the Word I have spoken shall judge him IN THE LAST DAY."

People cannot be judged by a 'word' they have not heard. Responsibility to God is created only by contact with divine law. Noah's descendants are an example of this sort. His immediate family received a law, knew it and understood it. Yet as one generation of their descendants succeeded another they wandered farther away from the way of knowledge and understanding, gradually sinking below moral responsibility, to the level of the beasts, bringing about those conditions Paul said God 'winked at.'

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM - A NEW RELATIONSHIP

Abraham - the father of the Jewish race - was called directly and openly by God to come out of the prevailing world darkness. This invitation made the direction of his life much more important than while he lived in the Chaldean darkness. Faith and obedience to God constituted him the 'heir of the world' (Romans 4:13) conditional upon resurrection to immortality. And, being called, unbelief and disobedience would have made him subject to a more severe and far-reaching extension of God's displeasure than fell upon Adam.

Paul told the Ephesians that in their former ignorance they were -

*"Without God or hope in the world . . . strangers from the Covenants of Promise . . . aliens from the life of God through the ignorance in them."
(Ephesians 2:12)*

When one is called from this godless condition by the preaching of the Gospel, they cease to be 'their own' (1 Corinthians 6:19). All their activities come under God's supervision, and become the basis of future accountability.

As in the case of Abraham, all who become enlightened to the same truth come under the same responsibility as he. The Law of Faith had its origin in Eden, as stated in Hebrews 11:4 --

"By faith Abel offered sacrifice, and obtained witness he was righteous."

But the full and official initiation of the Law of Faith as a rule of salvation, occurred in the life of Abraham. This was the basis of resurrectional responsibility. Of course, there are evidences of it in the lives of God's people before the time of Abraham: Abel, Enoch, Noah, etc.

THE LAW OF MOSES SECONDARY; IT'S PURPOSES:

The Law of Moses was a national code for the nation of Israel. It was entirely subordinate to, and did not replace or override, the Law of Faith through Abraham (which really goes back to the beginning in Abel). The Law of Moses was an interim administration, added for various divine reasons, including -

1. To manifest all mankind as guilty before God;

BibleKEY fact:

“If it is true (as the Scriptures state) that from those to whom much is given much is required, then logically it should also be true that from him to whom nothing is given shall nothing be required. ”

BibleKEY definition:

"resurrectional responsibility" - the scriptural doctrine that defines what is required for a person to become subject to resurrection.

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2. To testify to God's supremacy and unapproachable holiness;
3. To be a schoolmaster and guide to lead to Christ;
4. To be a foreshadowing, educational pattern & type of heavenly things;
5. To *provisionally* cover sins and provide for their forgiveness on the basis of obedience to the sacrificial ordinances, and faith in what they represented.

Also it was a national code to organize and regulate Israel as a nation while they were the channel of God's manifestation to the world. It provided a foundation upon which the Abrahamic Law of Faith could have its perfect work.

THE LAW OF FAITH NOT SUPERSEDED; OLD TESTAMENT TESTIMONY ON RESURRECTION

While the Mosaic Law was in operation - from Moses to Christ - it is clear that the principle of resurrectional responsibility was in operation also.

This principle runs through all that God did by His faithful servants from Abel to Paul. God's purpose from the beginning had reference to the mission of the Christ as the 'Resurrection and the Life.'

Christ stated that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets are to appear in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 8:11). God revealed Himself to Moses through the use of the Memorial Name which indicated the principle of resurrection, calling Himself the God of men already dead (Exodus 3:6). Christ used this passage to silence the Sadducees (who did not believe in resurrection) showing that God would raise these men to life again (Luke 20:37). Thus we read --

"God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is A TIME there for every purpose and every work" (Ecclesiastes 3:17).

"God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing" (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

"Judge nothing before THE TIME, till the Lord come . . . who will make manifest the counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor. 4:5).

"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another . . . And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in the DAY when I make up My jewels then shall ye discern between the righteous and the wicked" (Malachi 3 :16-18)

And there are many similar passages throughout the O.T. Scriptures (as Psalm 37; 49:14; 58:10; 62:12; Proverbs 11:18-31; Ecclesiastes 5:8; 11:9; 12:14; Isaiah 3:10; 26:19-21; 35:4; 66:4-5,14; Malachi 4:1-3, etc.).

JEWISH NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Jewish responsibility was greater than the cast-off descendants of Noah, because of their close association with God as His chosen race, as He said -

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).

Again the clear principle of responsibility through knowledge. The national punishment of the Jews by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Romans and Gentiles through the centuries is a full discharge of their responsibilities as a result of their national election. Yet it is very evident that there were varying degrees of individual responsibility here also, as when

BibleKEY fact:

“ God's purpose from the beginning had reference to the mission of the Christ as the 'Resurrection and the Life' ”

BibleKEY definition:

"MEMORIAL NAME" - the Divine title by which God made Himself known to Moses and Israel: -

EXO 3:6 Moreover he (God) said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

EXO 3:13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel...and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

EXO 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM (or, *"I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE"*): and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM (*"I WILL BE"*) hath sent me unto you... this is my name for ever, and *this is my memorial* unto all generations.

