



# Judgment

By Jacques B. Doukhan

## 1. What was the main function of the judge in biblical times?

*"Then the LORD raised up chieftains who delivered them from those who plundered them" (Judges 2:16; cf. 3:9, 15; Isaiah 51:4-5).*

## 2. Why shouldn't we be afraid of the Day of Judgment?

*"Until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was rendered in favor of the holy ones of the Most High, for the time had come, and the holy ones took possession of the kingdom" (Daniel 7:22).*

*"When a king suppressed a rebellion he kills the innocent with the guilty because he knows not the one from the other. God who knows men's thoughts and the counsel of their hearts . . . knows the spirit of each individual, and will distinguish the guilty from the guiltless" (Tarhuma, Buber, Korah, par. 19).*

## 3. On what special occasions did the ancient Israelites anticipate the great Day of the future judgment of God (Yom ha-Din)?

*"And this shall be to you a law for all time: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall practice self-denial; and you shall do no manner of work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. For on this day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you of all your sins; you shall be clean before the LORD" (Leviticus 16:29-30).*

*"We must give this day all its holiness because it is a day of fear and awe. In this day thy reign is established and thy throne is made firm. . . . For thou art the judge, the pleader, and the witness, the one who opens and seals. And thou shalt remember every forgiven thing and thou shalt open the book of remembrance . . . , the great shofar will be sounded, and the small still voice will be heard, the angels will shudder from fear and say "This is the Day of Judgment" (Book of Prayers, Mahzor min rosh Hashana weyom hakippurim, I, p. 31).*

## 4. How should we expect the Day of Judgment?

*"God of retribution, LORD, God of retribution, appear! Rise up, judge of the earth, give the arrogant their deserts! How long shall the wicked, O LORD, how long shall the wicked exult" (Psalm 94:1-3; cf. Psalm 50:4-5).*

*"Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence" (Daniel 12:2).*

*"The sages regarded the Day of Atonement (Kippur) as the supreme festival and the greatest day of the year (Gen. R. 2:3). . . . A day of unparalleled joy, both for God, who gave it to Israel with live (Seder Eliahu Rabbah 1), and for the children of Israel themselves (Seder Eliahu Zuta 4)" ("Day of Atonement," Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. 5, p. 1382).*

## 5. Who and what will be judged by God?

"I mused: 'God will doom both righteous and wicked, for there is a time for every experience and for every happening'" (Ecclesiastes 3:17; cf. 12:14). "The just will be judged by their good inclination, the unjust by their evil inclination" (Berakot 61).

#### **6. When should we expect the Day of Judgment to take place?**

"As I looked on, Thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His garment was like white snow, and the hair of His head was like lamb's wool. His throne was tongues of flame; Its wheels were blazing fire" (Daniel 7:9; cf. vss. 26-27; 8:17, 26).

"Yom ha-Din, day on which mankind will be judged by God . . . at the end of days" (R.J. Zwi Werblowsky and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1997], p. 750).

#### **7. "How long" will the prophetic period last until the Day of Judgment begins?**

"He answered me, for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14; cf. Daniel 7:9).

#### **8. What are the elements of Daniel's prophecy that associate the "time of the end" with the day of Atonement?**

"I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward. No beast could withstand him, and there was none to deliver from his power. He did as he pleased and grew great. As I looked on, a he-goat came from the west, passing over the entire earth without touching the ground" (Daniel 8:4-5; cf. Leviticus 16:5). Daniel 7 is parallel to Daniel 8.

On the connection between sacrifices and the Messiah: speaking of the sacrifices, "R. Eleazar said in the name of R. Josei: 'It is a *halakha* [a traditional law] regarding the Messiah'" (Zebahim 44b, *Sanhedrin* 51b).

#### **9. To what other event is the Day of Judgment connected in the book of Daniel?**

"I heard a human voice from the middle of Ulai calling out, 'Gabriel, make that man understand the vision'" (Daniel 8:16).

