

The Great White Throne Judgment

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READ: Revelation 20.

TEXT: Revelation 20:11, 12.

"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."

I would like you to notice Revelation 20:11 and 12 as my text for this message, "The Great White Throne Judgment."

When you consider the matter of the great White Throne Judgment, you are talking about a matter dealing with the unsaved. That is purely what this judgment is about. I do not know of any doctrine in the Bible that I could mention to you that is more neglected and more left out than this doctrine that I am talking to you about in this message, the doctrine of the great White Throne Judgment.

I think there is a reason for this. In recent generations, people have gotten some unscriptural and unbiblical ideas about what God is like. For instance, you hear many unsaved people talk about the fact that God is a God of love and a God of mercy and a God of grace. There never has been anything truer than that. God is a God of love.

It says in I John 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

I would remind you that the same Bible that says that God is a God of love, also says that God is holy.

Isaiah 6:3 says, "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."

So not only does the Bible say that God is a God of love, but the Bible says that God is a God of holiness. I believe that anyone who reads the Bible, and reads it honestly, will come to the conclusion that God hates sin. God loves sinners, but God hates sin. The very nature of God demands that God punishes sinners and that is what this great White Throne Judgment is all about.

In Genesis 18:25, you find an all important question, ". . . Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

In order to do right and be consistent with His attributes, God must punish sin. It cannot possibly go unpunished. That is what the White Throne Judgment is all about. I do not know of anything more this world needs to hear about than the judgment of the unsaved—the great White Throne Judgment. I will tell you why. When you read the third chapter of the book of Romans, you find an inspired description of the sinfulness and depravity of man. The Bible teaches that man is totally depraved.

Romans 3:10 says, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."

Romans 3:12 says, ". . . there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Then in the midst of this third chapter where there is a description of the depravity of man and the sinfulness of man, you find this statement, "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (v. 18).

You see this today. You see it in the masses of humanity. There is no fear of God before their eyes but there needs to be. People need to fear God. A person that does not have a reverential fear of God is a person who is going to live without Christ and without any desire to be saved and without any intention of ever settling this sin question.

You say, "Do you think that people ought to always be afraid of God?"

No, not in a sense. I loved my grandfather. He had as great a part in raising me as any other one individual. In fact, he raised me several times! I remember very distinctly. I loved my grandfather. I used to love to sit and look at him. He was a distinct sort of man; an individualist and opinionated and usually his opinions were right. I loved him.

He wore high top shoes and a big, broad-brimmed hat and a big, heavy mustache. He was an individual. No one else looked like him. I never saw another man that even reminded me of him. I loved him, but I want to tell you something else. I had a fear of him too. I knew that when he said something he meant it and I knew if he ever promised punishment, I would get it. I not only loved my grandfather, but I feared him.

I believe that must be the attitude of people toward the almighty God. He is a God of love, but the Bible says in Romans 3:18, "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

The Bible says that it is a bad thing for people not to fear God. You say, "Why preach on the great White Throne Judgment?" I am preaching on it because there needs to be a fear of God. I think that it is a misunderstood doctrine, this doctrine of the judgment of the unsaved. Many people still have the idea that everyone is going to stand before the Lord at one time and the Lord is going to say, "You are lost and you are saved and you are lost and you are saved."

That is not the way it is going to happen. I think there are some verses of Scripture which people read and do not know how to rightly divide them and they come to the conclusion that everyone at one time is going to stand before God.

There is no such thing in the Bible as a general resurrection. There is no such thing in the Bible as a general judgment. You read in John 5:28 and 29, "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."

Some people say, "There it is. Some people are going to come out of the grave, some unto the resurrection of life, some unto the resurrection of damnation."

True, that verse does say that, but between these two resurrections are more than a thousand years. The first resurrection will take place when Jesus comes and the dead in Christ are brought out of the graves. The second resurrection will take place at the end of the millennium when God has a great White Throne Judgment set and the unsaved dead will then be raised to stand before God. It is a misunderstood doctrine.

I think that when you come to this doctrine of the judgment of the unsaved dead, you come to a doctrine that helps you to see God's attitude toward Christ rejection. God does not take this thing lightly. People rejecting him as Son and setting him at naught, trampling his precious blood under their feet, refusing his offer of mercy, God doesn't take this lightly.

John 3:18 says, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he bath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The person who is unsaved is sitting today under the condemnation of almighty God. How important this doctrine is. This is the last great act of God. You can study prophecy and study the Bible and what God is going to do, all in chronological order, but this is the last thing God is going to do. After this White Throne Judgment, I read these words, "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. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:1, 2).

