

Punishment in Heaven?

(A study on II Cor. 5:10 and Col. 3:24-25)

*(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament,
I will substitute the Hebrew word Yahshua for Jesus, Yahweh and Elohim for God and Anointed for Christ.)*

There are three classes of people:

- a. A saved person who does repent of sins committed after receiving salvation;
- b. An unsaved person;
- c. A saved person who does not repent of sins committed after receiving salvation.

The third person is the purpose of this study of Yahweh's Word. (The first person is he who confesses his sin and is cleansed. I John 1:9. The second person will be cast into the lake of fire. Rev. 20:15.) Will there be punishment given out, to Yahweh's children, at the Judgment seat of Christ after the gathering together? Punishment will be defined as, "to cause to undergo pain, loss or suffering for wrongdoing (Webster's Dictionary)." There are two difficult verses, written to the Church, which lead some people to believe that there will be punishment given out at the Judgment seat. These verses are, II Cor. 5:10 and Col. 3:24-25. The above question is not to be confused with Yahweh avenging or bringing out right, in this present life. We will begin with the clear verses.

"Each one's work shall be made manifest; for the day will make it plain, because by fire is it to be revealed, and each one's work of what sort it is, the fire itself will prove: if anyone's work shall abide which be built, a reward shall he receive, if anyone's work shall be burnt up he shall suffer loss but shall himself be saved though thus as through fire." I Cor. 3:13-15. This verse refers to the Day of Judgment and the reward for good works and the loss for bad works but no punishment was given out. Another clear verse is in I Cor. 1:7-9, "So that ye come short in no gift of favour, ardently awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ: who will also confirm you unto the end, **unaccusable** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ:" "Yet now hath he fully reconciled in his body of flesh through means of his death, to present you **holy** and **blameless** and **unaccusable** before him.." Col. 1:21,22. E. W. Bullinger defines the word, unaccusable (anegkletos), as, "not accused, with nothing laid to one's charge." Nothing laid to one's charge in the day of our Lord. "Knowing that each one whatsoever he may do that is **good** the same shall he receive back from the Lord – whether bond or free." Eph. 6:8. This verse is not in connection with the Day of Judgment but shows us a promise of Yahweh. Receiving for the evil one does, is not mentioned in this verse. Punishment, at the judgment seat, is not used in connection with Yahweh's children but with the unbeliever.

In Matthew 25, the Lord is talking about the goats and the sheep, and in verse 46, "And these shall go away into age-abiding correction (punishment), but the righteous into age-abiding life." "Then the Lord knoweth how to rescue the godly out of trial: but to keep the unrighteous unto a day of judgment to be punished... for whom the gloom of darkness hath been reserved." II Peter 2:9-17. Yahweh does use a few words for punish. The above words are kolasis and kolazo. Another word is, diken tio, "Who indeed a penalty shall be pay, age-abiding destruction from the face of the Lord..." II Thess. 1:9. Punishment is reserved for the unbeliever, Satan and his

messengers in the judgment but not for His children. Although Yahweh will not punish his children in Heaven, Yahweh does avenge and recompense for evil in this present life to His children and unbelievers. "For it is written, "Mine is avenging. I will recompense; said Yahweh; but if thy enemy hunger be feeding him, if he thirst be giving him drink; for this doing coals of fire shalt thou heap upon his head." Rom. 12: 19,20.

Avenge is the Greek word, "ekdikeo." Avenge can mean punishment and revenge but it can also mean, "to vindicate one's right, do one justice (Thayer)." Yahweh is an avenger as stated in I Thess. 4:6. Yahweh's justice, for believers, will be carried out in this life. The first case, of justice served, was to the serpent in Genesis 3:14. "On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life." The second case, of justice served, was given to Cain. Gen. 4:11-15. "Though thou till the ground it shall not go on to give its vigour to thee, a wanderer and a fugitive shalt thou be in the earth." Yahweh avenged the death of Abel, in this life. Yahweh also avenges, in this life, by His law. In Exodus 22:1, "When a man stealeth an ox or a sheep, and slayeth it, or selleth it with five of the herd shall he make good for the ox, or with four of the flock for the sheep." Yahweh's will is to restore the innocent person of wrong committed.

