

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 29

Jesus On the Throne

Jesus On the Throne

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students what the period of time will be like after the tribulation (the Millennium), when Satan is bound and Jesus is on the throne.

Key Verses

Revelation 20—Main Teaching Passage

Isaiah 2:2-4

Isaiah 11:4-9 (65:25)

Isaiah 35

Revelation 2:11

Memory Verse - Matthew 6:10

"Your Kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

In last week's class, we looked at the events that precede a time referred to in the Bible as "the Millennium." This week, we will look at the Millennium and what happens immediately after.

Ask the students, "Imagine a country where Jesus is the President. What do you think that country would be like? What would be there? What wouldn't be there?"

Allow several students to answer, then read Revelation 20:1-15.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Revelation 20 marks the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the 1,000-year reign of Christ over the earth (the Millennium). An angel, holding in his hands a chain and the key to the bottomless pit, will bind Satan and lock him away for 1,000 years. While in the pit, Satan will have no influence and no power on the earth. Jesus will sit on the throne. His kingdom will be one of peace and safety, where we will reign with Him over His people. The wolf and lamb will dwell together. Bears and cows will both graze in the field. Children will play with snakes and not be hurt (Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25). There will be no sickness and no war (Isaiah 2:4). People will live for hundreds of years and many will travel to see, learn from, and worship the King of Kings (Isaiah 2:3; see also Isaiah 35).

But this is not heaven. When the 1,000 years come to an end, Satan will be released from the pit and go out to deceive the nations once again. He will gather an army and surround the city of Jerusalem. There will be no battle. God will send fire from heaven to destroy them, and He will cast Satan into the lake of fire and brimstone where he will suffer eternally.

We are then introduced to the great white throne, where Jesus will sit as Judge over those who refused to accept His gift of salvation. Books will be opened, records of the lives of everyone there: every action, every word, and even every thought. After this, these people whose names are not written in the Book of Life are also cast into the lake of fire, where they will remain forever. This is the second death. Those who trust Jesus for salvation “shall not be hurt by the second death” (Revelation 2:11).

LOOK

After the terrible events of the tribulation, Jesus will return on a white horse and establish His throne and His kingdom. His reign will be on a global scale. Even creation will be at peace! The desert places will flow with streams and turn into beautiful gardens. Sorrow will flee away. Everlasting joy will be in the hearts of God’s people. The lame will walk, the blind will see, the deaf will hear, and the mute will speak.

Can you imagine? It all seems too good to be true. It’s kind of like what we think of when we consider what the Garden of Eden was like. Children will grab lions by their mane and lead them around. They will play with snakes and not be injured. No one will have to lock their doors at night. Weapons will be a thing of the past.

There will be no hospitals, the sick have been healed. There will be no police, the King enforces His law. There will be no military, wars will be no more. No one will starve. Everyone will be provided for. People will live for hundreds of years. Jerusalem will be the capital of the entire world and everyone will travel to be taught by Jesus Himself. How incredible is that!

The interpretation/
exegesis of the passage.
What does this passage
mean? How does this
passage apply to my
life?

LOOK (Continued)

This is the world God wants. This is what the world looks like when Satan is gone and Jesus is on the throne. But this is not yet heaven. People born during this time will still need to give their lives to Him, and not all will. We learn that when Satan is released, many will rebel against King Jesus, but they will be powerless to stop Him. Even today, Satan has no power beyond what God allows him to have. God can easily lock him away and easily throw him into hell when it's his time. Today, Satan is somehow serving God's purposes, which is why God lets him remain active in the world. It's impossible to understand all of God's reasons for this, but He knows everything and is in control even when things seem out of control. We know that even what Satan intends for evil, God intends for good.

Today, God's Kingdom isn't on earth like it will be in the Millennium. For now, His kingdom has been established in the hearts of those who call Him King. We pray, "Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The Millennium will be the ultimate answer to that prayer. Though it may sound too good to be true, it is. It's our hope. It's what we look forward to. And what lies beyond the Millennium is even better! We'll cover that in next week's lesson.

