

FINAL JUDGMENT

- Lake of Fire -

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compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, February 3, 2012
Scripture quoted from NKJV unless otherwise noted.

Revelation 20:7-15 “Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. 10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet (had been thrown). And *they* will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

11 **Then** I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 **Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Revelation 21:7-8 “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars (hypocrites) shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

NOTE: First we notice that this judgment does not take place until:
after the Second Coming
after the 7th millennium (1000 years),
after Satan has been released,
after the Gog-Magog battle.

NOTE: All of “the dead” are to be judged once again.

(Death is a state of unconsciousness.) There is no third resurrection mentioned, so these people ARE dead - that is - unconscious. However - they have only died physically. They are still alive to God, because He can easily resurrect them to physical life at any time.

Hebrews 9:27 “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,”

The word “once” may also be translated “first.” “It is appointed for men to die first, but after this the judgment.” In the Scripture, several men are said to have died more than once. Which I site simply to repeat - those to be judged ARE DEAD - not living.

At this point in time the dead would be:

- 1. those who died at the second coming, and**
- 2. those who died in the battle of Gog and Magog.**

*NOTE: **The dead are to be judged “by their works.”***

We know that we are NOT saved by our works, but it appears that we WILL BE JUDGED by them.

WHY?

NOTE: At the conclusion of this judgment, Death and Hell (Sheol - the abode of the dead) were cast into the lake of fire. Saying that the abode of the dead (Sheol) is consumed - would be another way of saying that everyone who IS DEAD has been consumed. They no longer exist. They cannot be resurrected after this event because God’s memory of them has been “blotted out.”

WHO ARE THE WITNESSES?

Deuteronomy 30:19 **“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you,** that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;

NOTE: I believe that all intelligent created beings have witnessed the struggle between good and evil.

Deuteronomy 31:26 “Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you;

NOTE: The Sanctuary was called Tabernacle of witness, because the law was kept there.

Deuteronomy 17:6-7 **“Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses;** he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. **The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death,** and **afterward the hands of all the people.** So you shall put away the evil from among you.”

NOTE: This verse alone tells us that all of saved humanity must participate in the execution of those lost.

HE WILL BLOT OUT HIS MEMORY OF THEM

Isaiah 26:14 **“They are dead, they will not live; They are deceased, they will not rise. Therefore **You have punished and destroyed them, And made all their memory to perish.**”**

Psalms 109:14-15 “Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be continually before the LORD, That He may cut off the memory of them from the earth;”

Deuteronomy 29:20 “The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and **the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven.**”

WHO SITS UPON THE “GREAT WHITE THRONE?”

Revelation 20:11 “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.”

Revelation Chapter Four describes the One who sits upon the throne. By His will all things exist.

Daniel 7:9-10 He is called “the Ancient of Days.”

“Ten thousand times ten thousand” stand before Him.

THIS IS GOD THE FATHER - Father of Jesus Christ.

He is the source of all life.

And only HE can end life.

He will erase His memory of those who are set on rebellion and selfishness.

BUT I THOUGHT THAT CHRIST WAS TO JUDGE HUMANITY.

John 5:22 “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,”

Revelation 3:5 “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

NOTE: My understanding is that Jesus Christ will judge all of humanity. He will choose those who are to be included in His kingdom, and will then blot out from the Book of Life, the names of those confirmed in selfishness and evil. After this there will be a final judgment - a final review of the records. The Father will preside.

1 Peter 1:17 “And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;”

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE FIRE WHICH FINALLY CONSUMES?

Brimstone (#2303) is from the Greek word “theion.” Yes - the first four letters “thei” tell us that this refers in some way to the divine. Strong’s tells us “brimstone was regarded as having power to purify.” It was called “divine incense.” When you smell exploding firecrackers, you are smelling sulfur in the gunpowder. So brimstone smelled like burning sulfur.

John the prophet, in vision, was shown the “lake of fire.” He was searching for words to describe this awesome, brilliant, glorious “fire.” It is a purifying fire. It may NOT literally be fire in our sense of the word today. So John used words which his readers could understand. This “fire” will consume the last trace of evil from the universe of God.

OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE

Matthew 28:2-4 “A Legion of soldiers “fell as dead men,” overcome by the glory of just the one angel, who came to call Christ from the tomb.

Acts 9:3-4 On the Damascus road, Saul the persecutor was blinded by this glory.

