

The Great White Throne Judgment ...

- *(Revelation 20:11 ESV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.*

This passage describes the final sentencing of the lost and is the most serious, sobering, and tragic passage in the entire Bible. Commonly known as the Great White Throne judgment, it is the last courtroom scene that will ever take place. After this there will never again be a trial, and God will never again need to act as judge. The accused, all the unsaved who have ever lived, will be resurrected to experience a trial like no other that has ever been. There will be no debate over their guilt or innocence. There will be a prosecutor, but no defender; an accuser, but no advocate. There will be an indictment, but no defense mounted by the accused; the convicting evidence will be presented with no rebuttal or cross-examination. [MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2000). *Revelation 12–22* (pp. 245–246). Chicago: Moody Press.]

The language of this passage is plain, stark, and unembellished. Few details are given, and the description is utterly lacking in the vivid, eloquent modifiers that might be expected. But the scene is frightening enough in its own right that such language would be superfluous. The beloved apostle John, recording this vision in a cave or on a hillside on the island of Patmos, no doubt was shaken as he wrote of the eternal damnation of the wicked. [Ibid.]

The first matter for the King's attention as He sets up His kingdom is the confinement of the chief rebel. The removal

of “the god of this world” ... “the prince of the power of the air ... will dramatically change the world.

- *(2 Corinthians 4:4a ESV) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers.*
- *(Ephesians 2:2 ESV) In which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.*

By this time, God will have destroyed all human rebels. Those who survived the Tribulation judgments will have been executed at Armageddon (19:11–21) or the goat judgment (Matthew 25:41–46). The ringleaders of the worldwide rebellion, the beast (Antichrist) and the false prophet, will have been thrown into the lake of fire (19:20). The final step in preparation for the kingdom will be the removal of Satan and his demon hosts, so that Christ reigns without the opposition of supernatural enemies. [Ibid.]

The basis of their judgment is twofold. First, books are opened, and then another book is plainly said to be the Book of Life. All of the dead are judged out of the things that are recorded in the books. This is a judgment based on their deeds or works. Everyone is there, the sea having given up the dead who have perished there and the grave, or Hades, having given up the dead in

them, and every person is judged by what he has done or what has been recorded in the books. [Patterson, P. (2012). *Revelation*. (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.) (Vol. 39, p. 359). Nashville, TN: B&H.]

Now the second basis of judgment is provided. If anyone's name is not found in the Book of Life, he, too, is thrown into the lake of fire. This constitutes an important theological principle. Everyone who stands before the great white throne is judged from the books. The only people appearing before this Great White Throne Judgment are those who were not a part of the first resurrection and hence were outside of Christ. No believers are here. [Ibid.]

God had his redemption plan in place before he even created the heavens and the earth.

- *(1 Peter 1:19–20 ESV) But with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you.*
- *(Revelation 17:8b ESV) And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.*
- *(2 Timothy 1:9 ESV) [God] who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.*

The divine councils centering on man

had first taken place long before the beginning of time (whatever is involved in the concept of “before time”). The Lamb had, in the determination of these councils, been slain before the foundation of the world; the names of the redeemed had been written in His book of life before the foundation of the world; and God had called those who were to be saved by His grace, before the world began. [Morris, H. M. (1976). *The Genesis record: a scientific and devotional commentary on the book of beginnings* (p. 73). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.]

- *(Ephesians 1:3–11 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.*