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SATAN'S DEFEAT AND FINAL JUDGMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

MAIN POINT: Christ's return at the close of the age will consummate the ultimate defeat of all of God's enemies and usher in the final judgment of all humanity.

Revelation 20:7-15

7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison **8** and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. **9** And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven[a] and consumed them, **10** and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

11 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. **12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. **13** And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. **14** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

II. SATAN'S ULTIMATE DEFEAT

1. SATAN GAINS TEMPORARY FREEDOM

- The millennial period expresses three glorious truths in the first part of ch20.
- It is the period of time during which the ultimate defeat of Satan is expressed in a preliminary manner, which anticipates his full and final defeat.
- Satan is bound. He cannot, during the gospel age, deceive the nations by persuading them to mount a unified assault to destroy the church of Jesus Christ.
- Additionally, the millennium is the period of time during which the church on earth will not fail in her missionary enterprise.
- Satan cannot stop the advance of the Gospel to the nations.

- The millennium is also the period of time in which the church in heaven will experience, in an intermediate fashion, her ultimate victory of reigning with Christ.
- But there will come a time where Satan will be allowed to do what he cannot presently do because he is bound.
- V3... After that he must be released for a little while.
- V7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison.
- Satan is released because in God's eternal decree and plan, God has a predetermined purpose for Satan to serve.
- This freedom that Satan has will come at the end of the church's missionary enterprise, it will be temporary and it will be brief. "*Released for a little while.*"

2. SATAN DECEIVES THE NATIONS

- He is released to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, (v8)
- The scope of his deception will be worldwide. It will be global.
- Gog and Magog is reference to Ezekiel 38 and 39 and are shorthand for all the nations of the earth that are in rebellion against God.
- So under God's sovereign control, Satan will have power to muster the nations for an all-out assault against the church.
- The great military might of the whole world under the influence of Satan will be arrayed against the church to secure her ultimate destruction.
- v9 symbolizes this army coming against the church to decimate her, "marching up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounding the camp of the saints and the beloved city..."—this is Exodus imagery, the people of God in the wilderness and the beloved city is another reference for the bride of Christ. (Rev 21)
- It will appear to the world that they have won. The church has been annihilated.
- The two witnesses, Rev. 11:7, And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them.
- The church all across the world will suffer and every last remnant of Christianity will seem to be eliminated.

3. SATAN MEETS HIS DOOM

- God's enemies are soundly defeated and destroyed and his people emerge as victorious and triumphant.
- How did God accomplish this great victory?
- Christ, at his return, will strike all of his enemies down with the sharp sword that comes from his mouth (Rev. 19:15). With a word he will conquer them.
- '*Fire came down from heaven and consumed them...*'
- Two OT accounts come to mind, Sodom and Gomorrah's utter destruction and Elijah calling down fire to consume King Ahaziah's men. (Gen 19 ; 2 Kings 1)
- The judgment comes from heaven. God is the source of Satan's ultimate defeat.
- The judgment is sudden and unexpected. Like a thief in the night.
- Every last person is consumed. There is not a single shred of evidence of this global rebellion left.
- Satan is thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur just like the beast and the false prophet were.
- The unholy, counterfeit trinity, are united in never-ending torment.

- Eternity, from that moment forward, will be one in which we will be completely free from Satan.
- The one who has tormented the earth for all of these many thousands of years, the one who would seek our harm and destruction, will be fully, and finally, and eternally defeated.

III. JUDGMENT BEFORE GOD'S THRONE

- The testimony of Scripture concerning final judgment:
 - **Matthew 25:31-32a** “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations,
 - **Acts 17:31** because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”
 - **2 Cor. 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.
 - The final judgment will be comprehensive and universal in scope. All men will appear before him.
- God has exercised judgment throughout all of human history. It is his divine prerogative and right to do so as Creator.
 - Scripture is replete with scenes of God's judgment and warnings of impending judgment. It's woven all throughout Scripture.
 - This is the **final judgment of all humanity**.

1. WHO IS THE JUDGE?

11 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.

a. THE THRONE

- John sees two immediate things in his vision:
 - First, a great white throne.
 - We were first introduced to this throne in ch4. The throne is the epicenter of the universe.
 - While the throne in other Revelation scenes has been ascribed to the Creator and Sovereign, the images here have to do with God's role in judgment.
 - This is heaven's courtroom.
 - Two descriptors are offered of the throne: great and white.
 - Great in the universal scope of authority that flows from the throne.
 - Great in the magnitude of judgment that will be meted out.
 - Great in the comprehensiveness of those who are summoned to appear before it.
 - Great in the glory manifested by virtue of its occupant.
 - White symbolizes, as we have seen before, righteousness, holiness, purity, and victory.
 - The image of this throne declares the unrivaled sovereignty, absolute authority, unparalleled righteousness and holiness that is about to express itself in divine judgment.
- Second, John sees the person occupying the throne.
 - Is this God or Jesus Christ?
 - We have seen several times in Rev., the throne used to speak of God seated on the throne in distinction to the Lamb. (Rev. 5)
 - Jesus's role in judgment:

