

Course DC219: Judgment Day

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. 2 Corinthians 5:10

Intro: One of the most sober things any person can do is to ponder the reality that he will have to give an account of his life before God on Judgment Day—answering for "the things done in the body . . . whether good or bad." No one likes the idea of just an IRS audit, even if one is an honest man. The thought of having one's tax records spread out before a government official demands that we approach such an audit soberly. Yet, though an IRS audit is only a mere possibility, standing before the Judgment seat of Christ is an absolute and much greater certainty. To give sober thought to the subject is to thank God for providing Jesus to be our Savior. It also provides motivation to pursue holiness in the fear of God. Not only is certainty of Judgment Day fully established in Scripture, it also accords with sound reason, agreeing with man's internal sense of justice.

I.) The Reasonableness of Judgement Day

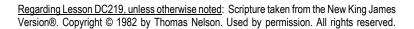
A final Judgment Day is reasonable in light of the injustice which prevails in the world:

- Acts 24:25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come,
 Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."
- Eccl. 8:14 There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity.
- Eccl. 3:16-17 Moreover I saw under the sun: In the place of judgment, wickedness was there;
 and in the place of righteousness, iniquity was there. I said in my heart, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

The righteous understand the need for justice, wicked men often deceive themselves that God will take no note of their deeds:

- Prov. 28:5 Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand all.
- Ps. 10:5-11 ⁵ His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; as for all his enemies, he sneers at them. ⁶ He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity." ⁷ His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue is trouble and iniquity. ⁸ He sits in the lurking places of the villages; in the secret places he murders the innocent; his eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless. ⁹ He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; he lies in wait to catch the poor; he catches the poor when he draws him into his net. ¹⁰ So he crouches, he lies low, that the helpless may fall by his strength. ¹¹ He has said in his heart, "God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see."

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Zeph. 1:12 "And it shall come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men who are settled in complacency, who say in their heart, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will He do evil.'" Ps. 94:1-11 1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs— O God, to Notes: whom vengeance belongs, shine forth! ² Rise up, O Judge of the earth; render punishment to the proud. 3 Lord, how long will the wicked, how long will the wicked triumph? 4 They utter speech, and speak insolent things; all the workers of iniquity boast in themselves. ⁵ They break in pieces Your people, O Lord, and afflict Your heritage. ⁶ They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. 7 Yet they say, "The Lord does not see, nor does the God of Jacob understand." 8 Understand, you senseless among the people; and you fools, when will you be wise? ⁹ He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who formed the eye, shall He not see? 10 He who instructs the nations, shall He not correct, He who teaches man knowledge? 11 The Lord knows the thoughts of man, that they are futile. Ezek. 8:12 ¹² Then He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, 'The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land.'" To reason rightly in one's heart is to know the reasonableness of a Day of final Judgment: Eccl. 3:16-17 ¹⁶ Moreover I saw under the sun: In the place of judgment, wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness, iniquity was there. ¹⁷ I said in my heart, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work." • Eccl. 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil. • 2 Pet. 2:9 ...the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations Notes: and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, Gen. 18:25Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? II.) God has Promised a Day of Judgment **Christ is the Judge:** 2 Cor. 5:10 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. Rom. 14:9-12 ⁹ For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ 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.

- John 5:22-23 ²² For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.
- Acts 10:42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.
- Acts 17:31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the
 world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has
 given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.
- 1 Cor. 4:2-5 ² Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. ³ But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

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III.) The When of Judgment Day

On the Last Day: Clearly Scripture tells us that the Day of the Lord's second coming, the Day of the resurrection of all the dead, and the Day of Judgment, all take place on the same day, revealed in Scripture as the *last day*. Just as certain as there was a first day for mankind (being the 6th day of creation) so there will be a last day.

- 2 Tim. 4:1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:
- John 12:48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him— the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

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- John 6:45 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.
- John 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.
- Jude 1:14-15 ¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, <u>the Lord comes</u> with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."
- 1 Cor. 15:26 The <u>last enemy</u> that will be <u>destroyed</u> is death.
- 1 Cor. 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, <u>until the Lord comes</u>, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

• 2 Peter 3:4-10 ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶ by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷ But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

The Great Extent of who will be there has already been addressed by the fact that "we must ALL appear before the judgment seat of Christ." However, the following two passages give a very great visual of the extent of the ALL. That all the dead are raised at the same time (#1) and that those who are judged before the throne of God includes both saved (whose names were written in the lambs Book of Life) and those who were not (#2), gives the staggering truth of just how great this last day is—this Day of Judgment. For it includes Adam and the race from him—i.e., EVERYONE.

