

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

REVELATION 20:11-15

Text:

Introduction:

The world is filled with people who live as though God did not exist. They live as though they will never face God in judgment. What they hope for will never come to pass. These verses tell us about judgment day. They speak about that terrible day when every lost sinner will face the Lord in judgment. There will be nowhere to hide on that day. No one will hide behind excuses, ignorance, false professions, etc. Everyone will face Jesus Christ as Lord and Judge and they will all receive a just sentence for their sins.

Notice the facts surrounding this judgment – “The Great White Throne Judgment.”

1. THE JUDGE AND THE GREAT WHITE THRONE (VSS. 11)

Revelation 20:11

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

A. The Picture in this Throne

There are two adjectives used to describe this throne.

1. It's called "Great"

This word refers to "its power". When judgment is rendered from this throne, there is no appeal.

2. It's called "White"

This speaks of "the purity" of this court. The Judge who occupies this bench is infallible. He cannot be tainted by sin or prejudice, but He renders judgment in perfect righteousness and fairness.

B. The Person on this Throne

The Bible tells us that this throne is occupied by a Person. However, His identity is not revealed here. The Bible tells us in other places just Who is on this throne.

1. His Name

The man on this throne is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

John 5:22

²² For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

John 5:27

²⁷ And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

John 5:30

³⁰ I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Acts 10:40-42

⁴⁰ Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; ⁴¹ Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead.

2 Timothy 4:1

¹ I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2. His Nature

This is no lowly Nazarene Who occupies this throne.
This is not a poor, humble carpenter. This is a
resurrected conqueror. This is the King of Kings and the
Lord of Lords. His appearance is described for us by the
prophet Daniel.

Daniel 7:9-10

⁹ I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him,

and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

His presence is so terrible and powerful that even the heavens and the earth flee from before Him. Nature has the good sense to bow before this judge!

The Bible tells us here that there was found no place for the heavens and the earth to hide from the gaze of the One on the throne. It needs to be remembered that this righteous Judge sees all and He knows all. There is no sin hidden from Him and no thought has ever been concealed. There will be no pretending and no pretense on that great judgment day, but only a sure recounting of every sinful deed and every sinful thought.

Luke 8:17

¹⁷ For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

Ecclesiastes 12:14

¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

2. JUSTICE AND THE GREAT WHITE THRONE (VSS. 12-13)

Revelation 20:12-13

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³ And the

sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

A. The Defendants Appearing at the Throne

Here we are told that those appearing before the throne are the “dead”. This proves that there will not be a single born again believer in the group. Why? The Bible tells us that we who have trusted Jesus as our Saviour have “**passed from death unto life**”

Note also that this group includes all the spiritually dead! God raises their dead bodies from their tombs. He knows where every particle of human dust is located and He is well able to bring it together and raise it to life.

Every person who has ever died without Jesus Christ will face Him in this Judgment on that day!

B. The Documents Used At the Throne

The Bible tells us here that the “books” will be opened. Only one of these books is named and it is called the “book of life.”

I don't know all the books that will be used that day, but I am sure of a few that will be opened.

Some of the books that will be opened are:

1. The Bible

Jesus Himself reminded us that we would be judged out of His Word.

John 12:48

⁴⁸ He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

This Bible that sinners mock and refuse to heed will be used to render judgment upon their lives that day.

2. The Book of Works

In Heaven, a record is being maintained of the deeds of all men. One day, every lost person will stand before the Lord and hear the record of his life read from the throne. Every deed, both good and evil will be mentioned.

Revelation 20:12

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

C. The Decision Made at the Throne

Revelation 20:13

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

The last phrase in verse 13 tells it all. When these books are opened, judgment is rendered based on the evidence found in the books. You can be sure that the evidence is accurate, and that the record is complete.

Every person will stand on his own! Regardless of the excuse they use to justify not trusting Christ as their Saviour, in that day you will stand under judgment by yourself! It won't make any difference who hurt you, who stood in your way, what hypocrite you looked at, or whatever. It will come down to you and the Judge the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. JUDGMENT AND THE GREAT WHITE THRONE (VSS. 14-15)

Revelation 20:14-15

¹⁴ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

A. A Fearful Judgment

The sentence rendered from this bench is “**Death**”. Not just physical death, but the second death which is eternal separation from God in the fires of the Lake of Fire.

2 Thessalonians 1:9-10

⁹ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; ¹⁰ When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all

them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

This death involves no dying! There will be no end to the torment, to the hell, to the awful nature of what the sinner will face. It will be an eternal state of dying apart from the presence of God or anything good! It will be Hell! It is the “death” Paul refers to in Rom. 6:23 as the “wages of sin”.

Imagine the horror of hearing Jesus say the words that will condemn you to eternal torment! Imagine hearing Him say,

Matthew 25:41

⁴¹ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

B. A Final Judgment

There will be no appeals; all judgments rendered from this bench will be final and they will be binding. This will be the last day any of these sinners ever see. This will be the end of the road for them, for they are forever consigned to the Lake of Fire to suffer torment for eternity!

C. A Foolish Judgment

It is foolish only in the sense that it did not have to happen! Any sinner, who is willing to repent and turn

to Jesus alone, by faith alone, can be eternally saved. The precious blood Jesus shed on Calvary is sufficient to the saving of any sinner who calls upon Him.

Romans 10:13

¹³For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Close:

I think that this is the most horrible scene mentioned in the Bible. I think the concept of people perishing forever is terrible beyond description. However, as horrible as it is, it is true nonetheless!

If you have never been saved, you need to come to Jesus.

To those of us who are saved, this passage reminds us of the terrible need of the world around us. If nothing else, it ought to move us to come before the Lord and cry out for the souls of our friends, neighbors and loved ones who need to trust Christ as their Saviour.