

The Great White Throne Judgment

Study 22. Revelation 20:11-15

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A. The Judge in the Courtroom 20:11

1. What object did John see? 20:11 _____
2. Who was sitting on it? _____
3. Read John 5:22-30. Based upon the statements of Jesus, who is most likely the person who will be sitting on the throne ¹ as described in Rev. 20:11?

4. What happened to heaven and earth when this Judge sat on the throne?
20:11 _____ 2

B. The Defendants in the Courtroom. 20:12-13

1. John saw some people standing before the Great White Throne. 20:12a
 - a. What one word describes them? The _____.
 - b. What two additional categories describe them? The _____
and the _____

¹ 20:11 - and Him who sat upon it: The person sitting on the Great White Throne is unidentified. Based on Jesus' statements in John 5:22-30, it seems likely that Jesus will be the one sitting on the Great White Throne as Judge. Why did John not identify the one sitting on the throne? We do not know.

² 20:11 - from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them: Literally, the text reads, "from whose face earth and heaven fled away", etc. With minimal description, John seems to be describing the catastrophic destruction of the entire universe - including our present Earth and Heaven - not the abode of God, but the atmosphere of earth and the "Space" in which all the planets, stars, galaxies, and other celestial bodies are suspended. In other words, Jesus will destroy the entire physical universe, which has been marred by man's sin. John will again refer to this "passing away" of "the first heaven and the first earth" in Rev. 21:1. Elsewhere, Peter describes the destruction of the universe in graphic language (2 Pet. 3:7-12).

The effect upon people will be dramatic, I suspect. For most people this physical earth, along with the sun, moon and stars they see from day to day, are the only reality they know. But all physical matter will be destroyed. Peoples' homes, cars, possessions, their money, the earth they live on, the stars, the sun, the moon - all will be annihilated in flames. When they stand before Jesus, the only thing they will have will be the works they have done in their life upon earth and their character. No material substance from this present order will survive the purification by fire. No human will be able to bring any "props" with him when he stands before the judge. What a sobering thought. Peter's words of warning (2 Pet. 3:3-18) are supremely appropriate! The wise will listen and heed the warning!

2. What do you think will be the reaction of people standing before the throne (20:12) when they see that the earth and the heaven have “fled away” from the face of the one sitting on the throne? 20:11 _____

3. What were opened? 20:12b _____
4. Another, separate book was also opened. It was identified as “the _____ of _____.” 20:12c
5. How were the dead judged? _____
_____ 20:12d
6. Three entities were said to “give up the dead” which were in them. What are these entities? 20:13a
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. How were they judged? 20:13b _____

C. The Disposition of the Defendants. 20:14-15

1. What were thrown into the Lake of Fire? 20:14a
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
2. What is another name for the Lake of Fire? 20:14b _____

3. The criterion of judgment. 20:15
 - a. What does the criterion of judgment appear to be? 20:15a _____

 - b. What will happen if someone’s name is not found written in the Book of Life? 20:15b _____

4. Another word for the Lake of Fire is hell (Greek = *geenna*, 1067). What do you learn about hell from
 - a. Mark 9:43 _____
 - b. Mark 9:47-48 _____

5. Hades (86) is a temporary (see Rev. 20:14) place of death. A rich man found himself in Hades (Luke 16:23).
 - a. How was his condition described in Luke 16:23? _____

 - b. What did he request? Luke 16:24 _____

 - c. Why? Luke 16:24 _____
 - d. Of what was the rich man conscious? Luke 16:27-28 _____

 - e. Why would the rich man's brothers not believe, even if someone rose from the dead to warn them? Luke 16:29-31 _____

D. The Book of Life

1. If having one's name written in the Book of Life is of supreme importance for avoiding the Lake of Fire, how does one make certain his name is recorded there?
2. Jesus said that the person who hears His message, and who believes in the One who sent Him, possesses eternal life, and does not enter into judgment, but has passed from "the death" into "the life"³ (John 5:24).
3. Jesus also said that He Himself was "the way and the truth and the life." He also said, "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).
4. According to John 3:36, "The one believing in the Son has eternal life. The one disobeying the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

³ Quotations of the Scripture in this section (D. The Book of Life) are the author's translation of the Greek New Testament passages.

5. Here is what Jesus spoke to Martha the sister of Lazarus, who had just recently died. "I am the resurrection and the life. The one believing in me, though he had died, yet shall he live. And every one living and believing in Me shall not die into the age. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26).
6. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).
7. Believe in Jesus – receive Him as your own, enter God's family, and avoid the Lake of Fire! (John 1:12)

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