

Think Straight about the Investigative Judgment

1. Is the topic of the investigative judgment still relevant to Seventh-day Adventist today? Is it still present truth? Why go over the subject when it is fraught with too many issues and objections?
 - a. . . supposedly a fabrication by Ellen White and is not in the Bible
 - b. . . “the most colossal face-saving device in Christian history” to explain away the great disappointment of 1844 (according to Donald Barnhouse)
2. Why spend time and energy studying the subject when it can be confusing at times? Consider the following apparently contradicting statements by Ellen White about whose cases are considered in the investigative judgment:

All to be judged. . .	Only professed people of God judged. . .
<p>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." GC 479</p> <p>Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. . . GC 482.</p> <p>Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. GC 490.</p> <p>The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state--men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. . . Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men. GC 491.</p>	<p>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. GC 480.</p> <p>As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. GC 483.</p>

3. Objectors say the investigative judgment robs the Christian of the assurance of present salvation

- a. **Rom 5:10, Rom 5:1**, If we have been reconciled to God by the death of Christ and if we already have peace with God, why still an investigative judgment?
- b. **1 John 5:12**-- If those who have the Son already have life, then what is the point of an investigative judgment?
- c. If a believer is already accounted righteous by faith, what's the point of convening an investigative judgment?
- d. And of course, if the righteous dead are already in heaven and the wicked already in hell, the idea of an investigative judgment before the second coming of Christ doesn't fit in the equation!

Why Study the Investigative Judgment

- 4. **Rev 14:6-7**--The first angel's message announces the convening of this judgment; it is the time of most significance in human history, because the destiny of every individual living in this planet is about to be decided; this is the most compelling reason why the subject of the investigative judgment should be studied and properly understood;
 - a. A correct understanding of the investigative judgment takes away the "controversiality", the confusion and the fear factor surrounding the subject;
- 5. We are admonished that the subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be **clearly understood** by the people of God:

The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be **clearly understood** by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. **GC 488**.

- 6. The question is, how **clearly** do we understand the subject of the investigative judgment? The only reason really, why the subject of the investigative judgment is controversial, confusing and terrifying is because it has not been **clearly understood** by the people of God;
- 7. So, how do we go about **clearly understanding** the subject of the investigative judgment? We must take note of and follow Daniel's approach:

Two Distinct Lines of Investigation in Daniel 7

- 8. In Daniel 7, Daniel describes the investigative judgment taking place in heaven as happening along two parallel yet distinct lines or occurrences; we must follow his approach if we are to **clearly understand** the subject of the investigative judgment as Ellen White says:
 - a. **Dan 7:9-10**—an investigative judgment involving the Father (the Ancient of Days)
 - b. **Dan 7:13-14**—an investigative judgment involving the Son of man (Jesus Christ)
- 9. AGAIN, it is absolutely important that we take a look at the investigative judgment happening in heaven as two separate but connected work of investigation: one conducted by the Father and the

other one conducted by the Son; although they are happening simultaneously, they are distinct from one another

10. These two lines of investigation being conducted in the investigative judgment by the Father and by the Son must not be confused with each other:

Two Parables Dealing with the Investigative Judgment

11. Two parables in the new Testament throw light on the dual aspect of the investigative judgment as explained by Daniel; in these parables, the investigative judgment is portrayed under the symbol of marriage:
 - a. The Parable of the wedding garment in **Matt 22:1-14** focuses on the part the Father plays in the investigative judgment, whereas
 - b. The parable of the 10 virgins in **Matt 25:1-13** focuses on the part Jesus plays in the investigative judgment;

The Investigative Judgment by the Ancient of Days

12. **Dan 7:9-10**. The work of investigative judgment brought to view in this passage of prophecy is that of the Ancient of days, with the books being opened and the judgment being set.
 - a. **The Ancient of days**---represents God the Father
 - b. **The books**---the book of life, the book of deeds of all professed followers of Christ
13. EGW's comments on **Dan 7:9-10** clearly shows that the line of investigation described in the passage is that being conducted by God the Father:

[**Daniel 7:9-10** quoted]. 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. . . 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. **GC 479.**

14. The parable of the marriage supper in **Matt 22:1-14** is an clear-cut explanation of the investigative judgment at the end of the gospel age, as it is conducted by God the Father ; it explains the nature of His work of investigation;
 - a. **The king**---represents God the Father
 - b. **The son**---represents Jesus, the son of God
 - c. **The marriage**---Jesus receiving His kingdom from the Father in marriage (**Dan 7:13-14; GC 426**)
 - d. **The guests**--- Jews and the Gentiles (in other words, the entire human race)
 - e. **The wedding garment**---the character that each must possess to be fit for the marriage supper (COL 307); Christ's perfect character in human flesh;

- f. **The examination of the guests just before the marriage**—represents a work of investigation by the King (the Father) to see if the characters of the guests conform to the image of Christ to the full extent;

15. The Father conducts this investigation to see who is worthy to receive a share in the kingdom and a seat upon His throne:

Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Matthew 22:11; Revelation 7:14. He who is found wanting is cast out, but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on are accepted of God and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing of work in the sanctuary above. **GC 428.**

16. The Father conducts this investigation to see who are fitted to share in the inheritance of the righteous:

By the king's examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, "to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. **COL 310.**

17. The Father examines the records of "every man," all nations," "every man's work," "each individual" and decides "every man's destiny;" (**GC 479, 482, 489, 491**)

The Investigative Judgment by the Son of Man

18. **Dan 7:13-14.** Whereas the focus of the investigative judgment in **Dan 7:9-10** is the Ancient of days, in **Dan 7:13-14**, the focus shifts to the Son of Man (Jesus Christ); this second line of investigation on the part of Christ is not clearly understood;

- a. Jesus receives the kingdom from the Father in marriage according to **GC 426:**

The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called "the bride, the Lamb's wife. **GC 426.**

19. EGW's comments below on **Dan 7:13-14** clearly shows that Jesus also conducts His own investigative judgment separate from that of the Father for one purpose: **to determine who are entitled to receive the benefit of His final atonement.**

[Dan 7:13-14 quoted.] The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the 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. GC 480.

20. Unlike the investigative judgment conducted by the Father, Jesus conducts a work of investigation to determine who will receive the benefit of His final atonement--which is the cleansing or taking away of the filthy garments and the putting on of Christ's perfect character upon those who are going through the Day of Atonement process of soul affliction (**Lev 16:30; PK 591**)

As the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through **repentance** of sin and **faith** in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation--a work of judgment. **GC 421-422.**

21. Unlike the Father who is looking for character perfection in the investigative judgment, Jesus looks for faith and repentance;

22. Unlike the Father who examines every case, every case, the cases considered in Jesus' line of investigation are only the professed people of God (**GC 480, 483**); this makes a lot of sense because in the time of Moses and Aaron, only those who were afflicting their souls received the benefit of the final atonement; the rest were cut off from among God's people (**Lev 23:27-29**)

The Two Lines of Investigative Judgment Compared

23. The distinction between the line of investigation conducted by the Father and that of the Son in the Investigative judgment must be clearly made:

First Line of Investigative judgment	The Second line of investigative judgment
Done by the Father (Ancient of Days; the king in the parable of the wedding garment)	Done by the Son of Man, the bridegroom in the parable of the ten virgins
The purpose is to determine who has on the white robe (Matt 22:1-14); to determine who will have a share in the kingdom; and a seat upon His throne (GC 428); to determine who will have a share in the inheritance of the righteous (COL 310)	The purpose is to determine who will receive the white robes in preparation for the examination by the Father (GC 480, 421-422)
The Father is looking for character perfection (the wedding garment)	The Son is looking for faith and repentance (GC 421-480)
The Father examines each name in the books	The only cases considered are the cases of God's professed people

Go Ye Out To Meet Him

24. The parable of the 10 virgins in **Matt 25:1-13** focuses on Christ's work in the investigative judgment;
25. The marriage in this parable is the same marriage Daniel describes in **Dan 7:13-14**;
26. Those who are judged worthy to receive the benefit of His final ministration and receives the wedding garments are those who receive light on the change of His ministration (trim their lamps) and are able to follow Him by faith into the marriage chamber (Most Holy Place) when the call is given "the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to Meet Him!"
27. The question is, what are we doing in reference to the call "Go ye out to meet him?"
28. Do we know enough about His final ministration in the heavenly sanctuary to be able to follow Him there and thereby receive the wedding garment which we need to stand in the presence of the Father?
29. Do we realize that **white raiment** that Laodicea is told to buy is the same **wedding garment** that Jesus gives in the investigative judgment as a benefit of His final atonement? The same **wedding garment** the Father will look for as He examines the guests in the wedding?
30. Do we realize that the only way to "buy it" is to heed the call to be zealous therefore and repent? What are we doing with the call to "be zealous therefore and repent?"

In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their **soul anguish**, which is expressed in **lamentation** and **weeping, reproofs** and **warnings**. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, those who have a zeal for God's honor and a love for souls will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. Their righteous souls are **vexed** day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with **grief** and **alarm**. They **mourn** before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They **lament** and **afflict their souls** because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church. The Spirit of God, which prompts to reproof, is trampled underfoot, while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored, the truth made of none effect.

The class who do not feel **grieved** over their own spiritual declension, nor **mourn** over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. . .**5T 210**.