

Judgment Day

Although this subject was touched on in the main body of this study, **it's worthy of a fuller presentation.** One of the foundations of our faith is the reality of eternal judgment (Hebrews 6:2). When this foundation is properly laid in our hearts it automatically empowers us toward righteous living and a healthy appreciation of the destination of all mankind which leads to compassionate evangelism when we remember that we all have an appointment with the Judge. In the following three passages from Matthew we see that the end of the age is also the time of the Judgment.

Matthew 13:40-43 NKJV

Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Matthew 13:47-50 NKJV

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 25:31-46 NKJV

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’

41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you

did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' 45 Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.' 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

In the parable of the wheat and the tares, we learn that both the wheat and the tares come off the field at the time of harvest. Jesus explains to us that it is in this manner that He sends out His angels to separate the wicked from the righteous at the end of the age. In each of the illustrations Jesus gave we find a common theme: The wheat and tares are taken from their world to the place where they are separated from one another; In the parable of the dragnet the fish are taken out of their world to where they are sorted on the shore; Likewise with the parable of the sheep and the goats. When He comes in His glory, we are brought before the throne of His glory where the judgment is decreed. The tares are separated from the wheat, the bad fish from the good fish and the goats from the sheep. All are resurrected from the dead: the wicked to the resurrection of condemnation leading to eternal punishment; the righteous to the resurrection of commendation (well done good and faithful servant) leading to abundant eternal life.

John 5:26-29 NKJV

For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Most Christians understand that the righteous are not subject to the condemnation, but they generally overlook the fact that there is still a judgment for His servants. There are many Scriptures on this subject so let's look at the main passages that speak on this:

Matthew 25:14-30 NKJV

"For *the kingdom of heaven* is like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And likewise he who *had received* two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23 His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what is yours*.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 Therefore take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents. 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Luke 12:42-46 NKJV

And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers.

Luke 19:11-27 NKJV

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. 12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this *man* to reign over us.' 15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 And he said to him, 'Well *done* good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' 18 And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' 19 Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21 For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect

what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ 22 And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. 23 Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’

24 “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him who has ten minas.’ 25 (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) 26 ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 27 But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay *them* before me.’”

Matthew 24:45-51 NKJV

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ 49 and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In these Scriptures we find the Lord rewarding His servants according to what they have done for His Kingdom. When the Lord said for us to store up treasure in heaven, He really means that there are rewards that we will treasure. Amen.

In Matthew 24:15 we note **that each was given “talents”** according to their ability. This is totally just and fair. You will not be judged by the performance of someone else, only for what you have done with what was given you. However we note that there are two types of servants who find themselves receiving their portion with the wicked: those who do absolutely nothing with that which was given to them and others who turn on their fellow servants to beat them and who make their fellowship with the drunkards.

The following Scripture is rather sobering . . .

Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

These people were people of faith: casting out demons, performing miracles and prophesying. But they continued in sin. Obviously committing sins that lead to death. As we saw above, the real bad ones that beat up on their fellow servants are destroyed with the unbelievers. Here we see that those who **continued in sin were obviously believing a Gospel that had no repentance and thus were “workers of iniquity” or “workers of lawlessness”** depending on your translation. It’s amazing how many times I’ve

heard this verse quoted and almost always they leave out the last phrase. The condemnation is not upon **miracle working, it's upon** sinfulness and lawlessness.

The following verse is also sobering:

Luke 12:47-48 NKJV

And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Here we see both the severity and fairness in the justice of God. A lot of people don't like these Scriptures for they speak of judgment being administered to His servants. Clearly they are punished (disciplined by a loving Father) for their unrepented sins that John spoke of as sins that do not lead to death (1 John 5:17). Paul also speaks a bit on this subject in the following verses:

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 NKJV

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, *you are* God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Let us be sober minded, for we must all give account for the things we have done. Thankfully, those things that we have confessed and turned away from will not be brought to mind. Let us be attentive to walk in the grace of God which teaches us to deny ungodliness.

Titus 2:11-13

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

By the way, I do not believe one can lose their salvation. That said, I do believe it's possible to deliberately walk away from righteousness, which amounts to a rejection of the new creation and consequently a rejection of the Gospel. Thus it is that one does not lose their salvation, but they can by their actions and the intents of their heart come to a place of deliberate rejection of that which they had received. This does not come about by stumbling and weakness, but a complete wilfulness that one persists in over time. It is such a person who has so completely rejected righteousness that when they re-enter the state of unbelief, it is impossible to renew their faith and find repentance.

Matthew 12:36-37 NKJV

But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Romans 14:10-12 NKJV

But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: “As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.” 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 NKJV

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Philippians 2:12-13 NKJV

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Take heart my friends, God is at work in you both to will and to do. We are not in this battle against the flesh and powers of darkness alone. They may always be at work to ensnare us in sin, but we have the indwelling Holy Spirit at work in us to deliver us from evil. Hallelujah!

1 John 1:9 NKJV

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:1-2 NKJV

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

If you stumble, or even if you have been stubborn and wilful for a time, God is always calling us turn to Him and avail ourselves of His boundless grace with which we can work out our salvation with holy reverence for our God is a consuming fire. And remember that the purpose of the commandment of God is love from a pure heart, sincere faith and a clear conscience. When we come to our senses, we will not want to reject these things and will cease from giving ourselves to evil.

One of the promises of God concerning the Judgment is that the righteous have a part to play.

1 Corinthians 6:3 NKJV

Do you not know that we shall judge angels?

Matthew 12:41-42 NKJV

The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is

here. 42 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here.

