

Judgement Tempered By Mercy



Foundations (Day 325)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday we read Hebrews 12:22-24. Today, with the eye of faith and the light of Scripture, let us survey this heavenly scene. In the centre of it all we observe one solemn, majestic and awe-inspiring figure – "God the Judge of all." Here God is revealed to us in His sovereign, eternal authority as Judge – Judge of all, Judge of heaven and earth, Judge of angels and Judge of men.

However, if God were revealed only as Judge, there would be no place here for sinful men – neither for the perfected spirits of the Old Testament nor for the reborn saints of the New. In mercy, therefore, the revelation of God's Word leads us on from the figure of God the Judge to the figure of Jesus the Mediator – the only One who can come between a righteous, holy God and lost, sinful men and reconcile the one to the other. The picture is completed by the revelation of the blood of Jesus, being both the means and the price by which reconciliation has been achieved.

In this picture the blood of Jesus is contrasted with the blood of Abel. There are three main points of contrast.

1. The blood of Abel was shed without his own will or consent, spilled suddenly by a murderer's blow without warning; the blood of Jesus was freely given of His own consent as the price of man's redemption.
2. The blood of Abel was sprinkled upon the earth; the blood of Jesus was sprinkled before the mercy seat in heaven.
3. The blood of Abel cried out to God for vengeance upon his murderer; the blood of Jesus pleads for mercy and forgiveness for the sinner.

We see, therefore, that this revelation of God as Judge of all is tempered by the revelation of God's mercy and grace manifested in the mediatorial office and the shed blood of Christ. This revelation of God as a God of judgement tempered by grace and mercy is in harmony with the total revelation of Scripture upon this theme.

The entire Bible reveals that, by sovereign, eternal right, the office of judge belongs to God Himself. This theme runs through the whole of the Old Testament. For instance, Abraham said to the Lord: Shall not the Judge of all the earth

do right? (Gen. 18:25). Other Old Testament sources say: May the Lord, the Judge, render judgement this day (Judg. 11:27). Surely He [God] is God who judges in the earth (Ps. 58:11). The psalmist says to God: Rise up, O Judge of the earth (Ps. 94:2). (For the Lord is our Judge…) (Is. 33:22).

However, the truest and most perfect expression of God's eternal nature is not in judgement but in grace, not in wrath but in mercy. The administration of wrath and judgement is alien to God's nature. It is not something He naturally desires to do.

Jesus says in John 3:17: For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

This scripture – and many others like them – reveal that God delights to offer mercy and salvation but that He is reluctant to administer wrath and judgement.

Devotional

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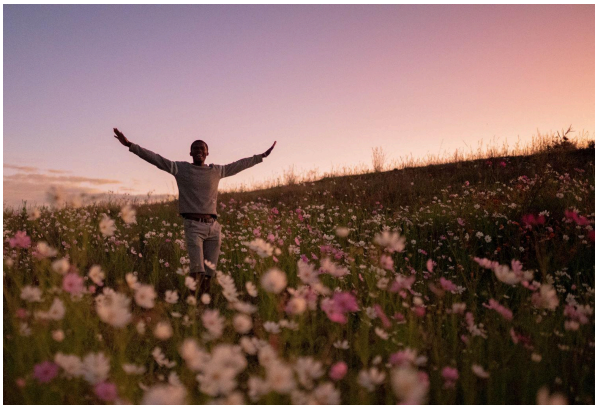

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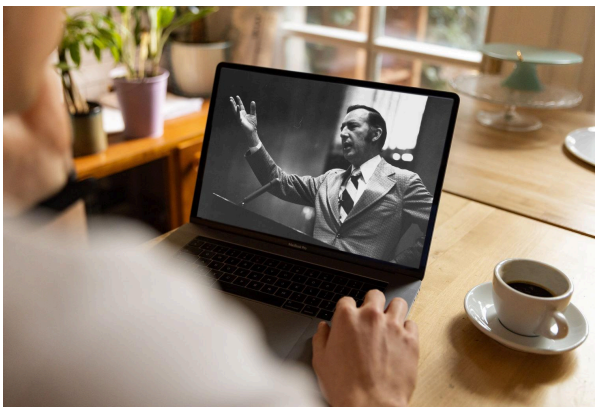

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