

**Objection 1.** It would seem that after the Judgment that takes place in the present time, there does not remain another General Judgment. For a judgment serves no purpose after the final allotment of rewards and punishments. But rewards and punishments are allotted in this present time: for our Lord said to the thief on the cross (Lk. 23:43): “This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise”: and (Lk. 16:22) it is said that “the rich man died and was buried in hell.” Therefore it is useless to look forward to a final Judgment.

**Objection 2.** Further, according to another (the Septuagint) version of Nahum 1:9, “God shall not judge the same thing a second time.” But in the present time God judges both temporal and spiritual matters. Therefore, it does not seem that another final judgment is to be expected.

**Objection 3.** Further, reward and punishment correspond with merit and demerit. But merit and demerit bear relation to the body only in so far as it is the instrument of the soul. Therefore reward or punishment is not due to the body save as the soul’s instrument. Therefore no other Judgment is called for at the end (of the world) to requite man with reward or punishment in the body, besides that Judgment in which souls are now punished or rewarded.

**On the contrary,** It is said in Jn. 12:48: “The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you [Vulg.: ‘him’] in the last day.” Therefore there will be a Judgment at the last day besides that which takes place in the present time.

**I answer that,** Judgment cannot be passed perfectly upon any changeable subject before its consummation: just as judgment cannot be given perfectly regarding the quality of any action before its completion in itself and in its results: because many actions appear to be profitable, which in their effects prove to be hurtful. And in the same way perfect judgment cannot be passed upon any man before the close of his life, since he can be changed in many respects from good to evil, or conversely, or from good to better, or from evil to worse. Hence the Apostle says (Heb. 9:27): “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the Judgment.”

But it must be observed that although man’s temporal life in itself ends with death, still it continues dependent in a measure on what comes after it in the future. In one way, as it still lives on in men’s memories, in which sometimes, contrary to the truth, good or evil reputations linger on. In another way in a man’s children, who are so to speak something of their parent, according to Ecclus. 30:4: “His father is dead, and he is as if he were not dead, for he hath left one behind him that is like himself.” And yet many good men have wicked sons, and conversely.

Thirdly, as to the result of his actions: just as from the deceit of Arius and other false leaders unbelief continues to flourish down to the close of the world; and even until then faith will continue to derive its progress from the preaching of the apostles. In a fourth way, as to the body, which is sometimes buried with honor and sometimes left unburied, and finally falls to dust utterly. In a fifth way, as to the things upon which a man’s heart is set, such as temporal concerns, for example, some of which quickly lapse, while others endure longer.

Now all these things are submitted to the verdict of the Divine Judgment; and consequently, a perfect and public Judgment cannot be made of all these things during the course of this present time. Wherefore, there must be a final Judgment at the last day, in which everything concerning every man in every respect shall be perfectly and publicly judged.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Some men have held the opinion that the souls of the saints shall not be rewarded in heaven, nor the souls of the lost punished in hell, until the Judgment-day. That this is false appears from the testimony of the Apostle (2 Cor. 5:8), where he says: “We are confident and have a good will to be absent rather from the body, and to be present with the Lord”: that is, not to “walk by faith” but “by sight,” as appears from the context. But this is to see God in His Essence, wherein consists “eternal life,” as is clear from Jn. 17:3. Hence it is manifest that the souls separated from bodies are in eternal life.

Consequently, it must be maintained that after death man enters into an unchangeable state as to all that concerns the soul: and therefore there is no need for postponing judgment as to the reward of the soul. But since there are some other things pertaining to a man which go on through the whole course of time, and which are not foreign to the Divine judgment, all these things must be brought to judgment at the end of time. For although in regard to such things a man neither merits nor demerits, still in a measure they accompany his reward or punishment. Consequently all these things must be weighed in the final judgment.

**Reply to Objection 2.** “God shall not judge twice the same thing,” i.e. in the same respect; but it is not unseemly for God to judge twice according to different respects.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Although the reward or punishment of the body depends upon the reward or punishment of the soul, nevertheless, since the soul is changeable only accidentally, on account of the body, once it is separated from the body it enters into an unchangeable condition, and receives its judgment. But the body remains subject to change down to the close of time: and therefore it must

receive its reward or punishment then, in the last Judgment.