After this time shall be no more. After this eternity sets in. After this not one soul is ever saved. After this there is just heaven for the saved throughout all eternity. After this there is nothing but eternal damnation for all those who are not saved. This is God's last great act and brings to an end what man calls time. The new Jerusalem descends after this.

This shows God's full execution upon the Edenic curse. You remember when you open the Bible and begin to read of the history of man and the history of sin and begin to read the story of where Adam and Eve fell in the garden, God placed a curse on several things.

First of all, He placed a curse upon a woman. Women, let me say this to you kindly and in love, you find in this opening part of the Bible where a woman was talking to the Devil, but had no business talking to him. God made man first and made man in his own image and took woman from the side of man and made her. He made her not in God's image, but in man's image and God made man the head of all of His creation.

Satan comes and the woman begins to talk to him and as a result of it, the fall of man comes. God pronounces a curse first of all upon the woman.

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16).

That has been true through all the history of the human race. God pronounced a curse on the Devil also. It says in Genesis 3:15, ". . . and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head"

God will execute that curse. The Devil, although he is on the loose today, is a defeated foe and the result of this battle between God and the Devil is an inevitable one. God some day is going to say to one angel, just one, not a whole legion of them, "Go bind him with chains and put him in the bottomless pit."

He will be there a thousand years and then be released for a little time. Then there will be further war and then God will put him back in the bottomless pit. God said that he would be tormented day and night forever and ever. His smoke shall ascend. God is going to torment the Devil forever. Don't get the idea that he is going to reign in Hell. There will be no reign, no authority in Hell. Not even the Devil will have it. God will execute His curse upon it.

In that fall in Eden, God placed a curse upon man. In Genesis 3:17-19 we read: ". . . Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

God not only placed a curse on man, but on the ground and on this earth. That is why when Jesus was to die on the cross, He was to bear these curses, and a crown of thorns was placed upon His brow. When you come to the close of the Bible, you see a holy God who cannot break His Word and who always must do as He said He would.

The Bible says in Revelation 20:11, ". . . the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." It doesn't just say that the heaven and earth were shaken and moved, it says that the heaven and earth were done away with. God's curse is being executed. The curse upon man, if he will not come to Christ, will be executed at that judgment day, and man will stand before God at the great White Throne Judgment and be judged.

Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." So, the believers' sins have already been judged.

There is a judgment in the Bible called self-judgment. I believe when people sit in judgment on themselves and settle it, God does not judge them anymore. It is like Paul said in I Corinthians 4:3, 4: ". . . yea,, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

There is a judgment in the Bible called the Judgment Seat. No unsaved people will stand at this judgment. Only Christians will stand at the Judgment Seat and have their works judged.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10).

There is a judgment in the Bible called the judgment of angels. Angels fell when Satan was cast out of heaven, and Peter said in II Peter 2:4, ". . . but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

There is a judgment in the Bible for the nation of Israel. God is going to judge them. He has been good to them, and He has deposited in them His oracles of truth. Their loins, humanly speaking, produced the blessed Christ of God. God has been good to Israel, but He is going to judge Israel someday.

There is a judgment in the Bible called the judgment of sinners, and that is the one that I am reading about.

"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" (Revelation 20:11, 12).

I want you to see some truths about the judgment of people who are unsaved and who will not give their heart and life to Christ and receive Him as their personal Saviour.

I. The Judgment Throne

First of all, I would like you to see the judgment throne or the great White Throne. It is great in contrast to any other throne the world has ever known, and it is great in contrast to other thrones mentioned in the Bible.

Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

It is a throne of grace. That is what you can come to. You can come if you will to a throne of grace and find mercy. This, however, is a great White Throne. It is not a throne of grace because there will be no grace in it. There will be no mercy there. There will be no tolerance there. There will not be another chance there. This is the last throne and God said that it would be a White Throne because it stands for justice and purity—a great White Throne.

Daniel spoke of this throne. Hundreds of years before Jesus was ever born, Daniel took his prophetic telescope and as God led him he looked down across the unborn centuries and said,

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire" (Daniel 7:9).

Daniel had seen a great throne. He had seen that great image that pictured the four great Gentile kingdoms. He saw the kingdom of Babylon, then Greece and Media-Persia and then the great Roman empire. Daniel saw thrones in the making. He saw the throne of Babylon

ruled over by Nebuchadnezzar, who conquered the whole world. He saw Belshazzar assume that throne and in his pomp and unbelief, Daniel saw him rule with a rod of iron over the whole world.