II Thessalonians. 2:8-9 When Jesus returns, the wicked will be slain “with brightness of His coming.”

Daniel 7:9-10 A “fiery stream” comes forth from the Ancient of Days.

Hebrews 12:29 “For our God is a consuming fire.”

Deuteronomy 4:24 “For the LORD your God is a consuming fire.”

Deuteronomy 9:3 “Therefore understand today that the LORD your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and bring them down before you;”

Exodus 19:18 “Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, **because the LORD descended upon it in fire.** Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.”

Exodus 19:21 God said to Moses, “Go down (from Mt Sinai) and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the Lord, and many of them perish.”

Exodus 34:28-35 When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai his face was shining so brightly that the people could not stand to look at Him. He wore a veil over his face until the glory faded.

Leviticus 16:13 On the ancient Day of Atonement the high priest carried the golden censer filled with smoking incense into the Most Holy Place so that the smoke would shield him from the glory, “lest he die.”

Leviticus 9:24 At the dedication of the wilderness Tabernacle: “... and **fire came out from before the LORD** and **consumed the burnt offering** and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

NOTE: In the Sanctuary, the Lamb was first killed and then burned on the altar. It symbolized the “Lamb of God” - Jesus the Christ, who died a sinner’s death - cut off from God, so that we may be spared this death.

The sacrifice also symbolized the final end of the sinner. Those who do not enter into covenant with God, thru Christ WILL DIE - and then they will be consumed in fire. David lamented the apparent success of the wicked until he entered the sanctuary. Then he “understood what would be their end.”

Psalms 37:20 “But the wicked shall perish, and **the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.**”

NOTE: Some translations read: “like the glory of the fields.”

To a shepherd this meant lambs - not crops or flowers.

Leviticus 10:1-2 “... Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, ... offered strange fire before the LORD. ... And **there went out fire from the LORD**, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. The “fire” killed them but did not burn them up, because they “carried them out by their coats.”

NOTE: They used their own fire - not the fire of God - meaning not from the fire which God had kindled on the altar. When a human being in a position of responsibility changes a symbol which God has given to represent Himself, or His way - the LORD will severely punish that person.

Moses was not allowed to enter the promised land, because he “struck the rock” in his anger, instead of speaking to the rock. God wanted to say something about Himself. After “the rock” was smitten (Christ crucified) we have only to ask for the spirit (water). Those who eat of the Passover (Lord’s Supper) in an unworthy manner, Paul said, bring upon themselves “damnation.”

Numbers 16:18 After the Israelites were turned back to the wilderness for their unbelief, three men lead a rebellion against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Moses did not fight them. He simply urged them to let the LORD decide. He instructed the men to come up to the courtyard of the Tabernacle. The story is in Numbers Chapter 16. Two hundred fifty “leaders of the congregation” came up, but the instigators, Dathan, and Abiram stayed out of the courtyard. Korah gathered the “whole congregation” just outside to pressure Moses to step down as leader of the people.

The LORD told Moses to warn the people to get well back from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. “ So they got away from around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, with their wives, their sons, and their little children. And Moses said: ‘By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the LORD has not sent me. But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD.’ Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. **So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly.**”

(And the men in the courtyard?) “And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.”

NOTE: I see a type of Satan - who will go down to the pit, and of false shepherds who will be consumed in the fire of God at the Second Coming, AND again in the “lake of fire” after the final judgment.

WHO WILL “DWELL WITH THE DEVOURING FIRE?”

Exodus 33:20 “But He said, You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.”

Isaiah 33:14-17 “The sinners in Zion are afraid; Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: ‘Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?’ **He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly,**

Isaiah 43:2 “. . . when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned.”

Revelation 22:4 “They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.”

NOTE: We will “see His face” and will not be consumed. The saved will receive immortal spiritual bodies, and will live “in His presence.” This is why “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God”(1 Cor. 15:50). The angels are spirit beings - beings of high energy. This is why they must be destroyed in “the lake of fire.” It was “prepared for the Devil and his angels” because they could not be destroyed by physical means.

Luke 20:35-36 35 "But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead . . . **nor can they die anymore**, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

NOTE: Wicked human beings will "die" again. My take on this verse is that the resurrected will be "equal" to those angels who remained loyal to God at the war in heaven. I believe those angels have been given immortality, whereas Satan with his angels will die.

Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power . . . "

A PERSONAL OPINION - ABOUT DEATH

I believe that God saves a memory (the mind) of each human being at the moment of death. Jesus said, "Father, Into Your hands I commit My spirit."

