

The Book of Revelation

Lesson Thirty-One

Revelation 20:11-15

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Introduction:

1. This section of the book of Revelation has detailed the rising to power of Satan (the dragon), the beast, the false prophet, and the harlot.
2. It has been shown that the devil would persecute the church by means of the Roman Empire.
3. However, this trouble would not last forever; for God would judge the enemies of His people.
4. Now, John has seen the defeat of the harlot, the false prophet, the beast, and of Satan himself.
 - a. Rome would be defeated, but Satan would seek to harm and destroy the church by other means and methods.
 - b. In the end, he is defeated and destroyed by God and the church is victorious.
5. When Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, that signals the end of time as men know it – the final Day of Judgment.

- I. The Great White Throne (20:11)
 - A. The concept of judgment has been seen several times in the book.
 1. However, those judgments were limited and local.
 2. Still, they helped to paint a picture and prepare man for what will happen at the final judgment.
 - B. John saw a throne that was described differently than any other in the book.
 1. Its greatness symbolizes the majesty of the One who sits upon it.
 2. The color white represents the purity and holiness of the Judge on the throne.
 3. The throne itself symbolizes the authority of God and His right to rule, reign, and judge.
 - C. John also saw the One who sat upon the throne.
 1. Who sits on the throne of judgment – is it the Father of the Christ?
 2. In Revelation, the judgments have been attributed to God (16:7; 18:8, 20; 19:1-2).
 3. However, it was also revealed that Jesus was come forth to judge (19:11-13).
 4. The Bible teaches that God will judge through Jesus (cf. John 5:22-27; Matthew 25:31ff; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:16).
 5. Thus, it is the judgment seat of God (Romans 14:10, ASV) and the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).
 6. The Father and the Son are one in purpose and judgment.
 7. Thus, it is Jesus who sits upon the throne of judgment, but He carries out the will of His Father.
 - D. At the time of the judgment, heaven and earth will cease to exist.
 1. Previously, the islands and mountains “fled away” at God’s judgment on a limited scale (16:20).
 2. Now, the entire “heaven and earth” – the dwelling place of man – will flee away for this is the final judgment of all mankind.

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3. When Jesus returns, this world will be destroyed (Psalm 102:25-27; Hebrews 1:10-12; 2 Peter 3:7-12).

- II. The Books of Judgment (20:12-13)
 - A. Next, John learned who would be present to stand before the throne of judgment – all humankind.
 - B. All of the dead will be present on the Day of Judgment.
 1. This means that all the dead will be raised from the grave (cf. John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).
 2. The sea of humanity will give up its dead (cf. Acts 10:42; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5).
 3. Death and Hades will release all their dead.
 - a. Death claims the body (James 2:26).
 - b. Hades claims the spirit (Revelation 1:18; Acts 2:27, 31).
 - c. At the resurrection, body and soul are reunited (1 John 3:1-3; Corinthians 15:50-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16).
 4. Both righteous and wicked will be raised and will stand before God in judgment (cf. Matthew 11:22, 24; 12:41).
 5. Death and Hades had held man captive; now, they were made captive to God and Christ (cf. Ephesians 4:8).
 - C. On the Day of Judgment, the books will be opened.
 1. One book that will be opened is the Bible; for the Word of God is the standard by which man is judged (John 12:48; Romans 2:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17).
 2. A second book that will be opened is the record of the deeds of one's life (cf. 2:23; 22:12; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Matthew 16:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10).
 3. A third book that will be opened is the Book of Life (3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 21:27; Psalm 69:28; Malachi 3:16; Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3).
 4. Those whose lives have been lived in harmony with the Word of God will have their names written in the Book of Life.
 5. Keep in mind that these books are not literal, but symbolize the omniscience of God and His power to judge righteously.
 - D. Those whose names are written in the Book of Life will be rewarded with eternal life in Heaven. *{That is the focus of the final chapters of this book.}*
- III. The Punishment of the Wicked (20:14-15)
 - A. Finally, Death itself is destroyed by being cast into the lake of fire (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:26).
 - B. Again, it is emphasized that Hell is the second death – eternal separation from God (cf. 2:11; 19:20; 20:10).
 - C. Those whose names were not written in the Book of Life were cast into the lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (cf. Matthew 25:41).

Conclusion:

1. "As there is a second higher life, so there is also a second and deeper death. And as after that life there is no more death, so after that death there is no more life" (Alford).
2. Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life?