

The Final Judgement

Revelation 20:7-21:4

OPENING JOKE: This deacon sold his parrot to his Pastor, and Pastor found that the Parrot cussed. He was always says things that embarrassed the preacher.

Well one day he Pastor was getting his hair cut. He was telling the Barber about the problem with his Parrot. The Barber said, "Preacher, I know this Pentecostal Lady who also has a Parrot, but her only says, "Let us pray, let us pray". Maybe if we could get your mean parrot with her sweet pentecostal parrot, her parrot could teach your parrot some manners. Pastor said, "That sounds like a great idea". So he called the lady up and they arranged to put both of the parrots in the same cage together.

Sure enough, as soon as the mean boy parrot saw the sweet pentecostal parrot he said, "Hey toots how about a kiss?" The Pentecostal parrot said, "My prayers have been answered!"

Someone said, *We ought to live in such a way you would be willing to sell your family Parrot to town gossip.*

INTRODUCTION: We come to these last three chapters of Revelation. Remember where we are in the prophetic timeline.

- The church has been raptured
- The seven years of tribulation have occurred
- The Lord has returned to set up His millennial Kingdom.
- Satan had been bound for the duration of the 1000 years.

Now, keep in mind, sin still occurs, death still occurs, crime still occur. How can that be with Satan bound? Well, you see, there are three enemies:

- The **World** - that is the world system, culture at large.
 - The **Flesh** - that is the Adamic sin nature.
 - The **Devil** - Satan and Demons
- The **Devil** is Bound for the 1000 years.
 - The **World** System is greatly overhauled, culture no longer works to lead you away from Christ, but rather to point you toward Christ.
 - The **Flesh**, is still there. That's that internal foe, that as the hymn writer says causes us to be, "Prone to wander".

Someone has said, "The **world** is your external foe, the **flesh** is your internal foe, and the **Devil** is your infernal foe".

So, Satan is eradicate, at least for a while, the World's influence shifts, and the flesh is the one thing you have the most influence over. You decide its power.

You either *discipline your flesh* and make it your slave, or you ignore it and it becomes your ruler. That will be far easier to accomplish during the millennial reign.

Verse 7 picks up at the very end of the Millennial reign with the release of Satan.

1. The Release of Satan

Revelation 20:7–15 (ESV)

⁷ And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison

Remember, last week we saw that Satan and Demons had been held captive in a place called the Abyss. A great chain was placed over the entry way and locked. But now that lock is open and the chain is loosed.

See him now if you will, creeping out of the abyss, his eyes adjusting to the light of day, then suddenly he bolts to enact his final plan. A plan he has conceptualized for 1,000 years. Where does he fly? To the leaders of the world powers.

So notice, national governments still exists. Consider the implications of that - Jesus has ruled the planet for 1,000 years and he has not eliminated governments.

Now, we do not know how much time passes from the release of Satan to the Deception of World powers. It could be a year, it could be a decade or longer.

⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.

So think of it, 1000 years of peace but now under the influence of Satan and Demons a great and final army is formed.

What does that tell you about Satan and Demons? He doesn't attack you directly, he stirs others up to attack you AND he stirs you up to attack others.

Is there unchecked, unreasonable anger in your heart toward someone? Could it be that Satan has a foothold in your life?

⁹ And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, **but fire came down from heaven and consumed them.**

This was the shorted battle every to occur. Like a gust of wind, it was over. A great one world army assembled and leveraged against Christ reduced suddenly and dramatically to ashes.

10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Notice the last two words, “forever and ever”. There will be no release from this sentence. Satan will be perpetually tormented under the unmitigated wrath of God for all eternity.

2. The Reckoning for Sinners

Revelation 20:11–15 (ESV)

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

And now we come to the Tribunal Judgement Bar of God, the Final Judgement. A court with no appeals. There is but one Judge - the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 5:22 (ESV)

22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,

- **Acts 10:42 (ESV)**

42 And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he (Jesus) is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.

- **2 Timothy 4:1 (ESV)**

1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead.

11b. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

I believe this is what Peter is referring to in **2 Peter 3:10 and 12 (ESV)**...the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, ...12b the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

So the slate is wiped completely clean before the throne. As He judged the Earth with Water the first time, this time it is consumed with fire.

Every person who has ever lived are gathered there before Jesus Christ.

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne,

This is every man, woman, boy and girl who has ever lived gathered to give an account to God.

John 5:29 tells us they will come out of the grave..., those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

DEATH - The moment a person dies they are ushered immediately into one of two places. The Christ follower is taken into the presence of Christ (absent from the body, present with the Lord). The unbeliever is taken to a place the New Testament calls, Hades - the place of the dead. This is a hellish temporary holding cell. The rich man in hades was in torment in the flame, desiring just a drop of water, but being denied.

Imagine that day when they are resurrected. Their soul is summoned from hades, reunited with their bodies once again. Perhaps, they assume their suffering is over, their sin has been atoned for, only to discover that they have just been brought up for their eternal legal condemnation. A final act of justice by which they will be legally condemned.

