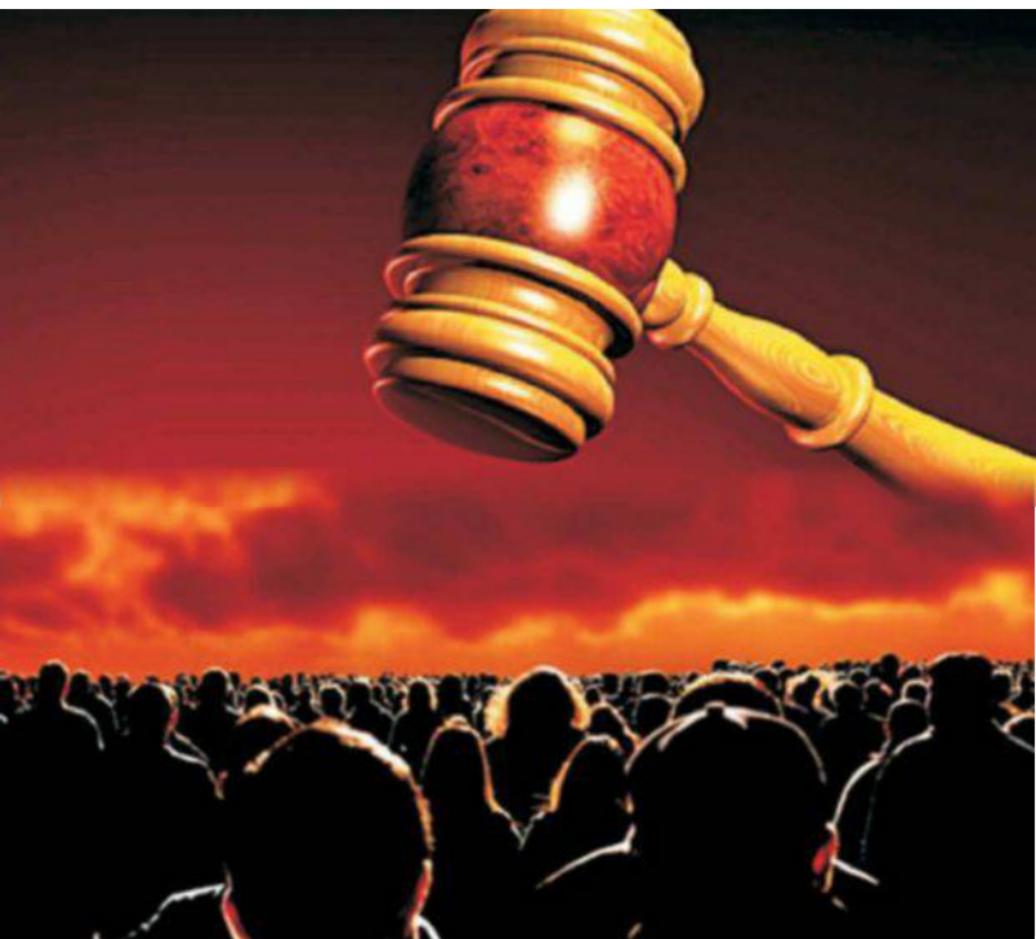


THE JUDGEMENT DAY



“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this (comes) the judgment” (Hebrews 9: 27 KJV).

Death is a hard reality. I have seen people die. My father, Pastor Solomon Fomum Tanee, died in my presence at 62. Miss Mary Namatovu, a postgraduate student in Biology at Makerere University, also died. My closest friends, Lambert Eteng Egot and Martin Njoya Emmanuel, both died in their early twenties. Presidents die. For example, where is the great Nkrumah of Africa? He, too, kicked the bucket. Two days ago, a young boy died at Tsinga in Yaounde. He was aged 14. He had gone out healthy and strong in the morning, but at night his parents received his corpse. He had drowned. He was just 14, but he was gone. People of all ages die. If you are ten, twenty, thirty, forty, etc, years old, you have an appointment with death. If you go to a graveyard and measure the lengths of the graves, you will find that people of all ages die. None are exempted. When will you die? The next obituary announcement may be yours.

Death neither respects age nor position. The rich and the poor receive the same invitation. The educated and the ignorant receive the same invitation. You, with a doctorate's degree, may soon be visited. It is the same case with a fool. You, a minister in the government, may soon receive that frightening knock and the same knock will be the lot of the poor beggar in the city. The prettiest girl and the ugliest woman receive the same knock.

