



Will Sinners be Happy on Judgment Day?

2 Peter 3:7: (NASB) *But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

Judgment Day! The very words strike fear into the hearts of many believers across the borders of many religions. After all, this world obviously does not dole out any form of true justice to its vast population and God - whatever God you may believe in - surely sees this and will soon balance those scales that are presently so skewed in their measure. Justice! For many believers there is a conviction that God's justice will soon come to earth in the form of anger, wrath and fire and bring the result of a destruction never seen upon this planet! Judgment and Justice - are these images of mayhem and obliteration really what the Bible describes? Is this world in for a dark and miserable night of pain from the wrath of God from which there is no tomorrow or is there an entirely different meaning and result of Judgment Day? What does the Bible REALLY say?

Let us look at all uses of the phrase *Day of Judgment* in the Bible: Matthew 11:22
Mark 6:11: Jesus sent out his disciples with strict instructions of preaching. Wherever they were not given a positive response, they were to *shake the dust under your feet*, in other words, "enough of you," leave the dust of that city behind. They are not responsible for the consequences of their rejecting the message. It would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah (very sinful cities!) than the city that rejected the preaching. What does *more tolerable* mean? Sodom and Gomorrah were already destroyed once because of sin.

Judgment Day includes groups of people from very sinful times and places with varied responses, each having some part in the Day.

Our theme text: 2 Peter 3:7: Judgment Day here is connected to the destruction of *heaven and earth* as well as the ungodly. This is all about destruction - a negative end result. Sounds ominous! This is different than the Tyre/Sodom and Gomorrah Scripture that indicates one has a better chance than the other. Does this contradict with this image of fire/destruction?

Matthew 12:36: Here Jesus said Judgment Day includes personal accountability, especially for words spoken.

2 Peter 2:9: Now we have a dividing of people into two types: The godly who are delivered and the unjust who are punished.

1 John 4:17: Should those being judged have *boldness*? Is there some sort of "Get out of Judgment Free (because you paid the price) Card" for some people? For most of us, being accountable for all of our actions would be embarrassing and humbling experiences. How could we be bold? All of these pieces - once put together and understood under the following biblical principle - will open the door to what Judgment Day will accomplish. Why does Judgment Day exist?

The most important principle teaching to answer that question: Galatians 6:7-8: *God is not mocked* - The "seeds" you put out in your life is the resulting "crop" you will get back. God's judgment sees and understands that. This is bigger than taking a few Revelation Scriptures out of context. The whole idea of the Day of Judgment is bringing forward the actions and thoughts of every individual so that something good can be done with them.

The context of our theme text will help us see a broad picture of Judgment Day in God's plan: 2 Peter 3:3-4: *In the last days* encompasses a longer timeframe than the periods of time known as Armageddon, the Time of Trouble or the Day of Judgment; it starts earlier.

Jesus returns *before* Judgment Day: Matthew 24:36-39: (NASB) ³⁶*But of that day (the day Jesus would return) and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. (Please see our programs, "Is Jesus Really Returning?" Part 1 from January 19, 2014 and Part 2 from February 2, 2014) Even though we would not be able to "see" visibly when Jesus returns, he assured us we can see the conditions of the world at the time of his return: Like the days of Noah* - Jesus used Noah to picture himself. Noah delivered humanity from destruction to a new life. He was active in facilitating human salvation by building the ark. This is a picture of Jesus' return - he returns long before the great difficulties, building the method of salvation.





Jesus' return is described in [1 Thessalonians 5:2](#) as *a thief in the night*. Noah was there long before the rain and the flood. We believe Jesus returns before the Day of Judgment. We see evidence that the return of Jesus has actually happened and he is already preparing. *Before* Judgment Day we have great trouble (phrased as *the last days*), conditions like those in Noah's day (mocking, sin and extraordinary evil) and we have Jesus already present. This is what is leading up to Judgment Day. [2 Peter 3:5](#): Water, water, water! A comparison is coming up and here Peter helps us get ready to see it... God has had some significant periods of judgment throughout history, at least **four** of which have had world-changing significance.

First, there was judgment upon Adam and original sin. This established a need for Judgment Day. [Romans 5:12](#) **Second**, there was the flood - it destroyed the "world" at that time - the system by which humanity was governed (not the physical earth): [1 Peter 3:18-20](#): At the time of the Flood, the earth was under the rule of Satan and the fallen angels, well outside of the will of God. Water was the tool of destruction in [2 Peter 3:5](#), but soon water would play a role in salvation. The Flood was used to remove the fallen angels' materialized presence on earth, and their destiny is the same Judgment Day we have been discussing. **The role of the fallen angels**: [Jude 1:6](#): God has put them in restraints until the Day of Judgment. Their ability to do what they want has been limited. **Third**, the casting off of Israel as the sole seed of promise, providing an opportunity for Gentiles to be called into the favor of following Jesus as part of his "body." [Romans 2:9](#) **Fourth**, there is the ongoing judgment of the "true church" to choose those who will inherit immortality: [1 Peter 2:9-11](#): There is a specific judgment going on *now*. The *godly*, those who follow Jesus, are not destined for the Day of Judgment, for they will have already been proven. Their judgment is in this lifetime.

