

He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God *is* judge himself.

— Psalm 50:4-6 —

Why Judgment Day

1 Samuel 2:6-10 **The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.** The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. **He raiseth up the poor** out of the dust, **and lifteth up the beggar** from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: **the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth**; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

The First Resurrection

Have you ever wondered, “Why judgment day?” If all souls go either to heaven or hell at the moment of death, why judgment day? Is God going to take them from heaven and hell for judgment day, only to put them back after their judgment? Of course not! At the return of Christ, as Revelation 20:1-3 tells us, Satan will be imprisoned for a thousand years. In Revelation 20:4-6, the apostle John reveals the order of resurrection.

Revelation 20:4-6 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and **judgment was given unto them**: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.** Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

The End of the Thousand Years

We see that we will become judges, rulers, and priests, ruling with Christ for a thousand years. The resurrection of Christians comes a full thousand years before the rest of the dead come back to life. If only Christians can be saved, again we should ask, why judgment day? In Revelation 20:7-10, we read what will come to pass at the end of that thousand years.

And **when the thousand years are expired**, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And **shall go out to deceive the nations** which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: **the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.** And they went up **on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about**, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Here we see the world after the return of Christ. The earth has been repopulated with mortal people who have formed nations during this thousand years. We also see that the camp of the saints and the beloved city are on the earth. This is the time when we have received the promise of Revelation 2:26-27.

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, **to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron;** as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

At the end of this thousand years, Satan will be released from his prison and will be allowed to deceive the nations once more; after which he will be cast into the lake of fire himself. In Revelation 20:11-15, we see the climax of all human endeavor from creation to Satan's final deception.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and **the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**

Everyone who ever lived, "the rest of the dead," from the creation to the end of the thousand years will be resurrected and "judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." If anyone's name is not found written in the book of life, he is cast into the lake of fire. We know that "the books" contain the works of men, but what else can we learn about these books and the book of life? Let us examine a few passages pertaining to this subject.

Malachi 3:16-18 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and **a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.** And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. **Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.**

Daniel had a dream and saw visions of beasts which represented various empires throughout history. In the time of the final empire, he said,

Daniel 7:9-10 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: **the judgment was set, and the books were opened.**

Speaking of the final persecution of the saints prior to the return of Christ and the events following, Daniel wrote,

Daniel 7:21-27 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, Until the Ancient of days came, and **judgment was given to the saints of the most High;** and the time came that **the saints possessed the kingdom.** Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most

High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But **the judgment shall sit**, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end. And **the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High**, whose kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

The Book of Life

In Daniel 11:32-39, the glorified Christ relates more about this three and a half year persecution. In Daniel 12:1-3, He informs us of our salvation.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, **everyone that shall be found written in the book**. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

We must be found written in the book of life at the end of the judgment in order to be saved. In Psalm 69, David prophesied of the distress of Christ prior to His crucifixion.

Psalm 69:21-28 They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Let their table become a snare before them: and *that which should have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate; *and* let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute *him* whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. **Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.**

Even those who crucified Christ are written in the book of the living. "Let them be blotted out" implies that names which are written in the book of life may be removed. Psalm 139:15-16 implies that our names were written in the book of life before we were even born.

My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and **in thy book all my members were written**, which in continuance were fashioned, **when as yet there was none of them.**

Revelation 3:5 **He that overcometh**, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and **I will not blot out his name out of the book of life**, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, **God shall take away his part out of the book of life**, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things, which are written in this book.

Speaking of the final empire, the fourth beast which we read about in Daniel, Revelation 13:6-10 says, And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, **whose names are not written in the book of life** of the Lamb slain **from the**

foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

This passage suggests that people who submit to the beast government were never written in the book of life, but were fitted for this purpose. Those who refuse to worship the beast will be killed or imprisoned; out of sight, out of mind. Therefore, it will seem to them “all that dwell upon the earth” that everyone on earth worships the beast.

Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and **they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world**, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The Bible does not tell us whether anyone else was never written in the book of life, only those who accept the mark of the beast. This government will be so powerful and in control of all aspects of life that it will seem impossible to resist. “Here is the patience and faith of the saints.”

The book of life is a list of names written before creation. It will be altered in the judgment. Only those whose names remain in the book at the conclusion of the judgment will enter the kingdom of God.

Christians are to be the judges. If Christians are resurrected and receive eternal life one thousand years before the judgment, will the book of life be opened only to find no other names in it? Again we ask, why judgment day? Who are we going to judge?

Those Being Judged

Let us consider the entire human race since the beginning of time. Is salvation only for those who have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ in this life and accepted it? What about the people who never heard about Jesus? There must be billions of them since the creation. Or what about the people who heard something about Jesus, but the message they heard did not ring true; so, they chose not to believe? In order to believe the truth, we must first have **heard the truth!** Satan wants us to perceive of God as being unfair.

Consider all the people who have suffered a life of poverty, starvation, and enslavement never having experienced anything but misery and deprivation in this life. Yet, they go on striving to survive. Do you think they were all fortunate enough to have had a missionary come and tell them about Jesus? If some of them were so fortunate, were they told the truth? Let us be realistic. The majority of people who have ever lived on this planet have never heard the truth. Are they all going to burn? Jesus said in John 3:18-21,

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But **he that doeth truth** cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

This passage does not condemn everyone who does not believe, only those who have heard the truth and refused to believe. How can we believe or disbelieve something we have never heard. Paul tells us in Romans 10:14-15,

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach,

except they be sent?...

Not intending to take this scripture out of context, look at verse 18.

But I say, Have they not heard? **Yes verily, their sound went into the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.**

Paul was not saying that everyone has heard the truth about Jesus. He was quoting Psalm 19:4.

Examine Psalm 19:1-6.

The heavens declare the Glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard. **Their line is gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.** In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which *is* a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

This Psalm is referring to the heavens, the creation itself, as being evidence of the Creator. There is no place on earth where we cannot see the evidence of God. Therefore, there is no excuse for not believing in God. What we believe about God, however, is a different story. Just believing that God exists is not enough. Let us consider these following verses:

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: **no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**

Acts 4:12 **Neither is there salvation in any other:** for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

John 6:44 **No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:** and I will raise him up at the last day.

The Only Way

The only way to come to the true God is to become a Christian, but we must first be called by God in order to become Christians. Only those whom God has called even have a chance to become Christians in this life. If Christians are to be judges, priests, and kings, then who are the people of the nations that we are to rule over? Revelation 21:23-27 tells of nations and kings in the kingdom of God.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof And **the nations of them which are saved** shall walk in the light of it: and **the kings of the earth** do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And **there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

We must be found written in the book of life after the judgment to enter the kingdom of God. If Christians are to become "the kings of the earth," then there must be other names in the book of life besides those who were chosen to become Christians. Who are these people? How can they remain in the book of life without having accepted Christ?

God's Righteous Judgment

Perhaps you have known someone who, although a sinner "for all have sinned," was basically a good person. This person was generous, kind, and caring, but for some reason never accepted Christ. He or she was certainly no worse, and possibly better, than the average "Christian." Do you suppose this

person deserves to be cast into the lake of fire? The parable of Lazarus and the rich man has a message for Christians.

Luke 16:19-25 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, **remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.**

This parable is not a literal description of heaven and hell, but is given to make two points. Notice that the story never says that either the rich man or Lazarus was a Christian. It only states that the rich man in his lifetime **received his good things** and Lazarus evil things. The contrast is that the rich man had his heaven while Lazarus had nothing but misery; therefore, Lazarus will be comforted. Referring to Himself, Jesus makes another point in this parable.

Luke 16:31 ...,If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, **though one rose from the dead.**

Lazarus is a picture of all the suffering people of the world. Their names will be found written in the book of life. They, too, will be comforted. Jesus said in Matthew 5:3-5,

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for **theirs is the kingdom of heaven**. Blessed *are* they that mourn: for **they shall be comforted**. Blessed *are* the meek: for **they shall inherit the earth**.