Daniel said, "I see a day when thrones like this and every earthly throne will be destroyed and only one throne will remain."

That throne is the great White Throne Judgment. Listen, my friends, that is an inevitable thing. Men must stand before the throne of God.

If you were to visit the city of Istanbul, Turkey, you would go to the great museum which contains, among other things, the most costly group of jewels to be found anywhere in the world. It is an accumulation of jewelry and finery of all the Persian sultans of history.

One thing that you would see is a great throne built. That throne is literally filled with all kinds of precious gems. I do not think it would be possible for any human mind to ever evaluate the wealth of that throne, and yet, there is no sultan on it. That sultan who had it made is dead and lies in the dust and ruins this day. All thrones will perish, but God's Word said that there will be a great White Throne Judgment.

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:9, 10).

God's Word says that there will be a great White Throne and He who sits upon it will have such fiery indignation in His face against sin that heaven and earth will flee away, but sinners must stand and meet Him at the Judgment Day.

Yes, there will be the judgment throne.

"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" (Revelation 20:11, 12).

II. The Judge on the Throne

I would not only like you to see the Judgment Throne, but I would like you to see the Judge on the throne. God is a trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—that is elementary, everyone knows that, but the Bible teaches that God is going to let Jesus do the judging.

John 5:22 says, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

You see, the One who is going to be on that throne, the Judge on the throne, is going to be the Lord Jesus Christ. The same Jesus who one night with a little infant wail announced His arrival in the stable among the lowly cattle in a little manger in Bethlehem. The same Jesus who walked gently among men and was in privacy for thirty years of His life. Then one day

He walked out in the River Jordan and was baptized of John. The same Jesus who for three-and-a-half years reached out His hands and begged people to come to Him and the same Jesus who said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

The same Jesus who said, ". . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

The same Jesus who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

That same Jesus is going to sit on that throne. At that coming He is pictured as a lamb. He is pictured as a lamb that openeth not His mouth. A lamb that is led before His shearers and is dumb. A lamb does not offer resistance. He is pictured as a lamb when He comes to die because He is a sacrificial lamb.

The same Bible pictures Him as a lion. When Jesus sits on that throne, He will not sit there as God's lamb, but as God's lion. The one on that throne is none other than Jesus Christ.

Did you ever stop to think of all the great doctrines of the Bible that you cannot separate from the doctrine of the judgment of the unsaved? In fact, it is connected with the doctrine of the resurrection. You can connect it with the doctrine of the Second Coming. It is connected with the doctrine of hell.

Some people have claimed to have read the Bible in the original Greek language and so forth and try to come up with some kind of concoction that there is no such thing as an eternal hell. They have a battle of semantics and argue about hades and sheol. It is true that in the Old Testament sheol means a great abyss. It could mean a grave, but doesn't always mean that. A grave is not always a great abyss. Sheol in the Old Testament speaks of the bowels of the earth where God imprisons sinners.

The same is true of hades in the New Testament. It speaks of a place. Jesus talked about this place when he told of the rich man and the poor man in Luke 16. One man begging for food at the gate and the other whose table was full of all the bountifulness of life.

Jesus said, "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:22-24).

Now remember that Jesus said this. He said the rich man died and begged for a drop of water. When you come to this judgment, God doesn't use the word hades or sheol. He says that people are going to be put in a lake of fire. You let someone argue about that! It is in the Bible. I don't enjoy talking about it. I don't enjoy it anymore than talking about a child having to be punished or someone having to suffer surgery. I don't enjoy talking about it, but it is a necessity because it is a divine truth that is absolutely unalterable. Sinners are going to have to stand before God.

Revelation 20:15 says, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Sheol in the Old Testament and hades in the New Testament is God's jail. God keeps them there until this judgment. The lake of fire is God's penitentiary. Man stays in God's jail until the day of his trial. Then he is in God's penitentiary forever. That is what the Bible teaches. No exit, no end, no water, no relief. That is what the Bible says.

Call me an old-fashioned preacher if you want to, accuse me of using terms that are antiquated if you will, but I am preaching what the Bible says: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

When the Gospel first went to the Gentile people in the days of Simon Peter and the house of Cornelius, Simon said, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead" (Acts 10:42).

In Acts 24 we see Paul standing before Felix, and in verse 25 we read, "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

It talks about the judgment to come. That is what I am talking about. Felix trembled but he said, "Go thy way for this season. When I have a more convenient time, I will mend for thee."

Felix trembled, but Felix did not repent. You may be afraid of judgment, but unless you do something about it, you will be as lost as Felix was.

Hebrews 9:27 says, "And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

I used to hear Dr. Bob Jones Sr. tell of this story of a young soldier in the Civil War. One night before battle, it is said that this young man sat at the fire side with his soldier friends and even in the dim light of the fire, they could see that this young man was frightened and afraid and had an ashened look upon his face.

One of the older veteran soldiers said, "What is the matter, Son? Are you afraid to die?"

He said, "No, I am not really afraid to die. Die I may before the sun goes down tomorrow night. I am not afraid to die."

The veteran said, "Why do you look so pale? Why are you so ashened? Why are you so frightened? You are afraid of death, aren't you?"

He said, "No, I am not afraid of death." And in the dim light of that fire the young man said, "I will tell you something that I am afraid of. I am afraid of what is going to happen to me after I die, because I am not right with God. If the Bible be true, death is not the frightening thing, but to die without Christ and to stand at the judgment is what is so frightening."

That will be the greatest tragedy that you will ever know.

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I to ye cannot come." (John 8:21).

"And I saw a threat 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, 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 whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:11, 12, 15).

III. The Judgment Issues

In the next place I would like you to notice the issues of the judgment. When this resurrection spoken of in the Bible as the second resurrection takes place at the end of the millennium, when all the unsaved dead are raised and stand before God, what will be the issues in the judgment day? What will God condemn these unsaved people for?

There are several issues that will be brought into focus at the White Throne Judgment. First of all, the Bible teaches that man shall be judged for his deeds. We read in the Bible where the books will be opened and man shall be judged for his works or his deeds. Unsaved people will be judged.

Romans 2:6 says, "Who will render to every man according to his deed."

If this Bible be true, no unsaved person shall escape meeting his life and his wicked deeds at the judgment bar of God. At the White Throne Judgment one of the issues will be the deeds of men.

In speaking of unsaved people, God talks of their wicked work and everything that an unsaved person can do is wicked before God even if he is religious. If he is not saved and not a Christian, even his deeds, his religious deeds are an abomination unto God.

Then his words will be brought into focus at the judgment of the unsaved. I don't know of a more heart searching thing than the fact that the Bible plainly teaches that a man's words will be brought into focus at the judgment.

Sometimes people say, "Well, how can God bring every, every idle word, as Jesus said, into the judgment?"

Matthew 12:36 says; "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

People say, "Well, how can God do that?"

Listen, God can do anything. There are electronic devices that capture the words of men and preserve them for generations, and they can be spoken in secret and amplified to millions. At the Judgment Day, according to Jesus, every idle word of man that he shall speak, he shall give an account thereof.

I think if you will examine that twelfth chapter of the book of Matthew where Jesus gave that statement, you will find that in that chapter he talks about one of the most crucial and delicate matters that a person could ever contemplate. In that chapter Jesus talks about a sin for which there is no forgiveness. Jesus says in that chapter that if one commits this sin he shall not be forgiven in this life or in the world to come. There is no forgiveness for that sin. That is the sin of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men" (Matthew 12:13).

That is what a man can do with his lips from a wicked heart. When he attributes the work of God to the Devil, he commits blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Then in Matthew 12:36 Jesus went on to say that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

I read a story some years ago about a man who was witnessing to a group of young people. He was trying to win them to Christ, and one of them said, "Why, I would sign away for \$5.00 my hope of ever being saved and ever being forgiven."

It is said that this wise Christian man took out of his pocket a five dollar bill and a piece of paper and said, "Let's see if you really will." This young man challenged God, and this Christian challenged him.

The man said, "Here is the money, and here is the paper and pencil. See if you would."

The young man said, "What shall I write?"

The wise Christian said, "Write what you said, 'For five dollars I would sign away my right to ever become a Christian.'"

He began to write, and suddenly he put down the paper and the pencil and the money and said, "Sir, you know that I didn't mean what I said, and you know that I couldn't possibly do that."

I have heard people blaspheme the name of God and take His name in vain, but you remember that God said "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matthew 12:36).

What will be the issues of the judgment day? A man's deeds and a man's words, and I believe that even the thoughts of man shall be brought into focus at the day of judgment. Proverbs 23:7 says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."

You don't have to say it with your lips; think it with your heart and if it is against God, it is a wicked thought. The Bible plainly teaches this. I Corinthians 4:5 says, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

God said that even in that judgment day the things that have been made secret in the life of an unsaved person, the unspoken counsels of his heart never even spoken by his lips, God said that he will give an account thereof in the day of judgment.

What will be the issues of that day? The secrets of men will be an issue of that judgment day.

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Romans 2:16).

The main issue of the judgment day will be your relationship to Jesus Christ. What have you done with Jesus? Recently I was thinking of one of the most wonderful verses about assurance in the Bible. It is a verse when many a time people have said to me, "Preacher, how can you know beyond any shadow of doubt that you are saved?"

I have often used John 5:24 in answer to this question where Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

Many times we have applied that verse to a Christian, that if you heard God's word and believed on His Son, Jesus said that you shall not come into judgment. That gives us assurance. You think of it. What does that verse mean to an unsaved person? If that verse means that a person who has believed shall never come to this judgment, it also means that one who has not believed is bound to come to that judgment. That judgment is for every man who rejects God's Son.

It is like the question that Pilate asked, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified." (Matthew 27:22).

So the issue of the judgment day will be what you have done with God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"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." (Revelation 20:11, 12).

IV. The Judged

I want you to notice in the fourth place the judged. Who is going to be judged? Revelation 20:12 says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God."

Now that means in the eyes of the world what we call little people. Maybe insignificant people.

Poor people are going to be at the judgment. Sometimes people get the idea that beggar out at the gate in Luke 16 who was begging for crumbs went to heaven when he died because he was poor. He didn't go to heaven because he was poor. He went to heaven because he was saved. Sometimes people think that if they have it rough and live in poverty in this life, it means that they are going to escape hell. It doesn't mean that at all. It means people who never had enough to eat in this world will perish in hell and never have a drop of water throughout eternity if they are not saved.

Poor people will be there. Oppressed people will be there. People who have been oppressed and afflicted and mistreated in their life here on earth will also stand at the judgment bar of God and be condemned for all eternity.

I went to a home some years ago and a lady came to the door. She must have had four or five children, and she was a bedraggled-looking lady who lived in a little, poor, humble

home. The children looked emaciated and sickly and didn't look like they had enough clothes.

I began to talk to the woman and told her who I was. I said, "I am Brother Malone, pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church, and I would like you to come to our church."

I went on to talk to her about the Lord, and she said, "Now, Preacher, let me tell you something. I am not a Christian. My husband is a drunkard, and every Friday night when he gets his pay check he doesn't head home, he heads for the bar. He drinks up most of it in the bar with his drunkard cronies, and these little children and me, his own wife, have had to suffer because my husband is a drunkard and a lot of other things that he ought not to be." Then she said, "Preacher, I believe as much as I ever believed in anything in my life, I am getting my hell right here."

As I heard her tragic story, my heart went out to her. Here was a woman who had borne these children and had been a good wife to this man, but she had felt his beatings and she had been deprived of the normal things of life and she said, "Preacher, I am getting my hell right here on earth."

I had to tell that lady, "No, you are not." I had to tell her, "Some day, unless you are saved, you are going to have to spend eternity in the same hell with that drunkard husband of yours. That is where you are going."

In that awful day when men meet God, John said in Revelation 20:12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened. . . ."

John said little people, and he said great people. There will be kings at the judgment. There will be men who have ruled nations at that judgment. There will be senators and judges and lawyers and potentates. There will be presidents. You think of it! Maybe a man who has been president of the United States of America someday will stand at the judgment bar of God and hear Jesus say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:23).

Jesus is going to say, "Depart from me ye accursed. I never knew you as one of my own. Depart ye into everlasting fire."

In a previous chapter when John saw a picture of the coming wrath of God he said, "Who can stand before the face of him that sitteth on the throne." And he said that in that awful day when God judges the world, captains and mighty men and rich men shall cry out to the mountains and to the rocks, "fall on us and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:16, 17).

If I am speaking to one who has never come to Calvary and has never been born the second time, let me tell you that will be an awful thing. You will stand in the white light of His holiness, and every word and thought and secret thing of your life will be in panoramic view across the heavens. That will be an awful day.

I wouldn't want to stand in the sinner's shoes. I wish somehow or another God could give me the power to paint the picture from the Bible in regard to what it means to be unsaved and lost and without God and without hope and headed toward a judgment bar and an eternal hell; there would not be one of you unsaved. In fact, I believe if God could help you

to see the truth that I am talking about, you perhaps wouldn't wait for an invitation, you would come now to meet Jesus Christ. If you could see it as it really is, that God is a holy God and a God of wrath who will punish sin, you would come right now to meet Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour.

"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" (Revelation 20:11, 12).

V. The Judgment Itself

In the fifth place, I would like you to see the judgment itself. The judgment itself proves some things. It proves first of all that death does not end everything. Every once in a while I will meet someone who thinks it does, but it doesn't. Death doesn't end all. Not for a man. Of all the things that God ever made, you are the only thing that the Bible says was made like God. We are made in His image. Man is as eternal as God. I am going to live just as long as God lives somewhere.

I heard Dr. Bob Jones Sr. say one time that he was walking down a road in Florida, and a truth hit him that changed his life. He said that he was walking along the road all by himself, and suddenly something he had known, something he believed was true, but had never really thought about before dawned on him as he walked along that road. He thought, "I am going to live just as long as God lives."

My friends, the judgment proves that death doesn't end it all. Remember that you might die today, tomorrow, or ten years from now, but at the judgment day, you will be raised to stand before God.

The Judgment teaches me something else. God is inescapable. You cannot escape God. You may think that you can. You say to me, "I won't listen to that preacher. I don't care if my loved ones pray for me. I don't care how many people knock on my door. I don't care how many tracts I read and how many sermons I heard and how many songs are sung, I don't have to respond."

No, you don't.

I have heard people say, "I don't want anyone to force me to be saved." No one could, but I will tell you one thing, you cannot escape God. Someday you are going to meet God almighty. You are going to meet Him. If there is one not saved, if you could only believe the truth that you are going to meet God someday. The judgment proves that there is no escape. That is why Amos 4:12 says, "Prepare to meet thy God."

The judgment proves to me that God is holy and just. He rectifies everything. God almighty makes everything all right before the end of time. The judgment proves to me that sin must be reckoned with.

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death."

Galatians 6:7 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The Judgment proves to me that sin must be reckoned with. You can't laugh it away. You can't smile it away. You cannot keep on ignoring it. Someday you must meet sin head on at the judgment bar of God.

It is like a man who told his little boy one time, "Son, when you do something bad, I am going to drive a nail in that post. When you do something good, I will pull one out." One day it appeared that the little boy had done so many things that were right until every nail in the post had been pulled. Then the little boy said to his father, "Daddy, the nails are all gone, but the holes are still there."

Let me tell you. Maybe you have forgotten it, but God never has. If you are not saved and your sins of your life are not under the blood, you are going to meet God at the judgment seat.

God says that sin must be reckoned with, and man will reckon with it at the judgment bar.

The judgment teaches something else. It teaches me that hell is a reality. There is no way to estimate how many people are in hell today because of the cults and "isms" in the world. It is like a country preacher I heard one time who said, "I will be so glad when all the isms are wasms!"

I will too. There is no way to estimate how many millions are already in hell. People get into a battle of semantics and a bantering with words. As I mentioned before, so many people are arguing about sheol in the Old Testament and hades in the New Testament that it doesn't mean hell. But forget all that for a moment. It does mean hell. There is no question about it. Sheol in the Old Testament means a great abyss. It might mean a grave, but does not necessarily mean a grave. It means a great abyss, and that is what hell is. In the bowels of the earth, hell is down. Whether it is Old Testament or New Testament, God is talking about the same thing. Sheol in the Old Testament or hades in the New Testament is nothing but God's jail where he keeps the wicked spirits of the unsaved men until that judgment day.

Then God said, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

Hades is God's jail. The lake of fire is God's penitentiary, and when a sinner is put in there, there is no exit. People can argue all they want too, and literally thousands can be engulfed by wicked cults, but they are going to end up in hell.

The devil can really sugar coat his pills so that people will take them. He puts a little truth in with a lot of lies and puts truth in that is misappropriated. I know people who can quote Scripture by the yard who are going to end up in hell because they are twisted and confused about who Jesus is.

They say, "There is no hell. God is too good." Some other people say, "We will just be annihilated."

No, the Bible does not teach annihilation in the Old Testament or the New Testament or anywhere else. There is not one bit of teaching in the Bible that a person will be annihilated and his suffering will be instantaneous only. It is eternal, God says.

One man who engulfed thousands in one of the most wicked cults was one time put on a witness stand and asked if he could quote the Greek alphabet. He couldn't do it. He had helped to start one of the most wicked cults which literally swept thousands of people around this encircled globe, but he couldn't even quote the Greek alphabet. He had been deceiving people for almost a generation saying, "The Greek says. . . ." You must take Revelation 20:15 like it is. God says, "lake of fire."

Someone says, "Well, that is figurative language." Listen, if that is a figure, then the truth is far worse than the figure, so you are just making a monkey out of yourself when you speak about figurative language. It is not figurative in the first place. Every time the Bible uses figurative language, the whole context will show that God is using a symbol. Here God's word plainly says,

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

The judgment itself proves to me that there is a hell. You know, there is not much said about hell today. When I was a boy thirty five years ago and saved as a young man, and you went to a week of revival meetings, I will guarantee you that one night out of a seven-day meeting the preacher would preach a sermon on hell. He would make it hot and long and horrible, and he would lift up Christ and talk about the love of God and people would be afraid of hell and run to Calvary. I believe that is a good thing.

