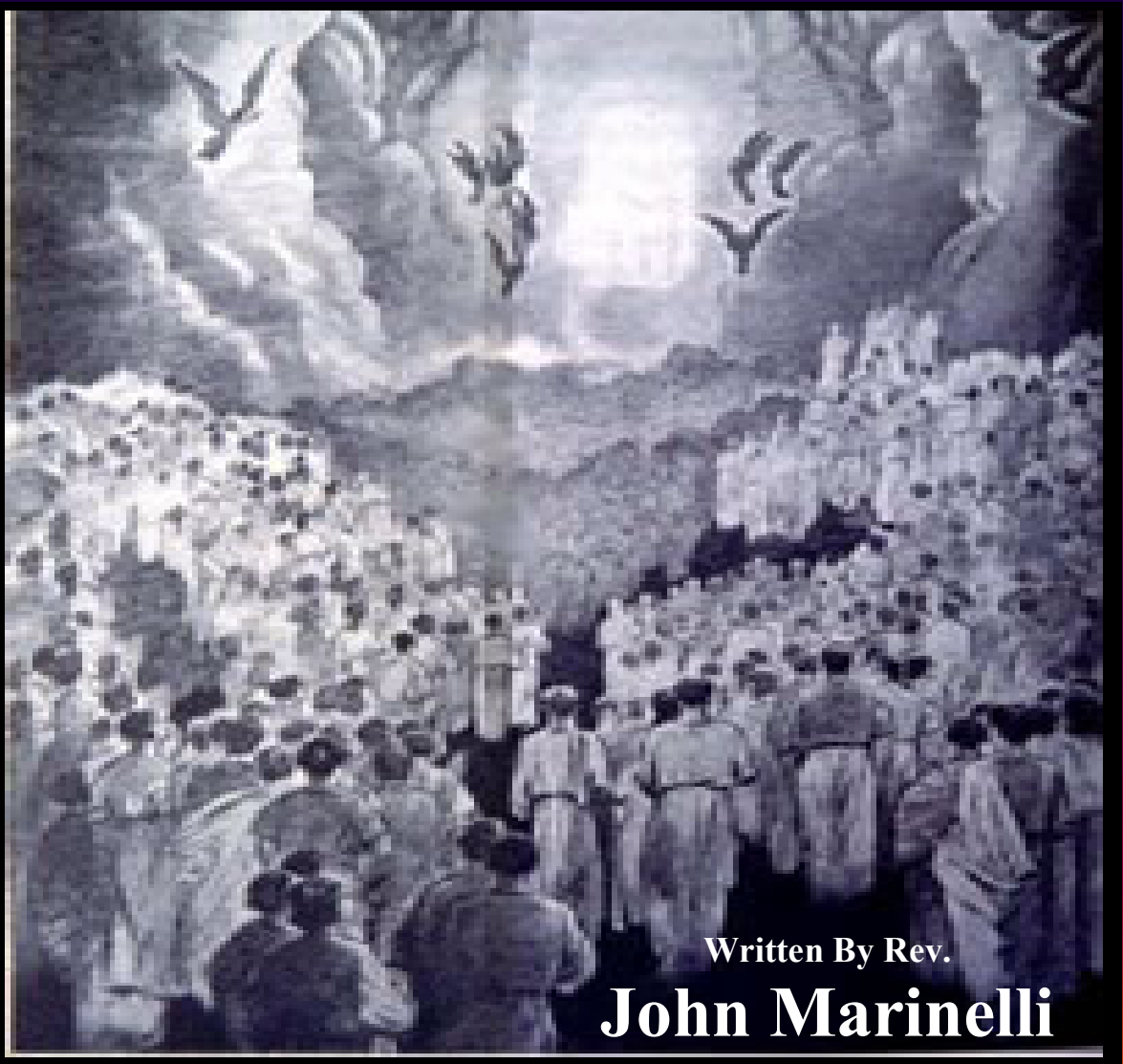


The
**Great White Throne
Judgment**



Written By Rev.
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“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

Revelation 20:12

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Introduction

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The great white throne judgment is described in **Revelation 20:11-15** and is the final judgment prior to the lost being cast into the lake of fire. We know from **Revelation 20:7-15** that this judgment will take place after the millennium and after Satan, the beast, and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire (**Revelation 20:7-10**).