- John 5:28-29 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.
- Rev. 20:11-15 ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it,

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and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

God's righteousness demands that sin be dealt with. It will either be dealt with at the cross (Rom. 3:23-26), or when He returns for judgment (2 Thess. 1:6-10):

- Rom. 3:23-26 ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- 2 Thess. 1:6-10 ⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

IV.) The Extent of Judgment

Great is the extent of the Judgment on that Day, all things coming to light:

- Matt 10:26Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.
- Luke 12:2-3 ² For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. ³ Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.
- 1 Cor. 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.
- Heb. 4:11-13 ¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and

marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

- Eccl 12:13-14 ¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. ¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.
- Rom. 2:16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.
- Heb. 6:10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.
- Matt. 12:36-37 ³⁶ 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.

Absolute judgment requires that every detail comes out. Only then can all the extenuating circumstances for everyone, both in justifying and condemning one in the day that the secrets of men's hearts are revealed, manifest the justness and goodness of our God. Yet, if all things are uncovered and revealed on that Day, then this includes even those things which we are ashamed of in our past life of sin—thus, even sins which have been forgiven must come to light. This thought proves to be a great distress to believers when they first hear it. One may ask, "Why should they be made manifest on that Day if they have been forgiven? How can they come to light when He will remember them no more?" These two questions need to be both answered and reconciled. Let us deal with the second question first.

Truly we are given many wonderful and precious promises about sin being forgiven so that we never need worry about it again. We rejoice that Micah 7:19 declares that He will "cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." We rejoice that Isaiah 43:25 declares "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins." And how comforting and precious is Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." These are wonderful truths indeed from which we rightly rejoice and draw comfort from them. Together they unite to declare that our past sins will never be remembered against us for our harm, nor will God hold them over our heads and look at us suspiciously, nor will retribution for them ever be inflicted upon us—the God of heaven has pardoned us from our sins through the atonement and propitiation made by Jesus Christ. But we read too much into these promises if we interpret them in a manner which makes them make void the declaration that all things will be made manifest in that Day.

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One may ask, "For what purpose are they revealed in that Day if they can do us no harm? Why is it necessary that they be revealed?" There is, however, a very necessary and sound reason for all things to be manifested in that Day, for no one lives in a vacuum. Our sins which we have committed against others may be greatly related to the sins they themselves committed. If only our sins were hidden from the record, even though they greatly contributed to the actions of another, much of the necessary extenuating circumstance in order to justly weigh the level of guilt and responsibility for the sin of another would be left out of the judgment. This would not be a just/fair manner of judgment in either a human court nor before the throne of God. It is most reasonable that everything should come out in the final judgment. Furthermore, the goodness of God towards us in His forgiving us from our sins would be greatly hidden if such things remained covered. Let our hearts rest in this: There will be nothing revealed in our past life in sin that will be used against us. For every forgiven sin that comes to light in that Day there will be, as it were, a blessed asterisk next to it with a footnote declaring: THIS CHILD IS CLEAR FROM THIS SIN—IT HAS BEEN FORGIVEN—COVERED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST—CAST AWAY FROM REMEBRANCE, NEVER TO BE HELD AGAINST THIS HOLY CHILD! In such moments I can well imagine a chorus of angels singing glory to God in the highest, O how He loves them! Every Christian on that day will be so moved that they will not be able to keep a crown upon their heads but will gladly cast them before the throne while bowing in humble adoration and saying, "It is all of Your grace that we are here, all glory goes to You O God!" Amen.

It may be answered, It is apparently and absolutely necessary, for the full display of the glory of God; for the clear and perfect manifestation of his wisdom, justice, power, and mercy, towards the heirs of salvation; that all the circumstances of their life should be placed in open view, together with all their tempers, and all the desires, thoughts, and intents of their hearts: Otherwise, how would it appear out of what a depth of sin and misery the grace of God had delivered them? And, indeed, if the whole lives of all the children of men were not manifestly discovered, the whole amazing contexture of divine providence could not be manifested; nor should we yet be able, in a thousand instances, "to justify the ways of God to man." Unless our Lord's words were fulfilled in their utmost sense, without any restriction or limitation, — "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, or hid that shall not be known;" Matt. X, 26; abundance of God's dispensations under the sun would still appear without their reasons. And then only when God hath brought to light all the hidden things of darkness, whosoever were the actors therein, will it be seen that wise and good were all his ways; that he saw through the thick cloud, and governed all things by the wise counsel of his own will; that nothing was left to chance or the caprice of men, but God disposed all strongly and sweetly, and wrought all into one connected chain of justice, mercy, and truth. —John Wesley, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, Vol. 1* (3rd American edition), (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1895), 130.

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Had all men a deep sense of this, how effectually would it secure the interests of society! For what more forcible motive can be conceived to the practice of genuine morality, to a steady pursuit of solid virtue, and a uniform walking in justice, mercy, and truth? What could strengthen our hands in all that is good, and deter us from all evil, like a strong conviction of this, "The Judge standeth at the door;" and we are shortly to stand before him?

- John Wesley, Ibid., 126.