This is a hard reality. Are you prepared to die? We are in

the closing days of this year. We are also in the closing days of some lives here. Do not trust in your health. It may fail you at any moment. The Bible says, *“For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away”* (James 4 : 14 KJV). My dear friend, what is your name? Peter, Paul, John, Mary, Grace, etc? I want to address you personally : Peter, Mary, what is your life? How long do you still have to live? Are you prepared to die? What are you priding yourself in? Are you showing off so much about your life that is a mere vapour? You may dress the vapour in the latest clothing, own gold chairs and this and that, but, my dear friend, that will not change anything. I, Zach Fomum, who am preaching to you today, am a dying man. My life is very brief. I may never be able to mount a pulpit or preach another sermon. I live with this impending sentence of death. But you, too, who are listening to me today, each one of you is a dying man or a dying woman. There is a sentence of death on you. Death is a great leveller. It brings all races and all classes to the same level. When a pastor, Doctor of Philosophy, minister in the government, director, messenger, houseboy, beggar, etc, die, each one is buried six feet deep. There is a six feet hole waiting for you. Friend, do you realise that? You will not take anything along. Men may put you into a wonderful casket. They may dress you up in an academic gown, but you are going empty-handed, naked. The Bible says, *“Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither”* (Job 1 : 21 KJV). Friend, your departure is eminent and you will soon discover that of all

that you invested your life acquiring, you cannot take anything along.

If everything ended at the grave, then we might derive some comfort from the fact that after the suffering, death comes as a relief. **BUT death is not the end.** The Bible states categorically that death is not the end. Some people here have told me that when they die that will be the end. My friends, you are mistaken. There is the other life. There is continuity.

After death , what next? The judgment. The Bible says, “*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ*” (2 Corinthians 5:10 KJV) . We cannot escape death. We shall not escape the judgment seat of Christ. Those who say that there is no God will suddenly find at death that they have to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Those who belittle Christ will find themselves before the judgment seat of Christ. There will be no atheists then. They will believe when they see Him, to their great damnation.

Your life record will be brought before Jesus the Judge. Your whole life is going on record. Your every thought is being recorded, your every word is being recorded, your every action is being recorded. You might have hated someone in your heart, that will be projected on the screen on that day. You might have committed adultery or fornication in your thoughts. That will show up on that day. What you did under closed doors will be exhibited for all to see. In Romans 2 : 16, the Bible says that God shall

judge the secrets of men's hearts by Christ. Yes, everything will be revealed. My dear friend, how would you react now, if you sat down and a film was put up of all that you have ever thought, said or done? Would you stand it? Would you stand a projecting on a screen of all that you are and have been for every eye to see? That is what will take place on the Judgment Day. What was done in darkness will be brought to light. People will cry and wish that the ground would open and swallow them for shame, but the ground will not. All the mighty hypocrites will be in for a great and tragic shock. How is it with you, friend? You may be deceiving many people, whereas you are an abortionist. Do you know that that will be revealed? You may be an elder but you are unfaithful to your wife in thought, word or deed. What is your peculiar sin: the one you have so carefully worked out a way of deceiving the people about? Do you know that it will come up? There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, and the secret thoughts of every man's heart will be manifest. How will God regard the sinner on the Judgment Day? The Bible says that He will punish the sinner. The Bible says, "*Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived : Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God*" (1 Corinthians 6 : 9 10). Have you ever been drunk, even if only once? Then you are condemned. Have you ever told even one lie? Then you are condemned. The unrighteous cannot inherit the

Kingdom of God, even if their unrighteousness is little. It is not a matter of a pass mark. God's pass mark is 100% and even 99% is a failure.

What will be the nature of the punishment? The Bible says it is hell fire. Listen, they are not my words; for the Lord says in Revelation 20 : 12, 13, 15 RSV : *“And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and all were judged according to what they had done.... If any one's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”* And Revelation 21 : 8 : *“But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”* God has promised to throw all sinners into a lake of fire, an unending fire, an unquenchable fire. That fire awaits you. Some tell me that this is a primitive concept. Well, Jesus categorically said that people will go to hell in at least eleven places in the Bible. I want to be as primitive as Jesus in my belief. The Bible says, *“God is not a man, that he should lie ...”* (Numbers 23 : 19). The unchanging God has promised to burn all sinners in an eternal lake of fire. He cannot lie about this. You tell me that you do not believe it. Well, wait until you are there. You will then

testify to an unchanging personal experience. You ask if it is fair. Well, why not? God is a righteous God. A God who does not punish sin will be far from holy. If God did not punish sinners permanently, He would contradict His nature and, as such, be one with Satan.

Hell fire is the salary for sin (Romans 3 : 23). If the government did not pay you at the end of the month, how would you receive it? God will not make a mistake. Each one will receive his due. Pay day is coming. The devil has put into some hearts to say that because there will be many people in hell, the burden will ease off.

Can you be so stupid? Can you be so mad to believe that? There are many prisoners in the central prison, but their number does not comfort them. Each one yearns for release. Every sinner in hell will be isolated; so that he may personally suffer the penalty for his sin. I tell you, there shall be gnashing of teeth, continuous decay, unfulfilled lust, etc. God's desire is that no one should perish. He has put a number of barriers on the way to hell. The Bible, the cross of Christ and the Lord Jesus have all been put by God on the way to hell.

Not all sinners will go to hell. Jesus said that unless a man is born again, he will not see the Kingdom of heaven. By implication, he is saying that all who are born again will go to heaven. There are two types of sinners there are condemned sinners and there are forgiven sinners. The forgiven sinner will go to heaven and, there with Christ, he will enjoy the fullness of God. Such a one will have the

exact opposite of what the person in hell has. God's goodness, God's presence, God's riches shall all be his. Such riches as cannot be put into human words await those who are born again.