For today, the question is, "is Jesus your King?" Is He on the throne of your heart? Do you listen to and obey His commands or do you prefer to do life your own way? Do you read His Word and treasure it in your heart? God loves you. He loves everyone. He knows what is best for us. Jesus died and rose so we could have our sins forgiven and our names written in the Book of Life, but not everyone's name will be there. There are those who refuse to call Jesus their King. For them, eternal suffering lies ahead. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, but the Bible clearly teaches that not all will come to repentance. As wonderful as God's Kingdom sounds, not everyone wants Jesus as their King, but the King still wants them, and that is why He has not yet returned to take us up to be with Him. There is still time to believe in Jesus for salvation, but that time is running out.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Be sure to give the kids an opportunity to respond in faith and invite Jesus to be their Lord and Savior.

As a class, memorize Matthew 6:10.

Pray: Praise God that Jesus is coming back to set up His throne and thank Him for providing a way to be a part of His perfect and eternal Kingdom.

Parent Question: What is the Millennium and what will it be like?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Revelation 20 by David Guzik

SATAN, SIN AND DEATH ARE FINALLY ELIMINATED

A. Satan bound for a thousand years.

1. ([Rev 20:1](#)) A nameless angel comes to bind Satan with a great chain.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

a. **An angel coming down from heaven:** The angel that will subdue Satan is anonymous. It is not Jesus Himself, nor is it Michael or Gabriel or any other high-ranking angel.

i. “The final importance of Satan is perhaps indicated in the fact that it is not the Father who deals with him, nor the Christ, but only an unnamed angel.” (L. Morris)

b. **An angel coming down from heaven:** This is a dramatic declaration that Satan is *not* God’s opposite or equal; and that God could easily stop Satan’s activity at any time. Yet God allows Satan to continue, because even in his evil, he indirectly serves the purposes of God.

2. ([Rev 20:2-3](#)) Satan is imprisoned for 1,000 years.

He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the Devil and Satan*, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

a. **Laid hold... bound him... cast him... shut him up... set a seal on him:** Satan tried to imprison Jesus in a tomb, but couldn’t. Here, God has no problem restraining Satan, and this incarceration is not for punishment, but restraint. By implication, Satan’s demonic armies are also restrained and imprisoned.

i. “Is this a literal transaction? Certainly it is. The battle is literal; the taking of the Beast and the False Prophet is literal; the slaying of the kings and their armies is literal; Satan is literal; and his binding must be equally literal. It will not resolve itself into anything else.” (Seiss)

ii. Some people ask, “What kind of chain can hold the devil?” We don’t know, but God can fashion a chain for that exact purpose. We know that right now there are demonic spirits who are imprisoned and chained ([Jude 6](#)). If God can chain them now, He can chain Satan for 1,000 years.

iii. “The elaborate measures taken to insure his custody are most easily understood as implying the complete cessation of his influence on earth (rather than a curbing of his activities).” (Mounce)

iv. Some take this as Satan’s binding on a personal level, believing that it refers to how Satan’s work can be restrained in the life of an individual. But this view does not take the text seriously. If God *did* want to tell us of the total inactivity of Satan, how could He have said it any stronger?

v. This shows that there is no *man* who simply “binds” Satan with his prayer. This is a work done on divine

initiative. “One very important detail is to notice that the conquest of Satan and his powers does not come by any human effort.” (Barnhouse)

b. That he should deceive the nations no more: This shows us Satan’s main mode of attack is revealed. Satan is a deceiver, so the most potent defense and weapon against Satan is the truth of God’s Word.

