

The Judgment of the Great Day

Facing the Eternal Consequences of Faith or Rejection

Turn in your Bible to Jude, Jude, the last epistle before the book of the Revelation, which is the last book of the Bible. And when you arrive at Jude, I invite you to stand to read with me Jude verses 4, 5, and 6. For there are certain men crept in unawares—I hope you're not one. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. He does that. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Won't you please be seated.

Jude, the inspired writer and very likely the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ, announced in this passage the certain destruction of the wicked in his day. And he illustrated his pronouncement with an example from the past and a prophecy of the future. Focus your attention, if you will, please, on our text for this evening, Jude verse 6, wherein mention is made of the fallen angels. These criminals, as yet, have had no formal trial, but they are reserved in chains until all things are ready for the solemn event. They are bound over for—I don't think I will ask this evening how many of you have ever been bound over for any length of time. Let me read the text to you again, verse 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

The great day that Jude refers to is the day of the Lord. Not a 24-hour day, but an extended period here on earth during which time Jehovah and His concerns are in the ascendancy. First mentioned in the small Old Testament book of Joel, the day of the Lord begins with a time of profound spiritual darkness following the rapture, that is variously known as the tribulation, the 70th week of Daniel, referring to its seven years' duration, and the time of Jacob's trouble. But this is only the beginning of the great day, a day, even a prophetic day, that lasts more than a thousand years. That always, in Scripture, begins with darkness, does not remain darkness. Light always dawns. And after the darkness of the tribulation period will come the dawning of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in clouds of great glory and the establishment of His millennial kingdom, also known as the theocratic kingdom. Then, at the very end, as time gives way to eternity, is the judgment of the great day that is known in the Revelation as the great white throne judgment, mentioned in Revelation 20:11-15.

Rather than cut this topic up into pieces for dissection, let us consider the entire day of the Lord as a unified whole. As we focus within that unified whole on the judgment of the great day, the great day, then, will take place when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.

Unto this day, the fallen angels which kept not their first estate, those who believed not when the Lord delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, those ungodly men crept in unawares in Jude's day, and you, if you're not converted, are all reserved. You understand that you may not feel reserved, but you are reserved. And this is the judgment of the great day that you are reserved for.

Here are eight particulars in which the day of judgment will appear to be a great day. First, the judge will be great. The Son of Man will appear in His own glory and in the glory of His Father. According to Luke chapter 9 and verse 26, referring to His own glorious return, the Lord Jesus said He would come in His own glory and in His Father's. His glory will cover the heavens, according to Psalm 8 and verse 1. It is the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, according to Titus chapter 2:13, and He will be seated on a great white throne, emblematic of His majesty, dominion, and power. Revelation 20:11 reads, "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." So, yes, the judge will be great.

Second, the crowd will be great. Christ will call all the inhabitants of heaven that attend Him down to this world. He will call all those living on the earth and all the dead out of their graves and summon all nations will be gathered before Him. Revelation 20:12 and 13: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." Every intelligent being that we have ever heard of, every rank and station you can imagine, will be there. They're not going to be someplace else waiting for an important call. They will be summoned, and they will be there. In short, all the inhabitants of the three realms—heaven and earth and hell—will be there. It must be a great day to command the attention of so many realms. Amen. Heaven and hell will be emptied of all their inhabitants to attend with those here alive on earth at that time. You will be in attendance on the great day. I will be in attendance on that great day. Everyone will be in attendance on that day. Skip church all you want, so you'll be ill-prepared for that great day. But you will not be staying away from that gathering. And for every loved one and family member whose spiritual situation is not identical with yours, it will be the last time you ever see them. The last time—either they will go to the lake of fire and you will not, or you will be cast into the lake of fire and they will not. The difference: what in this life was done with Jesus Christ.

Third, the transaction will be great. Revelation 20:12 and 13 again: "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 they were judged every man according to their works." What will be considered is not just what you say, but what you do and what you think. So, yes, it will be a day of great transaction. We consider it a great matter, a matter of great importance in our own time, when a life-and-death court case is tried. Right, you remember the OJ trial—that was a clown show, wasn't it? But on the great day, it will be the souls of every unsaved person who has ever lived that will be tried. Tried on that decisive day for your works, your conduct, and your determined refusal to believe.

Fourth, the duration shall be great, my friends. It will be a long day. Time, as we reckon it and understand it now, will have almost come to an end. Revelation 10:5 and 6 reads, "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his

hand to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.” And the present state of things that we’re familiar with will be ended. The sun and moon and stars shall disappear. They will all be darkened and not shining. When that happens, there will come to an end all of the laughter and all of the smiles of the wicked, all of the giggling, all the double-entendre humor, and God will no more cause His sun to rise on the earth or the moon and the stars to shine in the night. It’s just going to stop. The seasons of the year will even cease. Alternate times of work and rest will be of no further use as well. The bodies of both saints and sinners will be altered, but for radically different environments. You see, when sinners return from the judgment of the great day, they will not return to their houses. They will not return to their families. They will not return to their friends. They will not return to their former life. The description of that great city Babylon will be literally true of the whole world. Revelation 18:22 and 23 tells us about Babylon in the future: “And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee.”