Our brains are very sophisticated bio-computers. This is how the LORD confused the languages at the Tower of Babel. He simply plugged in a language program and one group was speaking Chinese, another Hebrew, and another early English. This is how He caused each person to hear Peter speaking in his own language, on the Day of Pentecost. This is how He communicates with us - mind to mind. We each have a built in receiver. I know this is over simplified, but it's the best I can do.

It is this memory (this saved mind) which God uses to resurrect each person, so that their thoughts may continue with memory and mind intact after they are given a new body (computer). It is THIS MEMORY which God the Father will blot out - destroy - in the lake of fire. This is the "second death" - the death from which there is no resurrection - because their memory, and the memory of them, is gone.

NOTE: You could call the saved mind, "spirit" or "soul." And you could call God's storehouse of saved minds, "sheol" - the abode of the dead. But we must understand that the dead are not conscious and cannot interact with living human beings.

CHRIST NEEDS NO BOOKS OF RECORD

Revelation 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not **blot out his name from the Book of Life,**"

NOTE: Christ knows all things. He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. Jesus said, "I know my sheep." He certainly does not need to open books and look through records of deeds in order to decide whether someone should be blotted out of existence.

SO - FOR WHOSE BENEFIT IS THIS REVIEW OF THE RECORDS?

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 "Do you know that the saints will judge the world? ...

Do you not know that we shall judge angels?

The mind of a created being, be he man or angel - is nothing, compared with The Almighty. God could so easily overpower our thoughts and our will - but He does not. The LORD has restrained Himself, for the sake of His creation - for the sake of love. For love cannot be forced. It must be freely given. And without trust there is no love.

The Israel of the first Exodus experience the power and glory of the LORD. They saw the Red Sea opened. They heard Him speak, and saw His glory at Mt Sinai. But was a display of His power enough

to save them from disobedience and rebellion - No! Because love cannot be forced. Only by love is love awakened. It was the love of God - poured out at Calvary that won the hearts of men.

For thousands of years HE has waited and worked, using only those means which would not overpower humanity. Finally - human beings have come to understand that His way is love. They understand that His way is the only way - to life.

Now HE is about to blot out perhaps millions of human beings - to destroy them in a "lake of fire." What will His creation think of this? Will HE lose their trust - and their love?

This is why the books are opened. Human beings cannot read minds. They cannot know the heart. They can only see the "works" - the actions. I believe they will take one last look at the records of each human being. They will "read" the record of God's patient pleading, about the messages of warning, about the love shown. They will finally conclude that there was nothing more God could have done to win that person (or that angel) to Himself. They will understand that these persons are committed to selfishness and rebellion. They will understand that - if resurrected, these people would simply continue to take (not give), to steal, to kill, to destroy. They would be a danger to the community of God.

It is only with the consent of the governed that God will execute. To do otherwise would destroy the trust - and therefore the love of His creation. The final judgment is for them - for His creation. It is a final review of the controversy between God and Evil. They must understand that all the pain was necessary. They must agree with HIM - with what He did and how He did it.

After the resolutely wicked are finally blotted out - the intelligent creation of God will be able to put it behind them. They will go forward into eternity completely trusting the honesty, the openness, the self-restraint, the patience and the unwavering love of The Father who gave His beloved Son.

The crisis has revealed a Super-Hero. Without the display of love necessitated by this crisis of rebellion, created beings would have continued to worship Him, and to praise Him. But now - the choirs of Heaven strike a higher note. They praise Him with a depth of feeling never before known. They praise Him for His wondrous love!

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS?

They were cast out of heaven. (Rev. 12:9)

His kingdom (The Beast/Babylon) will be burned up at the Second Coming. (Rev. Chpt 18)

He will be imprisoned in "the pit" for the 7th millennium. (Rev. 20:2-3)

Released with the second resurrection during the 8th millennium. (Rev. 20:7)

Finally cast into the lake of fire after the Gog-Magog battle. (Rev 20:10)

Revelation 20:10 "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ..."

SPIRIT BEINGS

We are talking about a higher order of beings - spirit beings. They are high energy. Though they were cast out of heaven long ago, Satan and his angels are still spirit beings and we human beings cannot possibly fight against them. Only God Himself and His divine "fire" can overcome such powerful beings. Which is why "the lake of fire" was "prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41).