i. “The truth is ever against him; therefore falsehood is his particular recourse and instrument. But naked falsehood is only repulsive. What we know to be a lie cannot command our respect... Untruth can only gain credence and acceptance by being so disguised as to appear to be the truth. Falsehood can have no power over us until we are led to believe and conclude that it is the truth. And this deluding of men, getting them to accept and follow lies and false hopes, under the persuasion that they are accepting and following the truth, is the great work and business of Satan in every age.” (Seiss)

ii. Since Satan’s work of deception continues today, we know that he is not bound in the way that this passage describes. We know that Satan was not bound at the finished work of Jesus on the cross, at the resurrection, or at the founding of the church. We know this because Peter said that Satan was free to walk about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour ([1 Peter 5:8](#)).

iii. Satan continues to effectively deceive. “People not only make falsehoods, speak falsehoods, print falsehoods, and believe falsehoods; but they eat them, and drink them, and wear them, and act them, and live them, and make them one of the great elements of their being.” (Seiss)

c. Till the thousand years were finished: This thousand-year period is often known as the *Millennium*. Through church history, there has been many different ways of understanding the Millennium.

i. The Bible speaks powerfully to other aspects of the millennial earth. Tragically, the Church through history has often ignored or denied the promise of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The early church until Augustine almost universally believed in an earthly, historical reign of Jesus, initiated by His return. Tyconius (in the late 300’s) was the first to influentially champion a spiritualized interpretation, saying that this Millennium is *now* (*amillennialism*) and must be understood as a *spiritual* reign of Jesus, not a literal reign. His view was adopted by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church and most Reformation theologians.

ii. Growing out of *amillennialism* is the doctrine of *postmillennialism*, saying the millennium will happen in *this* age, before Jesus’ return – but that the church will bring it to pass. Yet the clear teaching of the Bible isn’t *amillennialism* or *postmillennialism*, but what is called *premillennialism* – the teaching that Jesus Christ will return to this earth *before* the millennial earth, and *He* will establish and govern it directly.

iii. There is no need to say that Satan is only bound in a spiritual sense, and Jesus only rules in a spiritual sense. When we consider the rest of the Scriptures, the earthly reign of Christ and His people on this earth is plainly taught in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, we see it in [Psalm 72](#), [Isaiah 2:2-4](#), [Isaiah 11:4-9](#), [Jeremiah 23:5-6](#), and in many, many more passages. In the New Testament we see it in [Luke 1:32-33](#), [Matthew 5:18](#), [Luke 19:12-27](#), among other passages. All in all, there are more than 400 verses in more than 20 different passages in the Old Testament which deal with this time when Jesus Christ will rule and reign personally over planet earth.

iv. Who will be on the earth in the Millennium? Even after the rapture and the vast judgments of the Great Tribulation, there will be many people left on earth. After Jesus returns in glory, He will judge those who survive the Great Tribulation in the judgment of the nations ([Matthew 25:31-46](#)). This is not a judgment unto salvation, but a judgment of moral worthiness, and entrance into the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus. The unworthy will be sent into eternal damnation, and the worthy will be allowed in Jesus’ Millennial Kingdom.

d. Till the thousand years were finished: Some of what we know of the Millennium from other passages of Scripture.

i. *During the Millennium, Israel will be the superpower of the world*, the leading nation in all the earth, and the center of Israel will be *the mountain of the Lord’s house* – the temple mount, which will be the “capital” of the government of the Messiah. *All nations shall flow to the “capital” of Jesus’ government* ([Isaiah 2:1-3](#), [Ezekiel](#)

[17:22-24](#)).

ii. *During the Millennium, the citizens of earth will acknowledge and submit to the Lordship of Jesus.* It will be a time of perfectly administered enforced righteousness on this earth ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)).

iii. *During the Millennium, there will be no more war.* There will still be conflicts between nations and individuals, but they will be justly and decisively resolved by the Messiah and those who reign with Him ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)). It isn't the reign of the Messiah itself that will change the heart of man. Citizens of earth will still need to trust in Jesus and in His work on their behalf for their personal salvation during the millennium. But war and armed conflict will not be tolerated.

