

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

1 Rev. 20:11-15

2 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face
3 the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
4 [12] And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books
5 were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and
6 the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books,
7 according to their works. [13] And the sea gave up the dead which were in
8 it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they
9 were judged every man according to their works. [14] And death and hell
10 were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. [15] And
11 whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of
12 fire.

13
14 In my senior year of high school I became friends with a fellow student. He had rather
15 limited scholastic abilities but he was a good athlete. Shortly after graduation, he held
16 up a liquor store. Turning his back to leave with the money, the proprietor reached under
17 the counter for a pistol and shot my friend in the leg. Within a few weeks, when he came
18 to trial I was working for a local television station and was assigned to cover the
19 proceedings. It was obvious that my friend was guilty yet he continued to assert his
20 innocence. When the jury was sent to their chambers to deliberate his guilt or innocence,
21 he suddenly changed his mind and ran to the judge's bench to plead guilty and ask for
22 mercy. I will never forget what the judge told him:

23
24 "Had you come to me with that plea before the jury left, I would have accepted your
25 words and granted you probation since this was your first time here. However, under the
26 law, once the jury leaves you cannot change your plea. You will have to live with what
27 the jurors say."

28
29 The jury returned with a verdict of "guilty." My friend was sentenced to five years in
30 state prison. It was so sad to me because he could have gone home with his parents had
31 he changed his plea just a few minutes earlier.

32
33 It will be like that - only infinitely worse - when men and women stand before the Judge
34 of the universe and learn of their eternal fate. We sometimes hear people say that God is

1 too kind to send anyone to Hell. Such a statement shows a total lack of understanding of
2 God's holiness and His abhorrence of sin.

3
4 Our study must start at the biblical beginning. Genesis 3 tells of the fall of man and the
5 resulting divine curses:

6
7 1) The curse upon Satan: Genesis 3:14 **And the Lord God said unto the serpent,**
8 **Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast**
9 **of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy**
10 **life:** And several passages in Revelation tell of his ultimate demise in Hell.

11
12 2) The curse upon the ground: Genesis 3:17 **And unto Adam he said, Because**
13 **thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I**
14 **commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake;**
15 **in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;**

16
17 3) The curse upon sinners: Galatians 3:13 **Christ hath redeemed us from the**
18 **curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that**
19 **hangeth on a tree:**

20
21 The curse upon human beings has been lifted for all those who accept Jesus as Lord and
22 Savior. Thank God for that! Romans 8:1 **There is therefore now no condemnation**
23 **to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**
24 For those who have accepted the Lord as Master and Savior, and truly are serving Him,
25 God's wrath is averted. But there remains the curse upon Satan and the earth. There
26 must also be the judgment upon those who reject the Lord and spurn the plan of salvation.
27 That judgment will happen at the Great White Throne Judgment.

28
29 After our Lord returns (the second coming of Christ) to this earth to reign for 1,000 years,
30 which is called the Millennium, and that period ends, this dreadful judgment will
31 commence. We are told that Jesus will sit upon THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY. It is
32 also known as THE GREAT WHITE THRONE, the symbolic representation of holiness
33 and purity. This world system which is so corrupted and in so many instances downright
34 evil will attempt to "flee from the very sight" of that incorruptible presence.

35
36 WHERE IS THIS THRONE? Not on earth because this earth as we know it will have
37 been purged and is gone. It cannot be in Heaven for sin or sinners will never be allowed
38 there - and this judgment is for sinners. So somewhere in an intermediate location this
39 drama of the ages will transpire.

