

Judgment at the House of God

Many are familiar with the verse in 2 Chronicles 7:14 that speaks of national deliverance...

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Do we realize that the blessing or curse of a nation by God has as much to do with the people of God as with sinners in the land? Let's look at that verse again, but not as an isolated verse this time. Let's look at it in the context of the passage around it.

2 Chron. 7:1-11 - The people are as God-honoring as they will ever be.

2 Chron. 7:12-14 - God may punish the land for His people's sin. This will affect sinners too.

2 Chron. 7:15-22 - Repentance of God's people brings healing to a land. Sinners sin by nature, God's people sin by conscientious choice. There is accountability for both, but which does God address with a warning and consequences here?

We are familiar with the verse in 1 Peter below, but are we familiar with the context around it?

1 Peter 4:17

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

1 Peter 4:1-6 We should acknowledge the sin of our lives before Christ, but not carry it into our life after Christ. Christians should not be casual about sin; God judges it in sinner and saint alike.

1 Peter 4:7-14 Living for Christ is not easy and may involve suffering or persecution. But turning back is not an option. Repentance is a Christians way of letting judgment begin at the house of God.

1 Peter 4:15-19 Don't turn away from Christ because of community persecution, as an angry retaliation to God. Commit the keeping of your soul to God as unto a faithful Creator in tough times and keep doing well.

In Daniel 9, we see a beautiful, intercessory, prayer by Daniel for his nation Israel. It begins with both personal and national confession and contrition. It then follows with acknowledging God's goodness and just cause for judgment. Then Daniel appeals to God's sense of rightness and mercy for a stay of judgment and acquittal of the punishment.

God replies to Daniel through Gabriel with a glimpse of Israel's future to the end of time, which includes when Messiah will come and what He will accomplish, as well as the end of national religion for Israel.