Silence. Of course, we cannot determine precisely how long the day of judgment will be, but the events of that day will almost certainly continue for many years, as we now measure time. That’s why I think the capacities of both saints and sinners may then be greatly expanded. People will probably—that’s my guess—but they will probably be able to recollect and communicate ideas with far greater precision than at present. And that’s good, at least for we who know Christ, since it will be necessary. Addy, go ahead and put your Bible down. Okay, that’ll be fine. There are more than 8 billion people on this earth at present. If it took only one second’s time to judge one soul, calculating only from those who are presently alive on earth, and not counting the multitudes who have lived throughout history, then judgment would take two and a half centuries, as we presently reckon time. That’s one second per person. It would take about 250 years to go through the entire current living human race. Owing to the fact that the Lord will not be hasty in His judgment, but very deliberate, you can see that the day of judgment will no doubt be a very long day.

Fifth, the joy will be great. Great joy for whom? Not for everyone, I can assure you. First, the joy will be great for the holy angels. The holy angels have always been delighted with the glory of God in the plan of salvation, and they have always desired to look into these things. Our Lord Jesus said they rejoice at the repentance of every sinner. They are more interested in people coming to Christ than many professing Christians are. But then, their joy will be all the greater in beholding the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation, even in judgment. For, you see, there will not be a single Christian in the audience who will not then exhibit the character of Christ, in great contrast to those who will be judged. And because of God’s grace being evident in every Christian who will then be present, angels will, because of that, admire the Savior. That’s one object of the day of judgment. Christ will come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe—all them that believe in that day.

The joy will also be great for those of us who are genuinely saved. Believers will all know beforehand the issue of the trial we will then witness. Many believers, by then, will have been with Christ in heaven for 2,000 years. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all who have died in the Lord, will have already also long been with Christ. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They have long been before the throne of God, serving Him day and night in His temple, and their happiness will not in any way be interrupted by the solemn events of the judgment of the great day. Their bodies will all, by then, be glorified bodies, and there will be nothing to disturb their joy.

We can think of only one thing that could conceivably trouble believers. It is thought by some that a public declaration by the wicked of all the sins of believers—you know, people pointing their fingers at the things that I've done wrong, people pointing their fingers of accusation at the things that you've done wrong. You, and they will be members of your family. They will be the finger-pointers. They will attempt, of course, to shift blame for their troubles and to then point fingers of accusation. Their goal will be, then, to fill believers with shame and to interrupt our complete bliss. But our sins are already recorded in the Bible, and Christians and even sinners—we can read about my sins every day. We can read about your sins every day. We can read about any Christian's sins every day. Be assured, then, that no attempt by the wicked to point the finger of accusation will have any effect on those of us who are believers in Christ. Our foul crimes are seen by anyone who reads the Bible. So, this will not interrupt our joy. Gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, my sins are gone. The sins of Abraham and Moses and David and Peter are held up every Sunday to the view of thousands of congregations around the world. So, nothing like that will interrupt our songs in heaven.

Christians read of our sins. And how do we react? How do we react when a Christian reads of our sins? We react by admiring the riches of God's grace in other people's salvation, as well as on their own. Somebody points out the things that this person did—yes, but look at what the Lord did. Somebody points out the pastor that—yes, but look at what the Lord did. And the same thing will be true of us. Yeah, yeah, that Spicer guy—yeah, but look at what the Lord did. If reading an account of the conversion of these people in the Bible excites so much interest in the hearts of Christians now, how much more thrilling will it be to hear them relate the wonderful story of the Lord Jesus Christ forgiving their sins themselves, coming out of their own mouths? Should they be called upon to rebut the accusations and the attempts to shift blame by the wicked before the great white throne, even when those accusations are thrust at us from unsaved family members who are still trying to shift the blame for their own damnation. Nor will it be hard for any Christian to admit our own guilt and make public confession of all of our sins. It's precisely what we did when we came to Christ, according to First John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Though a challenging thing to do if you have a proud heart, it's an easy thing to do for someone who's humble. Moses and David and Paul had meekness and humility enough to record their own sins that are open to the world and read in public all the time. And this is an evidence of their sincerity and their humility that we can only admire. God's grace is sufficient. Amen.

