

SOME GOLDEN DAYBREAK

17 Sermons on the Second Coming of CHRIST

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Last Judgment

"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. 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. 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. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:11-15).

IN PREVIOUS messages we have considered the eternal doom of Satan. We first observed that he was chained in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, and then in Revelation 20:10 we have recorded the final doom of Satan: **"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."**

It has also been our pleasure to discuss the reign of CHRIST upon the earth. The length of this reign is given six times in the first seven verses of Revelation 20 - it is to be a thousand years. During this time the children of GOD will rule the earth with CHRIST. Paul said, **"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"** (I Corinthians 6:2).

The reign of CHRIST will be a time of universal righteousness, a time when wars and rumors of wars will not be known, and a period when even the instincts of wild beasts will be changed.

Following these tremendous events given in the first ten verses of Revelation 20, we have the account of the last judgment. There are four significant things to be said about this awful and solemn event.

I. This Is the Final Judgment

Some people want to make this a general judgment at the end of the world, but a careful study of the Word of GOD will show that this cannot be a true interpretation. The Word of GOD

mentions many judgments. For example, there is the judgment of the believer's sins in the cross of CHRIST. When we accept JESUS as Saviour, our eternal destiny is settled forever. We have passed from death unto life.

Again, there is the judgment of self. "**For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged**" (I Corinthians 11:31). The judgment seat of CHRIST is clearly portrayed in the Word of GOD. Read Romans 14:10-12 and I Corinthians 3:11-15. The judgment of living nations is given in Matthew 25. This judgment takes place at the revelation of CHRIST when He shall sit upon the throne of His glory. The test in this judgment is the treatment accorded by the nations to those whom CHRIST calls "**my brethren.**"

The great white throne judgment is the final scene before we come to read about the new heavens and the new earth. The awfulness of this judgment is seen in verse 11 of Revelation 20, "**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.**" When the great sea of faces stand before the Judge, the scene will be so awful that the heavens and the earth will vanish away. I think that we can refer also to Revelation 21:1, where we read, "**And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.**"

I believe there is also a very definite connection here with the passage in II Peter 3:10, "**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.**"

In my own interpretation of the Scripture I have never held to the idea that this earth is going to be purged by fire, but I have always received the plain teaching by the Word of GOD that this earth will be destroyed and will be burned by fire. I prefer to think of all of this as vanishing away, and in its place a new Heaven and a new earth.

One Bible commentator points out another fact about this judgment which is more than interesting. He says that the great white throne judgment is not a trial. Those who are judged are not asked questions. They are simply judged from the things that are written in the books, and accorded their punishment in Hell

It is a great white throne because the lost of the earth will stand before the LORD. It is a white throne, for it reveals the holiness and purity of our GOD. It is before such a throne that men will be gathered. The one who sits upon the throne will be CHRIST, for He said, "**For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father**" (John 5:22, 23).

We can be sure that all the persons of the Godhead are present at this serious occasion, but CHRIST will do the actual judging, for it has been committed unto Him by the FATHER.

II. This Is the Judgment of the Lost Dead

We have rejoiced over and over again at the prospect of the resurrection of the saved. Beautiful

pictures of this are given in I Corinthians 15 and I Thessalonians 4. John said, "**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**" (Revelation 20:6).

But let us not forget that the unsaved will also be resurrected. "**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God . . . 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.**"

This is the resurrection of the unsaved. This is the time when the graves will give up the bodies of the lost and when hades will surrender the spirits and souls of the lost. They will be reunited and will be brought to stand before the judgment of GOD.

The Word teaches the plain fact of two resurrections.

Notice Daniel 12:2:

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

In John 5:28,29 we read:

"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; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Paul speaks of the two resurrections in Acts 24:15:

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

The saved dead have already been raised and have entered into life with the LORD. Only the unsaved are left in the graves, and now they are brought forth to stand before the judgment throne.

Notice the words, "**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.**"

The great men of all times who refused the Saviour will be brought to judgment. And the small, forgotten individuals will stand there, too. Those who have been buried for many centuries, on land or sea, will come forth. Body, soul, and spirit will be united, and face the judge.

III. They Will Be Judged Out of the Books

"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." (Revelation 20:12).

The record books will be there. Every man's sins will be plainly written down. GOD will judge each man out of the record.

All sins will be brought to light, for remember, these are sinners who have not had their sins covered by the blood of JESUS. They know nothing of GOD's gracious forgiveness; therefore, every sin will be brought out to face them. The young who died without CHRIST will face their sins. The middle-aged and the old people will likewise see their lives pass before them.

Secret sins will be brought to light. There are things which you have done which no one knows about but GOD. He has it all written down in the record, and one day, if you die without CHRIST, you will face it. GOD's records are exact. He makes no mistakes.

Sins never committed openly will also be brought to light. JESUS said, "**But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart**" (Matthew 5:28). John tells us in I John 3:15, "**Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.**"

All of us were shocked by the account of the young man who took a revolver and killed twelve people in cold blood. Whether sane or insane, we do not know. It was a horrible thing. Let us beware. JESUS said, "**Whosoever hates his brother is a killer.**" You are guilty of murder!

Yes, all sins will be brought to light, but the greatest sin will be that of rejection of CHRIST. There is no sin so terrible as refusing the loving Saviour.

We notice that another book was opened, which is the book of life. If this is the judgment of the unsaved, then why should the book of life even be present? It is there as a record against the lost. Even in the last judgment there will doubtless be men who will insist that they are good and deserve Heaven. Perhaps the judge will permit them to search the book of life to see if their names are written down.

Sinner friend, remember this: You will have to face your record. Nothing will be omitted.

IV. The Outcome of This Judgment

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14, 15).

Will any be saved who stand before the great white throne? If the record be true, then none will be saved, for it says that death and hades will be cast into the lake of fire.

Will there be degrees of punishment in Hell? Yes, if GOD is to be just, then there will be a difference in the degree of punishment. In the giving of the parable of the steward and his servants in Luke 12, the Lord JESUS said:

"And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did

according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12: 47,48).

The Scripture says that men will be judged "**according to their works.**" There will be a difference, but it will all be Hell.

And now in conclusion let us notice one sentence in verse 14 of Revelation 20, "**This is the second death.**" Here is a statement of finality. The second death is the lake of fire. It is called the second death because it follows after the first death, or physical death. The second death is existence without life. It is eternal death, yet eternal existence. This is what is meant when we speak of the lost soul dying, yet continuing to exist. The second death is not annihilation, as some would try to teach and preach.

The second death means separation of the entire person from GOD. The first death has power to separate the soul from the body, but the second death has power to separate the entire man from GOD eternally. The second death kills all peace, joy, happiness, and hope forever. It is separation from GOD, from CHRIST, and from Heaven. It is separation from loved ones who are saved. I stood by a casket and listened to a wife murmur to the dead body of her husband, "It won't be long until we are together again." Yes, this is true in CHRIST, but without CHRIST there is eternal separation.

Last, the second death is a future certainty for the Christ-rejecter. There is no escaping from Hell for the man who has heard of CHRIST and refused to accept Him. Choose tonight where you will spend eternity. Will it be in the place prepared for the Devil and his angels, as pictured in Revelation 20, or will it be the glorious Heaven as pictured in Revelation 21? Receive CHRIST and make Heaven your home.

~ end of chapter 13 ~