The books that are opened (**Revelation 20:12**) contain records of everyone's deeds, whether they are good or evil, because God knows everything that has ever been said, done, or even thought, and He will reward or punish each one accordingly (**Psalm 28:4; 62:12; Romans 2:6; Revelation 2:23; 18:6; 22:12**).

The, "Book of Life"

Also at this time, another book is opened, called the "*book of life*" (**Revelation 20:12**). It is this book that determines whether a person will inherit eternal life with God or receive everlasting punishment in the lake of fire. Although Christians are held accountable for their actions, they are forgiven in Christ and their names were written in the "book of life from the creation of the world" (**Revelation 17:8**).

We also know from Scripture that it is at this judgment when the dead will be "judged according to what they had done" (**Revelation 20:12**) and that "anyone's name" that is not "found written in the book of life" will be "thrown into the lake of fire" (**Revelation 20:15**).

Who Will Be Judged?

The fact that there is going to be a final judgment for all men, both believers and unbelievers, is clearly confirmed in many passages of Scripture. *Every person* will one day stand before Christ and be judged for his or her deeds. While it is very clear that the great white throne judgment is the final judgment, Christians disagree on how it relates to the other judgments mentioned in the Bible, specifically, who will be judged at the great white throne judgment.

Judgment of The Sheep And The Goats

Some Christians believe that the Scriptures reveal three different judgments to come.

The first is the judgment of the sheep and the goats or a judgment of the nations (**Matthew 25:31-36**). **Matthew 7:23...**"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Each will then be cast into the Lake of Fire, which will be their place throughout Eternity. (**See Mark 9:43-48**)

1. This takes place after the tribulation period but prior to the millennium; its purpose is to determine who will enter the millennial kingdom.

“Judgment Seat of Christ”

2. The second is a judgment of believers’ works, often referred to as the “judgment seat [bema] of Christ” (**2 Corinthians 5:10**). At this judgment, Christians will receive degrees of reward for their works or service to God.

The Great White Throne Judgment

3. The third is the great white throne judgment at the end of the millennium (**Revelation 20:11-15**). This is the judgment of unbelievers in which they are judged according to their works and sentenced to everlasting punishment in the lake of fire.

Three Judgments In One

Other Christians believe that all three of these judgments speak of the same final judgment, not of three separate judgments. In other words, the great white throne judgment in **Revelation 20:11-15** will be the time that believers and unbelievers alike are judged. Those whose names are found in the book of life will be judged for their deeds in order to determine the rewards they will receive or lose.

Those whose names are not in the book of life will be judged according to their deeds to determine the degree of punishment they will receive in the lake of fire.

Those who hold this view believe that **Matthew 25:31-46** is another description of what takes place at the great white throne judgment. They point to the fact that the result of this judgment is the same as what is seen after the great white throne judgment in (**Revelation 20:11-15**). The sheep (believers) enter into eternal life, while the goats (unbelievers) are cast into “eternal punishment” (**Matthew 25:46**).

Unbelievers Receive Various Degrees of Damnation Depending On Their Deeds

Whichever view one holds of the great white throne judgment, it is important to never lose sight of the facts concerning the coming judgment(s). First, Jesus Christ will be the judge, all unbelievers will be judged by Christ, and they will be punished according to the works they have done.

The Bible is very clear that unbelievers are storing up wrath against themselves (**Romans 2:5**) and that God will “give to each person according to what he has done” (**Romans 2:6**).

