

Matthew 10:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Analysis

Jesus pronounces sobering judgment: 'It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city' (ἀνεκτότερον εσται γη Σοδομῶν καὶ Γομορρῶν εν ημερᾳ κρισεως η τη πολει εκεινῃ). Sodom and Gomorrah represent extreme wickedness, destroyed by divine fire (Genesis 19). Yet cities rejecting Jesus' apostles face worse judgment. Why? Greater privilege brings greater accountability. Sodom never heard the gospel; Israelite cities heard directly from Jesus' messengers. Rejection despite clear revelation multiplies guilt. 'Day of judgment' (ημερᾳ κρισεως) refers to final accounting when all face God. Judgment is graduated: more tolerable for some, less for others, based on knowledge and opportunity. This demolishes universalism while establishing justice: people judged according to light received.

Historical Context

Sodom and Gomorrah were bywords for divine judgment in Jewish thought. Their destruction (Genesis 19:24-25) illustrated God's wrath against extreme wickedness. That Jesus places Galilean cities under worse judgment than Sodom demonstrates how seriously He views rejection of the gospel. These weren't pagan cities but covenant communities with Scripture, prophets, and now Messiah's messengers. Their advantages increased accountability. Early church understood that judgment considers circumstances: Hebrews 10:29 warns that trampling the Son of God merits worse punishment than violating Mosaic law.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does greater privilege create greater accountability in God's judgment?
2. What does graded judgment teach about God's justice and fairness?
3. How should awareness of judgment affect how we share and respond to the gospel?

Interlinear Text

ἀμὴν	λέγω	ὑμῖν	ἀνεκτότερον	ἔσται	γῆ	Σοδόμων
Verily	I say	unto you	more tolerable	It shall be	for the land	of Sodom
G281	G3004	G5213	G414	G2071	G1093	G4670

καὶ	Γομόρρων	ἐν	ἡμέρᾳ	κρίσεως	ἢ	τῇ	πόλει	ἐκείνῃ
and	Gomorrha	in	the day	of judgment	than	G3588	city	for that
G2532	G1116	G1722	G2250	G2920	G2228	G4172	G1565	

Additional Cross-References

2 Peter 2:6 (Parallel theme): And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

1 John 4:17 (Judgment): Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

2 Peter 3:7 (Judgment): But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

2 Peter 2:9 (Judgment): The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Mark 6:11 (Judgment): And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Matthew 12:36 (Judgment): But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

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