

CHAPTER TWENTY

As I just mentioned on the previous page we will see four outstanding things here in **Chapter 20** as well as the largest collection of *Graphic Artwork*, *seven in total*, contained thus far in any of our previous chapters.

1. The binding of Satan, He will be put in prison for one thousand years. We might say he will be placed in God's penitentiary, (**Verses 1-3**)
2. The reign of Christ and the saints of one thousand glorious years. (**Verses 4-6**)
3. Satan will be loosed for a little season to test those who have been born during the Millennium. He makes his last drive to conquer the world and overthrow God. He comes to utter defeat and meets his eternal doom. (**Verses 7-10**)
4. In the last part of the chapter we see the judgment of the wicked dead. There are no righteous dead — only the wicked dead. The righteous have already been judged for their stewardship, and have received their rewards at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

One of the most disputed, discussed and misunderstood events covered in the book of **Revelation** is that of the Millennium. The reign of Christ along with the saints has been maligned, and misrepresented by many of my counterparts who over the years have attempted to discuss it. It is simply my hope that we can enjoy and receive the account given to John by Christ for our edification as His children. For if we can, then truly we can grow thereby. At this point in my endeavor to complete our study I have already begun to look at the wonderful Scriptures that are quoted during the upcoming Christmas season (2007 which I believe could be the last one upon this earth), wherein I have received my first Christmas card and the quote follows, for it is more pertinent than one would even venture to think at this point in our study.

Chapter 20 introduces us to the most beautiful, peaceful, and rewarding age this world will ever know—the Millennium, or the one-thousand-year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ as **KING OF KINGS; AND LORD OF LORDS**. *He will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end (Isaiah 9:6-7).*

Before beginning our study of this chapter, may I take a moment to refute the reasoning of critics who deny this doctrinal truth? Those who oppose the teaching of a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ upon earth are in direct opposition to the Word of God! Their claim that the doctrine is dangerously built on a single chapter of the Bible proves that they are not good students of God's Holy Word, for many passages both teach and reflect this truth. Let's investigate.

First of all, if Israel has no future, dozens of Old Testament prophecies immediately go down the drain.

For example, **Genesis 49** and **Deuteronomy 33**, with all of their benedictions upon the people of Israel, must be scrapped if there is no place upon earth where they find fulfillment. To spiritualize or allegorize the literal truths concerning Israel's future is to be willfully blinded. I have spent thousands of hours in God's Book and could never honestly or intellectually arrive at such a conclusion.

Secondly, there must be a Millennium, or scores of verses become hollow platitudes of meaningless predictions. Consider the following texts—they could never depict heaven because they occur on earth. If so, there must be a time and place for their fulfillment, because none of them has yet occurred.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb (as nature is tamed) (Isaiah 11:6).

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid (Micah 4:4).

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness (Isaiah 32:1).

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44).

The Lord... shall suddenly come to his temple (Malachi 3:1).

Ezekiel describes this Temple, built and located upon the earth (see **Ezekiel 40-48**). Israel will be the head—not the tail—of the nations in that day (see **Zechariah 8:23**).

And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them (Isaiah 65:21).

The Lord Jesus Christ referred to the period of time during which these events take place as the regeneration. *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19: 28)*. Likewise, Peter declared, *And [God] shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3: 20-21)*.

The word *restitution* means “a reconstitute” and is similar to the regeneration of **Matthew 19:28**. In addition, Paul stated in **Ephesians 1:21** that there is an age *which is to come*. This same age is called *the dispensation of the fulness of times (Ephesians 1:10)*. Again these terms refer to the rule of Christ and His people over the earth—not angels, as the spiritualizers would have us believe. Angels ruling the earth is an impossibility, *for unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come (Hebrews 2:5)*. Instead, *the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men (Daniel 4:17)*. The title, *the most High* [God], or *the most High* is Christ’s millennial title throughout the **Psalms**, the Book of **Daniel**, and the Book of **Hosea**. The *most High* [God] will also bear the title *King of Israel* in that day (**John 1:49**). All upon earth will obey Him for [He] *shall break them with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9)*. The result: *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power (Psalm 110:3)*. Earth’s inhabitants will love the Lord Jesus so much during the kingdom age that *daily shall he be praised (Psalm 72:15)*. Yes, *His name shall endure forever (Psalm 72:17)*.

