

- 8 *The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.*
- 9 *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.*
- 10 ¶ *My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. (Psalm 7)*

God will judge! No three words have been spoken so often and heeded so little. Yet death and taxes are less certain than this. God will judge. James warns those who are harboring evil feelings against one another, those who hold resentments, feelings of being mistreated, “The Judge stands before the door.

And how will He judge? God does not try our case by external evidence presented. He is now swayed and persuaded by the cleverly worded arguments of our accusers or our defenders. The opinions and judgments of men weigh nothing in His court. He tries the hearts and reins. He is the God Who saves the upright in heart.

The Lord shall judge all the people. None will escape His justice. And is it quite evident from the Biblical record that not all will be vindicated. Verse 3 of the same Psalm tells us that He “hath also prepared for him the instruments of death.” Justice is meaningless unless it 1) vindicates, protects and rewards the righteous, and 2) condemns and punishes the wicked. God will surely do both.

If I, then, am to be judged according to inner purity of heart, then it most certainly behooves me to cease from my wickedness and turn in my heart to the God Who is merciful to repentant sinners.

But perhaps here is a sinner whose heart is too black, his past deeds too wicked. His whole life has been godless and corrupt. Far from being upright in heart, he has been selfish, rebellious, deceitful, greedy and hateful. Is there hope for such a person before a God Who saves only the “upright in heart?” Indeed there is! The prophet Isaiah foretold of the Substitute Sin-bearer: “All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” For those of us who have no upright heart to present to God, Jesus Christ, His Son, is our righteousness; and He will present us blameless before God the Father in that day.

-C.M.