Jesus put no stipulation on these promises. To those who are already comfortable in this life, He said,

Luke 6:24-26 But woe unto you that are rich! **for ye have received your consolation**. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Even so, this is not necessarily the end of the matter for those who are rich. Speaking of the rich and how hard it is for them to enter the kingdom of God, Jesus said,

Mark 10:27 ..., With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

So we see, God's judgment is a righteous judgment. It is more fair than any human court on this earth. Psalm 9:7-8 tells us,

But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

Judges for God

Does God actually judge? As we read in Daniel, chapter 7, **judgment will be given to "the saints of the most High."** In John 5:22-23 we find,

For **the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:** That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

God has delegated this task of judgment to Jesus; who in turn has assigned us to the job. God is still the

judge. He is judging, through us, by His Holy Spirit.

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: **as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.**

I Corinthians 6:3 Know ye not that **we shall judge** angels?

What kind of judge will we be? Will we examine their “works” in the books only to disregard their good works? Will we condemn them to the lake of fire? Will we disregard what kind of person they were, because they did not accept Christ in this life? Again, why judgment day?

Why do you suppose God is giving the responsibility of judgment to us? Could it be because we can empathize with our fellow human beings? And what is the criterion for judgment? We know that we will judge them “out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works;” but what are the works by which we will judge them? The parable of the sheep and the goats is a picture of the judgment. Matthew 25:31-46 shows us the criterion by which they will be judged.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.** Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: **For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.** Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

The standard that we will judge them by is whether or not they had compassion for their fellow human beings. It is apparent that none of these people became Christians in this life because they will not understand how they did or did not do these things to Jesus.

More Tolerable

Perhaps you are familiar with the story of Lot, in the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the fate of the people there. Jesus instructed His twelve disciples on how to preach the kingdom of God from city to city. He said,

Matthew 10:11-15 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, **It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment** than for that city.

If there is only one outcome of the judgment, how can it be “more tolerable” for one group over another? It is because they are judged as individuals, “according to their works,” as to whether they were compassionate or selfish in this life to even one of the least of His brethren. It is also because people who had heard the truth and rejected it will be judged more harshly than those who had never heard the truth at all.

John 12:47-48 And **if any man hear my words, and believe not** I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: **the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.**

How can anyone enter the kingdom of God not having accepted Christ in this life? In the judgment it will be impossible to deny that Jesus Christ is Lord. In Romans, Paul upbraids believers for judging others self-righteously in this life.

Romans 14:10-11 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Philippians 2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And **that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus' death paid the penalty of sin for everyone who ever lived. This is why people who never had the choice of accepting or rejecting Him can be saved; their sins were paid for.

1 John 2:1-2 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: And he is the propitiation [reconciliation] for our sins: **and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.**

Romans 2:11-16 For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of **the law written in their hearts**, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) **In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ** according to my gospel.

With God, ignorance of the law is an excuse. We, however, do not have this exception. We have heard the truth; we have no excuse. Whether we accept it or reject it is the standard by which we will be judged.

The Purpose of Judgment

Why judgment day? The purpose of the judgment is to show us what a gracious and merciful Father we have. Even to the truly wicked and selfish, He is merciful. Rather than being tormented forever, they will receive a quick and merciful death by fire (the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone - which is the second death ¹).

Psalms 67:1-7 God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for **thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.** Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let

all the people praise thee. *Then* shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

1 Chronicles 16:23-36 Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. For great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also *is* to be feared above all gods. For **all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD made the heavens**. Glory and honour *are* in his presence; strength and gladness *are* in his place. Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. **Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations. The LORD reigneth** . Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein. Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, **because he cometh to judge the earth. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. And say ye, Save us, God of our salvation**, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, *and* glory in thy praise. Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

1. What is Hell – <https://onlyjesussaves.net/hell.html>

Only Jesus Saves