

Eschatology

Preparations for the Eternal Kingdom Satan's Defeat & The White Throne Judgment

Before the Millennial Kingdom began, Satan was seized by an angel and bound him in the abyss for the duration of the 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3).

As we have discussed over the last several weeks, the millennial will be a time where Jesus will be accepted by all as King, but not accepted by all as Savior. Even with the most perfect of conditions and with God physically reigning on earth, the sinful flesh of the unregenerate will quietly rebel against Him. That is quietly until Satan is released and gathers all the rebels for one final revolt against God Himself (Rev.20: 7-8).

It is important to note that the reference to "Gog and Magog" (vs.8) IS NOT the same battle of Gog and Magog that Ezekiel 38-39 describes.

John gives the enemies of the King of Kings the symbolic title "Gog and Magog", naming them after the invasion force that will assault Israel in their mountains during the tribulation period (Ezek. 38-39).

The battle referred to in Rev. 20 is a battle where ALL the rebellious people of the earth will join Satan and his legions of demons (spiritually) to surround the mountain of the Lord and Jerusalem.

Whereas Satan believes himself to finally have the strength and numbers to defeat God, he is actually being used by God to make the final purge of ALL sin from earth. To his demise, Satan will not be victorious but will be defeated and cast into the Lake of Fire to be tormented for all of eternity (Rev. 20:9-10).

Just like the campaign of Armageddon, the "battle" will really be an execution. As the rebel forces move in for the attack, "fire will come down from heaven and devour them." The rebels will be physically killed and their souls will go into the realm of punishment where they will await their final sentencing...

The Great White Throne Judgment



John describes for us in Revelation 20:11-15 the final judgment on ALL of mankind from creation until the end of the millennial kingdom. This is the last courtroom scene that will ever take place.

➤ The Scene (20:11-12a)

John begins with the observation of the “great white throne”. This is a seat of judgment with sentencing in mind. John also note who is sitting on the throne. It is God the Son who has the unique role of sitting in this seat for scripture teaches that Jesus will judge sinners (John 5:22, 26-27; Acts 10:42).

Then John describes the “un-creation” of the universe. The details of God’s un-creation are given by Peter in 2Pet. 3:10-13.

➤ The Summons (20:13a)

Next John describes the summoning of the prisoners from their cells to come before the throne and stand before their Judge. As discussed several weeks ago, the unsaved dead are in the realm of the dead called “Hades” or “Sheol.” It is the place where the souls of the unregenerate are being tormented while waiting for their final sentencing. This is the resurrection unto damnation.

➤ The Standard (20:12b, 13b)

Then the “books were opened”. These books contain the record of every thought, word and deed of every unsaved person who ever lived. God keeps perfect records and every believer will be judged “according to their deeds.” The sinners deeds will be measured against God’s perfect, holy standard, which Jesus defined in Matthew 5:48.

God’s justice demands payment for every person’s sins. Jesus paid that penalty for believers (Isa. 53:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:21). Yet unbelievers will personally pay the penalty for violating God’s law – albeit eternal destruction in hell (2Thess. 1:9).

The final book to be opened is the Book of Life. It contains the names of all those whose “citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20). Every saved person from ALL of human history has his or her name written in the book.

➤ The Sentencing (20:14-15)

As the sentence is passed, “Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire”, meaning that they will go out of existence, swallowed up by the final hell.

Scripture vividly portrays the various aspect of the final, fiery hell. Isa. 66:24; Matt.8:12, 13:42, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30; Mark 9:44; Luke 13:28; 2Pet. 2:17, just to list a few.

Final Thought

As Christians, a study of the white throne judgment should not be cause for a sigh of relief; instead it should motivate us to share the gospel of grace and forgiveness with everyone we know.

Even Bible-believing Christians have tended to tone down the awfulness of eternal death to somehow reconcile the destiny of the lost with the prospect of the saved of being eternally in the presence of the Lord.

A thorough appreciation of eternal punishment, however, will in the end enhance the doctrine of the grace of God and make the love (agape) of God all the more wonderful for those who enter into its truth.