1 Let's reiterate....what happened to the earth? 2 Peter 3:3-13 **Knowing this first, that**
2 **there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, [4] And**
3 **saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all**
4 **things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. [5] For this they**
5 **willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the**
6 **earth standing out of the water and in the water: [6] Whereby the world that then**
7 **was, being overflowed with water, perished: [7] But the heavens and the earth,**
8 **which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire** against the
9 **day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. [8] But, beloved, be not ignorant of**
10 **this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand**
11 **years as one day. [9] The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men**
12 **count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish,**
13 **but that all should come to repentance. [10] But the day of the Lord will come as a**
14 **thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and**
15 **the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are**
16 **therein shall be burned up. [11] Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved,**
17 **what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, [12]**
18 **Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein**

19 **the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with**
20 **fervent heat?**

21 **[13] Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new**
22 **earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.**

23 Jesus did not return in the days so the apostles so critics of Christianity had a field day
24 scoffing and mocking any teaching regarding our Lord's return. Peter wrote, warning
25 them, that there is coming a judgment on the earth in which the earth will be destroyed by
26 fire and God will then set up the scene for the Great White Throne Judgment. John
27 picks up the scenario in the text found on page 1 from Revelation 20.

28
29 Some teach that this destruction of the earth by fire will come because of atomic war. I
30 don't hold that view. The book of Hebrews teaches that all things in the universe are
31 held by the WORD OF GOD'S POWER. With another WORD, He can end it. I
32 believe Jesus will speak one word....and this old planet will be dissolved, melted with an
33 unheard-of heat. Why would God do this? Because He despises sin. Eternity will be a
34 fresh sheet of paper. No residuals. Nothing of "the old" to be left.

35
36 **At this point, God brings the judgments to a close.** John wrote in Rev. 19 that God
37 brought the dead, small and great, to stand before Him. Even the sea gave up the dead
38 that had been long since lost. John 5:27-28 **And hath given him authority to**
39 **execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. [28] Marvel not at this: for the**

1 **hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice....** As one
2 preacher expressed it, "There is no individual who has ever lived and breathed who will
3 not be brought to physical resurrection. Saved and unsaved alike will all be resurrected.
4 The "dead who were followers of Christ" will be raised at the Rapture earlier. John 5:29
5 **And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and**
6 **they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.**

7
8 Remember there is a FIRST resurrection to LIFE - Jesus was the "first-fruit" or prototype
9 of this: 1 Cor. 15:22-23 **For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made**
10 **alive. [23] But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they**
11 **that are Christ's at his coming.** I often refer to that word "firstfruits" as "the
12 prototype." Just as Jesus came out of that grave, so that all the righteous dead! Then
13 there will be a resurrection to death - the second resurrection.
14

15 ***DON'T BE CAUGHT DEAD AT THE SECOND RESURRECTION!***

16
17 Here is how John taught another amazing truth: Rev. 20:6 **Blessed and holy is he that**
18 **hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they**
19 **shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.**
20 There will be a multitude of people who commit to Christ during the Tribulation and pay
21 for it with their lives. They too will be resurrected at the SECOND COMING OF
22 CHRIST. This is still considered part of the FIRST RESURRECTION. So...who is
23 resurrected in the first go-round?

- 24 1. Jesus Christ - the firstfruit - or prototype
- 25 2. The living saints at the Rapture
- 26 3. The believers who were martyred in the Tribulation

27 For goodness' sake, BE READY IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION!
28

29 I love this astounding truth: **WHEN JESUS RETURNS THE SECOND TIME AND HIS**
30 **FEET TOUCH THE MOUNT OF OLIVES....THERE WILL NOT BE ONE BODY OF**
31 **A BELIEVER FROM THE TIME OF ADAM UNTIL THAT MOMENT LEFT IN THE**
32 **GRAVE! HALLELUJAH!** So when Jesus opens the glorious Millennium, the first
33 resurrection will be completed.
34

35 So who is raised in the second resurrection? Those who are eternally lost! The only
36 dead left in the whole program of God are the unsaved or wicked dead from the time of
37 Adam to the end of the Millennium. **THERE WILL NOT BE ONE GRACE STILL**
38 **HOLDING THE REMAINS OF ITS OCCUPANT - ANYWHERE ON EARTH!**
39

THOSE BOOKS!

A careful record has been kept in eternity of our earthly lives. There are two sets of books that will be opened according to Revelation 20, verses 12 and 13:

1. The book of our lives, words, actions.
2. The book of Life.

Those who stand before the Eternal Judge will be judged according to that which is written - or not written - in those books.