iv. *During the Millennium, the way animals relate to each other and to humans will be transformed.* A little child will be safe and able to lead a wolf or a leopard or a young lion or a bear. Even the danger of predators like cobras and vipers will be gone. In [Genesis 9:2-3](#), the Lord gave Noah, and all mankind after him, the permission to eat meat. At the same time, the Lord put the *dread* of man in animals so they would not be effortless prey for humans. Now, in the reign of the Messiah, that is reversed. For this reason, many think that in the reign of the Messiah (the Millennium) humans will return to being vegetarians, as it seems they were before [Genesis 9:2-3](#) ([Isaiah 11:6-9](#)).

v. *During the Millennium, King David will have a prominent place in the millennial earth, ruling over Israel* ([Isaiah 55:3-5](#), [Jeremiah 30:4-11](#), [Ezekiel 34:23-31](#), [Ezekiel 37:21-28](#), [Hosea 3:5](#)).

vi. *During the Millennium, there will be blessing and security for national Israel* ([Amos 9:11-15](#)).

vii. *The Millennium will be a time of purity and devotion to God* ([Zechariah 13:1-9](#)).

viii. *During the Millennium, there will be a rebuilt temple and restored temple service on the earth as a memorial of God's work in the past.* ([Ezekiel 40-48](#), [Ezekiel 37:26-28](#), [Amos 9:11](#), [Ezekiel 20:39-44](#)).

ix. *During the Millennium, saints in their resurrected state will be given responsibility in the Millennial Earth according to their faithful service* ([Luke 19:11-27](#), [Revelation 20:4-6](#), [Revelation 2:26-28](#); [3:12](#), [22](#), [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)).

e. **Thousand years:** Is it a literal 1,000 years? We should take a number literally *unless* there is clear reason or evidence to do otherwise. We should take this **thousand years** literally, because God has an important work to accomplish during the Millennium.

i. The Millennium is important because it will demonstrate Jesus' victory and worthiness to rule the nations.

ii. The Millennium is important because it will reveal the depths of man's rebellious nature in a perfect environment. Some people seem to believe that man is basically good, and deep down he really *wants* God's righteous rule. Many believe that man is really innocent, and corrupted only by a bad environment. The Millennium will answer these questions *before* the great judgment ([Revelation 20:11-15](#)).

iii. The Millennium is important because it will display the eternal depravity of Satan, who continues his evil as soon as he is released from his incarceration.

iv. The Millennium is important because it will show the invulnerability of the city of God and God's new order.

v. "Let us rejoice that Scripture is so clear and so explicit upon this great doctrine of the future triumph of Christ over the whole world... We believe that the Jews will be converted, and that they will be restored to their own land. We believe that Jerusalem will be the central metropolis of Christ's kingdom; we also believe that all the nations shall walk in the light of the glorious city which shall be built at Jerusalem. We expect that the glory which shall have its center there, shall spread over the whole world, covering it as with a sea of holiness, happiness, and delight. For this we look with joyful expectation." (Spurgeon)

B. Saints reigning for a thousand years.

1. ([Rev 20:4](#)) The saints live and reign for 1,000 years.

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

a. **And I saw thrones, and they sat on them:** Who sits on these **thrones**? Perhaps the twenty-four elders representing the church ([Revelation 4:4](#)) or the apostles ([Matthew 19:28](#)) or the company of saints as a whole ([1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)).

i. **And judgment was committed to them:** Perhaps this is the “judging of angels” mentioned in [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#), but it is more likely that these are the saints ruling on and over the earth.

b. **They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years:** These saints reign with Jesus for the same period of time that Satan is bound (**a thousand years**). They administrate the kingdom of Jesus Christ over the earth, reigning over those who pass from the earth of the Great Tribulation to the earth of the Millennium.

c. **Who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus... who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark:** *All* those who overcome in Jesus will rule and reign with Him ([Revelation 2:26-28](#), [3:12](#), [22](#), [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)). Why does John only mention the Tribulation saints?

i. They are specifically mentioned so as to encourage them, while not implying others will be left out. This is special vindication for Tribulation saints. They suffered under Antichrist who had said, “I will rule the earth;” now *they* are in authority and Antichrist is destroyed. So, these martyrs are literal, but also representative of all that give their lives in faithfulness to Jesus.

ii. **Beheaded** is actually a broader word than we might think. The ancient Greek word really means “executed.”