12band books (plural) were opened.

I call these books the LIBRARY OF DEEDS. This is an accurate recording of everything you have ever done whether it be good or bad.

This is one of the most consistent irrefutable truths of God's word.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 (ESV)

14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Luke 8:17 (ESV)

¹⁷For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.

That word **manifested** means - *declared openly*.

ILLUSTRATION: If you are fortunate enough to take a cruise will you notice as you board that vessel that every cruise ship has a manifest. That is an accurate recording and an open declaration of all that is contained on that vessel.

Matthew 12:36–37 (ESV)

36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Psalms 62:12 (ESV)

12 and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work.

Matthew 16:27 (ESV)

27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Revelation 22:12 (ESV)

12 “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.

Romans 2:6 (ESV) 6 He will render to each one according to his works:

YOU SAY, “***Well I hope my good works outweigh my bad works***”. That’s the problem friend, you have no good works in and of yourself.

Isaiah 64:6 (ESV) 6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Inevitably when I read that verse, someone will say to me, “Don’t quote that verse to me, I know I’ve sinned, I know I’ve done bad things” But friend, read what it says, it doesn’t say all of our sins are filthy rags, it says all of our righteousness. The best things we can possibly come up with are filthy sticking rags before a Holy God.

We all stand condemned before Him and if it ended there, we ought all just stop and weep until eternity. But thank God for the next part...

12c. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life.

Oh, thank God for that precious book! You see written on the first page of that book it says something to the effect of, “This is a complete and exhaustive list of those whose debt has been paid in full by the Judge Himself”.

Just as SIN had been openly declared. Now GRACE is openly declared.

Those names written in this book have NO CHARGE laid against them. They are declared innocent based solely on the virtue of another.

Is your name in the book?**Revelation 13:8 (ESV)**

8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written ***before the foundation of the world*** in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Pastor, how can I know?

John 6:37 (ESV)

37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

If you come humbly, repentantly, to Jesus Christ as recognize that His GOOD works is sufficient to eliminate your BAD works... your name has been written in the book.

12b. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 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 one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

For those who never come to Christ. You aren't judged to see whether or not you get into Heaven... listen... YOU DON'T. You are judged to determine the severity of your eternal punishment.

There are degrees of punishment in Hell. Hell will be hotter for some than it is for others, but the coolest spot in Hell is a place you never want to go.

YOU SAY, Pastor, I don't think Jesus would send someone to Hell. Friend, we would hardly know hell existed without Jesus.

If you take the OT and the NT apart from the Gospels you could develop a theology of Hell, but it would be only in the broadest of strokes.

The most explicit words we have about eternal damnation came from the verses written in RED.

It was as if the Father said, "This subject is so serious, I reserve it's exposition for my Son only".

John MacArthur said in his commentary of this Judgement •There will be no debate over your guilt or innocence. •There will be a prosecutor, but no defender; •an accuser, but no advocate.

- There will be an indictment, but no defense mounted by the accused;
- The convicting evidence will be presented with no rebuttal or cross-examination.
- There will be an utterly unsympathetic Judge and no jury, and there will be no appeal of the sentence He pronounces.
- The guilty will be punished eternally with no possibility of parole in a prison from which there is no escape.

Matthew 25:41 (ESV)

41. “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

The release of Satan the recompense for the sinner...

3. The Reward for the Saints

Revelation 21:1–4 (ESV)

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

Christ followers are also judged. You see just as there are degrees of wrath, there are also degrees of reward.

1 Corinthians 3:10–15 (ESV)

10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— 13 each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION:

Christ did not come to rub your sin in, He came to rub it out.

ILLUSTRATION: Many years ago I read about a Pastor Daniel Kirby - Daniel Kirby was a minister back in the horse and buggy days. He took what he had, a horse, a pen, he preached, he wrote books... but sometimes he wondered if it was doing any good.

Then one night he had a dream. In this dream he stood before the Judgment Bar of God. He said that as God’s presence was revealed he fell down into a fetal position, gripped with fear. His arms wrapped around his knees.

Suddenly he heard a loud voice from the throne cry out - WHO ARE YOU AND WHY ARE YOU HERE? But Kirby said he could hardly breath much less speak... then he heard the voice again - - WHO ARE YOU AND WHY ARE YOU HERE? Again, terrified he could not answer... a third time more fiercely the voice asked - WHO ARE YOU AND WHY ARE YOU HERE? And again he was helpless to respond.

About that time he felt two hands reach under his arms and lock at his sternum. He noticed that the hands were nail scarred. It was Christ. Jesus lifted him up and hung there limp and helpless... Jesus looked boldly into the face of the Father and said, "This is my servant Daniel Kirby - he confessed me before me, now I confess him before you.

Howard Hendricks, *"There is no fear judgment for the man who judges himself"*