"A word went forth as you began your plea, and I have come to tell it, for you are precious; so mark the word and understand the vision" (Daniel 9:23; see

Daniel 9:24; cf. Exodus 29:36-37).

#### **10. What is the starting point of the 2300 evenings and mornings leading to the beginning of the heavenly Day of Judgment?**

"You must know and understand: From the issuance of the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the [time of the] anointed leader is seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it will be rebuilt, square and moat, but in a time of distress" (Daniel 9:25).

"So the elders of the Jews progressed in the building, urged on by the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Iddo, and they brought the building to completion under the aegis of the God of Israel and by the order of Cyrus and Darius and King Artaxerxes of Persia. . . . arriving in Jerusalem in the fifth month in the seventh year of the king" (Ezra 6:14; 7:8).

#### **11. What is the date of the end of the 2300 evenings and mornings?**

"He answered me, For twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14; cf. Daniel 12:12; Ezekiel 4:5).

"Thus the Admoz Hazaken indicated that the Messiah should come in 5603 (1843-1844). Then the Tsemah Tsedek (third rabbi of Lubavitch) explained . . . that it was only a spiritual redemption" (*Mashiah Now* No. 46, January 30, 1995).

#### **12. What will be the role of the Messiah in the Day of Judgment?**

"Dominion, glory, and kingship were given to him; all peoples and nations of every language must serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, And his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14; cf. Daniel 8:14).

"Rabbi Eliezer ben Jose ha-Gelili said: 'God's inclination in judgment is always in man's favor. If 999 angels give a bad account of a man, and one only a favorable account, God inclines the balance to the meritorious side'" (*Y. Kiddushin* 61d).

"The iniquities of Israel will then be atoned" (Rashi in *Miqzaoth Gdoloth* on Daniel 8:14).

"When Israel turns toward the Lord, his advocate Michael will plead in his favor" (*Pesikra Rabbati* 44).

"In the heavenly Jerusalem ... the temple and the altar are built, and Michael the great Prince stands and offers up thereupon an offering" (*Hogogah* 12b).

**13. How and on what basis will the divine judgment be preceded?**

"As I looked on, Thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His garment was like white snow, and the hair of His head was like lamb's wool. His throne was tongues of flame; its wheels were blazing fire. A river of fire streamed forth before Him; Thousands upon thousands served Him; Myriads upon myriads attended Him; The court sat and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:9-10; cf. Daniel 12:1; Malachi 3:16, 18; Psalm 69:29; Isaiah 4:3; Ezekiel 32:32-33).

"Three books are opened in heaven on Rosh Ha-Shanah, one for the thoroughly wicked, one for the thoroughly righteous, and one for the intermediate. The thoroughly righteous are forthwith inscribed in the Book of Life, the thoroughly wicked in the Book of Death, while the fate of the intermediate is suspended until the Day of Atonement" (*Rosh Ha-Shanah* 16b).

"The books which were opened are the books where there were written the sins they have done" (Rashi in *Migzaoth Gdoloth* on Daniel 7:10).

**14. What is the human counterpart that is contemporary on earth to the heavenly judgment?**

"But you, go on to the end; you shall rest, and arise to your destiny at the end of the days" (Daniel 12:12).

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water" (Revelation 14:7).

"Blessed be Thou, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who opens the door to mercy and gives light to the eyes of those who expect forgiveness from the One who creates light and darkness, and creates everything" (*Yotser leyom Kippur*).

"On the fourth of Tishri, the sacred New Year's Day and the anniversary of creation, man's doings were judged and his destiny was decided; and on the tenth of Tishri the decree of heaven was sealed" (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, p. 281; cf.

*Rosh Ha-Shanah* 11a, 16a).

**15. What does the expectation of the Day of Judgment imply for us in our daily existence?**

"But you, go on to the end; you shall rest, and arise to your destiny at the end of the days" (Daniel 12:12).

"The sum of the matter, when all is said and done: Revere God and observe His commandments! For this applies to all mankind: that God will call every creature to account for everything unknown, be it good or bad" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).