

FINAL JUDGMENT

- Lake of Fire -

“The great white throne judgment” - We cannot even read those words without a twinge of fear. At the conclusion of this judgment, every person whose name does not then appear in the Book of Life, will be thrown into a lake of fire (*Rev. 20:11-15*). Let's put this event into context.

This judgment does not take place until AFTER the Gog-Magog rebellion, which battle does not take place until AFTER the last great resurrection of the 8th millennium. So - this judgment does NOT take place at the Second Coming. **This judgment is the concluding event in the history of sin and its consequence.**

Satan and his evil angels are thrown into the lake of fire at the Gog-Magog Battle. (The “lake of fire” *was* after all - “prepared for the Devil and his angels.”) This final concluding judgment does not concern them. They will already have been dispatched when this judgment sits. This judgment will decide which human beings will be finally destroyed in the same “lake of fire.”

The wicked who are resurrected to face Jesus Christ at the Second Coming - will die in the last plagues. Those who side with Chief Gog in rebellion against King Jesus Christ will also die. **There is no mention in Scripture of a third resurrection - so all of these people WILL BE DEAD (unconscious) when the final judgment sits.** What then is “thrown into the lake of fire?” I will try to give you an answer. I will also talk about “forever and ever” - because this punishment is final and irreversible.

We need to talk about the purpose of this final judgment. The LORD does not need to look into any record books in order to decide which persons belong to Him in heart and mind. So why open all the “books” one last time?

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THE LAST JUDGMENT

Revelation 20:7-15 [Historical Context] “Now **when the thousand years have expired**, Satan will be released from his prison 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. 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. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are [*had been thrown*]. And [*they*] will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[The Judgment] **Then I saw a great white throne** and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away [*They seemed very small in comparison*]. And there was found no place for them. 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. 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. **Then Death and Hades** [*sheol - the abode of the dead*] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

This judgment does NOT take place until:

AFTER the Second Coming, (Many wicked die on this day.)

AFTER the 7th millennium,

AFTER the last great resurrection of The 8th Day

AFTER the Battle of Gog & Magog. (The rest of the wicked die on this day.)

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.”

Many of those saved in the kingdom committed these very sins. Paul claimed that he persecuted the followers of Christ. He was forgiven, because he did it in ignorance. So let's be clear. Every person has committed sins against God. We are saved because we ask for forgiveness - and we change our ways through the indwelling power of the Spirit of Christ. Those who are lost, are those who refused to change their ways.

FIRST SIX MILLENNIA

ALL MANKIND

The few who enter into covenant with the LORD

FAITHFUL

Those aware of God and His Law who resist the LORD and persecute His people

Most remain ignorant

UNFAITHFUL

SECOND COMING

Go to Father's house

Judged - 'cut off' left behind to die in the plagues

Not judged

7TH MILLENNIUM

Prepare for priesthood

Remain asleep in death

8TH MILLENNIUM

Return to "the land"
Serve as priests
Govern the nations

Raised to continue their lives
Christ rules as LORD of the nations

Many commit to Christ and are joined with Israel

ISRAEL

Victorious Redeemed People of Elohiym

The majority rebel and die at the Gog-Magog battle

FINAL JUDGMENT

THESE PEOPLE ARE DEAD

Those who died at the Second Coming & those who died at the Battle of Gog - now constitute all of "the dead." 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 resurrect them to physical life at any time. But He will not resurrect them. Instead - He will destroy them in "the lake of fire."

THE END OF DEATH - AND THE DEAD

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." No one is finally judged while still living. His/her life is not yet completed. In the Scripture, several men are said to have "died" more than once. They died physically - more than once. They died the "first" type of death - physical death - more than once. All of the wicked - resurrected to physical life at the Second Coming - will die again. Which I site simply to repeat - those to be judged ARE physically DEAD - not living.

At this point in time the dead would include:

1. the wicked who died at the Second Coming
2. the rebels who died at the Battle of Gog & Magog.

At the conclusion of this final judgment, Death and Hell (Sheol - the abode of the dead) are cast into the lake of fire. Saying that "the abode of the dead" (Sheol) is consumed - is another way of saying that ALL OF THE DEAD are consumed. The abode of the dead will then no longer exist. It has will have been blotted out. No one from Sheol can be resurrected after this event - because Sheol will no longer exist!

THE EVIDENCE

Revelation 20:12-13 "... 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 . . . And they were judged, each one according to his works."

*We are NOT saved by our works,
but it appears that the dead WILL be judged by their works. **WHY?***

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 The Tabernacle of Witness. The Torah Scrolls (written by Moses) were kept next to the Ark. The scrolls contained the warnings - blessings for obedience, and curses for disobedience - to covenant. Inside the “ark of the covenant” were the tables of stone upon which were written the covenant - The Ten Commandments. The LAW is witness, and fellow human beings are witnesses. The terms of covenant - the blessings and the curses, were clearly written.

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: The Torah of Moses is the model. To answer any question of judgment or penalty, we must return to the original model. The model tells us God’s plan and blueprint. This verse alone tells us that all of saved humanity must participate in the execution of those lost. They must give assent.

