

ETERNAL JUDGEMENT

The Judgments: Scripture teaches that the judgments differ as to time, place, subjects, purpose, etc... God is a God of love, but also He is a holy. And if God is holy, then there are moral absolutes. And if there are moral absolutes, God will justly judge His creatures for violating those moral absolutes. There is a time of judgment for every person.

The Judge in the end times is the Lord Jesus Christ. All judgment is given to the Son of God, and all those that do not come to Him as the giver of life will have to face Him as their Judge (John 5:21-23, 27). Jesus declared His judgments will be just and fair and he will act in harmony with the will of the Father (John 5:30). He is not a respecter of persons- He is not impressed with wealth, status, or power (Isa. 11:3-5). He knows all and sees all (Rev. 1:14; 2:18). He is holy (Rev. 3:7).

THE PRESENT JUDGMENT

Judgment One

Subjects- Believers as to SIN

Time- 30 A.D.

Place- Calvary

Basis of Judgment- Christ's "finished work"

Result – Rom 10:4 "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

1. Death as to Christ
2. Justification as to the Believer

This Judgment is past. Rom 8: 1-2 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

John 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Condemnation defined:

When it is discovered that a crime has been committed, that the law has been broken, the process of investigation may lead to formal charges being levied against a defendant. The process of litigation leads to the outcome, a verdict of acquittal or guilt. The verdict indicates that the defendant is either free from or accountable to the law's penalty for that crime. Thus the result is either vindication or condemnation. Condemnation can refer either to the legal status of liability to punishment or to the actual infliction of that punishment. At times the word is also used in a broader context to refer to negative evaluations of a person by one's own conscience.

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In New Testament theology the rebellion of the first Adam with its disastrous consequences of death and condemnation for all humankind is more than offset by the obedience of the second Adam, the Lord Messiah Jesus (Rom 5:12-21 ; 1 Cor 15:22). Jesus' sinless life and sacrificial death provide the basis for God's giving life and justification to all who believe in him. God remains just in justifying sinners because of the perfect redemption accomplished by Jesus, the sinners' substitute (Acts 13:38-39; Rom 3:21-26). Those who have been made right with God by faith in Christ are not condemned (John 5:24; Rom 8:1-4; Col 2:14), but those who refuse to believe in Jesus are condemned already (John 3:16-18; Rom 1:18-32; Gal 1:8-9). Unless they repent they face the irrevocable finalization of this condemnation at the resurrection and judgment (Matt 25:46 ; John 5:28-29 ; Acts 17:30-31 ; 24:15 ; Rom 2:5-16 ; 2 Thess 1:5-10 ; 2:9-12 ; 1 Peter 4:4-5 1 Peter 4:17 ; 2 Peter 2:1-10 ; Jude 4-9 ; Rev 20:7-14 ; 21:6-8 ; 22:12-17). In the meantime, expectation of this judgment motivates believers to scrutinize their lives so that they will not be condemned with the world (1 Cor 11:31-32).

The “Believer’s” judgment for sin is past and was settled at the cross. However the Judgment of the Believer is threefold:

1. As a Sinner- already commented that this is “past”
2. As a Son
3. As a Servant

2. As a “Son”- When a person is “born-again” (John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38) that settles the “Sin” question for him. For if our iniquities are laid on Him (Jesus), then they are not laid on us Isaiah 53:5, 6. The “Sin” question and the “Sins” question are two different things. “Sin” is the tendency or disposition to sin we inherit from Adam; a natural depravity or tendency of the human heart. We do not loose this tendency by the “New Birth”, but we gain a counteracting force called the “New Nature.” We become a dual personality composed of “Old” and “New Natures.” Which predominates depends on which we feed and which we starve. This explains the “warfare” that Paul describes in Romans 7: 1-25. “Sins” are the outward acts of wrongdoing that we commit as a result of our tendency to sin. These sins must be confessed daily to remove them.