- John 5:22,27 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.
- The Father has given all authority to Jesus Christ to execute judgment.
- Matthew 25:31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.
- There is no contradiction here.
- John does this kind of thing a few times in Revelation where he refers to it as the throne of God and of the Lamb.
- Rev. 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb...
- Then in 22:3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.
- He speaks of God and of the Lamb, but then uses a singular pronoun, ‘his servants.’
- God is ONE! God is a trinity.

b. DE-CREATION

- V11b From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.
- The phrase, earth and sky fled away, is something we have seen before. Ch6, sixth seal (6:12-14) and Ch16, seventh bowl (16:17-21).
- All of these parallel symbolic visions of the end of all things is the de-creation of the present heaven and earth associated with final judgment.
- **2 Peter 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.
- The present sin-stained creation will be judged.
- Rom. 8 tells us that creation was subjected to futility and is in bondage and corruption because of sin. Creation groans under the curse of man’s rebellion.
- De-creation at final judgment makes way for the renewed creation.
- All that matters now is the Great White Throne and the Judge seated upon it, and the verdict that He is about to render.
- God has reserved the final judgment and its execution for himself.
- The judgment will be righteous. It will be just.
- The Judge brings absolute omniscience and holiness to the judgment seat.
- It will be fair. Everyone will get what they rightly deserve.

2. WHO ARE THE JUDGED?

12a And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne,

13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

- Who are the judged? John defines them as the dead.
- Parenthesis in 20:5, The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.
- Ch19, the birds summoned to the great supper of God to eat the flesh of kings, captains, might men, the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great (19:17-18).
- The dead are both unbelievers and believers, but the context here is in regard to unbelievers.
- At the Second Coming of Christ, every single person who has died in the entirety of human history from Adam until that very last final battle

scene, will be resurrected bodily and stand before the throne of God.

- Death and Hades will give up the dead who are in it.
- Every unbeliever who has died prior to this scene, is in the place of the dead. It is a preliminary realm of judgment and condemnation. It is a place of torment . (The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:22-23).

- The place of the dead will surrender their dead. God will raise up everyone bodily and be transformed for eternity.
- All of the enemies of God rise to eternal condemnation.
- Every human that has refused the gospel of Jesus Christ is now before God's throne awaiting their final sentence.
- The great throne has jurisdiction over all the inhabitants of the earth.
- This vision of final judgment reveals the ultimate destiny of all God's enemies as the saints of God are ushered into the promised land, the new heavens and the new earth.

3. HOW ARE THEY JUDGED?

12 ...and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

- In this final judgment scene, books were opened. Evidence is presented. Judgment will be rendered according to what they had done.
- What are these books? They are symbols, they are metaphors that communicate the inerrant, unfailing, perfect, recollection and memory of God.
- What does that tell us about the judgment?
- The judgment will be based on irrefutable evidence.
- The record will be consulted, and every detail presented is accurate.
- God's judgment will not be arbitrary or capricious.
- There will be no partiality or bias. God will apply the same standard to all.
- Those standing before the throne will not be able to appeal to their recollection of prior thoughts, deeds, or words.
- God will give an accurate account. He will be the witness called against every man and woman, and his judgment will be just.
- **Jeremiah 17:10** 10 "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."
- **Romans 2:6** He will render to each one according to his works:
- Peter says that God judges impartially according to each one's deeds (1 Pet.1:17).
- The practice of one's life NOT the profession of faith will be the basis for judgment.
- We said that Christians will also be present to be judged before the throne.
- The question on that day will not be, "Did you receive Jesus into your heart?"
- Are we saved by grace through faith apart from works or are we saved by faith and works? YES!
- The evaluation of one's life and work will be the definitive test of the genuineness of one's faith.
- It's not that salvation is by works, but that salvation produces works (Eph. 2:8-10).
- Our works will demonstrate whether our faith in Christ was real.
- If our faith is genuine, the works will be there to prove it was genuine.
- If the works are not there, then our faith was not genuine.
- Read James 2, faith without works is dead.

- We are justified by our works in that they are the definitive proof of our allegiance and obedience to Christ.
- God will check the books!
- But he will also check the Book—the Book of Life. This is not a record of deeds but of names.
- The book of life contains the roster of God’s elect, chosen in him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; Rev. 17:8).
- We are saved by works—HIS WORKS!
- And on the basis of what Christ has done for us, our names were inscribed in the book of Life.
- For the rest, their works will condemn them. They will be judged exactly as they want to be judged, on the merits of their works. They are damned by their works.

4. WHAT IS THE JUDGMENT?

- Death and Hades, the temporary abode of the dead, is swallowed up by the lake of fire.
- Those whose names are not written in the book of life are thrown into the lake of fire.
- The lake of fire, the second death, will be the eternal home of all those who rejected Christ.
- They will not be annihilated, but will be cast into hell experiencing conscious, unending torment for all of eternity, in bodies that burn but are never consumed.
- They will not experience any of the grace of God.

CONCLUSION

- How does God expect us to respond? What does he expect of us?
- First it is a summons to respond to the gracious offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- **John 3:16-18** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
- I implore you, be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.
- Second, He expects our **praise, worship and adoration.**
- Because he is a righteous Judge.
- On that day, every wrong will be made right, every injustice will be dealt with.
- Because He has graciously pardoned us in Christ.
- Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- On that day, when we stand before his throne of judgment, we will fall on our faces before him in endless praise of his glorious grace.