2. ([Rev 20:5-6](#)) The first resurrection.

But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

a. **This is the first resurrection:** This **first resurrection** is the granting of resurrection life in resurrection bodies to all those dead in Jesus.

· This is a resurrection of *blessing* (**blessed and holy is he**)

· This is a resurrection of *power* (**over such the second death has no power**)

· This is a resurrection of *privilege* (**they shall be priests of God... shall reign with Him a thousand years**)

b. **The rest of the dead:** Those who *do not* have part in the *first resurrection* are *not* blessed, they are *under the power* of the **second death**, and they are without privilege.

i. In [John 5:28-29](#), Jesus described two resurrections: *Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

ii. The two events are separated by this 1,000 year period because the **rest of the dead** are not given their resurrection bodies until **the thousand years were finished**.

c. **This is the first resurrection:** If the **first resurrection** is a singular event, it argues well for a post-tribulation rapture, because it implies that all saints receive their resurrection bodies at the same time, immediately before the rule and reign of Jesus Christ.

d. **This is the first resurrection:** If the **first resurrection** is an order or class encompassing previously dead

believers (who are at once with the Lord), the raptured church (already in heaven), and saints from the Great Tribulation, then the idea fits in a pre-tribulation framework.

i. Donald Barnhouse says of the phrase **first resurrection**: “It must be especially emphasized that our phrase in the Apocalypse covering this resurrection is a retrospect that looks back over all three phases (of resurrection).”

ii. “The ‘first resurrection’ is not an event but an order of resurrection including all the righteous who are raised from the dead before the millennial kingdom begins.” (Walvoord)

C. The final battle after the thousand-year reign of Jesus.

1. ([Rev 20:7-8](#)) Satan is released and gathers an army.

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

a. **Satan will be released**: For the thousand years of the direct reign of Jesus over this earth, Satan was bound and inactive. But after the thousand years are over, he will be released and successfully organize many people of the earth in another rebellion against God.

i. If Jesus has reigned so wonderfully for a thousand years, then why will the earth rebel? They will do it, and God will allow it, as a final demonstration of man’s rebellion and depravity. *Outward* conformity to Jesus’ rule will be required during His reign, but seemingly, an inward embrace of His Lordship will still be up to the individual.

ii. In this we see more of the important reason God has for the Millennial Kingdom and allowing this final rebellion. For all of human history, man has wanted to blame his sinful condition on his *environment*. “Of course I turned out the way I did. Did you see the family I came from? Did you see the neighborhood I grew up in?” With the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus, God will give mankind *a thousand years* of a perfect environment – with no Satan, no crime, no violence, no evil, or other social pathology. But at the end of the 1,000 years, man will still rebel against God at his first opportunity. This will powerfully demonstrate that the problem is in *us*, not only in our environment.

iii. “It will be proved once more that man, whatever his advantages and environment, apart from the grace of God and new birth, remains at heart only evil and at enmity with God.” (Hoste)

b. **Gather them together to battle**: Who will these rebels be? They will be those who survive the Great Tribulation, enter into the Millennial Kingdom, and their descendants. “Infants born during the millennium will live to its conclusion and will not be required to make a choice between the devil and Christ until the end.” (Walvoord)

c. **Gog and Magog**: These are prophetic enemies of Israel in [Ezekiel 38-39](#), but the battle described in those chapters of Ezekiel seems to be distinct and different from this final battle.

i. John seems to borrow the term and use it as a symbol. Seemingly, the battles described in [Ezekiel 38-39](#) take place before the return of Jesus, perhaps right before or during the tribulation. This final battle clearly takes place at the end of the thousand-year reign of Jesus.