[1 Peter 2:12](#): This verse has a lot to say about the role of the faithful in the Day of Judgment. We will come back to this again, but it gives us a sense there is a different destiny for them. The *godly*, those who follow Jesus, are not destined for the Day of Judgment, as they will have already had their "day of judgment" beforehand, in this life. When we read Scriptures about being judged now, it is about this class of people and not the rest of the world.

The faithful judged ahead of time: [Matthew 25:31-32](#): (NASB) ³¹ *But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels (the spiritual heavenly church already judged and proven faithful in this life) with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him; and he will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;* These are not the messengers of God (like we think of angels); these are messengers of Jesus who have proven faithful in this life who execute judgment in the future.

The method of the proving of the true Christian is different than that used on Judgment Day: [1 John 2:1-2](#): An advocate is someone working with you who is on your side. This is a unique relationship between Jesus and his true followers now. The relationship he has to the world in the Day of Judgment is entirely different. More on this later. By the time the world's Day of Judgment comes, the members of the true church have already been judged and found faithful. Jesus was their advocate in front of the Father. In other words, Jesus takes care of it. He fulfills what is needed to atone for the sin for both the faithful now and the rest of the world. Not everyone has the Advocate, but he was the propitiation *for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world*.

Theme text: [2 Peter 3:7](#): There are two steps in this verse: First, the destiny of the present *heavens* (symbol of the spiritual controlling powers - Satan, fallen angels and the religious systems under their direction) *and earth* (symbol of the entire social fabric) is destruction. We know these are symbols because God is not judging literal dirt, trees, air and stars. God judges *systems*. The destiny of that which was under Satan's influence is destruction, just like during the Flood. This is a judgment of the systems. Second, there is a Judgment Day for humanity that comes after the controlling powers and social fabric have been judged. Obviously step one ends badly, but what about step two? What does *destruction of ungodly men* mean? **Paul's witness efforts help us begin to understand this**: [Acts 17:29-31](#)

Observations: It is a fixed day - a time period predetermined to happen. The judgment of that day will be upon the world, based in righteousness. The judgment of that day will come from Jesus. The true church will (as we have already seen) play a role.



2 Peter 3:3-7: This does not describe a destruction of the physical earth; but rather, the systems of the earth that need to be torn down in order to establish the righteous government of God.

What is the purpose of the Day of Judgment? Many Christians understand it to be a “stamping” of approval or disapproval. **Here is what starts the judgment:** John 5:28-29: *They that have done good* - These have already been judged and have proven themselves to be unbreakable in their loyalty to Jesus. Their intentions were always towards the will of God. By the grace of God and covering of Jesus, those intentions, even if everything was not done perfectly, are counted as perfect because their heart was in the right place.

They that have done evil - **Judgment:** Strongs #2920 krisis (kree'-sis); decision (subjectively or objectively, for or against); by extension, a tribunal; by implication, justice (especially, divine law): 1) a separating, sundering, separation 1a) a trial, contest 2) selection 3) judgment

The idea of making a decision implies a process, not a final proclamation. This is a time period of a decision-making process about reconciling man back to God. The judgment is for the purpose of reconciling man back to God. Man will have to account for their sins and there will be consequences. But man will then have the opportunity to learn righteousness (most for the very first time), make amends and move forward in the kingdom. 2 Peter 3:7-8: This is obviously not something that happens in an instant - it is a 1,000-year judgment period where people are held accountable.

Practical example: Your employer calls you in for your review. If you had unaccomplished goals and objectives from the previous year, you are held accountable. What is supposed to happen next? You go back to work with a new focus. The Day of Judgment is a time of accountability for the purpose of correction and reconciliation to righteousness. It is not a mere “pass/fail” proclamation or verdict for a death sentence. This fact gets confused by many and the Day becomes ominous instead of the pathway to a glorious future. 2 Peter 3:9: Everyone will have an opportunity to turn their heart right and be in harmony with God and His ways.

This next text reveals the process and objective of The Day of Judgment: Isaiah 26:9: *the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*. This could not happen if the Day of Judgment “stamped” you as “disapproved.” Remember the *advocate* method of proving the true followers of Jesus? Now let us look at Jesus and the ungodly - *they that have done evil*. Romans 3:23 1 Timothy 2:1,3-6: *Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times* - In the Day of Judgment, we believe the vast majority of mankind will be thankful they have been resurrected and are alive again, realizing Jesus died for them - even if they had no relationship with him. They will be joyous they were given an opportunity.