1 John 2:1a “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous...”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

For some sins, even though God may have forgiven you, you may still have to face the consequences (as opposed to judgment) e.g. David (2 Sam 12:14).

Our Judgment as “Sons” is for unconfessed sins. The punishment is chastisement. This should explain the chastisement of Christians, and should show them that they are “Sons” and not “Bastards”. Hebrews 12:5-11

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Paul says-

1 Corinthians 11:31-32 "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." Peter states, "Make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him" (II Peter 3:14, NIV). "For the time is come that 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 of God?" (1 Peter 4:17).

Our duty as saints is to self-judge ourselves daily. The blameless character of a Christian is the intention of God, who "chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight" (Eph 1:4). God's power and protection ensure that the believer maintains a blameless status until the final judgment (1 Cor 1:8; Jude 24).

God alone has the power and right to accuse the believer and pronounce condemnation, but through his grace and power he renders the believer blameless in his sight. The believer is called to live in such a way as to attain the quality of blamelessness. By growing in discernment and avoiding a critical spirit, believers can become "pure and blameless" in an age marked by wickedness (Php 1:10; 2:14-15).

The importance of a blameless character for the church is seen in the qualifications for church leaders who must be blameless and above reproach (1 Tim 3:10; Titus 1:6). The Scriptures further define the sphere of the Christian's blameless behavior as including godly service (James 1:27) and the marriage bed (Heb 13:4). The characteristic of blamelessness thus should define the believer's private and public life as a reflection of the transforming work of God's grace in salvation.

3. As a "Servant"- this leads to Judgment number two.

JUDGMENT AT THE RAPTURE

Judgment Two

1. Subjects- saints as to "works"
2. Time- After the rapture 1 Cor. 4:5
3. Place- Judgment seat of Christ (in the air) 1 Thess. 4:17
4. Basis of judgment- saints "works"
5. Result- reward or loss

This Judgment is future: "We must all appear before the *judgment seat of Christ* that every one may receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).

The pronoun "we" occurs 26 times in second Corinthians chapter five. In every instance it means the Believer. The epistle is addressed to the "church" and "saints" at Corinth. This judgment is for saints only. This judgment will be styled after judges awarding

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medals at an Olympic event. 1 Cor. 9:24-27 also, this judgment is not for sin, but for “works.” (1 Cor 3:11-15)

In the judgment of works, the essence and quality of our deeds will be taken into account (Psalm 62:12; Obadiah 15; Matt 16:27; 1Peter 1:17; Rev. 22:12). This covers every activity in our lives. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is naked before Him (Heb. 4:13).

Motivations will be judged (Jer. 17:10; 32:19; Ezek. 18:30-32; Rev. 2:23; 1Cor 4:3-5). Not only what we do but why we do it (or do not do it) interest God. Those who live and serve with a desire to please Christ will receive great reward. Those motivated by self-promotion, financial gain, or other improper goals will not receive rewards.

Faithfulness will be judged (1 Cor 4:2). We have been given spiritual gifts, natural abilities, material resources, training, and opportunities for service. Believers must remember that they are held accountable for what has been given to them, not what has been given to another. (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27)

God hold’s us accountable for our words (Matt. 12:36; Luke12:2-12). Our careless words are carefully recorded. Even down right lies, clever half-truths, boastful claims, the cutting criticisms, off-color jokes and the unkind remarks.

The Lord knows our thoughts (Psalms 94:11; Rom. 2:16; 1Cor 3:20). Things are seldom what they seem because most of what goes on is written in the invisible ink of our thoughts, which definitely records all of the ducking and weaving, and all of the wriggling and rationalizing. It is our thoughts that produce “invisible exports”- like jealousy, envy, greed, self-sinking, pride, hatred, impurity and covetousness. These are not crimes; we can hide this way of thinking from most people most of the time. The day is coming when our deepest darkest thoughts will be blazoned across the heavens.