The center of all this kingdom activity is Jerusalem, not heaven’s golden shores. Proof? *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion (Psalm 2:6)*. *Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3)*. [They] *shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem (Isaiah 27:13)*. *And the Redeemer shall come to Zion (Isaiah 59:20)*. *The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem (Joel 3:16)*. *Thus saith the Lord...I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem (Zechariah 8:3)*. *Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem (Zechariah 8:22)*.

The preceding evidence is proof enough! Only the spiritually blind can deny the fact of a literal Millennium. Only the willfully ignorant can claim that the teaching is based on just one chapter of the Bible. Our brief review has but touched the hem of the garment concerning millennial truth. Believe God, not men. Now, since *mille* means “thousand” and *annum* means “years,” let’s begin our study of **Chapter 20** which presents the *mille-annum*, Millennium, or the one-thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth.

I. SATAN BOUND AND PLACED IN PRISON FOR ONE THOUSAND YEARS.

Verses 1-3

A. *Verse 1: And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

1. What a victorious sight John now sees—an angel coming from heaven with a key and a chain in his hand for the purpose of opening the bottomless pit and binding Satan for one thousand years.



2. Some scholars believe the angel to be Christ himself because he has the keys of hell and death (**Revelation 1:18**). This is a distinct possibility. However, one who possesses keys often loans them to another when help is needed. Thus, the angel might be Michael, the archangel. The important observation here is that Christ’s ownership of the keys—which open the pit of the abyss for Satan—is by virtue of His completed work upon Calvary’s cross. Remember His statement “*I am he that liveth, and was dead; [Calvary]; and, behold, I am alive for evermore [the Resurrection], Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. (Revelation 1:18)*”
3. There could be no Millennium as long as Satan is loose. The chain carried by the angel is used to bind the villain of the ages—for a thousand years. The next verse gives us a greater understanding of his true nature and identity as known through the ages—

B. **Verse 2:** *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

1. What horrid titles the evil one bears!
 - a. *Dragon*, in Hebrew, pictures a hideous monster.
 - b. The term *old serpent* portrays the slithering snake who brought ruination upon the entire human race through his deceitful work in the Garden of Eden (see **Genesis 3:1-6**).
 - c. *Satan* means “slander,” for he is *the accuser of [the] brethren* as we learned in **Revelation 12:10**, and he is also the father of slanderers and gossips (see **John 8:44**).
 - d. *Devil* means “adversary” or “foe,” and surely Satan has been a foe of Christ and His followers until this present moment in our text.
2. Now, at last, he is cast into the *bottomless pit*, shut up and sealed for a Millennium (**Verse 3**).
 - a. We learn from the names given that Satan is a person, and not just an influence or principle of evil.
 - b. The binding of Satan reveals to us the fact that Almighty God can stop the devil at the appointed time. He can stop him without armies.

bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

1. Satan will be shut up in an inescapable pit.
 - a. The *bottomless pit* is not the *lake of fire* into which the beast and false prophet were cast in **Revelation 19:20**.
 - b. It is a temporary prison where Satan is incarcerated for ten centuries in order that peace, prosperity, happiness, and holiness may exist on earth during Christ’s millennial reign.



The Dragon Chained (**Revelation 20:3**)

- c. At the end of this time, he is *loosed* [for] *a little season*, leads one final revolt against God, and is subsequently cast into the eternal *lake of fire...where the beast and the false prophet are* (**Revelation 20:10**)
- 2. After the Millennium he will be loosed for a short time. Why?
 - a. Those who were born during the Millennium must be tested or tempted,
 - b. Satan will offer to these people the same thing he has offered all through the ages.
 - (1) He offered it to Adam and Eve.
 - (2) He offered it to Jesus.
 - (3) Satan will offer power and glory in one last attempt to overthrow God.
 - (4) Many will rally behind Satan in his final attempt.