My nearly 79 years of life have been recorded in those books. Fortunately, I will not have to stand before the Lord on that day because I committed my life to Him decades ago and there IS NO LONGER CONDEMNATION! Glory! Even if God opened the book of my life nothing could be read because it was all blotted out by the blood of Jesus Christ. When I accepted the Lord as my personal Savior, the record of my works was wiped clean - yes, as clean as the righteousness of God, for it is Christ's righteousness, not mine. God is a faithful Bookkeeper.

But John is not referring here to my records, for those who have been raptured and/or resurrected have no part in this judgment whatsoever. I have often wondered if we believers would be at the Great White Throne Judgment as observers. I find no scriptural reference that says we will.

But, oh, the trauma of the unsaved as they stand before God. Their records will show up clearly in their books of works.

But there is yet a second book - this is THE BOOK OF LIFE. Those who have accepted Jesus will have their names entered there. This Book of Life is a separate record from "the books." *It is a separate record, a double entry, if you will, a safety check. When an individual stands before God and the books are opened, there is the undeniable record of his sins, of his unrighteousness and of his unworthiness to be received into the presence of a holy God. The record stands. And then, as though to demonstrate that no error has been made, God will take the Book of Life and will go through its pages to see if that man's name had been inscribed there. The person's name is not found written in the Book of Life. The sentence against the sinner stands, and because he or she would not avail himself or herself of the provision of the grace of God, the eternal and dreadful sentence must be given. Verse 15 is stunning: "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.* Pentecost / Dallas Seminary

Someone might protest, "But I'm as good as you, Betzer!" I don't question that. But unfortunately for you, I am not the standard by which you will be judged. Romans 3:23

1 **For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God....** What is the glory of God?
2 Not a what...but Who! The glory of God is Jesus Christ according to John chapter 1.
3 So the One to whom you will be measured at this judgment is Christ Himself. Jesus is
4 the only standard by which anyone will be accepted.

5
6 Then who can pass that impossible muster? Only those in whom Christ lives. When we
7 are saved, born again, Jesus comes into our lives. It is His life within us that saves us
8 from hell. The sinner may protest on that day, "But I am as good as my pastor!" And
9 God will respond, "But as you as good as my Son Jesus?"

10
11 Here is the reality: A person will not be sent into Hell because of what he did...he will
12 be sent there for who he was—an unrighteous sinner in whom the Spirit of God does not
13 dwell.

14
15 In Revelation 20:14, Satan gets his sentence! "Death and hell were cast into the lake of
16 fire." No one in hell is going to worship Satan. He will be a condemned sinner just
17 like anyone else outside of Christ. Everything Satan has ever touched will suffer a fiery
18 demise. Once again, as it was in the Garden of Eden, all power and dominion and
19 majesty will belong to God.

20
21 In fact, Paul reminds us in Philip. 2:9-11: **Wherefore God also hath highly exalted**
22 **him, and given him a name which is above every name: [10] That at the name of**
23 **Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things**
24 **under the earth; [11] And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is**
25 **Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** My friend, those who suffer in Hell will have
26 regular worship services before the King...only their worship will be demanded and will
27 have no affect whatsoever on their eternal deliverance. Can you comprehend at all the
28 chagrin of Satan - who has opposed Jesus at every turn - having to worship his Master day
29 after day - forever?

HELL

30
31
32
33 Hell will be a place of eternal torment. For one thing there will be the forever memory
34 of every altar call ignored, of every personal witness given set aside. Can you even
35 imagine the torture of an awakened conscience in Hell?

36
37 *Conscience is indestructible; it is eternal. Look at the oceans. Some day they will run*
38 *dry for they are not eternal. Look at the stars; one day they will dwindle and go out*
39 *like dying candles. The very universe is destined for a deep, unmarked grave in the*
40 *black abyss of space. But conscience is immortal; it is everlasting; it is co-existent*

1 *with your never-dying soul. When you spend your last hour on this earth you will hear*
2 *its voice. In eternity it will stand with you before God and make excuse impossible.*
3 *Conscience will remind you of your every evil deed and thought when you stand at the*
4 *Judgment.*

5
6 *This one thing I know about Hell; conscience will be there and will set up his pulpit to*
7 *preach to the damned. I know his text. It will be, "Son, Daughter remember." He*
8 *will stand there pointing a finger at Judas. "You had three and one-half years to make*
9 *up your mind, Judas. You fool! You fool! The others are in Glory, rejoicing, glad*
10 *forever, and you are bound in these chains."*

11
12 *Pilate will be there. Conscience will say, "Pilate, you had God's Son standing right*
13 *before you. You craven! You coward! You spineless man! You said He was*
14 *innocent. You could have been a disciple, a ransomed soul. Now you are in chains*
15 *forever."*

16
17 *Consider yourself, my friend. Do I see you there with conscience preaching to you*
18 *about this Bible study and every sermon you ever heard and your mother's prayers and*
19 *your Christian father's counsel?*

20
21 *Conscience has been given to you to lead you to Christ and you cannot get away from*
22 *him now. You can avoid that preacher....you can run from your church....you can*
23 *duck into a dark alley when you see a Christian witness walk down the street. You do*
24 *not have to listen to them. But there is one you cannot escape – your conscience!*

25 GOD'S LOST AND FOUND DEPARTMENT / JACK SHULER/BACK TO THE BROADCAST/ PAGES 15-16
26

27 Oh good friend, the inhabitants of Hell will recognize the Savior they refused to
28 acknowledge on earth. Now there will be eternal separation of the soul from God! Even
29 in the fire, while acknowledging that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of the Father,
30 they will yet be separated from Him, never to see His face, to enjoy His blessings and His
31 provision. There will be no fellowship with Him.

32
33 Are there degrees of punishment in Hell? From scripture and sheer logic I believe so,
34 just as there will be degrees of reward in Heaven. The Bible declares:

35
36 Matthew 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels;
37 and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

38
39 Romans 2:5-7 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto
40 thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of
41 God; [6] Who will render to every man according to his deeds: [7] To them who by

1 **patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality,**
2 **eternal life:**

3
4 **Proverbs 24:12 If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth**
5 **the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall**
6 **not he render to every man according to his works?**

7
8 **NOTE CAREFULLY HERE: WORKS ARE NOT THE CRITERIA FOR**
9 **SALVATION. BUT WORKS ARE THE CRITERIA FOR REWARDS:**

10
11 **I Cor. 3:10-15 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise**
12 **masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let**
13 **every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. [11] For other foundation can no**
14 **man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. [12] Now if any man build upon this**
15 **foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; [13] Every man's work**
16 **shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by**
17 **fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. [14] If any man's work**
18 **abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. [15] If any man's**
19 **work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by**
20 **fire.**

21
22 **But what about degrees of punishment?**

23
24 **The other day my group of pilgrims and I stood in the ruins of the synagogue in ancient**
25 **Chorazin (a little town just north of the Sea of Galilee). There Jesus declared:**

26
27 **Matthew 11:21-24 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the**
28 **mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they**
29 **would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. [22] But I say unto you, It**
30 **shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. [23]**
31 **And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to**
32 **hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in**
33 **Sodom, it would have remained until this day. [24] But I say unto you, That it shall**
34 **be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.**

35
36 **The writer to the Hebrews also gave us some insight into this: Hebrews 10:29**

37 **Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath**
38 **trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant,**
39 **wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit**
40 **of grace?**

1 Notice as well Peter's stinging indictment against backslidden and unrepentant former
2 believers: 2 Peter 2:20-21 **For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world**
3 **through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again**
4 **entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the**
5 **beginning. [21] For it had been better for them not to have known the way of**
6 **righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment**
7 **delivered unto them.**

8
9 So....does the Bible teach degrees of reward in Heaven? Yes, it does. Does it also teach
10 degrees of punishment in Hell? Yes, it does. The good news is that Heaven's offer of
11 salvation remains open to everyone. No one HAS to go to Hell but everyone DOES have
12 the opportunity to go to Heaven.

13
14
15 Next Wednesday: Part 18 of our series.