

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 33.-Of the last Judgement.

I. God hath appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the world, in righteousness, by Jesus Christ¹, to whom, all Power and Judgement is given of the Father². In which day, not onely the Apostate Angels shall be judged³ but likewise all persons that have lived upon Earth, shall appear before the Tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their Thoughts, Words, and Deeds; and, to receive according to what they have done in the Body, whether good or evil⁴.

Question 1.—*Has God appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the world, in righteousness, by Jesus Christ?*

Answer.—Yes. Acts 17:31. Thus do they err who deny that there is a Day coming wherein the world shall be judged in righteousness by Jesus Christ. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because Solomon alludes to this fact of judgment, Eccles. 12:14; which fact presupposes a set time wherein it shall occur. 2.) Because the Scriptures speak of a judgment which is to occur at the coming of the Lord, Matt. 16:27; Jude 14, 15; 2 Tim. 4:1; which judgment is at a set time, Matt. 13:40-42. 3.) Because the Scriptures affirm that this judgment has unto it appointed a Day, Acts 17:31; Matt. 12:36. 4.) Because the providence and justice of God, which wish it to be well with the good and evil with the wicked, demand it, 2 Thess. 1:6, 7. 5.) Because the conscience of each one approves and bears witness to this—which, while Christ is absent, performs a vicarious judgment over man inasmuch as in it God has erected his throne, on which he exercises judgment concerning the individual works of the man, Rom. 2:15, 16.

Question 2.—*Is all power and judgment given Jesus Christ of the Father?*

Answer.—Yes. John 5:22, 27. That Christ will be the Judge in the very visible nature in which he was condemned for us appears for the following reasons: 1.) Because Christ himself, before his ascension asserts that all power had been committed to him, Matt. 28:18. 2.) Because Luke also affirms this truth, Acts 10:42; 17:31. 3.) The Judge on this great occasion is to be, not God absolutely considered, but the God—man in his office as mediatorial King. All judgment is said to be, not inherently his, but committed to him by the Father, John 5:22, 27. As Judge he is called “the Son of man” and “the man ordained by God,” Matt. 25:31, 32; Acts 17:31. He conducts the judgment as “the King,” and as Head of his members who have lived on earth, Matt. 25:35, 40. And thus, as mediatorial King, he will consummate his work in the destruction of his enemies, the complete redemption of his friends, and “the restitution of all things,” 2 Thess. 1:7–10; Rev. 1:7; Acts 3:21.

¹ Acts 17:31.

² John 5:22, 27.

³ 1 Cor. 6:3; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4.

⁴ 2 Cor. 5:10; Eccles. 12:14; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 14:10, 12; Matt. 12:36, 37.

Question 3.—*Shall the apostate angels be judged in that Day?*

Answer.—Yes. 1 Cor. 6:3. Thus do the Pelagians err who maintain that only those men who have enjoyed gospel privileges shall come into judgment. So too, do others err thus restricting or altogether denying this judgment. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) The apostle Peter states explicitly that God cast down the angels that sinned to be held in chains unto judgment, 2 Pet. 2:4; these chains which are now for custody will then be for punishment, and what is now somewhat relaxed will then be most weighty and close. 2.) Jude tells us that the angels which sinned are reserved in chains unto judgment of the great day, Jude 6; but what great day, if not Judgment Day?

It may be further noticed, that the Scriptures are utterly silent as to the judging of the holy angels. It is therefore our duty to refrain from asserting anything about it. Some have surmised that though they are not mentioned, they will be judged, because they have some connection through their ministry of love, with the men who will be judged. But, on the other hand, it may be remarked, there is significance in the fact, that all the creatures spoken of as standing at Christ's judgment are sinful ones. The holy angels never sinned; they have been long ago justified through a method totally inapplicable to fallen beings, the Covenant of Works, and this may constitute a valid reason why they should not bear a share in this judgment of sinning beings, who are either justified by free grace or condemned.

Question 4.—*Shall likewise all persons that have lived upon earth, appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and, to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil in that Day?*

Answer.—Yes. 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10, 12. The objects of the judgments is both personal and real. Personal are rational creatures, angels (in particular the bad ones) as well as men. All men, the pious as well as the wicked of every order, sex, age, condition and state (small and great, noble and ignoble, kings and subjects, slave and free), of all places and times, who have been, are and will be (as no one can withdraw himself from them), the living as well as the dead. *First*, we all must stand before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12. *Second*, the real includes what is done in the body, whether good or evil: our very thoughts, Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 4:5; indeed, Scripture teaches that we shall give an account for every idle word, Matt. 12:36, 37; so too, we are to stand to give an account of the deeds, Eccles. 12:14; Matt. 25:31-46.