

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

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### THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT.

"I BEHELD," says the prophet Daniel, "till thrones were placed, and One that was ancient of days did sit. His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the Judgment was set, and the books were opened."<sup>1</sup>

Thus was presented to the prophet's vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered "according to his works." The Ancient of days is God the Father. Says the psalmist, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."<sup>2</sup> It is he, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the Judgment. And holy angels, as ministers and witnesses, in number "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," attend this great tribunal.

"And, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away."<sup>3</sup> The coming of Christ here described is not his second coming to the

<sup>1</sup> Dan. 7 : 9, 10, Revised Version.    <sup>2</sup> Ps. 90 : 2.    <sup>3</sup> Dan. 7 : 13, 14.

earth. He comes to the Ancient of days in Heaven to receive dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, which will be given him at the close of his work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not his second advent to the earth, 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 investigative Judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.

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. "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?"<sup>1</sup>

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. Says the prophet Daniel, "The Judgment was set, and the books were opened." The Revelator, describing the same scene, adds, "Another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."<sup>2</sup>

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."<sup>3</sup> Paul speaks of his faithful fellow-workers, "whose names are in the book of life."<sup>4</sup> Daniel, looking down to "a time of

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. 4 : 17. <sup>2</sup> Rev. 20 : 12. <sup>3</sup> Luke 10 : 20. <sup>4</sup> Phil. 4 : 3.