2. ([Rev 20:9-10](#)) A battle ends before it begins.

They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

a. **Surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city**: We don’t know if the **saints** referred to here are glorified saints who reign with Jesus, or earth-inhabitants who come to faith in Jesus during the Millenni-

um. Either way, the strategy of this vast Satanic army is clear: to destroy God's people, and the "headquarters" or "capital city" of His administration, Jerusalem (**the beloved city**).

b. **Fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them:** We shouldn't even call this a final battle, because there is no battle. The fight is over before it begins. At this point, God finally deals with the devil and his followers forever.

c. **Cast into the lake of fire... they will be tormented day and night forever and ever:** After this aborted battle, Satan is then judged and **tormented** forever – together with the **beast and the false prophet**, who were cast into the lake of fire at the beginning of the thousand years ([Revelation 19:20](#)).

i. The presence of the beast and the false prophet in the lake of fire after a thousand years argues against annihilationism. In eternal punishment, a thousand years is just the beginning. It never ends. Commentator John Trapp thought this eternal aspect of hell so terrible that he called it "another hell in the midst of hell."

d. **Forever and ever:** Is this really *eternal* punishment? Yes it is; the words mean exactly what they appear to mean. "There would be no way possible in the Greek language to state more emphatically the everlasting punishment of the lost than here in mentioning both day and night and the expression 'forever and ever,' literally 'to the ages of ages.'" (Walvoord)

D. Judgment at the Great White Throne.

1. ([Rev 20:11](#)) An awesome throne.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

a. **I saw a great white throne:** **Great** in status, power and authority; **white** in purity and holiness; and a **throne** in kingly sovereignty.

b. **And Him who sat on it:** Who is this? The Bible tells us that the Judge is Jesus ([John 5:22-27](#)); or more likely, the fullness of the Triune God.

c. **The earth and the heaven fled away:** **Earth** and **heaven** flee from this throne, but **there was found no place for them**. There is absolutely no hiding from this throne. No one can escape the judgment that it represents.

i. Many – even most – Bible scholars believe that Christians will never appear before this **great white throne**. It isn't because we can *hide* from it – no one can. The idea is that we are spared from this awesome throne of judgment because our sins are *already judged* in Jesus at the cross. We don't escape God's judgment; we satisfy it in Jesus.

ii. However, Christians will have to stand before another throne – the *judgment seat of Christ*. [2 Corinthians 5:10](#) says, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

iii. Therefore, when we pass from these bodies to the world beyond, we must each give account *according to what he has done, whether good or bad*. This describes a judgment of works of believers.

iv. At the judgment seat of Christ, *what we have done* will be judged. Our *motives* for what we have done will be judged. Paul presents essentially the same idea in [1 Corinthians 3:12-15](#), where he speaks of a coming assessment of each one's work before the Lord. In that passage, he makes it clear that what we have done, and our motive for doing it, will be tested by fire, and the purifying fire of God will burn up everything that was not of Him. We won't be *punished* for what was not done rightly unto the Lord, it will simply be *burned up*, and it will be as if we never did those things. We will simply be rewarded for what remains. Sadly, some will get to heaven *thinking* they have done great things for God, and will find out at the judgment seat of Christ that they really did nothing.

2. ([Rev 20:12-13](#)) The judgment of condemnation.

