

## THE BOOK OF REVELATION

### "The Great White Throne"

Revelation 20:11-15

#### Introduction

1. Every dispensation (period of time in which God administers His purpose) has demonstrated the absolute sinfulness of man. Start with Eden and go right through to the end of the millennium. That statement is true.
2. To claim that natural heredity is the answer is wrong. Even some sort of genetic selection is bound to end in failure. Why? Because men are born sinners (Psa. 51:5; 58:3). There is no way to gain deliverance except through our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The provision of our Lord as the Substitute for sin is God's only answer to man's sin need. Therefore, to reject His person and work for one's soul calls for justice. It is the rejection of the only antidote to sin. Justice is the alternative to acceptance of God's love in Christ at Calvary. It is a necessary corollary to rejection of love. This justice is demonstrated at the Great White Throne Judgment. The throne is described as:

#### 1. SOVEREIGN v. 11.

a. Identified There are other thrones mentioned in this book (4:4; 20:4), but this one speaks of unlimited majesty in the disposition of the destiny of God's creatures. It is to be distinguished from the judgment seat of Christ for the church (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). This is the final judgment of the wicked.

b. Colored The color "white" shows there is no mercy here, no pity, no love. Here is the undimmed, unveiled blaze of divine holiness. It is pure justice.

c. Occupied While the Lord Jesus Christ is probably the One on the throne (cf. John 5:19-22), the presence of the triune God is latent. Men will recognize our Lord as the rejected Savior and be speechless before Him as the Judge. Heaven and earth will not be able to tolerate His utter purity, hence they flee from Him. This is obviously related to the events at the beginning of eternity (2 Pet. 3:12, 13, cf. Rev. 21:1).

#### 2. SUMMARY vv. 12, 13.

a. Of Resurrection There are only two resurrections. This is the second one and it is unto death (cf. John 5:28, 29). It cannot be for believers (John 5:24). All classes of people stand at this one. None is exempt. All believers go one direction and all non-believers another. It is a day of summary action.

b. Of Works The phrase "according to their works" has puzzled many who teach salvation by grace. However, this is consistent with the teaching of the Bible. Salvation is indeed not "of (out of) works" (Eph. 2:8, 9), but it is "unto (purpose of) good works" (Eph. 2:10). God does judge the secrets of men (Rom. 2:16). He knows the motives (1 Cor. 4:1-5). Abraham believed God (Gen. 15:6) and this gave him salvation by grace through faith (Rom. 4:1-4; cf. Gen. 15:6). But that same faith worked and it was by this means that Abraham demonstrated the vitality of his faith (James 2:1-10; cf. Gen. 22). Hence, the works are the fruit of one's salvation. Such fruit is always visible for true faith.

c. Of Books The Book of Life is the book in which saved people are listed (Rev. 21:27). Since a man cannot lose his salvation (John 10:28, 29), how is it possible for a name to be erased from the book of life as is indicated in the Bible (Rev. 3:5)? Apparently the answer lies in the fact that all names were originally in the book of life, but when final rejection of Christ is made, the name is blotted out (Rev. 13:8). Such have denied the only Savior and Lord (John 16:9). Hence, at this particular judgment, those whose names are not written in the book of life are judged. It is the "name written" which counts--not the voice raised!

### 3. SOLEMN vv. 14, 15.

Death relates to bodies. Hades (hell) relates to souls. The lake of fire concerns the second death (21:8). The statement is eternally solemn that "whosoever" is not in the book of life is judged! This makes the judgment:

- a) divine because God spoke it.
- b) eternal because there is no end to it (cf. 19:10).
- c) painful because there is consciousness (19:10).
- d) ceaseless because there is no interruption to the suffering (Luke 16:19-31).

Conclusion Many of earth's greatest sinners will be in heaven through God's infinite grace. They find salvation through the blood of Christ. If one's name is not written in the book of life, he is lost--lost--lost! How solemn!!!