

# ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS

Jon Macon

Judges 1:4-6 tells us about a Canaanite king called Adonibezek who was captured by the children of Israel and then had his thumbs and great toes cut off. In this punishment, the king recognized God's righteous judgment, and a principle that few people take to heart. The king said, "Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: *as I have done, so God hath requited me*" (Judg 1:7). Galatians 6:7 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: *for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*" Some of this reaping may occur in this life, but our biggest concern needs to be our eternal judgment. Hebrews 9:27 expresses the unchangeable fact that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." At that time, we will be judged according to our works, as that heathen king of Bezek came to understand so long ago.

## **Old Testament warnings**

The Old Testament is rich with statements and examples that instruct us in the basic fact that God will render to us according to our works. In Job 34:11, Elihu acknowledged, "For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways." Solomon prayed that God would hear the prayers of His people and then "render unto every man according unto all his ways" (2 Chr 6:30). Psalm 62:11-12 says, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: *for thou renderest to every man according to his work.*" Concerning the wicked, Psalm 28:4 says, "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert." Proverbs 24:12 asks, "Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?" Isaiah 59:18 says, "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense."

## **New Testament warnings**

The New Testament applies this principle often in warning us of the judgment to come. No one will be able to escape Judgment Day.

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(continued)

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10).

Romans 2:5-11 says, “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; *who will render to every man according to his deeds*: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God.”

Revelation 20:12-13 describes Judgment Day: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and 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*. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and *they were judged every man according to their works*.”

### **Reminder for Christians**

Revelation 2:23 warns Christians that the Lord will punish those who turn away from him, “*and I will give unto every one of you according to your works*.” At the end of the Bible, Jesus Christ says, “*And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be*” (Rev 22:12).

How should we prepare for this? “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear” (1 Pet 1:13-17).