Believers Receive Various Degrees of Rewards Depending On Their Faith & Obedience

Believers will also be judged by Christ, but since Christ's righteousness has been imputed to them and their names are written in the book of life, they will be rewarded, but not punished, according to their deeds. **Romans 14:10-12** says that we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and that each one of us will give an account to God.

Great White Throne Judgment Is A Trial

The Great White Throne Judgment is a trial, set in the future, for all people who have rejected God's Call to salvation. Every person who has lived upon earth and has refused to accept God's way to redemption from sin, will kneel before their Creator at this time, and acknowledge that He is God--that Jesus Christ is Lord.

No person who has not been saved by acceptance of the Lord Jesus' sacrifice on the cross will escape this horrifying judgment against sin. The Lord Jesus foretold of this moment.

Jesus Is the Judge

The Greatness of this Throne is not in the size of it, nor is it the number of the multitude who stands convicted before it, but in the greatness of the Judge who presides over it--the Lord Jesus.

The white color is representative of His holiness and purity, and of how fitting it is that He should judge mankind.

The Great White Throne Judgment is found in the following:

Revelation 20:11-15..."And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead, which were in

it; and death and hell delivered up the dead, which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire".

Although the word "throne" appears some thirty times in the Book of Revelation, this is a reference to a throne different than any previously mentioned, and accordingly, it is called a "**Great White Throne.**" Unlike the previous thrones on Earth or Heaven, it is pictured as being in space and occupied by the Lord Jesus himself. **(1 John 5:22-23)** "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all [men] should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him".

Romans 2:16..."In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

Revelation 3:21..."To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Judgment Will Follow Death

Hebrews 9:27..."And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

Our status in the Lord Jesus determines how we will be judged. Immediately following the Rapture, the believer will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10..."For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad."

There, the resurrected saints will receive rewards for the good works they performed while on earth. But, this is far different from what will happen to the unbeliever, who will appear before the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium.

The Great White Throne Judgment is NOT for Christians. It is only for those who refuse to accept the Lord Jesus Christ in this earthly life.

To avoid this judgment, all one must do is repent and believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and invite Him to become his or her Lord and Savior.

Romans 8:1..."[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Hebrews 10:31..."[It is] a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The Wicked Go Before Jesus At The Great White Throne

As the text (**Revelation 20:12-15**) makes plain, The Great White Throne is the final judgment. As the righteous have already been judged, this judgment relates to the wicked. It is the final resurrection in contrast to the first resurrection, which had to do with the righteous.

Daniel 12:2..."And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt."

John 5:29..."And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Acts 24:15..."And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

Salvation is not the issue, for those in this judgment are described as dead, meaning they are spiritually dead. They have no saving relationship with God and hence, no mediator.

1 Timothy 2:5..."For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

Those standing before the Throne come from all walks of life but are now being judged on the basis of their works. The judgment is based on what occurs in the books, which record their works, and whether their names are in the Book of Life.

The **Book of Life** contains the names of God's elect. They will experience no condemnation or judgment. They are not among the dead, for they are alive.

John 6: 50-51..."This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Revelation 20:12-13..."And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

The "dead, small and great" refers to those who have lived throughout history and, regardless of their stature or position, died without acknowledging and accepting The Lord Jesus' payment for their sins. All remains of these deceased will be raised and united with their souls so that they can stand in a resurrected form before the Great White Throne.

After death, the soul continues to exist. Before the resurrection, the soul of the believer is in the presence of God awaiting eternal reward. The soul of the unbeliever is in Hades awaiting final judgment.

Ecclesiastes 12:14..."For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether [it be] good, or whether [it be] evil."

Romans 2:5-6..."But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds:"

After the unsaved are judged, another Book is opened, **The Book of Life**. The New Testament refers to this Book eight times, while three times the Old Testament mentions a Book in which names are written. John says:

Revelation 20:15..."And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

The lake of fire is a punishment of everlasting torment prepared for Satan, his angels and all who refuse the gift of eternal life through the Lord Jesus.