What we now so much admire in them will then exist in all Christians in a far greater degree on the day of judgment. This is already proved by facts that are before us every

day. When a man falls into sin, he is unwilling to acknowledge it, in exact proportion to his lack of humility. The more proud he is, the less he's willing to own up to what he did, even if it's public knowledge, even when his sin is already known to the world, it's hard for him to admit. But there is such a thing as being so spiritual and being so brokenhearted that you are unwilling not to confess your sins. In proportion as the Christian loves God, in the same proportion will he loathe himself. Christ, by His sufferings, has condemned sin in the flesh. And all whose hearts are united to Him and pleased with the plan of salvation will vigorously condemn ourselves. All who are here, who now love Christ, love also to acknowledge our guilt and confess our sins to Him. How could it be otherwise, however humiliating? It makes no difference. The more humbling, the more desirable, and the more humble, the more joy the Christian experiences. Yeah, but you're really bad—yes, but Christ is really great, and I have great joy. Christians rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and His glory is advanced by a confession of those sins which have been pardoned through God's grace. Believers on the day of judgment will all be anxious to give glory to God. A sense of the justice and mercy and glory of God will dispel all the fear of man. We're not going to care what anybody else thinks. The Christian's whole being will give glory to God in pardoning hell-deserving sinners. Our wonder and our admiration will be so much increased that we will think less and less of ourselves and more and more of what will be done to glorify God in our salvation. If others can so admire the wonderful grace of God in pardoning such sinners, much more may such a recipient of God's grace wonder at himself. Are you sometimes surprised that God saved you? You ought to be. Amen. On the day of judgment, I think that we will be given a complete history of the work of redemption. Every particular will be heard and attended to with deep interest. We're going to know everybody's business, and everybody's going to know our business. And as God's recounting of history continues, all the holy angels and all the saved, we're all going to be enthralled at hearing the unfolding of the stories. And our joy will rise higher and higher from the beginning of that great day to the end, as we see God mete out justice toward those who are despised by Him, pouring out upon them His great wrath.

Sixth, the terror. Terror will be great. Everything that gives joy to Christians will be inexpressibly horrifying to sinners. It will be scarier than anyone has ever been able to imagine. You see, Christians rejoice to look upon the face of our Redeemer. In His presence, the Bible says, is fullness of joy. But all the wicked tremble at the sight. They fear the gaze of Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire. Then shall they begin to say, in Revelation 6 and 17, "To the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" They're scared, aren't they? Rightly so. As the testimonies of the saints' conversions are rehearsed on that day of judgment to corroborate the record of lost men's sins in God's books, everything said and read will be grating to the sinners. Even now, a Christian's praise of God and testimony of salvation sounds harsh to them. They don't like it. They don't want to be around. You start praising God, they'll go into the next room because they don't want to hear it. That's the reason we need to say it, because they don't want to hear it. You don't be quiet because they don't want to hear it. You say it a little bit louder because they don't want to hear it. It disturbs them. But at the judgment of the great day,

everything of this type will be dreadful to their unrenewed souls. The joy of saints will tend to greatly aggravate the distress of the damned awaiting their hearing and their sentencing. The sight of one believer rejoicing will be irritating to that one who is under conviction of sin. And, without doubt, every sinner will be under conviction, under the deepest conviction of sin that they have ever known. Every hardened sinner will, at that time, be under deeper conviction than any conviction ever witnessed anywhere on earth during this span of life.

As Jude wrote the words of Enoch in verses 14 and 15: “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against them—to convince them,” which is to say, to convict them. What grief and envy the lost, awaiting judgment, will feel when they see their former friends and loved ones rejoicing while they are experiencing horror. They will then feel as if those Christians had no care if they went to the lake of fire. Oh, they don’t care about me. Oh, they don’t love me. Here I’m going to hell, and they seem to be having a good time. They will think it is so hard of others to feel so joyful when their situation is so desperate, giving no thought to how hard they were before. But this is not all of it. It will also be hard for impenitent sinners to confess their sins. Consider how hard it is for a proud heart to fall before God and confess sins. Now, how reluctant do people feel about others thinking ill of them? Now, how many pains will they take to vindicate their character now, and even when he is known to be guilty, how reluctant it is that individual for that individual to admit and confess his guilt, even when it is in his best interest to do so, they still will refuse to do it. But all this reluctance, shame, and remorse of conscience will be greatly increased on that day of great day of judgment. This is all because all pretense will then be removed, and everyone’s heart will appear in its natural wicked deformity. The sinner will be completely selfish and proud, with no pretense of being otherwise. No Christian motives from friends or family will influence his heart. Spiritual grief and hatred of sin will not be present around him to make it easy. Love for Christ will not melt his heart or make it easy. The glory of God in pardoning sinners will not do it. The hope or prospect of obtaining pardon does not make it a pleasant duty now, much less when all hope of pardon is passed. Because nobody will be saved on the great day of judgment. No one will be delivered. No one will be delivered, because it will be too late. At the judgment of the great day, he must and will be made to admit and confess his guilt—not to display the glory of God in his pardon and salvation, no, but to display His glorious justice in the condemned person’s everlasting condemnation. That will be a part of his punishment, that his trial will make it appear to the entire universe that he deserves no pity whatsoever. Everything that, in his case, tends to the glory of God ends in his shame and everlasting contempt. The distress and horror of the wicked will rise higher and higher up to his final sentencing. The judgment of the great day is called the great day of wrath and a revelation of the righteous judgment of God. When everything is settled, and the day of judgment draws to a close, then the judge will proceed to pronounce the final sentence. A summary of the final sentence on the righteous and the wicked has been left on the record by the judge for anyone to read. This last and closing scene will be the most dreadful scene ever beheld. The final sentence will initiate the eternal horrors of the damned. Depart from Christ, from

