

Judgement and Eternity

Introduction

What happens after we die?

Is there something, or is there nothing?

If there is something, is it good or is it bad?

Wikipedia says: Judgement in an afterlife, in which one's deeds and characteristics in life determine either punishment or reward, is a central theme of many religions. Almost all religions are greatly devoted to the afterlife, emphasizing that **what we do in our current lives determines what happens to us after death.**

The Bible says the following eight things about what happens when 'believers' die?

1. We go to be with Jesus. Paul says ...

- *"We would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8);*
- *"To live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phi. 1:21);*
- *"To depart and be with Christ is very much better" (Phil. 1:23).*

2. There is a resurrection of the body...

Paul says, *"we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51-52).*

Friends, when Christ returns, He will change our bodies of lowliness into glorious bodies, like His (Phil. 3:21).

Christ does not mean for us to be disembodied souls forever.

There will be a resurrection of the dead.

Following our resurrection...

3. We will be judged

Paul says in **Romans**, *"... the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone's secret life" (2:16).*

Five things to note at Judgment:

I. Our judgment will be after we die

The **Book of Hebrews** says, *"It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (9:27).*

II. Christ will be our Judge

The **Books of Acts** says, *"Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all—the living and the dead" (10:42).*

III. We will be judged according to our deeds in this life

Friends, the way we live now is important...

Second Corinthians says, *"... We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body" (5:10).*

IV. All people will be divided – Two groups

Positive... Those who have accepted Him now

Negative... Those who have not.

In the Book of Mark, Jesus says, *"If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (8:38).*

V. The division is forever!

Second Thessalonians says, *"The Lord will come with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power (1:7-9).*

4. The Aim of Judgment

The aim of Judgment is two-fold: It will reveal **who enters Heaven**, and **the measure of reward** of those who enter Heaven.

Ephesians (2:8-9) says, *"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."*

However,

Verse 10 says, *“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago”* (2:10).

Simplified, this passage says...

- Good Works... does not produce salvation (It’s God’s gift to you),
- Salvation... produces Good Works.

5. Reward is ‘proportionate’ to Deeds

Friends, believers will receive differing rewards in accordance with the degree that their faith has expressed itself on earth in acts of service and love, and righteousness.

For example...

- **First Corinthians** says, *“He who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labour”* (3:8)
And
- **Ephesians** says, *“Whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord”* (6:8)

Consider the Parable of the Ten Servants

In the **Book of Luke** (19:12-27), **Jesus compares** His going to heaven and returning to a nobleman who before going away, gave to ten of his servants the same amount of money with the command to invest so that his estate would be advanced in his absence.

When he returned... the investment of the first servant yielded ten times in gain. And the nobleman said that the servant’s reward will be to have authority over ten cities.

Another servant had turned his investment into five. And the nobleman said that his reward would be to have authority over five cities.

Another did nothing with what had been given to him. To this one the nobleman said, *“Your own words condemn”* you (v. 22). And the nobleman took the money from him.

This parable teaches that there are **varying degrees of reward** for the faithfulness of our earthly lives.

But it also teaches that there is a **loss... not only of reward but of eternity** for those who claim to be faithful but do nothing to show that they highly value God’s gifts, and the Giver.

The third servant who did nothing with his gift did not just lose his reward; he lost his life.

Jesus says in the **Book of Matthew**, *“Cast out that slave into outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”* (25:30).

6. Those who will **not** make it into Heaven.

Romans says, *“For a day of anger is coming, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. He will judge everyone **according to what they have done**” ... “God will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness. **There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil...**”* (2:5-9).

Revelations says, *“All were judged according to their deeds” ... “Anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was **thrown** into the lake of fire”* (20:15).

7. Those who **will** be welcomed into Heaven.

Writing to believers, the apostle John said...

“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God’s Son does not have life. I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life” (1 Jn. 5:11-13).

Friends, Heaven is the home address for those who ‘have’ Jesus, through ‘believing’ in Him. **NOTE: “Believing” is a ‘present-continuous tense’ verb.**

Yes, believers can stop believing in Jesus before the Day of Judgment!

8. Eternity... Tasting Heaven.

In **chapters 21 and 22** of the **Book of Revelation**, John recorded,

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, **coming down from God out of heaven** like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

*I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, **God’s home is now among his people!** He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there*

will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!” And then he said to me, “Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.” And he also said, “It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.

“But cowards, unbelievers, the corrupt, murderers, the immoral, those who practice witchcraft, idol worshipers, and all liars—their fate is in the fiery lake of burning sulphur. This is the second death” (21:1-8).

“Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the centre of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever” (22:1-5).

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2. There is a resurrection of the body
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4. The Aim of Judgment
5. Reward is ‘proportionate’ to Deeds
6. Those who will not make it into Heaven.
7. Those who will be welcomed into Heaven.
8. Eternity... Tasting Heaven.

Do you ‘have’ Jesus?

If you do... Heaven is your home address