BibleKEY word search:

"AM" (I AM THAT I AM) - Strong's Hebrew Dictionary #1961 hayah, haw-yaw'; a prim. root [comp. 1933]; to exist, i.e. be or become, come to pass (always emphatic, and not a mere copula or auxiliary); i.e. *"I WILL BE[COME] WHO I WILL BE[COME]"*

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Christ said that certain of his generation would manifest weeping & gnashing of teeth when they witnessed the patriarchs being accepted for his Kingdom and 'they themselves thrust out' (Luke 13:28)

OTHER NATIONS RESPONSIBLE TO A DEGREE

As there was a degree of responsibility with Israel in relation to God, so we see also that as other nations came into contact with Israel and Israel's God, so their responsibility rose. The nations of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistines & Tyrians all were in this class, as were others, and have all been subjected to God's wrath because of their responsibility to Him. This we understand from such testimonies as Ezekiel chapters 25-33, Amos chapters 1-2, etc.

But *resurrectional* responsibility is limited to those who have a knowledge of the Word of God. His promises and precepts confer privileges and impose responsibilities with reference to resurrection. They form a basis for that awakening from the dust to everlasting life, or to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2). But how can we make any sense out of these long ages of God-permitted heathen darkness that God 'winked at' if every human being that ever lives is a precious 'immortal soul' that has to be either 'saved' by conversion or allowed to suffer eternally in hell torture? By this absurd & unscriptural theory, every human being that has ever lived, even for a mere moment, must exist somewhere consciously for all eternity.

If such are confined to hell because of ignorance (Ephesians 2:12; 4:18) - what divine injustice! But if such are allowed to go to heaven in ignorance because of helplessness, what cruelty then is the preaching of the Gospel, creating the very strong possibility of rejection (Matthew 7:21; 2 Corinthians 2:14-16), while undisturbed ignorance guarantees salvation! Thus the traditional Christian theory of an 'immortal soul' creates a dreadful dilemma!

The true, consistent, logical Bible message is very clear: natural ignorant mankind has no more to do with the future state prepared for God's children than the decaying vegetation that passes away each year with the winter.

CHRIST THE 'RESURRECTION' - AND THE JUDGE

Christ reveals himself as the only means of Resurrection and Life, the Judge of all the responsible, and the Giver of rewards or punishment when he returns to the earth. He said:

"the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22).

And further, John 12:48, as quoted already -

"He that rejecteth me & receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him: the word I have spoken shall judge him IN THE LAST DAY."

This is a first principle of the faith of the Gospel. Paul (Hebrews 6:1-2) linked eternal judgment with baptism, resurrection, etc., as the principles ('the beginning') of the doctrine of Christ. Peter said Christ commanded them to preach that he was --

"Ordained by God to judge the quick (living) and the dead" (Acts 10:42).

And Paul told the Romans God had appointed a Day when He will (Romans 2:16)-

"Judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel."

BibleKEY fact:

“The true, consistent, logical Bible message is very clear: natural ignorant mankind has no more to do with the future state prepared for God's children than the decaying vegetation that passes away each year with the winter.”

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The following verses illustrate the Bible picture concerning judgment to come --

"It is appointed unto men once to die: after that the Judgment" (Hebrews 9: 27).

"As many as have sinned under law shall be judged by law . . . in THE DAY when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel " (Romans 2:12-16).

"Every man's work shall be manifest for THE DAY shall declare it" (1 Corinthians 3: 13).

"God will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:5-6).

"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ . . . every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10-12).

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5 :10).

'The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom" (2 Timothy 4:1)

MANY CALLED, FEW CHOSEN

God, by the method of preaching, is

'taking OUT of the world' a people to honor His Name (Acts 15:14),

'purifying to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works' (Titus 2:14).

While this invitation has gone out to all kindreds, nations, and peoples, and the number who have answered the call over the centuries is a great number, all those who have been called will not be chosen --

"Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14).

This is because many who accept the Word of God are not influenced sufficiently by it to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God (Romans 11:1). Or as Paul told the Hebrews (4:2) --

"The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith."

This is clearly shown in Christ's parable of the Sower. The seed falls in various kinds of soil. As a result, it brings forth varying amounts of fruit, acceptable or unacceptable to God, or no fruit at all (Matthew 13:23).

Thus we find a great multitude, living & dead, each with an individual responsibility to God, according to His knowledge of them. We cannot judge anyone in this regard. We may think certain ones are sure of entry into the Kingdom; others, of rejection; but God alone knows. The decision rests with the true judgment of God, manifested by Christ when he appears.

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RESPONSIBILITY & JUDGMENT

Name Mr/Mrs/Miss

Address Postal Code

* You may need an additional sheet for your answers if there is not enough space below. Your answers to the following questions will help you - and us - to determine how much you have discovered about your Bible. Please return this form in the envelope provided even if you are unable to answer all the questions. On receipt of it we will forward a further study, as well as some

1. What is the basis for divine judgment of an individual?
2. What made Adam responsible to God's judgment?
3. What was the result of Adam's disregard of the consequences of his acts:
 - a) In relation to himself?
 - b) In relation to his descendants?
4. What was the primary purpose of God in Creation?
5. What method did He provide to this end after the fall of Adam?
6. a) Are people in ignorance of God's laws and commands answerable to judgment?
 - b) What scripture supports your answer?
7. How does a person become responsible to do God's will?
8. How did Abraham become responsible to God?
9. What feature of the Creator was impressed by the Law of Moses?
10. What made Israel as a nation responsible to the will of God?
11. In what way were other nations responsible to God?
12. What class of people are related to resurrectional responsibility?
13. a) Is the subject of resurrection and judgment a first principle doctrine?
 - b) What scripture supports your answer?
14. Give 2 passages to prove that the responsible will answer for their deeds at the judgment seat of Christ.
15. Will all those who have received the call of God be accepted by Christ at the judgment seat?
16. When will the judgment take place?