Matthew 19:28 NKJV

So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

These three quotes all have examples of the righteous having some kind of participation in the judging of the wicked. Matthew 19:28 has caused some confusion in some circles as the word translated “regeneration” has left the door of interpretation wide open to some speculation. The English word “**regeneration**” comes from the Greek word *palingenesia*. **It’s a compound word: *palin*; Strongs #3825 meaning again; and *genesia* Strong’s #1077 a derivative of genesis #Strong’s 1078 meaning: beginning; or birth. By itself, *genesia* is also translated “birthday”; twice referring to Herod’s birthday celebration (Matthew 14:6 Mark 6:21).**

In the context wherein this verse is found, Jesus was explaining the Kingdom of God (Matthew 19:23-20:16). He speaks of the new creation and the judgment with words that literally mean ‘again’ and ‘beginning’; *palingenesia*: a re-genesis; a rebirth of creation; a new beginning where righteousness dwells. Hallelujah! Good times a coming for those who have been made righteous.

However, for those who remain in their wickedness, there is no good news. There is the resurrection of the just and there is the resurrection of the unjust (Acts 24:15). There is the promise of eternal life and there is the promise of an eternal fire.

It has been noted that there are many who do not believe that our God who is LOVE would punish people forever. It is appropriate that I address this matter both from Scripture and from reason. Firstly from Scripture:

Matthew 5:29-30 NKJV

If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

In the above passage we note two things. Firstly Jesus is drawing our attention as to how seriously we are to regard the reality of hell. And in so doing He lets us know that it is the person’s “whole body” that is cast into hell. You see, after the resurrection, no one will die. It’s a matter of where you will live. Death is finished. **Your body is restored to you and it’s a matter of where you are going to spend eternity.**

I believe Jesus even mixed a little humour in here. If anyone actually cuts off their hand or plucks out their eye they will discover that the issue is actually in their heart. What follows are a few verses describing the reality and nature of hell.

Matthew 3:12 NKJV

His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Matthew 8:12 NKJV

But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 13:42 and 50 NKJV

and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 22:13 NKJV

Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Matthew 25:46 NKJV

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Mark 9:42-48 NKJV

“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.
43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—
44 where

‘Their worm does not die
And the fire is not quenched.’

45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 46 where

‘Their worm does not die,
And the fire is not quenched.’

47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire— 48 where

‘Their worm does not die
And the fire is not quenched.’

Luke 3:17 NKJV

His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Unquenchable fire: a fire that cannot be put out. It cannot be quenched and it will never be quenched. Having heard what Jesus said about it, here we have some verses from the Apostles:

2 Thessalonians 1:9 NKJV

These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Jude 7 NKJV

. . . Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Jude 12-13 NKJV

These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

It appears that the burning fire of hell burns in darkness. Some people look at these Scriptures and still reason in their hearts that a loving God will not torment people in an everlasting unquenchable fire.

An understanding of God's Love is needful at this juncture. God is indeed LOVE. And oh, that we might know the love of God in its entirety:

Ephesians 3:17-19

that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

One of the things about the Love of God is that He actually hates evil. God hates evil with such a passion **we can hardly imagine. He hasn't got one single nice** thought about any kind of evil: He hates lies, He hates murders, He hates child abuse, He hates rape, He hates betrayal, He hates manipulative power and control, He hates greediness and selfishness, He hates thievery, He hates pride and arrogance and He hates that which has hatred of what is good. His hatred of evil knows no bounds. A zillion years from now and He will still hate evil. He hates it more than you or I. And yet, in His great mercy He is willing to forgive anyone who will turn from the evil of their heart, giving each one sufficient revelation and time to repent.

You will not find God thinking, "Oh, sin isn't that bad. I'll think I'll let them off now. Turn the heat down, or switch the pain off. **Remove them from their just punishment.**" At some point in time in eternity, He may send someone to the edge of the eternal fire of torment where the ungodly are suffering and ask for a report. "Are they still evil?" the Lord asks. "Yes Lord, they are still evil." Then the Lord would say, "Then let the fire burn. I still love righteousness and I still hate evil."

There are not going to be any nice people in hell. We look at the outward appearances of people, but God looks on the heart. God knows that the heart of mankind is deceitfully wicked beyond all imagination (Jeremiah 17:9). Evil people can do a lot of good and kind things, but inwardly the 'nice' people are really hypocrites putting on a good front for their own sense of self-righteousness. All the people who will end up in hell are people who would not repent from evil and turn to righteousness. I wasn't saved because I was a good person. I was a wretched sinner that deserved to roast in an

everlasting fire. But because I believed in His mercy and grace and responded with repentance and faith, I will inherit eternal life. **God's love is shown** to us in that He has granted sinners repentance and for this we are eternally grateful. It is His kindness that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). He delights in mercy and takes no pleasure in the soul that perishes.

Everyone in hell will have rejected Christ Jesus somehow and their heart will have rejected the mercy and grace of God. This means they have rejected goodness, kindness, faithfulness, honesty, mercy, justice, compassion etc. etc. People who reject these things are absolutely evil. They love darkness rather than light (John 3:19).

We must reject the idea that Jesus is looking for good people to save. There is no such thing. Jesus said of His own disciples that they were evil (Matthew 7:11). Let us get this clear. Jesus is looking to save sinners (Matthew 9:13).

Judgment Day. If the awareness is properly sown into our hearts it will produce both a gratefulness and a soberness in our walk with God, and as mentioned above, it will produce compassionate evangelism as our hearts will be moved by His Love. Amen. By way of reminder, **here's what Paul had to say on the matter:**

Acts 24:15-16

I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. 16 This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.