

## **30. The Supreme Court of the Universe**

“THE Supreme Court of the Universe is even now handing down its final decisions for life or death. Christ is even today separating those who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, from those who are contentious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness. He is even now drawing the dividing line, which places the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left.” -L. L. Shuler, in “The Great Judgment Day,” page 80.

### **SELECTED REFERENCES**

GC 479-491; 4T 384-387; COL 310-319; [3] Pages 112-120. [6] Pages 231-240. [9] Pages 159-191.

Memorize: Revelation 22:12.

### **A. THE SESSION OF INVESTIGATION.**

The Hour of His Judgment Has Come. Daniel 7:9,10; Revelation 14:7; 11:18; 22:11-15.

“It is this coming . . . that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies, and there appears in the presence of God, to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man, to perform the work of the investigative judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.” - GC 480.

“At the time appointed for the judgment-the close of the 2300 days, in 1844-began the work of investigation and blotting out of sins. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and the dead are to be judged ‘out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.’ - GC 486.

“We are now living in the great Day of Atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life, should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. . . . For many years this work has been in progress. Soon-none know how soon-it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review.” -GC 489, 490.

### **B. THE BOOKS OF LAW AND RECORD.**

#### **1. The two tables of the law. Romans 2:12,16; James 2:8-12; Revelation 11:19.**

“In order to be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the judgment.” - GC 436.

“The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment. Says the wise man: ‘Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment.’ - GC 482.

#### **2. The book of remembrance. Malachi 3:16-18; Psalm 87:6; 139:16; Matthew 10:30; Acts 10:4-6.**

“The books of record in heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment. . . .

“A book of remembrance’ is written before God, in which are recorded the good deeds of ‘them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.’ Their words of faith, their acts of love, are registered in heaven. . . . In the book of God’s remembrance every deed of righteousness is immortalized. There every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ’s sake, is recorded. . . .

“Every man’s work passes in review before God, and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered, with terrible exactness, every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel.” - GC 480-482.

“I beheld scenes in the coming judgment. . . . The great day of the execution of God’s judgment seemed to have come. Ten thousand times ten thousand were assembled before a large throne, upon which was seated a person of majestic appearance. Several books were before him, and upon the covers of each was written in letters of gold, which seemed like a burning flame of fire, ‘Ledger of Heaven.’ One of these books, containing the names of those who claim to believe the truth, was then opened. . . . As these persons were named, one by one, and their good deeds mentioned, their countenances would light up with a holy joy that was reflected in every direction. . . .

“Another book was opened, wherein were recorded the sins of those who profess the truth. Under the general heading of selfishness came every other sin. There were also headings over every column, and underneath these, opposite each name, were recorded, in their respective columns, the lesser sins. Under covetousness came falsehood, theft, robbery, fraud, and avarice; under ambition came pride and extravagance; jealousy stood at the head of malice, envy, and hatred; and intemperance headed a long list of fearful crimes, such as lasciviousness, adultery, indulgence of animal passions, etc.” - 4T 384, 385.

“Yes, every act, however secret you may have thought you were in its committal, has been open to God, to Christ, and to the holy angels. A book is written of all the doings of the children of men. Not an item of this record can be concealed. There is only one provision made for the transgressor. Faithful repentance and confession of sin, and faith in the cleansing blood of Christ, will bring forgiveness and pardon will be written against his name.” - 2T 292, 293.

“No, not a single soul who puts his trust in Him will be forgotten. God thinks of His children with the tenderest solicitude, and keeps a book of remembrance before Him, that He may never forget the children of His care.” - 4T 329, 330.

### **3. The book of life. Revelation 20:12,15; Psalm 69:28; Luke 10:20; Revelation 13:8; 3:5; Daniel 12:1.**

“The book of life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. Jesus bade His disciples, ‘Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.’ Paul speaks of his faithful fellow workers, ‘whose names are in the book of life.’ Daniel, looking down to ‘a time of trouble, such as never was,’ declares that God’s people shall be delivered, ‘every one that shall be found written in the book.’ And the revelator says that those only shall enter the city of God whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” - GC 480, 481. (For the “Book of Death” see Lesson 36.)

## **C. THE HEAVENLY WITNESSES.**

Malachi 3:16; Ecclesiastes 5:6; Matthew 18:10.

“How solemn is the thought! Day after day, passing into eternity, bears its burden of records for the books of heaven. Words once spoken, deeds once done, can never be recalled. Angels have registered both the good and the evil. The mightiest conqueror upon the earth cannot call back the record of even a single day. Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe. Though they may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or to condemn. . . . Could the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world be swept back, and the children of men behold an angel recording every word and deed, which they must meet again in the judgment, how many words that are daily uttered would remain unspoken. Now many deeds would remain undone.” - GC 486, 487.

## **D. THE CASE OF EACH INDIVIDUAL UP FOR TRIAL.**

1 Peter 4:17; Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 18:24; 33:12.

“In the typical service, only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment, the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period.” - GC 480.

“Those who in the judgment are ‘accounted worthy,’ will have a part in the resurrection of the just. [Luke 20:35, 36; John 5:29.] . . . The righteous dead will not be raised until after the judgment at which they are accounted worthy of the resurrection of life.’ Hence they will not be present in person at the tribunal when their records are examined and their cases decided.” - GC 482.

“As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the

cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance." - GC 483.

"Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great judge face to face." - GC 488.

## **E. OUR ADVOCATE AT THE BAR.**

1 John 2:1; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25.

"Jesus will appear as their Advocate, to plead in their behalf before God. . . . All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven. As they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah, I even I, am He that blots out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." - GC 482, 483.

"Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying, 'I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of MY hands.'" - GC 484.

"The sinner, through repentance of his sins, faith in Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family." - 3T 371, 372.

## **F. THE SOLEMN SENTENCE.**

Revelation 22:11, 12.

"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. Behold. I come quickly; and My reward is with Me.'"

" 'Watch you therefore: . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.' Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments. It may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence, 'Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.'" - GC 490, 491.

### **KEY TEXTS**

Daniel 7: 9, 10

James 2:842

Revelation 20:12,15

Revelation 14:7

Malachi 3:16-18

1 John 2:1

### **THOUGHT QUESTIONS**

1. How do we know this court session must precede the Second Advent?
2. What different items are recorded in the books of heaven?
3. Should we learn that we had failed, would there remain any legitimate excuse?
4. Another chance? If not, why not?
5. Whose names only are recorded in the book of life?
6. Since no one is without sin, what hope have you when your name is called before the great judge?

### **TEST QUESTIONS**

Answer With Ample Bible Proof

1. What is the investigative judgment to determine? What is left for the next session of the court?
2. What standard of character is compared with what records to determine the verdict?
3. What books are mentioned as being in heaven?
4. How is the heavenly court described?
5. In what work is Jesus now engaged? Since when? Until when?

## **PROJECT**

Select up-to-the-minute news items which clearly fulfill a definite signs prophecy; look up authoritative statistics and other data; place with this the correct Scripture texts, and arrange, with your comments in the form of a newspaper article.

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