Someone says, "Oh, you preachers use fear as a motive, and psychologists say that fear is not a good motive."

I don't care what psychologists say. My grandfather was the greatest psychologist I ever saw. He would say, "Tom, if you do that, I will beat the devil out of you." That was his psychology. I was scared.

Someone says, "Oh, in this modern age we don't believe in scaring people. Why, you preachers talk about death-bed stories and God burning people up and all of that. Fear is not a good motive."

I read in Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not yet seen, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

It is a shame that someone didn't tell Noah about what psychologists believe, isn't it? He wouldn't have had to build that ark, and he and his family would have been drowned.

If fear is not a good motive, don't take your little child to the stove and say, "Hot, burn! Hot, burn! Hot, burn! Don't touch, burn!" Don't take him out where the cars are going up and down the road and say, "Now you stay out of that street. You get in that street and a car will hit you." Do you know why? You want to scare them because you love them. You want to scare them because you don't want to lose them. You want to scare them because they are imparted to you.

Let me tell you, God wants people to fear Him enough to be saved. Romans 3:18 says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

We need some preaching on hell. Would to God that we believed it. If we had Christians today who believed in hell like it is taught in the Bible, we would win a lot more people to the Lord.

It is like a lady who came to the altar years ago. She was one of the most active and faithful members of the Emmanuel Baptist Church. She was a lovely, wonderful, Christian woman. She came weeping and sobbing with her shoulders stooped and held up her hands in desperation and said, "Oh, Pastor, pray for me."

I said, "Why?"

She said, "I need a vision of hell. My loved ones are lost. My friends are lost. My relatives are lost, and I need a vision of hell!" She got down on her knees and sobbed and prayed, and it broke my heart. She said, "Oh, pray that God will give me a vision of hell."

Listen, a preacher can't pray that for someone without praying for it himself. It changed her life. She brought her loved ones and friends down the aisles by the dozens in the next few years after that.

We need that. Hell is just a myth in the minds of many people today. Listen, Jesus said, "Where the fire is not quenched and the worm dieth not" (Matthew 9:44).

Jesus said that a Christ rejecter died and one day lifted up his eyes in hell and cried being in torments. The great White Throne Judgment is to settle finally everyone who is to be put in hell. God help us to see it.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Acts 17:31 says, "Because 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."

God raised Jesus from the dead to guarantee a day of judgment, among other things. If people would believe that there is a judgment day coming, it would affect their behavior here and now. If you are not saved, I think it would call you to be saved.

"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" (Revelation 20:11, 12).

VI. The Judgment in Prophecy

The judgment in prophecy is all through the Bible. Some people say, "I don't believe that God is going to judge the world." Ecclesiastes 12:14 says, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be bad."

You look back across the pages of Holy Writ. One day God judged this world became of its sinful flesh. He looked down on this world and said, "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." (Genesis 6:13).

Genesis 6:3 says, "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is also flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." God sent a flood that destroyed the world: "And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life" (Genesis 6-17).

One day God looked down upon two cities, and because of their worldliness Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. God used the flood to destroy the race because of man's flesh and God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their worldliness.

Read about that day when Uncle Abraham talked to his nephew Lot. Their herdsman were arguing because they had so much worldly goods. Abraham said to Lot, "We do not need to quarrel, we are brethren. You go one way and will go the other and we will still be brethren. If you want to go to the mountain, you go to the mountains and I will go to the plains. If you want to go to the plains, I will go to the mountains."

Lot began to look around, and he saw the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Bible says that the men of those cities were wicked exceedingly, but the plains were well watered, and Lot said, "A poor place for me to be and a terrible place for family to be, but it is a wonderful place for my cattle. I can be rich in Sodom," and he was.

The Bible says that he was the one that sat in the gate like a judge. One day God looked down on those two cities and because of their worldliness and materialism, God said He would destroy them, and He rained fire and brimstone from heaven.

Some folks ask, "Do you think that there is real fire in hell?" Sure, there is real fire in heaven. God rained it out of heaven, and He destroyed those cities. You can go there today and see the Dead Sea where not one living thing is found. Down at the south end of the sea under water are the remains of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The sulphuric atmosphere still prevails all around that body of water, and not one blade of grass grows there.

God did judge the world. He did judge it with a flood. He did judge it with fire and brimstone. One day men were judged because of a bloodless religion. "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole world" (Genesis 11:4).

God said, "Let's go down and see what the people are doing." God here is speaking to the Trinity.

God went down and saw that tower and the efforts of man to get to heaven without God. God said, "Man will never be restrained in anything if he is allowed to do this," and God struck it to the ground.

"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth" (Genesis 11:7, 8).

You say, "Well, God judged the world." Yes, He did. He judged the land of Egypt. For 400 long years they kept God's people in bondage and God said that He would send judgment on the land. I have walked in that land and I have seen the flies and insects and poverty and blindness and disease and ignorance and sin. There are millions of people still in a land that God judged. Will God judge? Yes, He will.

God judged Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar built the city walls so thick that three chariots could race around them at one time on top of the walls. One night, the unseen messenger of God wrote on the walls, "TEKEL; Thou art weighted in the balances, and art found wanting" (Daniel 5:27).

The tingling of glasses stopped and the flying feet of the dance floor and the orchestra hushed and God spoke in that night, and that night Belshazzar was slain.

God said, "Babylon will never be rebuilt. It will be the home of owls and jackals and night animals." You can go to those ruins today and that is what you find because God is a God of judgment.

You say, "Will God judge the world?" He has judged nations in the past. Proverbs 13:34 says, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reach to any people."

I have seen God send judgment in this life on people. I know God sent it. I remember a man down in Tennessee whose little daughter died. They said, "We have to heat some water." The old fashioned people use to prepare their dead for burial. I have seen them do it myself where I was raised in a poor part of the country. They would send to town for a casket and bring it back on a wagon. The neighbors would come, they would prepare the body for the casket and leave it in the home and the next day bury it.

They said, "Go out and chop some wood. We have to heat same water to prepare this child for burial."

So the man went out and was about to pick up the ax and he lifted up fist toward God and said, "Yes, you can kill a little baby, but have you ever tried a man? Why don't you come down and fight with a man?"

He reached down and put his hand on the ax handle, and a little insect bit him on the end of the finger. In three days he died of blood poisoning, blaspheming God.

It is like young man who said, "None of these things are sacred to me. I don't believe in God nor Jesus nor blood nor Calvary nor the Holy Ghost." He took a sheep and waded out into the creek leaving his three friends on the shore. He said, "We are going to have a baptismal service. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," and he put the sheep under the water. When the sheep came up, it struggled and pushed the man down and he fell into the stream with the sheep. He couldn't swim and was drowned.

His three companions stood like frozen stones and watched him drown. and someone said, "Why didn't you help him?"

They said, "If bands of steel had been around our arms, we couldn't have moved any better. We were bound to our tracks on that day."

Listen, God judges people today. I have seen it. I have seen the intervening hand of God come in judgment.

Proverbs 29:1 says, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

God is going to judge the world.

"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" (Revelation 20:11, 12).

VII. The Judgment Books

I close by mentioning the judgment books. John said, "And the books were opened. . . ."

Daniel spoke of the books in Daniel 7:10, ". . . the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

In those books will be a record of every time you have ever heard the gospel or felt conviction of the Holy Spirit. I believe there will be a record of every time that you have ever had a contact with a true believer. I believe there will be a record of every time that you have procrastinated and said, "Go thy way for this time."

I believe in book will be a record of every promise that you have ever made to get right with God and you didn't. I believe there will be a record of every invitation of song you have ever heard and of every tear that has ever been shed for your salvation. I believe there will be a record of every time you have ever been angry at a witness who tried to win you. It will all be in the books.

Listen, God is an accurate bookkeeper. John said, "Hallelujah, a book was opened." He said, "A book was opened, and it was the book of life."

Do you know why it is there? Here will come a man like Matthew 7 says, and he will say, "Lord, I am not unsaved. Why, I did many wonderful works in your name."

God will say to a recording angel, "Get the little book out and look up the name of this man."

The angel will say, "There is no such name here."

Jesus will say, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire. I never knew you."

The book of life always has been. God has always had it. He had it in Moses' day. When the children of Israel sinned, Moses prayed, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:32).

Oh, yes, the books will be there at the judgment. Every word, every deed, every thought, every wasted opportunity, every moment of procrastination, every gospel song you have ever heard, every verse of Scripture will be written in that book.

But, thank God, there will be another book there. Thirty five years ago I saw that my name was written in that book, and I believe God wrote it down forever. The judgment holds no fear for me, for I was judged at Calvary when Jesus died.

"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" (Revelation 20:11, 12).