How are people born again?

Firstly, there is repentance, a recognition of sin, a confession of sin to God and to man, a thorough forsaking of sin; restitution, and a total abandonment of all the ways of sin, whether they be small or great, whether they bring profit or not.

Secondly, there is an irrevocable commitment to Jesus who died for you. The repentant soul embraces Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour in a deliberate and conscious act, and determines at all times and at any cost to follow Him along the narrow way. He takes up his cross day by day against all the tides of popular and current opinion, to follow Christ. Such a one becomes God's fool.

Thirdly, that person commits himself to winning people for Jesus. I often hear people say that they will just live good lives and those good lives will witness for Christ. They will not bother to tell anyone. If you think that way, it signals to the fact that you are on your way to hell. There is no life that is good enough, even when transformed by Christ, to witness alone without words spoken. Jesus did not only live a good life. He preached and preached. The early disciples were not persecuted for their good lives. The charge against them was : *“You have filled Jerusalem*

with your doctrine and intend to bring this man's blood upon us" (Acts 5 : 28). Their principal crime was that they testified to their new birth, to whom Jesus was and what He was doing. If you are not actively telling people about Jesus and bringing them to the Saviour, you are lost.

The way to heaven is narrow. Only a few find it. Jesus says that people should strive to enter by that way. He says that only a few are saved. These few are going against the tide, being insulted, spoken ill of, cursed and persecuted. But on they must go; for that is what happened to Jesus. There is no armchair salvation. If you will not bear the cross, you will not wear a crown. If you do not confess Him openly, He will deny you openly. Where are the sinners who will repent today? Where are the condemned sinners who will be acquitted by Jesus? Where are those who will publicly take a stand for Him? Why will you not repent today?

Many years ago someone helped me to receive Christ. If you want to receive Him, follow the following four steps :

ADMIT that you are a sinner by nature and by practice, and that on your own you are without hope. Tell God that you have personally sinned against Him in your thoughts, words and actions. In a sincere prayer, confess all your sins to Him one after the other. Do not omit any sin that you can remember. It may be helpful if you write out your sins on sheets of paper and then burn them after God has forgiven you. In doing so, you must be truly sorry for them, since they pierce God's heart. Then, truly turn your back to and abandon your sinful ways. If you stole, steal

no more. If you have been committing adultery or fornication, stop it. God will not forgive you if you have no desire to stop sinning in all the areas of your life; but if you are sincere, He will give you the power to stop.

BELIEVE that Jesus Christ, who is God's Son, is the only Way, the only Truth and the only Life. Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me"* (John 14 : 6 RSV), and the Bible says, *"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men"* (1 Timothy 2 :5-6 NIV). If you believe this, you are also rejecting every other system or philosophy that suggests that a man can be reconciled to God outside of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. If you believe in Jesus Christ, you will want to receive Him, for, *"To all who received him, He gave power to become children of God"* (John 1 : 12 RSV).

CONSIDER the cost of following Him. Jesus said that all who will follow Him must deny themselves. This includes selfish financial, social and other interests. He also wants His followers to take up their crosses and follow Him. Are you prepared to abandon your own interests daily for those of Christ? Are you prepared to be led in new directions by Him? Are you prepared to suffer for Him and die for Him if need be? Jesus said, *"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword ... and a man's enemies will be the members of his own household. Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of*

me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10 : 34 38 NIV).

This is very costly, but God's gifts peace, joy, eternal life, etc, are far greater than whatever it may cost you. You do well to choose Him. Jesus will have nothing to do with half-hearted people. He demands a total commitment. He will only receive and forgive those who are prepared to follow Him **AT ANY COST**. Think about it and count the cost. If you are prepared to follow Him come what may, then there is something you must **DO**.

Invite Jesus to come into your heart and life. He says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any one hears my voice and opens the door (to his heart and life) I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me” (Revelation 3 : 20 RSV). Why not pray a prayer like this one, or another one as the Holy Spirit leads you?

“Lord Jesus, I am a wretched, lost sinner who has sinned in thought, word and deed. Forgive me all my sins and cleanse me. Receive me, Saviour, and transform me into a child of God. Come into my heart now and give me eternal life. I will follow You at all cost, trusting Your Holy Spirit to give me all the power that I need. Amen.”

If you have prayed the above prayer sincerely, then Jesus has forgiven you and made you God's child right away. He has blotted out all your sins and forgotten the fact that you ever sinned (Hebrews 10 : 16-17). You have eternal life (1

John 5 : 11-13). You are born again; you are an entirely new creature and the past is gone (2 Corinthians 5 : 17). You are saved (Romans 10 : 9).

Rejoice in your new position before God. Thank Him for His marvelous love, forgiveness, salvation, etc. Begin at once to tell other people about your new life in Jesus and write to me at once. I shall pray for you and, if possible, send someone to come and encourage you. Your letter will be treated personally and confidentially.

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