heaven, and from happiness forever. Depart, accursed by the law and the gospel and the Savior forever. Depart from the society of angels and all holy beings, with the company of devils and damned spirits, into everlasting fire forever.

And here are some passages. Revelation 20:14 and 15: "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." Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Isaiah 13:6: "Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." James 5:1: "Weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." Yes, the terror shall be great.

Seventh, the separation shall be great. The day of judgment will be a day of great separation. Matthew chapter 25 and verse 46: "For these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." What an awful separation. Many who have been friends for a lifetime, who have lived together their whole lives, will be separated forever. Families will be split apart forever. Many who have walked into the church house together, who have attended worship in the same congregation, sat next to each other in the auditorium, and have communed together at the Lord's table, will part ways to meet no more forever. Pastors and people will part. Some preachers who have not been faithful to warn the wicked of their awful guilt and danger will now turn and go away with the blood of souls on their hands, because they have not been faithful to declare Bible truth. Others who, though they have declared the whole counsel of God, have never experienced the grace of God themselves, and they will lose their own souls. Many men who have lifted others into heaven will probably never enter themselves. And those who have been faithful to their own souls and the souls of their hearers may now enter heaven, while they observe the multitudes who heard them without responding, going away to never return. Members of the same family will now finally separate. A spiritual father will now leave his ungodly wife and children, while he goes with Christ. A believing wife now leaves behind an ungodly husband to perish in everlasting fire, all the while afraid to witness to him. A child with faith will now part with ungodly parents, while the child ascends to heaven, they, the parents, sink down to perdition. Brothers and sisters, too, will now part to meet no more forever. The separation at death is nothing compared to the day of judgment. You think of crying at a funeral. You cry at a funeral. Oh, the tears that will be shed on the day of judgment by the lost. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. The saints shall all go with Christ, no more to return. Like the prophet Elijah, they shall ascend. Every one of the saints, like him, shall be seen mounting up and leaving the world and all its wicked inhabitants behind, to visit them no more.

The great end for which this world was created is answered. The glorious plan of redemption is on schedule. The closing scene of this grand drama has arrived. And the stage on which the drama was acted out must now be dismantled.

Eighth, the renovation shall be great. About this time, the whole universe will undergo a great change. It does not appear from the Bible that the world will be annihilated, but its present form will be greatly changed. The psalmist writes in Psalm 102:23-26: "Of

old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." It is evident not only that this world will be changed, but that it will be changed by fire. Isaiah 34:4: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as a leaf falleth off the vine, as a falling fig from the fig tree." Zephaniah 3: all: "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Psalm 50:3: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Isaiah 66:15: "For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." Daniel 7:9 and 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." Malachi 4:1: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Second Peter 3:7: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." And then in Second Peter 3:10, 11, and 12: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

God is real. Sin is soul-damning. Hell is hot. And judgment is coming. And it will be the judgment of the great day. So, what more can I say? The scene is really beyond description. It is the judgment of the great day. And who shall stand in that day? Who shall enter God's holy place? Psalm 24:4 reads, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart." Only those whose sins are cleansed by the blood of Christ, who have trusted Him for the forgiveness of their sins, only they will enter in. Are you numbered among them?

I urge you to flee to Christ. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the truth. We thank you that the division between the lost and the saved is so clear, is so remarkable, that those of us who are believers, who will be present for the judgment of the great day, will have no remorse. We will have no sorrow. We will have no regret. We will be so properly oriented and so much on the Lord's side that we will be against those that reject Christ, and we will call for judgment against those who reject our wonderful Savior. I pray, Lord, that during this dispensation in which we live, that sinners will come to Christ,

that sinners will pay attention to the predictions of Scripture and will, in fear for their eternal welfare, flee to Christ. Bless, we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen.