

Note

Revelation – Part 12 of 15

Summary

Revelation chapter 20 focuses on the beginning of the reign of Jesus Christ on the earth with the Millennial Kingdom. It describes the Great White Throne Judgment, the judgment of all the dead who have rejected Jesus Christ as their Saviour. All who believe in and follow Jesus Christ are welcomed into the Millennial Kingdom. Jesus Christ brings justice through His righteous final judgment and final victory of the end times.

Transcript

Revelation – Part 12 of 15

We've come to Revelation Chapter 20. This is the section on the great white throne judgement. This is the only time this judgement is mentioned, there is no other reference to the great white throne judgement in any other part of the Bible. This is the only mention of this terminology. Now, what is this judgement? This is the judgment of everyone who died without knowing and trusting Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior. It's a general judgment.

The event just prior to this one was the end of the Millennial Kingdom - Satan is released, his deception, and then he's thrown into the lake of fire to join the antichrist and the false prophet. Very soon they will be joined by all kinds of people who didn't like to believe God, wanted nothing to do with God. God grants them their wish; they will not be with God, which is what they wanted. They wanted the Theory of Evolution, they wanted all those theories that say, "There is no God, it's only a figment of your imagination", whether it's communism, evolution, or whatever philosophy. So the Great White Throne Judgement is the judgment of all the dead who have rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior. Now, when is this done? After the Millennial Kingdom, after Satan is thrown into the lake of fire.

Now, let's look at this term "Great White Throne Judgment". It's called "great" because there's no other word to describe it. Because the one going to sit on it is the great one, the creator of the world.

Revelation 20:11 ESV

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it.

Who is the Him? We look at John Chapter 5.

John 5:21-22

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgement to the Son.

John 5:27

And He has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

Why does God Himself not sit on the throne and judge? Why does He give it to Christ? Because He is the Son of Man, John 5:27 says that. The perfect Man judges men. Fair! He's the one who did His very best to give us the best, a chance to escape from this judgement to receive His righteousness, took the penalty for sins and gave us His righteousness, the greatest transaction on the cross. So now, He finally sits as Son of Man to judge you.

Jesus Christ, the creator of the world, the Savior of the world sits on the Great White Throne Judgment. Why a white throne? Usually thrones are gold, signifying royalty. White because it's holiness. He's going judge you by His holy standards. Everybody will be judged by God's holy standards. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." You don't judge yourself by your standards. Everybody say, "I'm not that bad." Who says that? You said it or God said it? Do you ever enter any place by your own standards? Do you enter Harvard by your own standards? Enter a university by your own standards? Enter a company by (your own

standards)? You have to enter by the standard of the one who is in charge. If you want to go to eternity, you have to enter by His standard which is a different standard from yours. It's white, pure white; one sin you are out. You say then, "Who can enter?" Only those clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, who has received His righteousness as much as Christ has received our sins on the cross, we have received His righteousness. Are you pure white on that day? "Pure white, yes, not by my works but by Christ's righteousness. He gave me His righteousness." It's a throne. The King decides who comes into His Kingdom. It's a day of judgment. So Great White Throne Judgment. All of us are going to be judged against God's perfect standards, and nobody can get in except those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior.

Where will this judgment take place? Let's go back to Revelation Chapter 20 and see.

Revelation 20:11.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. From His presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

Peter said to us, "Heaven and Earth will pass away." The old heaven and the old earth will just melt away. That was in the book of Peter.

So where is this judgement going take place? It's not on this earth, it's gone. It has fled from His presence. It disappeared, heaven and earth disappeared. And then in Revelation (Chapters) 21 and 22, we see the new heaven and the new earth. So where is this going to take place? We don't know, but not in this old earth, not in the old heaven.

Look at Revelation 20:12.

And I saw that dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.

How can the dead stand up? They stand up because they are resurrected. So we see, this is what we call “the second resurrection”.

Let's look at Revelation 20:5.

The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.

So it tells us there was a first resurrection at the end of verse 5, it says, “This is the first resurrection.” The first resurrection - all those who have received Christ as their Savior and the martyrs who died for Christ during the Great Tribulation. That was the first resurrection, before the Millennial Kingdom, so that they could rule in the Millennial Kingdom. In other words, the ones who would be brought into the Millennial Kingdom - the dead in Christ, and the martyrs who died for Christ will be resurrected in their new bodies into the Millennial Kingdom. That's the first resurrection. 1000 years later, those who didn't receive Christ, will be resurrected, that is the second resurrection which we are reading of right now. Look at Revelations 20:12 again. “I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne.” Resurrected to stand before the throne and books were opened.

The words “great and small” speak of everybody, all classes of people. People, you thought were great, who didn't trust Christ, thought they were moral, thought they were religious, thought they were Christians; great in their own mind but didn't have Christ; all will stand before God. And many will be shocked. Matthew Chapter 7 says, “Many will say to the Lord, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, cast out demons in Thy name, done wonderful works (another word for miracles) in Thy name?” And Jesus said, “I never knew you, depart from Me.”

What are these books? Later you see “a book of life” but here “books”. These are the accounts kept of every single deed man has done. Everything that they have done will be judged on that day. For you and me, all that we will be judged on is everything that Christ has done, that is put into our account.

Have you ever been a poor man and someone put a lot into your account? Let's say Bill Gates died and decided to put everything in your account. You will be very rich. Christ died and put everything, all His righteousness into my account. I have only Christ's good works because He took my bad works on the cross, He paid the penalty for those. You can't judge me twice for the same crime. So, here we have books opened. And then, I guess if your deeds are worse, then your torment in the lake of fire is going to be worse.

Then another book (not “books”) was opened, which is the book of life.

What is the book of life? It's mentioned 7 times in Revelation. And only once outside of Revelation, in Philippians 4:3. I believe that when you're born, your name is put in the Book of Life, you have been given biological life. Sometime in your life, if you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, then you not only have biological life but now your name is left there, in the Book of Life forever. But if at the end of your life, you've never trusted Jesus Christ as Savior, biologically at the day of your death, your name is taken out of the Book of Life. You have no more life, so your name is taken out from the Book of Life. If you have Jesus Christ, the day you died, and during that period you have Jesus Christ as your Savior, then your name is left there permanently because, now not only you have biological life, which you had during your lifespan, but now you have eternal life, and God leaves your name in there in the Book of Life. That's what I believe it is. But if you don't have Jesus Christ, then the day you die, it's erased. How can

you be in the Book of Life? You're dead! I believe it means just that. Some people have other thoughts, but to me, it's as simple as that. Your name is there on your birth, and if you trusted Jesus as your Savior, your name will be there forever, even after this life.

Revelations 20:12

Then another book was open, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they have done.

So for those who didn't have Jesus Christ, they will be judged according to what their deeds were. Those who have Jesus Christ will be judged according to what deeds they received from Jesus Christ, imputed to them, put into their account, just as our sins were put into His account on the cross. Amazing transaction. There is no other way for anyone to stand before a holy God. However good you are compared to others, you will be judged by God's standards, which are perfect, at the Great White Throne judgement.

Revelation 20:13.

And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each of them, according to what they had done.

The word "Hades" is just the realm of the dead, we don't know where that is. When you die, your physical body may be eaten by the fish, or worms, or birds. Where is your flesh? I don't know, but at the end God will gather everything together and you will rise up. And then, you will stand before this Great White Throne Judgment, no escape. You have to stand, no running away.

Revelations 20:14

Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.

All these area people in the second resurrection. First resurrection, all who have gone through the Millennial Kingdom, they will not face this second death. They faced the first death. What's the first death? It was the separation from your body. What's the second death? Separation from God, forever and ever, thrown into the lake of fire, which is another word for hell.

Revelation 20:15

And if anyone's name was not found written the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

So, on that day, the day you died and you did not receive Jesus, your name is erased from the Book of Life and you go into the lake of fire. If you received Jesus during your lifetime and you died, it's okay. He promised you eternal life, "Whosoever believes in Me shall not perish but have eternal life." So your name is still there in the Book of Life and you wouldn't be thrown into the lake of fire. That is called the second death, separated from God forever and ever.

I hope this helps us in our understanding because many people are confused - When do we rise? When are we judged? As a Christian, how are we judged? We are judged by Christ who sees the righteousness of Christ, perfect righteousness, you're welcomed into the Millennial Kingdom. If you have laboured hard, been faithful, you will get more responsibility and more opportunities and more joy in the Millennial Kingdom. So, prepare yourself for the Millennial Kingdom and for the eternal New Heaven and New Earth.

For the ones who have never received Jesus, you'll be judged by your works, not for what responsibility you will have, but for what level of judgment you will have in the lake of fire. So the first resurrection - those who were saved, and those who were martyred for Christ in the Great Tribulation. Second resurrection after the Millennial Kingdom - everyone who died but never received Christ. They will face the Great White Throne Judgment. The lake of fire is just hell. The Book of Life is your name, when the day you were born, it's recorded, just like you have a registry of births, you're recorded there. On the day you die, you don't exist in that registry of births, don't exist as a citizen anymore, your name goes off the citizenship list, you're dead. But if you have Christ, then you have eternal citizenship. Your name will always be in the Book of Life, and you will not be thrown into the lake of fire. I hope this helps to clarify the final judgment of God.

He gave you all the chances through your lifetime and this is the judgment. For those who don't want to have anything to do with God, their wish will be granted in full measure.

We have finished Revelation Chapter 20. Now we come to the best part in the next section, the New Heaven and New Earth.