

HANDOUT PART VII: FINAL (GENERAL or LAST) JUDGMENT

While I was watching thrones were set in place and one most venerable took his seat. His robe was white as snow, the hair of his head as pure as wool. His throne was a blaze of flames; its wheels were a burning fire. A stream of fire poured out, issuing from his presence. A thousand thousand waited on him, ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was in session and the books lay open. Daniel 7:9-10

The resurrection of all the dead, "of both the just and the unjust," will precede the Last Judgment. This will be "the hour when all who are in the tombs will hear [the Son of man's] voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." Then Christ will come "in his glory, and all the angels with him.... Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left.... And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." CCC# 1038

Jesus taught on the Final Judgment in the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds in Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43 and in Matthew 25:31-46. CCC# 1039: *In the presence of Christ, who is Truth itself, the truth of each man's relationship with God will be laid bare. The Last Judgment will reveal even to its furthest consequences the good each person has done or failed to do during his earthly life...*

St. Paul urges continual repentance in preparation for the final day: *Your stubborn refusal to repent is only storing up retribution for yourself on that Day of retribution when God's just verdicts will be made known. He will repay everyone as their deeds deserve. For those who aimed for glory and honor and immortality by preserving in doing good, there will be eternal life; but for those who out of jealousy have taken for their guide not truth but injustice, there will be the fury of retribution [Romans 2:5-8].*

Old Testament prophecy of the Final Judgment: Isaiah 66:23-24; Joel 4:9-17; Daniel 7:9-10.

New Testament passages found in Matthew 10:11-15; 12:33-37; 19:27-30; and Luke 11:29-32:

- The judgment on any community or nation who rejects God's chosen ministers will be greater than that fiery judgment which fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Humanity will be answerable for their works which includes the good or bad words they speak
- The Twelve Apostles will judge the 12 Tribes of Old Covenant Israel
- The people and communities of past generations will testify against peoples and generations who rejected God's gift of salvation

The Final Judgment according to the vision of St. John in Revelation 20:11-15?

- Immediately after the resurrection of the dead all human beings must face the judgment throne of God.
- Hades (the place of purification) will be emptied of the dead
- The Books will be opened: the Book of Life and the Books of Works or Deeds. Every person will be judged according to what is written down in the Books

- There will no longer be any need for death and Hades and they will be destroyed in the Lake of Fire.

Most complete description of the Final judgment is given by Jesus in Matthew 25:31-46. In the Final Judgment our love of neighbor will disclose our acceptance or refusal of God’s grace and divine love.

According to St. John’s vision in Revelation 20:10, 14-15 the Devil, Death and the place of purification [Hades/Sheol/Purgatory] are destroyed by being thrown into the lake of fire which is Hell/Gehenna along with any human being whose name could not be found in the Book of Life.

Concerning this final and definitive verdict for man St. Augustine wrote: *All that the wicked do is recorded, and they do not know. When “our God comes, he does not keep silence.” [...] ...he will turn towards those at his left hand: ... “I placed my poor little ones on earth for you. I as their head was seated in heaven at the right hand of my Father—but on earth my members were suffering, my members on earth were in need. If you gave anything to my members, what you gave would reach their Head. Would that you had known that my little ones were in need when I placed them on earth for you and appointed them your stewards to bring your good works into my treasury. But you have placed nothing in their hands; therefore you have found nothing in my presence.”* St. Augustine, *Sermo 18.4*

Catechism References:

The Final or General Judgment	679: Christ is the judge
	1038: Resurrection of dead to precede the Last Judgment
	1039: Judgment on works
	1040: Ultimate meaning of creation and God’s plan to be revealed
	1041: Calls men to conversion prior to event