



God as Triune Judgment

THE HEBREW WORD for judgment (*mishpat*) is used over 400 times in the Old Testament. It has multiple meanings — including “cause” and “determination.” In this context, God himself is the Final, Ultimate Judgment.¹

The “Father” as Creative Judgment

In the very beginning, God as the “Father” decided/determined to initiate the universe through his Creative Judgment. He began by making the universe out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*) and then proceeded to continue creating the universe over a vast expanse of time (*creatio continua*). In his decisions and actions, God granted Creation freedom to exercise “self”-judgment (decisions/actions). This, of course, led to the existence of evil as well as of good (cf. Isaiah 45:5-7). Meanwhile, God had further decisions to make.

The “Son” as Redemptive Judgment

Not long after God granted humanity the gift of self-consciousness,² he himself appeared in the form of humanity as the “Son” (First Coming). Throughout his life on earth, the Son, known as Jesus Christ, did what was “right” (*mishpat*), yet he nevertheless suffered rejection, punishment and, finally, a tortured death at Calvary. This constituted God’s own Redemptive Judgment.

Not long after God granted humanity the gift of self-consciousness, he himself appeared in the form of humanity as the “Son.”

Though God as the Son paid the full penalty for all the wrong decisions/actions of Creation,³ universal evil still persists. The rejection of the divine Redemptive Judgment can be attributed to ignorance, conscious denial and/or the determination of Creation itself to become god.⁴

The “Spirit” as Transformative Judgment

Now, nearly 2,000 years after Calvary, evil not only continues but is becoming more pervasive and violent. Soon, however, “when the fulness of the time [is] come,” God, now known as the “Spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45-47; 2 Corinthians 3:17; cf. John 14:16-18), will again appear (*parousia* or Second Coming) as promised (Acts 1:11; cf. Romans 9:28; Galatians 4:4) and convene the Transformative Judgment. In anticipation of this imminent event, we are called to be representative witnesses to his divine revelation (Acts 1:8; cf. Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1), to reciprocally receive his gifts and share them with all others, and to celebrate all that he has done in creation and redemption and all that he will do (Revelation 21:1; 4-6; 22:5).⁵

Conclusion

Because God as Jesus Christ encountered and overcame all evil at his First Coming, the universal disclosure of that victory at the transformative Second Coming — the Transformative Judgment — is certain. Then God will raise the dead (Matthew 25:31, 32; John 12:32; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17) and assemble all humanity before him (John 5:22, 27; 12:31; Hebrews 12:23).

In view of the reciprocal human relationality inaugurated at his First Coming (John 15:15), we can conclude that the *parousia* or Second Coming will involve a universal enlightenment about all that he has done and all that he intends to do for eternity. We can also conclude that this revelation will involve the opportunity for humanity, representing all Creation, to exercise its own judgment.

Hopefully, all will accept the divine purpose, decision and action and the invitation to receive and share God’s attributes and to enjoy everlasting life with him and with each other (cf. John 12:32; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Philippians 2:5-11; Revelation 3:20; 22:17). If not, the freedom for which Jesus suffered and died surely provides the option to refuse human relationality (life) and thus choose nonexistence (death). At the same time, the idea that such a choice would mean eternal torment at the hands of an angry God is wholly contrary to the spirit of Jesus.⁶

Then the Lord God will transform all Creation, so that the entire universe will exist for eternity in the loving embrace of its Creator, Redeemer and Transformer (cf. John 12:32; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Philippians 2:5-11; Revelation 3:20; 22:17). Thus, let us rejoice and sing, “For thine is the kingdom [of Creation], and the power [of redemption], and the glory [of transformation], for ever. Amen” (Matthew 6:13)!

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Endnotes

1. See “God as the Judgment,” *Outlook* (August 2008).
2. See “The Eternal Journey III: The Origin of Consciousness,” *Outlook* (July/August 2012); “The Origin of Consciousness,” *Outlook* (May/June 2014).
3. See “The Eternal Journey IV: Paying the Price,” *Outlook* (September/October 2012); “Covenantal Crises VI: The Incarnate Covenant,” *Outlook* (January/February 2014).
4. See “The Eternal Journey V: The Emerging Crisis,” *Outlook* (November/December 2012).
5. See “My Lord Delayeth His Coming,” *Outlook* (July 2009).
6. See “Truth Triumphant III: Parousia and Transformation,” *Outlook* (November/December 2011).

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