

James 5:9
“The Judge is Standing at the Door”
June 21, 2026

James 5:9 “Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!”

After admonishing believers against “wars and fights” in Ch. 4, in which James calls his audience “adulterers and adulteresses,” he now addresses them as “brethren,” in a softer tone, and he raises the bar for how we are to treat each other as fellow Christians: We are not to “grumble” against one another, “lest you be condemned.”

A “grumble” is a sigh, or a moan, or a complaint. If the Judge standing at the door is our motivation for righteous behavior, then what kind of Judge is James talking about?

Judgment/Justice Gr *krisis*; Judge Gr *krites*: administration of what is right and fair

Many believers have a vague notion of a “Final Judgment,” in which everyone, believer and unbeliever alike, appears before God at the same time, to learn of his or her eternal destiny. That notion is not Biblical. The Word is explicit about several different judgments.

Judgment Against Mankind and Creation – Past
Genesis 3:19ff; Romans 8:20ff

At the Cross: Judgment of the Sin of the World – Past
John 1:29; Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:14. The world does not have a sin problem; it has a Savior problem. The believer will never enter into judgment for a sin for which Christ died (**John 3:18; 5:24; Romans 8:1**).

At the Cross: Judgment of the Sin Nature of Man – Past
Romans 6; Galatians 5

At the Cross: Judgment of the Devil – Past
John 12:31; 16:8ff; Colossians 2

In the Believer: Self-judgment of Confession and Judgment of God's Discipline – Present and ongoing.

1 Corinthians 11:29ff; 1 John 1:9; Hebrews 12:5ff. The believer's sins will never send him or her to Hell, but God will still discipline us for sins, for the purpose of growing us into mature believers.

Judgment of the Believer's Works at the Bema Seat – Future, after the Rapture and before the Kingdom

Romans 14:10ff; 2 Corinthians 5:9; 1 Cor 3:11; 2 Timothy 4:8

Judgment of Israel – Future, after the Tribulation and before the Kingdom

Daniel 12:1ff; Ezekiel 20:33ff

Judgment of the Nations – Future, after Tribulation and before the Kingdom

Matthew 25:31ff

Judgment of the Great White Throne – Future, after the 1,000-year Kingdom

Revelation 20 Only for those who died without Christ.

Everyone who has died in a right relationship with God will be resurrected, at one time or another, to face an evaluation from God/Jesus Christ; this is called “the first resurrection” (**Revelation 20:4-6**). Believers alive at the Rapture of the Church will not face death, however. That is our “blessed hope” (**Titus 2:13**), and it is the next thing on the horizon of future events.