

*The Commencement of Eternity*  
“THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT”  
Revelation 20:11-15

**Theme:** The deeds of ungodliness performed in this life by those outside of Christ are accruing a wrath reserved for the day of judgment.

I. THE THOROUGHNESS OF JUDGMENT – 20:11-12a

A. *The Incineration of Creation – v. 11*

1. The time for the final judgment had come – after the rebellion of the ungodly at the end of the Millennium, John “*saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.*”
2. Satan’s historic deception of sinners concerning God’s willingness to judge sinners finally is demonstrated as the lie it has always been – cp. Genesis 3:4; 2 Peter 3:3-7
3. Indeed the time had come for the final and ultimate judgment to occur even as God had warned – cp. Daniel 7:9-10
4. This seems to indicate that the wrath of God that was poured out from heaven in the form of fire was the fulfillment of the prophetic promise to destroy the earth – cp. Revelation 20:9
5. The Lord Jesus had anticipated the “passing away” of both Heaven & Earth – cp. Matthew 24:35
6. Peter then clarified how this would occur – 2 Peter 3:10
7. Immediately after these verses, we’re told that Heaven & Earth have passed away – cp. Revelation 21:1

B. *The Inevitability of Judgment – v. 12a*

1. The focus of the Great White Throne Judgment are those who were “*the dead*” – that is, those who had never been reconciled to God throughout all the ages – “*And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne ...*”
2. The phrase “*the great and the small*” indicates that those judged come from all walks of life and degrees of greatness.
3. Thus, we recognize that everyone who has no part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Resurrection is included here – cp. Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:6
4. These are the ones raised to judgment – cp. John 5:29; Daniel 12:2; Acts 24:15

## II. THE TECHNIQUE OF JUDGMENT – 20:12b-13

### A. *The Record Is Established – v. 12b*

1. We are told that God consults the “books” to establish the record – not for Him, but for the sake of the accused – “*... and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life.*”
2. God has been recording the deeds of all men – in order to demonstrate the validity of His judgment of sin:
  - a. The first book mentioned is the book containing the deeds of sin done by the ungodly – cp. *Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 2:5-6*
    - (1) All of the wicked thoughts will be examined as recorded by God as they were thought throughout the sinner’s life – cp. *Psalms 44:21; Romans 2:16; Luke 8:17*
    - (2) All of the wicked words will be examined as well – cp. *Matthew 12:37*
    - (3) All of the wicked deeds will likewise be reviewed and examined by Jesus at this judgment – cp. *Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 16:27.*
  - b. The second book is “*the Book of Life*” – listing the names of those who have trusted in the sacrifice of Christ – cp. *Luke 10:20; Revelation 3:5; Revelation 13:8*
3. It should be remembered that it will be the Lord Jesus Christ who conducts this judgment – cp. *Philippians 2:10-11; John 5:22; Acts 10:42; Romans 2:16; 2 Timothy 4:1.*

### B. *The Record is Examined – vv. 12b-13*

1. The absence of their names in the Book of Life verifies that they warrant judgment – “*And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*”
2. The record of their wicked deeds determines the degree of severity of that judgment – “*and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.*”
3. It is clear that there are levels of intensity, or degrees, of suffering in the Lake of Fire – cp. *Matthew 10:14-15; 11:21-24; Mark 12:38-40; Luke 12:47-48; Hebrews 10:29.*

## III. THE TERROR OF JUDGMENT – 20:13-15

### A. *Judgment Will Be Physical – vv. 13-14a*

## An Exposition of The Revelation

1. Again we see the clarity by which God indicates that this judgment will be a literal and physical judgment – *“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them ...”*
  - a. *“Death”* refers to the state of the body – that is, those who have experienced the separation of soul from body.
  - b. *“Hades”* refers to the place where the spirits of the deceased had been held.
2. Thus, we see that the body and spirit of the ungodly will be reunited and then together, thrown into the Lake of Fire – *“Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.”*

### B. *Judgment will Be Perpetual – v. 14*

1. The eternity of the torment of the Lake of Fire is emphasized repeatedly in Scripture – *Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43-44; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9*
2. Here we are told that this is the ultimate separation from God – “This is the second death, the lake of fire.”
3. The fate of all of those who refuse to repent of their sin and turn to Jesus Christ for salvation is clear – *“And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”*
4. The ungodly will suffer eternally for their sin in a perpetual state of misery, suffering, and separation from God.