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 (1 Cor. 8:6, Rev. 4:11, Eph. 3:14).*

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.”

John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

Jesus said, “I know my sheep” (John 10:14, 27).

When we enter into covenant with the Father, thru Christ, our name is written into The Book of Life by Christ Himself. Only He can blot a name out of that book.

In this sense - Christ is judge. He decides which names will be retained in the book. So long as we remain faithful to covenant, our name is retained in the Book - and will not be considered in this last great judgment.

Those to be considered at this judgment are those whose names DO NOT APPEAR in The Book of Life. They are without the covering of Christ's blood. They will be judged by their actions (works).

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;”

THE PENALTY

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.”

This was spoken by the LORD concerning those who forsook the covenant, and did not repent. He will blot out ANY memory of them! Their names will not be remembered.

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. It may not have smelled like sulfur, but John is using imagery which his readers could understand. It is “divine fire” and it 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 Roman 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.

2 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, “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. The lamb 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. Jesus died - but He was NOT consumed in fire.

The sacrifice also symbolized the final end of the wicked. They 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” (Psa. 73:3-17).

Psalm 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.*

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 evil angels 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 “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: The “worthy” cannot die physically - because they will have spiritual bodies.

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 retains a memory (the mind) of each human being at the moment of physical 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. This is how He caused persons from distant lands, to hear uneducated Galilean fishermen preaching the gospel - each in his own language. (Many had journeyed from distant lands to Jerusalem for 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. Imagine Jesus trying to explain to Galilean fishermen - something called a “cell phone.”

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. 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. This is spirit death.

NOTE: You could call the saved mind, “spirit” or “soul.” And you could call God’s memory bank of saved minds, “sheol” - the abode of the dead. Think of a heavenly version of a “memory stick.” At the resurrection the LORD will give you a new computer (body-brain) and “upload” your saved mind. I know it’s simplified - but imagine God “cleansing” His “corrupted files.”

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 done, in order to decide whether someone should be blotted out of existence.

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 can be no love.

The Israel of the first Exodus experienced 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 this display of His power was not

enough to save them from disobedience and rebellion - because love cannot be forced. Love is only awakened by love. It is the love of God - poured out at Calvary that wins 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. They have come to agree with His law of love.

Now HE is about to blot out perhaps millions of human beings - to destroy all trace of 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 life-records of the dead. They will "read" the record of God's patient pleading, of His love shown and His messages of warning. They will finally conclude that there was nothing more God could have done, to win that person (or that angel) to Himself.

The redeemed who judge, will understand that these persons refused all healing, and were 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. There would be no peace!

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. His creation must understand that all the pain was necessary. They must agree with HIM - with what He did, and with 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 ?

With his angels, he was 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" during the 7th millennium (*Rev. 20:2-3*).

He will be "released" with the great resurrection of the 8th millennium (*Rev. 20:7*),

He will finally be 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. 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 Second Coming] "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."

The words "are" and "they" were 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 religio/political system on the earth, which is "burned up," along with its "false prophet" at the Second Coming (Rev. 19:20). Peter says, "the elements will melt with fervent heat" (2 Pet. 3:10-12). The earth will be a "lake of brimstone" - melted elements. The earth is "burned up" but it will not continue to burn forever.

The "false prophet" is probably a human being - a medium for Satan - but human (Rev. 16:13). The fact that the "beast and the false prophet" are "cast alive" into this fire, is simply a way of saying that they will be "alive" at the Second Coming.

The "fire" into which the Devil is "cast," is the same fire that consumed the beast and the false prophet at the Second Coming. It is divine fire. It is the fire that consumes evil. It is the "fire" which will slay the wicked with its brightness (2 Thessalonians. 2:8-9). Jesus said that He will come "in the glory of His Father, with His angels" (Matt. 16:27, Mar. 8:38). We cannot even imagine such glory - the glory of the One who created millions of stars.

The Beast and the false prophet, cast into this fire, are immediately consumed. When Satan is cast into this divine "fire," he (probably with his angels) "will be tormented day and night forever and ever." We need to take a close look at these 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 for them?

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.”

God alone “has immortality” (1 Tim. 6:13-16), so angels can die. I understand this verse to say that Jesus was made “lower than the angels, for the suffering of [physical] death.” If Jesus was divine, prior to His incarnation - then He could not die in the human sense.

This verse would seem to suggest that spirit beings, cannot die. But to me, it says that they cannot die physical death. Death in the lake of fire is spirit death - which is different from physical death.

Luke 20:35-36 “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. Those who receive spiritual” bodies, can no longer die this type of death. 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 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? They are - after all - created beings. Satan 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” means only the life-time of an individual.

The meaning of the Hebrew ‘*olam* (translated “forever” - #05769) changes with the subject.

Here are a few verses where “‘olam” clearly does NOT

convey 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 distant human history past

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 up in the 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 the “spirits” of rebellious unrepentant human beings will be instantly 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 (*1 Tim. 6:16*). He sustains life, and can therefore give life without end, to those whom He chooses.

I cannot believe that our Divine Father 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, when Satan is finally consumed. Beyond that is simply eternity.

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