Our character will be revealed (Matt18:23; 21:34; 25:19; Luke 12:13-21; 12:48; 19:15; Rom 14:12; 1Peter 4:4-5). American psychologist William James once said, “Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.” The very core of our personalities will be brought out into the open, so that we will be revealed for what we truly are rather than what we would like people to think we are. We will be turned inside out.

The good we fail to do will be taken into account (James 4:17). Have we always done everything we knew to be right? Have we always fulfilled our responsibility as members of our families? Have we always given as much help as we should to those in need?

JUDGMENTS AT THE SECOND COMING

Judgment Three

1. Subject- The Jews
2. Time- Second Coming
3. Place-Jerusalem and vicinity
4. Basis of judgment-Rejection of the Godhead
5. Result-Jewish national conversion and reception of Christ as the Messiah.

This Judgment is future: While the saints will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ in the air; the Jews will be judged under the Antichrist on earth. The Jews basis of judgment is the rejection of the Godhead. They rejected God as their king (1 Sam 8:7). They rejected Jesus as the Christ (Luke 23:18; Acts 3:14). They rejected the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:51, 54-60). Due to their sin, the Jews have been scattered amongst the nations until the "Times of the Gentiles" be fulfilled. At the end of this "Time of the Gentiles" the Jews will be gathered back to the Holy Land "unconverted" and caused to "pass under the rod." (Ezek. 20:34-38). Cast into God's "melting pot" (Ezek. 22:19-22), and pass through the "Time of Jacob's Trouble." (Jer. 30:4-7; Dan. 12:1). Christ calls it "The Great Tribulation," and along with Zechariah associates it with the "Return of the Lord" (Matt. 24:21-31; Zech. 14:1-11). The human agent the Lord will use will be the Antichrist, the terribleness of whose rule will be augmented by the pouring out of the "Vials of God's wrath" upon the earth. (Rev. 15:1, 5-8; 16:1-21).

The misery of God's wrath and terrible judgments will induce the Jews to call upon the Lord. (Zech. 12:10). Christ will return to the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14:4) and the Jewish nation will look upon Him that was pierced, and shall be born "converted" in a day (Isa. 66:8; Romans 10:13). The righteous of Israel will be allowed to enter into the Messianic kingdom- the rebels in Israel (unsaved) will be cut off. (Ezek. 20:34-38; Matt 25:1- 30).

Judgment Four

1. Subject- Gentile nations
2. Time- Second Coming ("the Revelation of Christ")
3. Place- Valley of Jehoshaphat
4. Basis of Judgment- Their treatment of the Jewish people during "The Tribulation."
5. Result- Some nations saved others destroyed.

This Judgment is future: The Gentiles that made it through the Tribulation alive will be judged. (Joel 3:1-2; Matt. 25:31-46). These Gentile nations will be gathered to a place near Jerusalem (Valley of Jehoshaphat) so their spiritual condition can be determined. The Jews are not involved in this judgment for they are not reckoned among the nations. (Numbers 23:9) Those who are righteous (the "sheep" in Matthew 25) will be

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welcomed into the Messiah's kingdom. The wicked who are the "goats" Christ will say "depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire..." (Matt. 25:41).

During the "Tribulation Period" the nations that treat the Jewish people kindly, feeding and clothing them, visiting them in prison, will be the sheep nations, while those who do not will be the goat nations. The sheep nations will inherit the millennial kingdom, in which they will remain in their mortal bodies and be part of repopulating the new earth. (Rev. 21:24). The goat nations will be destroyed as nations, no one entering into the millennium, with the wicked among them perishing and eternally lost.

The judgment of the "Old Testament" and "Tribulation Saints" (Daniel 12:2-3; Matt. 16:27; Rev. 20:4-6) will be at the Second Coming. These believers who died either in the Tribulation or millenniums earlier in Old Testament times will be rewarded when raised from the dead. Daniel 12:2-3 is set in the context of the Tribulation, speaking of the resurrection and rewarding of the saints of God; with this happening quickly after the Tribulation. Daniel 12:2-3 testifies of both the resurrection of the righteous and unrighteous without signifying that any time exists between the two. Daniel 12:13 indicates that Daniel (an Old Testament saint) will be raised and rewarded at the time under discussion; in particular, the time immediately after the Tribulation. When Daniel 12 is combined with Revelation 20:4-6 we are able to see that the righteous are raised and rewarded before the millennial kingdom, whereas the unrighteous are raised after the thousand year reign of Christ.

Concluding that individuals raised from the dead and rewarded at the Second Coming include both Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints. Those resurrected at this time per Revelations 20:4-6 are part of the "first resurrection". This concept brings confusion to some because we realize that the church will be Raptured some seven years earlier. The words "first resurrection" refers to a category of resurrected people rather than a chronological order.

The term "first" is used more to characterize the occasion as to kind, namely a resurrection of the righteous, than as to number in sequence. This idea makes the resurrection of the wicked, which does not occur until after the millennium, the second resurrection, corresponding in name to the "second death", as noted in Revelations 20:6, 14. The term "second" here again carries a connotation, basically in respect to kind, rather than sequence. Leon Wood, *"The Bible and Future Events"*, 153

Thus the "first resurrection" involves those that are resurrected to life eternal. (John 5:29) There are several points in time when believers are raised to eternal life; in this all would be considered belonging to the "first resurrection".

JUDGMENTS AFTER THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Judgment Five

1. Subjects – Mainly the “Wicked Dead”
2. Time- After the Millennial Kingdom.
3. Place – Before “The Great White Throne”
4. Basis of judgment – their works
5. Result- cast into the lake of fire.

After the Messianic kingdom is over three more final judgments take place. These judgments make preparation for the eternal kingdom of God. First Satan and the fallen angels. (Rev 20:10) Scripture shows that Satan and his angelic followers will be judged for their sin and rebellion. (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 1:6-7) and believers will be involved in their judgment (1 Cor. 6:3) Satan’s fate was sealed for all time at the Cross and judgment against him has several stages.

- Halfway through the Tribulation he will be cast out of heaven and confined to earth.
- At the beginning of the millennial kingdom he will be thrown into the Abyss.
- Then released for a short period of time after the Millennium, causes brief rebellion, then cast into the Lake of Fire, for final eternal judgment.

The second judgment after the Millennium will bring destruction or renovation of the present heavens and earth by fire. (2 Peter 3:10) This passing away of the present universe is anticipated in several passages of scripture (e.g., Matt 24:35; Rev 20:11). At this time the remaining elements of the curse placed on creation and the presence of sin in the universe will be dealt with. God will create a new heaven and a new earth. (Rev. 21:1)

The third judgment of the unsaved takes place at the close of the Millennium, 1000 years after the judgment of the nations and before the “Great White Throne.” (Rev 20:11-15). The “Great White Throne” will not be on earth, for the “Great White Throne” judgment will take place during the renovation of the earth by fire. For the renovation of this earth is reserved until the time of the “day of judgment” and “perdition of ungodly men” (2 Pet. 3:7).

All unsaved people from every age will be resurrected at this time and will stand before the Lord Jesus to be judged (cf. John 5:22, 26-29). These individuals are referred to as “the dead”, in contrast to believers, who are called “the dead in Christ”. The Church will be in the position as judges for “the saints shall judge the world.” (1 Cor. 6:2) When these unsaved people appear before the Lord, two books will be opened:

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The Book of Life which will be opened at the Great White Throne judgment will not contain the name of anyone who will be in that judgment. The books of works which will also be opened will prove that all who are being judge deserve eternal condemnation (and may be used to determine degrees of punishment).

Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 515

These books are there as positive evidence to all concerned that the judgment being executed is fair and right (cf. Matt.12:36-37, 1 Thess 5:21a). These unsaved are thrown into the Lake of Fire, which is said to be the second death.