Yahweh tells us not to render evil for evil. Rom. 12:17. Yahweh is good and just, love and light. He lets the rain fall on the just and unjust alike. He tells us, in Rom. 12:17-21, not to avenge ourselves but overcome evil with good. We are told to be imitators of Yahweh. Yahweh forgives and shows mercy. Eph. 4:32-5:1. Yahweh is our Father. As a father, I will chasten my children which means, "discipline in order to make obedient, meek etc." And if my child were a danger to society, I would want him to be put in prison, or put to death, in order to protect people. I could see Yahweh giving revelation to a policeman so that he could put one of His children in prison if His child was harming society, or even be put to death so that His good children could live in peace. Something like this was done in I Cor. 5: 1-5. The word avenge can mean, bring out right. I can see Yahweh intervening when a brother steals from another brother. He would restore the wronged person and take away the gain from the thief. I Thess. 4:3-6. He does this by inspiring laws in our society. Yahweh is a just avenger but does not revenge.

Revenge is to inflict damage, injury or punishment in return for something unjust. To retaliate. When Christ comes back for us we will receive our new bodies, like unto his glorious body. We will not have the sin nature any longer. Chastening will no longer be needed because we can not sin. So, if Yahweh were to punish us in Heaven, it would be a retaliation or a revenge because the punishment could no longer correct my wrong, or the person I wronged or change my future behavior. What would be the profit of punishment? If my child is an unrepentant sinner but has life age-abiding, he deserves chastening on earth, which could benefit him and society, but to have him serve time, punished, in Heaven would accomplish nothing. I would not retaliate, against my child, for all the unrepentant evil he has done. Would you as a parent? A child of Yahweh who does evil on this earth will reap what he sows while on this earth.

A great principal on earth, is sowing and reaping. "For whatsoever a man soweth the same shall he also reap, because he that soweth into his own flesh out of the flesh shall reap corruption, whereas he that soweth into the spirit out of the spirit shall reap age-abiding life." Gal. 6:7,8. And in this light is where, I believe, one of our difficult verses should be read. The context of Colossians 3: 24-25 is not concerning the judgment, but addressed to servants. "Knowing that

from the Lord ye shall duly receive the recompense of the inheritance, unto the Lord Christ are ye in service; for he that acteth unrighteously shall get back what he had unrighteously done..” What a man soweth that shall he also reap. If you walk in Satan’s realm, you will receive the fruit of darkness on earth. His treasures in heaven will abide but his treasures on earth will corrupt or be burned up. This verse does not mention punishment before the judgment seat of Christ. The next difficult verse does refer to the judgment.

“For we all must needs be manifest before the judgment seat of the Christ, that each one may get back the things done by means of the body, according to the things which he practised whether good or corrupt.” II Cor 5:10. The word corrupt means, “worthless, good-for-nothingness (Vincent, E. W. Bullinger Lexion).” Getting back something that is worthless or corrupt, means you receive nothing. Your works have been burned up, you have suffered loss, as in I Cor. 3:10-15. Most translations have this word translated as, “bad,” which give an impression that Yahweh will retaliate or get revenge. “How that Yahweh was in Christ, reconciling a world unto himself, **not reckoning unto them their offences...**” II Cor. 5:19. This verse is in the context of salvation, not judgment, but it does show us the heart of Yahweh.

Children of Yahweh who live in a sinful, unrepentant life, receive the fruit of darkness while on this earth. Death in part or in whole is the result of sin. Their existence may appear wonderful but their fellowship with the one who comes to steal, kill and destroy. They may appear happy but they can not be because,

“How happy the man
who hath not walked in the counsel of the lawless,
And in the way of sinners hath not stood,
And in the seat of scoffers hath not sat;
But in the law of Yahweh is his delight,
And in his law doth he talk with himself day and night.
So doth he become like a tree planted by streams of waters,
That yielded its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also doth not wither,
And whatsoever he doeth prospereth.

Not so the lawless,
But as chaff which is driven about by the wind:
For this cause shall the lawless not stand in the judgment,
Nor the sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
For Yahweh doth acknowledge the way of the righteous;
But the way of the lawless shall vanish.” Psalm 1

Rewards will be given out, at the Judgment seat of Christ, to saints who do Yahweh’s Word in love. Corruption awaits the works of the flesh not punishment.