

*David Dickson's*  
**Truth's Victory Over Error**  
Chapter XXXIII.  
*Of the Last Judgment.*

QUESTION I.

SHALL the wicked who know not GOD, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, be casten into everlasting torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power?

Yes. *Matth.* 25.31, to the end; *Rom.* 9.22, 23; *Acts* 3.19; *2 Thes.* 1.7-9.

Well then, *do not the Socinians err, who defining eternal death to be the extinguishing of the Body and Soul, maintain, that the wicked are to suffer no torment in hell; and that their whole punishment will be to be deprived of Eternity, or annihilated, that is, both Soul and Body turned into NOTHING?*

Yes.

*Do not likewise the Origenists and some Anabaptists err, who think, that not only the wicked, but the Devils themselves, after many torments in hell, shall be received by GOD into favour, and be made blessed and happy?*

Yes.

*By what reasons are they confuted?*

(1) Because, the Apostle affirms, almost in so many words, that which we have asserted; *2 Thess.* 1.7-10. (2) Because, Life Eternal, and Death Eternal, are in Scripture opposed to one another in the same sense; *Matth.* 25.46. But Life Eternal in Scripture, is not taken for being simply Eternal, but for being Eternally happy, or to be in a blessed Eternal state and condition; *Psalms* 133.3. Therefore, Eternal death must be taken in Scripture not for *annihilation*, or being turned into *Nothing*; but for an Eternal wretched and miserable state and condition. (3) Because, the Scripture says, *but the children of the kingdom shall be casten into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*; *Matth.* 8.12. (4) Because, the *Scripture affirms expressly*, that the wicked are tormented in hell; *Luke* 16.24. Next, there are some degrees of torments there, but there are no degrees in *non esse*, that is, in *not to be*. (5)

Because, *Abraham says expressly*, there can no man pass from the place of torment, to the place of bliss and happiness; *Luke 16.26*. (6) Because, the torments of the wicked are called a Worm that dieth not; a fire that cannot be extinguished. *Mark 9.44,46,48*. (7) Because, the *Scripture says*, that the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; *Rev. 14.11. Rev. 19.3*. (8) Because, the wicked will be carried into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels; *Matth. 25.46*. And the same wicked, are to rise again to shame, and everlasting contempt, *Daniel 12.2*. And to suffer the vengeance of Everlasting fire; *Jude verse 7*. And now only is the accepted time, and now is the day of Salvation; *2 Cor. 6.2*.

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Quest. II. “*SHALL all persons that have lived upon the earth, including the righteous elect, stand before the tribunal of Christ, in the day of Judgment?*”

Yes. *2 Cor. 5.10*.

Does this imply that the righteous also shall give a particular account of their offences, or be presented with accusations for their sins?

No. The Scriptures are not explicit to either affirm or deny such a conclusion.

Well then, *do not they err who assure their followers that they shall not stand before the judgment of Jesus Christ, nor ever have their sins reckoned up before the just Judge of all the Earth?*

Yes.

*By what reasons are they confuted?*

(1) Because, the Scriptures are in several places explicit that all shall be cited to stand in the day of Judgment. And although the acquittal and reward of the righteous will be very different from the sentencing of the wicked, they shall all have to do with him who is the Judge of all. *2 Cor. 5.10*; *Heb. 12.23*; *2 Tim. 4.8*; *Acts 17.31*. (2) Because, although it is only those who are not written in the book of life who are cast into the lake of fire, yet *Rev. 20.11-15* assures us that all of the dead, whether lost in the sea or elsewhere, shall be surrendered before the *great white throne*, so that then their sentence may be determined according to *the books* of God's remembrance, and also the *book of life*. (3) Because, although the righteous shall be found in a different character than the wicked, and we are told that their righteous conduct shall be noticed, yet *Matth. 25.31-46* assures us that all nations shall be brought

before Christ at this Judgment, and that it is then that a final separating shall be made between the Lord's sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left hand. (4) Because, it is in full conflict with our Saviour's own method of pastoral care, for men to give their followers that security in their sins which he labored to take away from presumptuous sinners. *Luke 21.36; Matth. 25.13; Luke 8.17.* And the doctrine of the Apostle Paul is the same with that of our Saviour. *1 Cor. 4.5.* (5) Because, the silence of Holy Scriptures concerning the supposed reckoning of the sins of the righteous may proceed from more than one possible cause: on the negative supposition, it may be silent to take away security from self-flatterers and incircumspect believers; and on the positive supposition, it may be silent to take away a misguided fear of a man's own blessed acquittal. Disciples should be taught to long for the return of the Lord Jesus; and they should be taught to look for it with watchfulness. And as this is done, they may also be assured that, if they have repented and believed indeed, their pardon and acquittal shall surely be as good as the not mentioning of their sins. *Ezek. 33.14-16. Psalm 103.10-12.*

Quest. III. "*IS it the will of Christ himself that the precise day that is appointed for Judgment should remain hidden and unknown to mankind, and even his Church, until the very day of his coming?*"

Yes. *Matth. 24.36.*

Well then, *do not many Chiliasts and Enthusiastic impostors err, who pretend to determine the day appointed either for the return of Christ or the end of the world?*

Yes.

*By what reasons are they confuted?*

(1) Because, our Saviour explicitly affirms that the day and hour of *that day* is unknown to men, and even the angels, and only known to his Father. Then, lest any should imagine that it would be revealed in a later time, he tells us explicitly that when the day finally comes, there shall be no prior awareness of its coming among men, but all things shall be as in the times of Noah. *Matth. 24.36-44.* (2) Because, In the conclusion of the above passage it is evident that our Saviour regards our ignorance of the particular day for his return to be sufficiently conducive to all our duties of watching and preparing. *Verses 42-44.* (3) Because, whatever the professed purpose of these impostors may be, yet their doctrine tends to increase carnal security and deter from watchfulness; first, among those who anticipate a remote or delayed day of judgment, and secondly, among those who are scandalized by the failure and disappointment of their expectations. *Mark 13.35; 2 Pet. 3.3-6.* (4) Because, It is the spirit and character of Christian piety to be longing for the return of our Saviour, exhibited by all serious Christians who have gone before us; and this would be spoiled in the spiritual exercises of many souls if they were not allowed to anticipate with eagerness the return of their beloved Lord and Saviour. *2 Pet. 3.11-13; Titus 2.13; 1 Thess. 1.9-10; Rev. 22.20.*