Matthew 25: 41, 46..."Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

When This Is Completed, Only One Last Event Is Scheduled For The Great White Throne Judgment.

Revelation 20:14...And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. In this way, the word of the apostle Paul will be fulfilled:

1 Corinthians 15:26..."The last enemy [that] shall be destroyed [is] death."

1 Corinthians 15:54-55..."So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where [is] thy sting? O grave, where [is] thy victory?"

God Eliminates Sorrow, Causes Crying To Cease And Wipes Away Every Tear

Revelation 21:4..."And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Excerpts from ABC's of Prophecy

No one knows for certain what is contained in the books mentioned in Daniel and Revelation. Many theologians speculate that they contain a record of sins committed in this life, and the resulting debt owed by each person to those they have wronged, including God, the ultimate target of all sin.

In the first century, every criminal who was crucified had a piece of paper detailing his crimes nailed to the cross above his head. Those who were imprisoned often had a list of their crimes posted outside their cell so all

would know what they were guilty of. For these reasons, Bible commentators feel the books at the Great White Throne Judgment are records of every person's "spiritual crimes" against other people and God.

Compelling Truth Tells Us More

More is known about the **book of life** that is mentioned. According to Scripture, the book of life contains the names of all who have trusted in God for their salvation and have been saved from God's judgment. Paul mentions the book of life in one of his epistles: "Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these . . . whose names are in the book of life" (**Philippians 4:3**).

The Bible makes it clear that no person will spend eternity with God based on his works and that it is only faith in Christ that saves a person (**Ephesians 2:8-9**), John records that those whose names are not found in the book of life (i.e., those outside of Christ) are consigned to the lake of fire based on their deeds (**Revelation 20:13, 15**). Our works cannot save us, but they may condemn us.

In the end, the Great White Throne Judgment underscores the fact that God's justice will be done and that, outside of Christ, that justice will be terrifying, sure, and final.

First Doctrine of God To Be Denied Or Rejected

It is important to note that the first doctrine of God to be denied was judgment. When Eve recited God's warning about the result of her disobedience, Satan denied what God said. Satan told her, "You will not surely die" (**Genesis 3:4**). But that lie resulted in the first couple's disobedience, God's judgment being handed down to Adam and Eve, and the introduction of sin into the human race.

Unless a person puts his faith in Christ, he will stand before Jesus at His Great White Throne and be judged unworthy of spending eternity with God. Speaking 2,000 years ago to a group of unbelieving philosophers on Mars Hill in Athens, Paul said, "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" (**Acts 17:31**).

If you haven't yet received Christ as your Savior and Lord, pray to Him now, ask for forgiveness, and escape the certain judgment that is to come.

Conclusion

Whether you agree with three judgments in one place, the Great White Throne of just one, there is one thing that is certain. That one thing is that death is an appointment for every human being and after death, comes judgment. We will all die and we will all face Jesus, God's Only Begotten Son to give an account.

The big question will be, "Is Your Name in The Book of Life? Our final destiny will be revealed and our fate sealed forever. He will want to see it for Himself, even though He already knows.

We will condemn or save ourselves with our own tongues. What we did and did not do is all written down. We will have openly, from the heart, said during our life that we are one of the "Whosoever" of **John 3:16** that believed in God's only Son and accepted Him as my Savior"...or we will be found lacking true salvation and must face the wrath of God.

God is a good God but He still demands repentance and faith in His only Son in order to enter into His kingdom. He takes no prisoners, no souls that do not want to be with Him and no excuses. We make the choice from our own free will and God honors our decision, even if it takes us to Hell and ultimately into the Lake of Fire.

The Great White Throne Judgment is indeed for the lost. If we show up there, it will be to hear our names being read as being recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Our reward will be to be with Jesus for all of time and eternity, living in His righteousness and sharing in His inheritance.

To God Be The Glory