FIRST LET'S DEAL WITH THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET

Revelation 19:20 (At the fall of “Babylon”) “Then **the beast** was captured, and with him **the false prophet** who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. **These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.**

Revelation 20:10 (At Gog-Magog) “And **the devil**, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where **the beast** and **the false prophet** **are** and **they** will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (NKJ)

NOTE: First the words “are” and “they” are supplied words. They are NOT in the original. They were supplied by the King James Translators. Some translations read, “where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown” (NIV). The “beast” is a religious/political system on the earth, which is “burned up,” along with the earth at the Second Coming. (Rev. 19:20) Peter says, “the elements will melt with fervent heat.” (2 Peter 3:10-12) Brimstone IS melted elements. They do not continue to burn. The “false prophet” is probably a human. A medium for Satan- YES, but a human. (Rev 16:13) He will also be burned up at the destruction of earth and all such systems. The fact that they are to be “cast alive” into this fire, is simply a way of saying that they will be “alive” at the Second Coming. Human beings will be consumed immediately. Demons on the other hand, may last much longer.

In this verse, only Satan “will be tormented day and night forever and ever,” so we need to take a close look at the words in the Greek, their source in the Hebrew, and any other references which may shed some light.

Satan and his angels (powerful as they are) ARE not divine beings. They were created. Their power is far below that of omnipotence. What is a just punishment for spirit beings who caused so much pain? Is continuing conscious torment without end, a just punishment?

CAN ANGELS DIE?

Hebrews 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

NOTE: I understand this verse to say that Jesus was made “lower than the angels, for the suffering of PHYSICAL death.” If he was a spirit being, prior to His incarnation - then He could not die in the human sense. Paul speaks of the moment when “this mortal shall have put on immortality” (I Cor 15:52-54). The righteous dead will be raised “incorruptible” meaning immortal, with “spiritual” bodies (I Cor 15:44). This verse would seem to suggest that spirit beings, cannot die.

Luke 20:35-36 35 “But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

*NOTE: We define death as the loss of, and subsequent absence of physical life. But we know that those who are physically “dead” are still alive to God because He can resurrect them. When we expand our understanding to include the spirit dimension, then our definition may include **spirit death, meaning loss of existence in any dimension.** Humans as well as demons could “die” this type of “death.”*

FOREVER AND EVER

For human beings, the “lake of fire” is “the second death.” We have looked at many, many passages which say that wicked human beings will be destroyed. But Satan, and his angels are spirit beings. They have never “died.” So the lake of fire would not be a “second death” for them. Will the devil, with his angels be consigned to continuing conscious torment without end? He is - after all - a created being. He is not omnipotent or all powerful. What do the words mean?

The Greek phrase translated as “forever and ever” (eis tous aionas ton anionon) literally means: “**unto the ages of the ages.**” It is an idiomatic phrase and is difficult to translate directly into English. It all depends on the context. When “age” is used in connection with physical human beings, then it can mean a human lifetime. If the human has been given “immortality” then that lifetime would be without end. It can mean a period of time, as in Matthew 13:39,40&49 (from creation or from Christ to the Second Coming). When the subject is God or Jesus, it means eternity without end. (Matt 13:39)

In the Old Testament, we have many examples where forever only means the life-time of an individual. The meaning of the Hebrew ‘*olam* (translated “forever” - #05769) also changes with the subject.

Here are a few verses where ‘*olam* clearly does NOT mean an unlimited past, or an unlimited future.

Genesis 6:4 of old: meaning - of the far distant human past.

Exodus 21:6 for ever: meaning - for the rest of his life.

Deuteronomy 32:7 the days of old: - meaning the far distant human

Deuteronomy 33:15 the everlasting hills -

Joshua 8:28 forever: - meaning it has not changed since the day it was destroyed

1 Samuel 27:8 from of old: - meaning distant human past

Proverbs 22:28 the ancient: - speaking of a landmark set in the far distant past

Isaiah 42:14 a long time: - meaning for a long period of time

So - how can we understand “unto the ages of the ages?” Quite simply - we cannot!

I understand that God’s memory of wicked human beings will be consumed in the lake of fire, and from that point they can never be resurrected to continue life.

I understand that only God has immortality (I Tim 6:16). God sustains life, and can therefore give life without end, to those whom He chooses. I cannot believe that our God would sustain the life of any created being simply for torture. There would be no purpose to such.

Perhaps - The “ages” come to an end - with the final destruction of evil.
Beyond that is simply eternity.