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

a. **Standing before God:** This is not a *trial*, trying to determine what the facts are. The facts are in; here is the sentencing of someone already condemned. "Their standing posture means that they are now about to be sentenced." (Walvoord)

i. Because this is a sentencing and not a trial, those who stand before the throne have nothing to say. Many think they will "tell God a thing or two" at the final judgment, as reflected in this letter to *Dear Abby* (a newspaper advice column) written some years ago:

Dear Abby: *I am troubled with something a reader wrote: "What right do we mortals have to demand an explanation from God?" Abby, that writer has never known the gut-wrenching pain of losing a child...*

God didn't answer my prayers, and I resent being told that I have no right to question God. If there is a God, and if I ever get to meet him face to face, you can bet your life I will have plenty of whys for him to answer.

I want to know why my little girl died and why that drunk was allowed to go on living. I love her more than my life, and I miss her so. I am mad that I am having to live in a world where she no longer lives, and I want to know why. Why shouldn't I have the right to ask God?

Aren't we supposedly created in his image? If so, surely he has a heart and soul capable of hurting just as I hurt. Why would he not expect to be questioned if he has anything to do with miracles?

I don't fear the Lord. And I don't fear hell, either. I know what hell is like. I've already been there since the day my precious daughter was killed.

Please sign me... A Bereaved Mother

ii. Of course, there will be no criticism of God on that day. This desperate woman will see not only the righteousness and goodness of God, but she will also see her own sin and rejection of Him more clearly than ever. One could only pray and hope she came to understand how the Father Himself knew the pain she experienced, and sent His Son to give her hope and redemption.

b. **And the dead were judged according to their works:** If people are *not* listed in the **Book of Life**, then each one is judged **according to his works**. Those who refuse to come to God by faith will, by default, be judged (and condemned) by their works.

i. "The issue is not salvation by works but works as the irrefutable evidence of a man's actual relationship with God." (Mounce)

ii. There are degrees of punishment for unbelievers, according to their works ([Matthew 11:20-24](#)). Here is where they are sentenced to their specific eternal punishment.

c. **The sea gave up the dead who were in it:** Why does the *sea* give up its dead? It represents the place of unburied bodies; the emphasis is on the universal character of judgment – *everybody* is included.

3. ([Rev 20:14-15](#)) Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire.

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

a. **Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire:** The last echoes of sin are now eliminated. **Death** is the result of sin, and it is gone. **Hades** is the result of death, and it is gone. The last vestiges of sin's unlawful domination are done away with.

b. **The lake of fire:** When a person refers to *hell*, **the lake of fire** is what they usually have in mind. The Bible uses three main words to describe where the ungodly may go when they die.

i. *Sheol* is a Hebrew word with the idea of the “place of the dead.” It has no direct reference to either torment or eternal happiness. The idea of *Sheol* is often accurately expressed as “the grave.”

ii. *Hades* is a Greek word used to describe the “world beyond.” In the Bible, it has generally the same idea as *Sheol*. [Revelation 9:1](#) speaks of the *bottomless pit*; this place called the *abyssos* is a prison for certain demons ([Luke 8:31](#); [2 Peter 2:4](#); [Jude 6](#)). Or more generally, it is considered part of the realm of the dead ([Romans 10:7](#) uses it in the sense of *Hades*).

iii. *Gehenna* is a Greek word borrowed from the Hebrew language. In [Mark 9:43-44](#), Jesus speaks of *hell* (*gehenna*). *Hell* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew “Valley of Hinnom,” a place outside Jerusalem’s walls desecrated by Molech worship and human sacrifice ([2 Chronicles 28:1-3](#); [Jeremiah 32:35](#)). It was also a garbage dump where rubbish and refuse were burned. The smoldering fires and festering worms of the Valley of Hinnom made it a graphic and effective picture of the fate of the damned. This is **the lake of fire** prepared for the devil and his angels ([Matthew 25:41](#)). Men only go to this place prepared for the devil and his angels if they reject God’s salvation and condemn themselves.

c. **This is the second death:** “As there is a second and higher life, so there is also a second and deeper death. And as after that life there is no more death, so after that death there is no more life.” (Alford)

i. “The devil and the damned have punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succor, crying without comfort, mischief without measure, torments without end and past imagination.” (Trapp)