2 Peter 3:10-11: A new spiritual governing system and social fabric will replace what is needed to be destroyed for life to continue in a godly fashion. These verses remind us of what the Apostle Peter already said so we can be focused on doing our part - that is, to live every day faithfully so we can be a healing part of this great Judgment Day.

Jesus will run Judgment Day through his faithful ones: 1 Peter 2:12: The Apostle explained that one of the results after judgment will be the people glorifying God. If Judgment Day were about throwing people into an abyss, why would they praise God in everlasting torment or instant death after resurrection? Many people throughout all ages have made complicated messes of their lives. It will not be easy to change from who you were to who you need to be.

Judgment Day will be a day of restraint: 2 Peter 2:9: The word for *punished* here means “pruning.” Pruning a tree cuts back all the branches not needed for fruit. Is that a good thing or bad thing? It is good because it helps the fruit to grow and develop, even though the tree does not look good immediately after. This is a description of the Day of Judgment. Mankind will go through a pruning or refining process the faithful Christians already went through.

Jesus talking to his disciples the night before he died: John 15:5: This picture of pruning resurrected mankind means having their sinful tendencies pruned back and restrained so they can grow into righteousness. It will be painful but worth the result.

Judgment Day applies equally to all who have ever lived. It does not matter when or where you were born, or into what religion you were born: Matthew 11:20-22: Jesus



personally visited Chorazin and Bethsaida. Jesus tells us if Tyre and Sidon would have received such a visit, they would have changed their ways.

All will have an opportunity for life in the kingdom, but some will have an easier time because their hearts were not so disconnected from righteousness. These sinners may not be initially happy in the Day of Judgment, but they will have the opportunity to work their way back to God's will.

Matthew 11:23-24: Sodom was a city specifically destroyed because of its inherent evil, yet they appear in the Day of Judgment with an easier path to righteousness than Capernaum.

Then what does this mean? *You will descend to Hades* - Hades is the grave. Capernaum as a city would be destroyed. But the people would have an opportunity for life.

Judgment Day will be based fully upon one's own actions, with the past considered, but not the primary qualifier: **Jeremiah 31:27-30:** *But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.* - No one will be able to say it is unfair since they inherited sin through no fault of their own. After being resurrected and rehabilitated, they will from then on be completely accountable for their own actions, without any influence of inherited sin or temptation. **2 Peter 3:12-13:** The symbolic heaven and earth are destroyed, replaced by God's perfect way of running things.

Judgment Day is inescapable: God sees all - no one gets away with anything:

Hebrews 4:12-13: God is love and has a plan. Mankind will have life, blessing, goodness, righteousness -in the best way that glorifies God first and foremost. You will be happy in the Day of Judgment if you are seeking the justification of Jesus - his assisting you to be righteous through his ransom sacrifice. If you are seeking to justify yourself and the things you have done in this evil world - you do not want to be part of this new program - eventually you will be removed from this new, righteous society and will go out of existence. We would think very few will choose this path. **True Christians will take part in the responsibility of judging - even angels:** **1 Corinthians 6:3:** This will be the time when the goodness of God's original plan for man can be seen and understood. There are billions of people who have never heard of the righteousness of God. That is all going to change. **Judgment Day will ultimately bring life to the billions and billions of humanity:** **Romans 6:23:** Every human being inherited Adam's sin. God's perfect justice required the sacrifice of Jesus' life so that every human being could be given a resurrection. They have to earn life from that point and though it will not be easy, they will have the opportunity. **Isaiah 42:1-4:** Great compassion is described. Jesus' ultimate work with the human race is to *bring forth justice and truth*. This is one of many prophecies that give us the sense of something good happening. There is an anticipation for this time. It is good news! Judgment Day will ultimately bring death to the few who refuse love, righteousness and mercy. There is a dark side for some if they absolutely refuse the gift of resurrection and mercy and want to continue in their evil ways.

Here is the method to deal with such incorrigible people: **Acts 3:19-23:** *Restoration of all things* -What was lost that needs restoring? The harmony of humankind with God. This period of restoration is of great value. In the context of resurrection and restoration, there will be some who will be utterly destroyed. (Not tormented or tortured.)

Hebrews 9:24-28: There is a necessary destruction of the symbolic *heavens* (the spiritual controlling powers - Satan, fallen angels and the religious systems under their direction) *and earth* (the entire social fabric)in Armageddon. There will be trouble first, then resurrection that leads to salvation for all. Part of that salvation is the Day of Judgment - when resurrection begins - when humans start returning from the grave, there is a new, righteous government in place.

The Day of Judgment involves the plan of God coming to fruition where every man, woman and child will be able to learn righteousness by following after the will of God. Will sinners be happy on Judgment Day? If they are relying on the justification of Jesus, absolutely! We look forward to that!

*So, will sinners be happy on judgment day?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*