

productive land will certainly learn." (Isaiah 26:9) During Judgment Day all the people will learn about Jehovah, and they will be given every opportunity to obey and serve him.

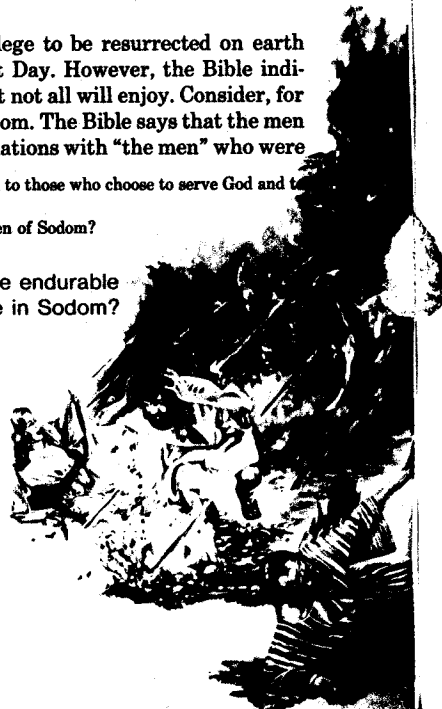
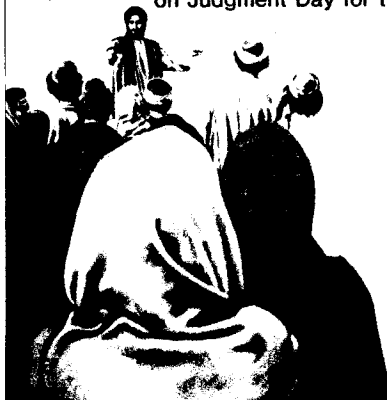
⁷ It is under such paradise conditions that Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate kings will judge humankind. People who choose to serve Jehovah will be in a position to receive everlasting life. But, even under these best of circumstances, some will refuse to serve God. As the Scriptures say: "Though the wicked one should be shown favor, he simply will not learn righteousness. In the land of straightforwardness he will act unjustly." (Isaiah 26:10) So after being given full opportunity to change their ways and to learn righteousness, such wicked ones will be destroyed. Some will be put to death even before Judgment Day ends. (Isaiah 65:20) They will not be permitted to remain to corrupt or spoil the paradise earth.

⁸ It will truly be a grand privilege to be resurrected on earth during Jehovah's great Judgment Day. However, the Bible indicates that it will be a privilege that not all will enjoy. Consider, for example, the people of ancient Sodom. The Bible says that the men of Sodom sought to have sexual relations with "the men" who were

7. During Judgment Day, what will happen to those who choose to serve God and to those who refuse to do so?

8. What was the moral condition of the men of Sodom?

Why did Jesus say it would be more endurable on Judgment Day for those in Sodom?



visiting Lot. Their immoral behavior was so extreme that even when they were miraculously struck with blindness, "they were wearing themselves out trying to find the entrance" of the house to get inside to have intercourse with Lot's visitors.—Genesis 19:4-11.

⁹ Will such terribly wicked persons be resurrected during Judgment Day? The Scriptures indicate that apparently they will not. For example, one of Jesus' inspired disciples, Jude, wrote first about the angels that forsook their place in heaven to have relations with the daughters of men. Then he added: "So too Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, after they in the same manner as the foregoing ones had committed fornication excessively and gone out after flesh for unnatural use, are placed before us as a warning example by undergoing the judicial punishment of everlasting fire." (Jude 6, 7; Genesis 6:1, 2) Yes, for their excessive immorality the people of Sodom and of the surrounding cities suffered a destruction from which they will apparently never be resurrected.—2 Peter 2:4-6, 9, 10a.

¹⁰ Jesus too indicated that the Sodomites may not be resurrected. When he spoke of Capernaum, one of the cities where he performed miracles, he said: "If the powerful works that took place in you [Capernaum] had taken place in Sodom, it would have remained until this very day. Consequently I say to you people, It will be more endurable for the land of Sodom on Judgment Day than for you." (Matthew 11:22-24) Jesus here was emphasizing the reprehensibility of the people of Capernaum by saying that it would be more endurable for the ancient Sodomites who, in the minds of his Israelite audience, were totally unworthy of a resurrection on Judgment Day.

¹¹ Surely, then, we should do everything we can to live our lives so as to merit a resurrection. But it may still be asked: Will it be more difficult for some of the resurrected dead to learn and practice righteousness than it will be for others? Well, consider:

9, 10. What do the Scriptures indicate about the prospect of a resurrection for the wicked persons of Sodom?

11. Why will it be easier on Judgment Day for the "righteous" than for any of the "unrighteous"?