II. THE REIGN OF CHRIST DURING THE MILLENNIUM - *Verses 4-6*

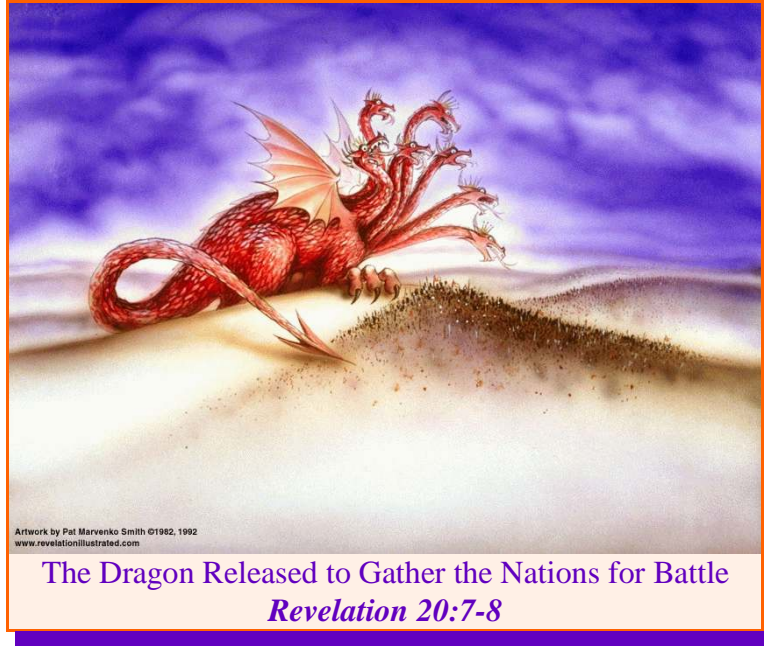
- A. **Verse 4:** *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*
 - 1. John now observes thrones occupied for judgment. Who sits upon them?
 - a. Members of the first resurrection—which includes the Old Testament saints, Church Age saints.
 - (1) The resurrection of the Old Testament believers is described in **Daniel 12:1-2**.
 - (2) The resurrection of New Testament saints in **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18** and **1 Corinthians 15:15-54**.
 - b. Tribulation saints.
 - (1) As we have seen, the resurrection of the martyred Tribulation saints undoubtedly occurs at the *glorious appearing of Christ* (**Titus 2:13**) when He returns to earth.
 - (2) **Revelation 6:9-11**, presented this view. At that point these martyrs awaited their resurrection but were told to wait *yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled*.
 - 2. Thus, we see that the thrones are occupied by resurrected believers from Adam onward, inclusive of the last Tribulation martyrs.

3. Each has been a participant in the first resurrection, that resurrection provided by Calvary, should Christ be crucified again?
 - a. These saints are entitled to sit upon thrones because they are members of the *royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9)*.
 - b. Christ has made them *kings and priests (Revelation 5:10)*.
 - c. Be careful to note that John first sees the souls of the butchered, and in the same verse... “*they lived.*” The resurrection takes place immediately after the marriage supper of the Lamb, and just before the beginning of the Millennium.
- B. **Verse 5:** *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*
1. The closing sentence of this verse, *This is the first resurrection*, should have been the conclusion of **Verse 4**.
 - a. The transition from **verse 4** to **verse 5** would then be:
And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. [This is the first resurrection.] But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.
 - b. This clarifies the issue.
 - c. The dead of **Verse 5**—raised a thousand years later— could not be part of the first resurrection (those of **verse 4**)—because...
 2. In other words, the “resurrection of the first” is mentioned in **Luke 14: 13-14**, and the “resurrection of life” is definitely distinguished from the “resurrection unto damnation” in **John 5:29**.
 3. Here in **Revelation 20:5** we learn for the first time the interval that separates the two resurrections —one thousand years!
 - a. As previously indicated, when Jesus comes in the Rapture, only the righteous will be raised. (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**)
 - b. When He comes in the end of the ages, only the wicked will be raised and will appear before the Great White Throne Judgment to be judged.
 - c. The doctrine of a general resurrection - a time when the good and the bad, just and unjust are raised - is certainly disproved by this text.
 - d. In **John 5:28-29** we read, “*Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*”
 - e. Not one saint of God will be raised in the last resurrection.

4. There is a resurrection of the just which is the first resurrection but the unforgiven sinner will not have any part of this first resurrection. (From Adam to the Rapture to the end of the Tribulation all participate in the first resurrection and yes it does include the martyred saints of tribulation.)
- C. *Verse 6: Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*
1. Since the remaining dead come forth one thousand years later, we immediately understand that they cannot be part of the first resurrection.
 - a. Those who take part in the first resurrection reign with Christ during the Millennium, while the members of this group remain in their graves.
 - b. They, in turn, are raised for the Great White Throne Judgment after the 1,000 years.
 - c. This is simply a reminder of what we have learned from the previous verse.
 2. When Christ comes at the Rapture of the church He will bring with Him the spirits or souls of the redeemed. At that resurrection the old body will be reunited with the soul and the person will be given a new body. They (or we) shall reign with Christ for a thousand years...
 3. Then the Kingdom (the Millennium) will begin - a time of peace when Jesus shall reign. Why? The Bible says so and I simply trust in that. I exhausted my argument at the onset of this chapter and since I am a person of faith I believe that the power of the Word of God will stand upon It's own. The Bible says what It means and means what It says! It does not need mine nor that of any other student to try to defend It for it needs no defense!

III. SATAN IS LOOSED FOR A LITTLE SEASON: DOOM OF GOG AND MAGOG: DOOM OF SATAN

A. *Verses 7-8: And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, ⁽⁸⁾ And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. ⁽⁹⁾ And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*



1. We learn that when the 1,000 years are expired, Satan will be set free for awhile.
2. This portion of Scripture has caused many people great concern. They ask, “Why should Satan be loosed for a short season? What purpose could God have in unchaining this monster after one thousand years of blessed peace?” The answer is, “The free will of man.”
3. All persons who enter the Millennium are redeemed people (*Isaiah 60:21* and *Joel 2:28*).
 - a. One must remember that procreation still takes place during this era of time because those who survived the Tribulation hour enter the Millennium with human bodies.
 - b. The believers upon the thrones possess resurrected bodies and do not bear children, but the others do. Consequently, the children born during this one-thousand-year period are born with the old Adamic, or sin, nature which has been an inherent part of man ever since the fall of Adam and Eve.
 - c. Many of them, of course, accept Christ as their personal Saviour, but many do not!
 - (1) In addition, since Satan is bound, there is little to tempt them.
 - (2) They simply do not face the problems and trials which have confronted mankind in past ages.

- (3) Satan's release, then, is to determine whether or not Christ is real to these children of the Millennium, or whether they have been submissive simply because He ruled *with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15)*.
4. The truth is revealed as millions follow the devil. Yes!
- a. Even after living with the Lord Jesus Christ for ten centuries, much of mankind rebels. *Verses 8-9* inform us that Satan deceives the nations internationally (pictured by the four corners of the earth), and gathers them together for one last battle.
 - b. The army is gigantic in number...*as the sand of the sea*.
 - c. Once again the camp of God's people—the beloved city of Jerusalem—is surrounded, just as the armies of the Tribulation hour gathered against Jerusalem to battle (see *Zechariah 14:1*).
 - d. At that moment, in an instant, God destroys them all with a devouring fire from heaven.
5. To whom do the names Gog and Magog refer? In *Ezekiel 38* and *39*, they identify Russia. Not so in *Verse 8*.
- a. It is my impression that they most likely indicate the memory of past brutality—much like the names *Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, and Iraq* do today.
 - b. As Gog and Magog (Russia) invades Israel and comes against Jerusalem during the Tribulation hour, such an indelible impression is left upon all the world that now— one thousand years later—the details are still vivid.
 - c. Thus, this past war, fought in the same area, is brought to mind as Satan once again attempts to destroy Israel.
- B. *Verse 10: And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*
1. This is the end for the deceiver of the ages. He is cast into the place *prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41)*.
 - a. Many centuries were required for this slanderous culprit to reach his final destination.
 - b. Now that he has arrived, he will experience nothing but continual torment—day and night— for ever and ever. Amen!
 - c. The Beast and the false prophet are already in the lake of fire and now they are joined by the devil and all who follow him.

We need to digress for a moment at this point, because many persons—Christians included—harbor a misconception about hell. Whenever they see or hear the term, they picture a place where a little red-suited gremlin stokes the fires and torments his victims with a pitchfork. Satan is neither the stoker nor does he torment his followers—and, as we have observed, he does not enter hell until after the Millennium. As we have already learned, Satan is the *god of this world* [system] (**2 Corinthians 4:4**), the *prince of the power of the air* (**Ephesians 2:2**), and the ruler of heavens one and two—the aerial and stellar heavens. He retains this position until he is cast out of heaven (see **Revelation 12:7-9**). He then reigns on earth for the final forty-two months of the Tribulation period. Upon Christ’s return to earth, Satan is bound in the *bottomless pit*, and then, following the Millennium, is released for a short season. Finally, he is cast into hell, or *the lake of fire and brimstone*, where he is tormented for all eternity. An understanding of these truths is essential to both victorious living and correct interpretation of the Book of Revelation.

The length of time of this literal hell is forever day and night. What else can we say? The Bible speaks true.

We now come to the most awesome portion of Scripture in the entire Bible—the judgment of the wicked.

IV. THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

Verses 11-15

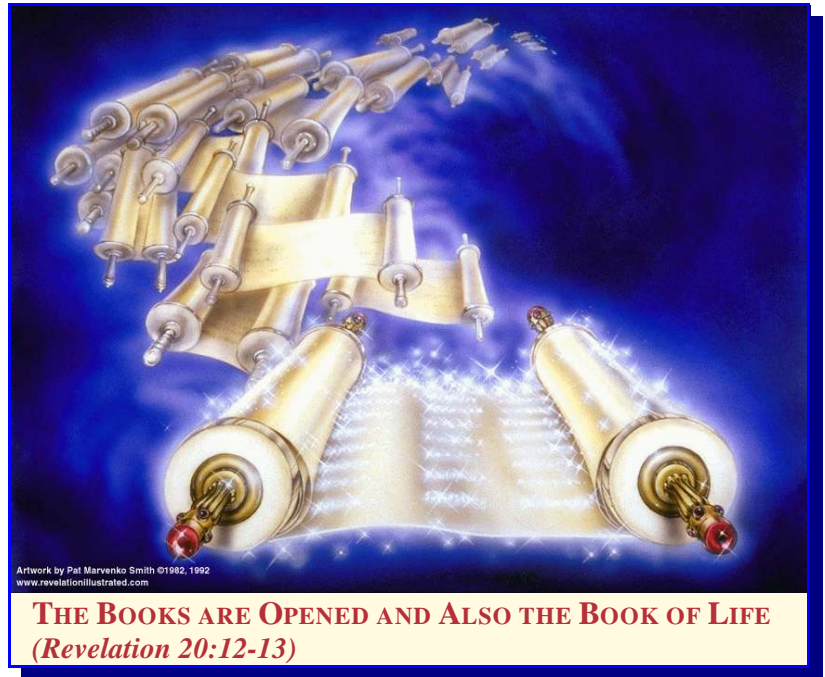
- A. **Verse 11:** *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*
1. This occurs at the end of the Millennium.
 2. The Judge is not named but we know Him to be the Christ. All judgment has been committed unto Him.
 3. Please notice, the earth and the heaven fled away - not disappeared. Upon the removal of the earth and the heaven, the stage is set for the heaven, the new earth and the pearly white city.
 4. I am sure all of us wonder what happens to the saved on the earth where are they during this change? God takes care of His own. The scripture is completely silent here and we dare not speculate; but God can preserve the righteous until the new earth, new heaven come into existence.



5. The Great White Throne Judgment is final and will have to do with all the wicked up through the last ungodly person to exist on this earth, and there will never be another ungodly person to invade the new heaven, earth, and Pearly White City.

B. **Verse 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.*

1. The dead referred to here are the spiritually dead . . . unbelievers, ungodly men.



2. All stand before God - all classes of men. -
3. The “*Books were opened...*” every person on earth has his life and history recorded in the books of God’s great bookkeeping system. Every thought, word and deed is recorded - nothing is forgotten.
4. Notice the “*books (plural) were opened.*”
 - a. One of deeds, etc.
 - b. The other the book of life.
5. They are judged from these books. (The chickens will come home to roost, and the skeletons are removed from the closet.)

C. **Verse 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.*

1. By “*death*” we are to understand that the grave will give up the bodies; and of course, the sea will give up the bodies that were buried at sea.
2. By “*hell*” we understand that the compartment (Hades) where the souls of the wicked dead will remain until the resurrection of the wicked, will deliver up the dead.

3. Let me point out here that all wicked spirits go immediately into *Hades* not *Gehenna* at death [both of which are translated as *hell* in our English Bible. I will discuss this in my final summary.
 4. At the Great White Throne the wicked will not be judged to see whether or not they are entitled to eternal life; that has already been settled. Here they will be judged to ascertain the degree of their punishment.
- D. **Verse 14:** *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*
1. “*The second death*” and “*the lake of fire*” are identical terms. Both terms are used to describe the eternal state of the wicked.
 2. There will be no more death in heaven but sadly enough neither will there be in hell. The second death, however, is not the destruction of the soul, for it will live in hell for eternity.
- E. **Verse 15:** *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*
1. Imagine the attempted persuasion because of good works and the search for the name and it isn’t there.
 2. God knows even the minute details of our life – so our own doings become the judgment which is the lake of fire.



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THE LAKE OF FIRE
Revelation 20:14-15

In closing I would like to make a few observations about the last five verses of this chapter.

Note, first of all, that once again John says, *I saw*. The term is found thirty-seven times in this book. What a privilege was his! This time he views the gloomiest hour of history—the judgment of the wicked—as well as Christ sitting upon a *white throne*. White is the symbol of purity, justice, and holiness in Scripture. *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white (Revelation 19:7–8).*

Since “white” stands for all that is honorable and right, what does it symbolize? Integrity—for Christ, Who is *the truth (John 14:6)*, is himself the Judge. Notice that the term is *Great White Throne*. This pictures a great judgment that is about to fall on those who have rejected the “so great salvation” question (see *Hebrews 2:3*).

How does one know that the tender, loving Jesus is the One who sits upon the throne as Judge? The answer is found in *John 5:22: For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son*. Again, the Father *hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man (John 5:27)*. The One raised from the dead—the Lord Jesus Christ—is the Judge, according to *Acts 17:31: [For] he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead*. That moment is now before us!

What a solemn scene as unregenerate mankind comes face to face with God for the investigation of all their evil deeds. Every transgressor is present: presidents and paupers, high society snobs and skid row derelicts. Yes, this group includes every Christ-rejecter of the ages, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond. *Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life [the first resurrection]; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [the resurrection for judgment] (John 5:28,29)*. Make no mistake about it, *there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust (Acts 24:15)*.

As the unsaved stand before a holy God, the books are opened. Yes, He has record of every wicked deed sinners have ever committed. Nothing remains hidden. Adultery, abortion, drunkenness, drug addiction, harlotry, hatred, lawlessness, murder, rebellion, sexual promiscuity, wife-swapping, and every other abominable practice is then exposed in detail.

How is all this possible? God is both omniscient (all knowing) and omnipotent (all-powerful). We find in *Psalms 139:1-2, O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising*. God knows everything about every member of the human race. God adds, *I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them (Ezekiel 11:5)*. I know when you have *eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin (2 Peter 2:14)*. I know when your tongue is about to curse, *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether (Psalm 139:4)*. *I the Lord search the heart (Jeremiah 17:10)*. This statement is extremely important, *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies (Matthew 15:19)*.

God's books will be totally accurate because He sees every move humans make: *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth (2 Chronicles 16:9)*. *All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do (Hebrews 4:13)*. That aborted fetus flushed into oblivion, that sex act in a parked car or motel room, that crooked deal for illegal gain—everything is indelibly inscribed in the journal of the Almighty bookkeeper. One cannot hide from God, whoever He may be! Furthermore, no mistakes will be made, for the dead will be judged *out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works*. We also see that every unbeliever will be present, for the bodies come forth from land and sea and the souls come from Hades (or hell). Then, body, soul, and spirit are reunited to stand before God.

Many have never realized that there is a time when the wicked are released from hell. This is not a new doctrine or man-made theory. However, for the moment, let's examine a few facts regarding this teaching.

The New Testament contains two Greek words—*Hades* and *Gehenna*—both of which are translated *hell* in our English Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ used both words repeatedly. Why two words? Are there two places? Yes! A simple illustration will help us understand.

Everyone knows the difference between a local jail and a penitentiary. When an individual is arrested for a crime, he is not placed in the penitentiary until he has had a trial. Instead, he is locked up in the local jail (city or county), where he awaits his trial. Then, upon being found guilty, he is transferred to the penitentiary, where he serves his sentence. The next statement is of extreme importance. Get it! When Jesus used the word *Hades*, He referred to the local jail—the place where the sinner is bound until the judgment morning. Then, on Judgment Day, the sinner comes out of the local jail (*Hades*), stands before the Judge (the Lord Jesus himself), is found guilty, and is subsequently transferred to the final penitentiary of souls (*Gehenna*). The lake of fire is usually synonymous with *Gehenna*.

The eleven instances where Christ mentioned *Hades* are as follows: ***Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:22,23; Acts 2:27; 2:31; 1 Corinthians 15:55; Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13; and Revelation 20:14.***

Gehenna is mentioned twelve times by the Saviour: ***Matthew 5:22; 5:29; 5:30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15; 23:33; Mark 9:43; 9:45; 9:47; Luke 12:5; and James 3:6.***

After studying the twenty-three texts, one observes that ***Verses 13 and 14*** of our present study now make perfect sense: *Death [the grave] and hell [Hades] delivered up the dead which were in them*. The plural pronoun “them” indicates two places: *the grave* and *Hades*—one for the body and the other for the soul. Next *they were judged every man according to his works* (that's the trial). Then *death and [Hades—Greek] were cast into the lake of fire [Gehenna—the final penitentiary]*.

Why are they transferred? *Gehenna* differs from *Hades* in that *Gehenna* is a place where there are degrees of suffering. After one has been examined and judged as to how much light he had (how often he heard the message of salvation and rejected it), he is assigned to this place called *Gehenna*, where there are degrees of suffering according to one's light and works. Thus, the final hell will differ for all, depending on one's evil deeds and the number of times he rejected Christ's offer of love.

Now we understand **Romans 2:5** a little better: *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up [storest up, savest up] unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath. This is why it shall be more tolerable [more bearable, more endurable] for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for [Capernaum] (Matthew 11:24).* What was Capernaum's sin? Capernaum had greater light since Christ visited the city and preached to her citizens. This is also why the Pharisees *receive the greater damnation (Matthew 23:14).*

Clearly, sinners are raised from *death* and *Hades*, judged by Christ at the Great White Throne, and then transferred to *Gehenna*. The "good news," however, is that none of this happens to those who are trusting in the merits of the shed blood of Jesus. When one trusts Christ, his name is written in the *book of life*. The judgment just discussed is only for those whose names are not found inscribed in the book (see *verse 15*). If one is saved, he need never be concerned about hell as his eternal destiny, for *he that believeth on [Christ] is not condemned (John 3:18)*. He is also *passed from death unto life (John 5:24)*. Thus, *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)*. Amen. The great judgment is only for those who participate in the final resurrection which occurs after the 1,000-year or millennial reign of Christ upon earth. Those who were raised prior to the Millennium are eternally secure, for *blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power (verse 6)*.

As we look ahead, what a wonderful future awaits every believer, and yet not so great a future for the non-believer.

We now move into the final two chapters of Revelation, Let us now on to

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE.