

FINAL JUDGMENT

- Lake of Fire -

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Scripture quoted from the NKJV unless otherwise indicated

“The great white throne judgment” is the final judgment event described in the Bible. We cannot even read the words without a twinge of fear. At the conclusion of that judgment, every soul whose name does not then appear in the Book of Life, will be destroyed in the lake of fire (*Rev. 20:11-15*). Let’s put this event into context.

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Please read our foundational studies, “[Where are the Dead?](#)“ and “[Hell - “What it’s NOT,”](#)” BEFORE continuing with this study.

The Great White Throne Judgment does NOT take place at the Glorious Return of Christ.

This judgment does not take place until *after* the Battle of Gog-Magog, which battle does not take place until *after* the last great resurrection of the 8th millennium.

[This judgment is the concluding judgment event, in the great sin saga.](#)

THREE JUDGMENT EVENTS (*Revelation Chapters 19 and 20*)

Judgment #1 - At the Glorious Return

The righteous dead are raised to everlasting life (*Daniel 12:2-3*).

The wicked dead are resurrected to hear judgment pronounced against them (*Daniel 12:1-3*).

The Beast and the False Prophet are thrown into the lake of fire (*Revelation 19:19-20*).

All the rest are consumed by the sword that proceeds from the mouth of Christ (*Rev. 19:20*).

Satan and his angels are imprisoned in the “bottomless pit” (*Revelation 20:1-3*).

Then: The 7th millennium

Then: The resurrection of “**the rest of the dead**” at the 8th millennium

Judgment #2 - At the Battle of Gog/Magog (*Revelation 20:7-10*)

Some from “the rest of the dead” will choose to serve Christ.

Most will rebel against Him.

This battle will take place during the 8th millennium.

The rebels are consumed by divine fire from Heaven, as they attack the City of Jerusalem.

Satan and his evil angels are thrown into the lake of fire. (See the addendum.)

Judgment #3 - The Great White Throne Judgment (*Revelation 20:11-15*)

This judgment will take place AFTER the Gog/Magog Battle.

Any soul whose name is not found in the Book of Life is thrown into the lake of fire.

NOTE: The Beast and the False Prophet are not just two human beings. **They are Satan’s two great systems of deceit, manipulation and control, that span centuries if not millennia.** Individual human beings who served these systems, knowingly working against the God of Heaven, will be judged and then annihilated as the whole earth is consumed in fire at the Glorious Return (*Revelation 19:11-20:3*).

WHY A THIRD JUDGMENT?

The unrepentant wicked and rebellious are all dead.

First: The enemies of God are resurrected to face judgment by Christ at His glorious return. They will be left to die in the last plagues. Their bodies will be **consumed in the fire** which consumes the earth. The Beast and the False Prophet are thrown into this lake of fire.

Second - Gog/Magog: The “rest of the dead” (*uninformed or immature during their lives*) are resurrected at the 8th millennium, to learn of God and then to choose. Many will choose to serve Christ. The majority, who rebel and seek to overthrow Christ, will be **consumed by “fire”** from Heaven as they launch their attack upon the Holy City (*Revelation 20:7-9*).

All of these people will die with the realization that they will never live again.

When the final judgment sits - the Great White Throne Judgment, every wicked rebellious human being who ever lived will be dead - consumed in fire.

Question: **So why this judgment?** Weren't they already judged as wicked and unsaved? Isn't that why their bodies were consumed in the fire that cleansed the earth?

Why wake them up again,
to judge them again, to throw them into fire again?

Wasn't once enough?

How the Father deals with the lost tells us the most about His character.
Who is this God we worship?

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THREE GROUPS RESURRECTED

At the resurrection of Christ

Matthew 27:51-53 “At that moment, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people (a large number) who had died were raised to life. 53 They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.” (NIV) *See Ephesians 4:8.*

Only righteous persons were raised at this event.

At the Glorious Return

Daniel 12:1-2 “At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. 2 And many (*multitudes*) of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.” (*See John 14:3, John 6:44-45, John 11:24, 1Cor. 15:23, 1Thess. 4:16-17, and 2Thess. 2:1.*)

Both righteous and wicked will be raised at this event. The righteous will go with Christ to stand before the Throne of God on the Sea of Glass, in Heaven. The wicked will hear judgment pronounced against them, and then they will die in the last plagues. Their bodies will be consumed in the fire that cleanses the earth.

Many uninformed folks will also die in the final events of this age, and many children, just as children died in Sodom and in Noah's flood. I believe they will be consumed instantly “by the brightness of His coming,” so they do not suffer. They will be resurrected later - at the 8th millennium, with “the rest of the dead.” (See our study: “The 8th Day - Messiah Reigns.”)

At the 8th Millennium

Revelation 20:5 “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”

I have argued extensively, that this resurrection will be for those who died as children, and for those who died without adequate knowledge of the true God. They could not choose either to serve the LORD, or to reject Him. After their resurrection at the 8th millennium, and their subsequent education in the ways of God, those from this group who rebel against Christ the King - who join with the Army of Gog/Magog, will be consumed in fire from Heaven as they come up to attack Jerusalem, the seat of Christ's government (Revelation 20:7-9). They will be dead when the final judgment sits.

NO FOURTH RESURRECTION

Notice carefully as you read the following passage again. **Only “the dead” are judged.** I don’t see anyone brought back to life. I don’t see the word “awake” used anywhere. Yes. They are said to “stand,” but in what sense? It could be that only the life-record of each individual will “stand” at this judgment. “The dead are judged from the things which were written in the books of Heaven, according to their deeds.” Christ will not intercede for these people.

Revelation 20:11-15 “And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them [*they fade into insignificance*]. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (NAS)

If the soul/spirit/mind of the wicked, exists *consciously* in a place of torment called Hell, separated from God, then this scene describes a judgment of living people. They are brought out of Hades (Hebrew: Sheol) to stand before this judgment, to then be cast into the Lake of Fire. Hades then becomes the holding place for *conscious souls*, where they stay imprisoned until the final judgment. **I don’t believe that!** (See study: “[Where are the Dead.](#)”)

If on the other hand, the soul/spirit is the essence that remains of a person - the download of the mind at the moment of physical death, retained in the “memory” of God - the Heavenly “cloud” if you will, then living people (physically alive) **will NOT be judged or executed at this final judgment event.**

Until the soul/spirit of a human being is destroyed forever in the Lake of Fire, the LORD can resurrect that person. He can create a new body for that person, and then “upload” all the thoughts and memories, allowing that person to resume his life. Should God do this? **This is the question to be answered at this final judgment.** Would it benefit anyone, to resurrect people who are committed in their rebellion against God and their fellow man?

Question: If the rebellious dead are unconscious and without bodies, what then is “thrown into the lake of fire?”

**Answer: Their spirits.
The lake of fire is spirit death.**

Question: Why all the books? The LORD does not need to look into any record books, to decide which persons belong to Him in heart and mind. So why open all the “books” one last time?

Answer: Human beings need the books. They need to see the records. The fact that “books” are opened, tells us that human beings must participate in this judgment.

WHEN DOES THE LAST JUDGMENT TAKE PLACE?

Revelation 20:7-15 [Historical Context] “Now **when the thousand years have expired**,

- (1) Satan will be released from his prison [*in the bottomless pit*] 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.
- (2) They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. (3) And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.
- (4) The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are [*had been thrown*]. And [*they - the Devil and his angels*] will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
- (5) **Then** I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away [*They seemed very small in comparison*]. And there was found no place for them.

This judgment does NOT take place until:

AFTER the Second Coming, (Multitudes of the wicked die in fire, on this day.)

AFTER the 7th millennium,

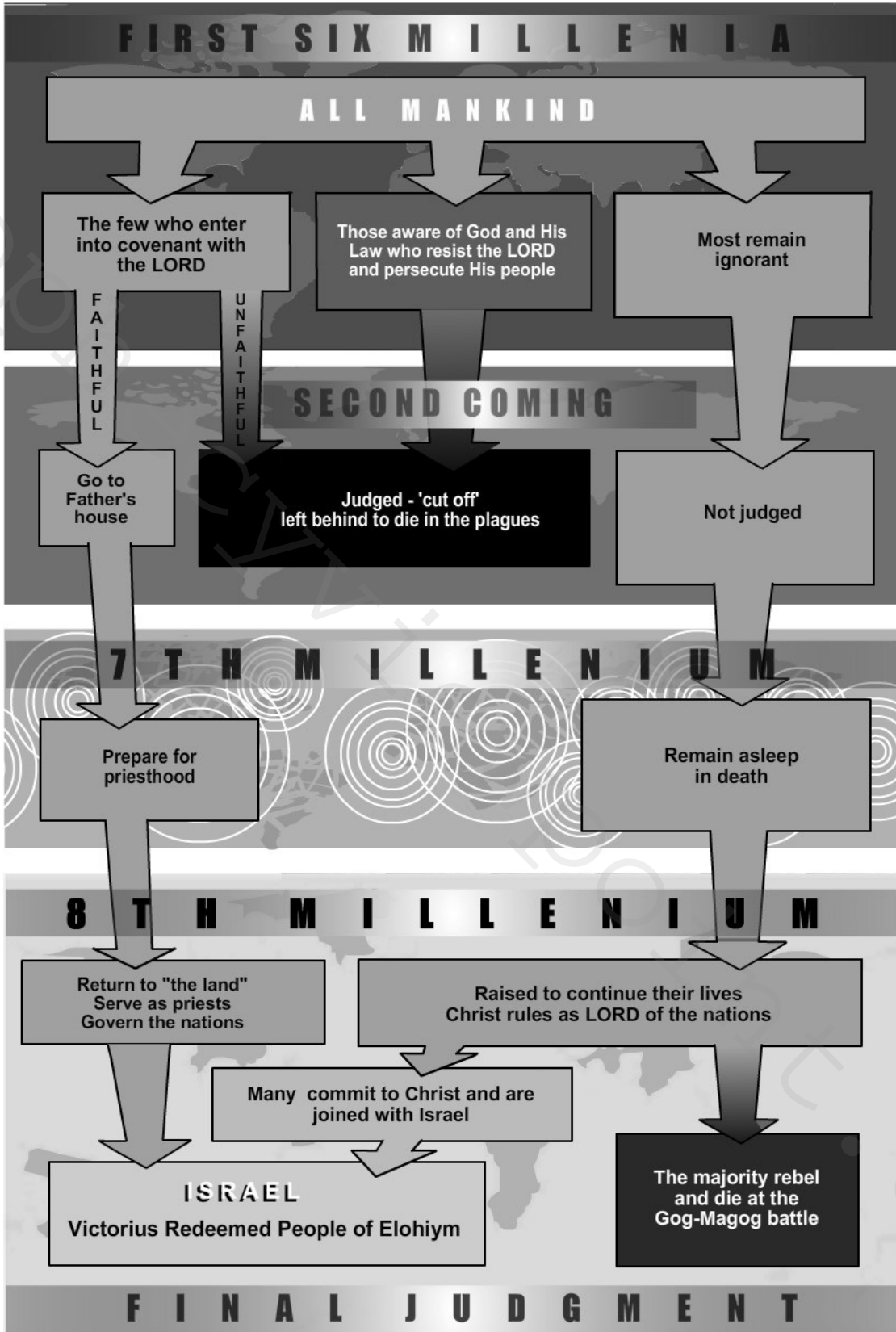
AFTER the last great resurrection of The 8th Day

AFTER the Battle of Gog/Magog. (The rest of the wicked die on this day.)

AFTER Satan and his angels are thrown into the “everlasting fire.”

All the wicked are dead, when the last judgment sits.

See flowchart next page.



PUNISHMENT DEATH vs THE SECOND DEATH

To die punishment death, is to die *knowing* that one is without God. The “second death” is different. It is not physical death. It is spirit death. The soul/spirit/mind (retained by God at the moment of death) is “blotted out” of the memory of God - permanently destroyed in the special “lake of fire,” eliminating any possibility of future resurrection.

I believe that **Jesus died *punishment death***. The Father had withdrawn His protection. Jesus could not sense the Father’s presence with Him (possibly because of demonic interference). He was tempted by Satan, to believe that His death would be permanent. Yet even this thought did not cause Him to rebel against His Father, or to appeal to Satan for rescue from the torment. This was His greatest test. He died in faith. He died the martyrs victorious death.

If Jesus had died “the second death,” He could not have been resurrected by His Father.

The second death is permanent.

DIE ONLY ONCE?

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

No one is finally judged while still living. His life is not yet completed. The argument in Hebrews is that the Lamb of God needed to die only once. He did not need to be offered over and over.

In the Bible narrative, several persons died more than once. They were raised/resurrected to continue their lives. God granted them **an exception** to the ‘appointed’ order. They were brought back to life in their mortal physical bodies. Later on, they died again. **They died the “first” type of death - physical death, more than once.** There was Lazarus (*Jn 11:14-43, 12:10*), the widow’s son (*Lk 7:12-15*), Jairus’ daughter (*Mark 5:35-41*), Dorcas (*Act 9:37-40*), and Eutychus who fell out of the window (*Act 20:9-12*). Historical sources tell us that Lazarus was later martyred. We know these people were not resurrected with the immortal spiritual body. No one reported being transported to heaven, or standing before a judgment.

Enoch and Elijah were also granted **exceptions to the “die once,” then judgment appointment** (*Heb. 11:5, Gen. 5 23-24, 2Ki. 2:11*). They were taken to Heaven without dying first, just as those who are still alive to see Christ come will not have to die first, before they are “caught up” to the clouds to meet Him in the air (*1Thes. 4:17*). Also, we know that all those who hear Christ’s word and believe in the Father who sent Him, have everlasting life. They will “not come into judgment” (*John 5:24*). They are granted an exception through Christ.

HELL - Is thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Revelation 20:14 "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.

This is the second death."

At the conclusion of the great final judgment, Death and Hell (*Hebrew: Sheol*) are cast into the lake of fire. To say that Sheol (*the abode of the dead*) is consumed, is another way of saying that all of the dead are consumed. They will no longer EXIST! **The abode of the dead will no longer exist**. No one from Sheol/Hell can be resurrected after this event - because Sheol/Hell will no longer exist!

THE EVIDENCE - against the accused

Revelation 20:12-13 "... and **books** were opened. And **another book** was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works (*deeds*), by the things which were written in **the books** . . . And they were judged, each one according to his works."

Why all the books? Answer: Because human beings cannot read minds/hearts. The record of deeds can be written down, and later read. We know that no human being has a great record. We have all sinned and sinned and sinned. What separates these sinners from the redeemed who receive eternal life. Answer: Christ Jesus.

The Book of Life contains the names of those who believed in Jesus as the Son of God, who sought forgiveness through His blood, and then served Him. Those who refuse to believe in Him are not written in that Book, and those who turn away from Him are "blotted out" of His Book. See our studies: "[The Book of Life](#)" and "[The Book of Life Challenge](#)."

WHO ARE THE WITNESSES?

Deuteronomy 30:19 "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;"

All beings in Heaven and all beings of earth - all intelligent created beings have witnessed the struggle between good and evil.

Deuteronomy 31:26 "Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you;"

The Sanctuary was called The Tabernacle of Witness. The Ten Commandment stones were kept inside the Ark. The Torah Scrolls (written down by Moses) were kept next to the Ark. These scrolls contained the warnings, the blessings for obedience, and curses for disobedience.

Revelation 11:19 “Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the Ark of His Covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.”

As the last plagues are about to be poured out on the earth, the Ark of His Covenant is seen in Heaven. Meaning? Anyone who thinks the Ten Commandments are obsolete, should think again. They will be the standard in the judgment.

The LAW is a witness.

The ANGELS are witnesses.

Redeemed HUMAN BEINGS are witnesses.

Deuteronomy 17:6-7 “Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among you.”

The Torah of Moses is the model. To answer any question of judgment or penalty, we must return to the original model. This verse alone tells us that all of saved humanity must participate in the final judgment. They must give assent. They must agree concerning the verdict.

WHO WILL SIT - ON THE GREAT WHITE THRONE?

Revelation 20:11 “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.”

Revelation Chapter Four describes the One who sits upon the throne.
By His will all things exist.

Daniel 7:9-10 He is called “the Ancient of Days.”
“Ten thousand times ten thousand” stand before Him.

*THIS IS GOD THE FATHER - Father of Jesus Christ.
He is the source of all life, and only HE can end life (1Cor. 8:6, Rev. 4:11, Eph. 3:14).*

1 Peter 1:17 “And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear (*respect and reverence*).”

I THOUGHT THAT CHRIST WAS TO JUDGE HUMANITY.

John 5:22 “For the Father judges no one,
but has committed all judgment to the Son . . .”

Acts 10:42 “And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.” (NKJ)

The word “judgment” has two meanings to consider. It can mean to hand down a verdict, or it can mean to execute the judgment dictated by a verdict. God’s Son does both. He acts on behalf of His Father.

Those to be judged at the final judgment event, are NOT COVERED by “the blood of the Lamb.” Christ does not represent them, therefore God the Father will judge.

Daniel 7:9-14, 26-27 describes a “court” that is seated to determine who will have dominion over the earth, Christ or Satan. The Little Horn is speaking blasphemy and persecuting the people of God on the earth. The “last days” of the age are passing. At the conclusion of the Daniel Seven judgment, dominion is given to the Son of Man. Because He receives the dominion, Christ will decide who will receive eternal life in His kingdom, and who will not.

The judgment of Daniel Chapter Seven, IS NOT the judgment event of Revelation Chapter 20 - our present study, which concerns those who refused Christ, refused His kingdom, or tried to take it by force.

The Great White Throne Judgment event of Revelation 20, concerns those who DO NOT RECEIVE eternal life in the Kingdom of the Lamb. They are NOT COVERED by “the blood of the Lamb.” Their names are NOT written in the Book of Life. Christ does not represent them in this judgment. They will stand before God the Father, without a mediator.

Revelation 3:5 [Christ speaking] “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

The Book of Life belongs to Christ. It is “the Book of Life of the Lamb (Rev. 13:8). He writes the names in the Book. He will “confess” those names before His Father. And He will blot out the names of those who turn away from Him.

John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

Jesus said, "I know my sheep" (John 10:14, 27). He does not need a judgment to know they belong to Him, listen to Him and follow Him.

*When we enter into covenant with God the Father, through Jesus Christ, our name is written into The Lamb's Book of Life by Christ Himself. Only He can blot a name out of His book. **In this sense - Christ is judge.** He decides which names will be retained in His book. So long as we remain faithful to Christ, (or seek forgiveness when we sin) our name is retained in that Book. We will not be considered in the final great judgment.*

Those to be considered at this final judgment are those whose names DO NOT APPEAR in The Book of Life. They are without the covering of Christ's blood. They will be judged by their actions (works). Do you see the two standings? You are either "in Christ" or you will be judged by your works and words. Speaking for myself, I really do not want to be judged by my works. I want to be "in Christ."

THE PENALTY

Isaiah 26:14 "They are dead, they will not live; They are deceased, they will not rise. Therefore You have punished and destroyed them, And made all their memory to perish."

Psalms 109:14-15 "Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be continually before the LORD, That He may cut off the memory of them from the earth;"

Deuteronomy 29:20 "The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven."

This was the warning, spoken by Moses concerning any who might forsake the covenant, without repentance. He will blot out ANY memory of them!

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WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE FIRE WHICH FINALLY CONSUMES?

Brimstone (#2303) is from the Greek word “theion.” Yes - the first four letters “thei” tell us that this refers in some way to the divine. Strong’s tells us, “brimstone was regarded as having power to purify.” It was called “divine incense.” When you smell exploding firecrackers, you are smelling the sulfur in the gunpowder. So brimstone smelled like burning sulfur.

John the prophet, in vision was shown the “lake of fire.” He was searching for words to describe this awesome, brilliant, glorious “fire.” It is a purifying fire. It may NOT literally be “fire” in our sense of the word today. It may not have smelled like sulfur, but John is using imagery which *his* readers could understand. It is “divine fire,” and it will consume the last trace of evil from the universe of God.

The “lake of fire” (*Rev. 20*) and “the everlasting fire” (*Matt. 25:41*) are the same. The word translated as “everlasting,” means without beginning and without end. Only God is “everlasting.” The “everlasting fire” is divine fire. It is God himself.

OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE

Matthew 28:2-4 A Legion of Roman soldiers “fell as dead men,” overcome by the glory of just the one angel, who came to call Christ from the tomb.

Acts 9:3-4 On the Damascus road, Saul the persecutor was blinded by this glory.

2 Thessalonians. 2:8-9 When Jesus returns, the wicked will be slain
“with brightness of His coming.”

Daniel 7:9-10 A “fiery stream” comes forth from the Ancient of Days.

Hebrews 12:29 “For our God is a consuming fire.”

Deuteronomy 4:24 “For the LORD your God is a consuming fire.”

Deuteronomy 9:3 “Therefore understand today that the LORD your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and bring them down before you . . .”

Exodus 19:18 “Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.”

Exodus 19:21 God said to Moses, “Go down [from Mt Sinai] and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the Lord, and many of them perish.”

This glory is deadly to mortal human beings.

Leviticus 16:13 On the ancient Day of Atonement the high priest carried the golden censer filled with smoking incense into the Most Holy Place so that the smoke would shield him from the glory, “lest he die.”

Leviticus 9:24 At the dedication of the wilderness Tabernacle, “fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

In the Sanctuary, the Lamb was first killed and then burned on the altar. The lamb symbolized the “Lamb of God.” It also symbolized the wicked.

The sacrifice symbolized the final end of the wicked. They will DIE (punishment-death) and then they will be CONSUMED in God’s fire (the second death). David lamented the apparent success of the wicked until he entered the Sanctuary. Then he “understood what would be their end” (Psalm 73:3-17).

Psalm 37:20 “But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”

Some translations read: “like the glory of the fields.” To a shepherd, this meant lambs, not crops or flowers. The best animals were sacrificed to the LORD.

Another example of divine “fire,” is the story of the ambitious sons of Aaron the High Priest, who “offered profane fire before the LORD, which He did not command them.” “Fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died” (Lev. 10:1-2). Their bodies were not burned up in the usual sense. The LORD instructed their cousins to “carry them out by their coats” (Lev. 10:4-5).

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WHO WILL “DWELL WITH THE DEVOURING FIRE?”

Exodus 33:20 “But He said, You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.”

Isaiah 33:14-17 “The sinners in Zion are afraid; Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: ‘Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly . . .”

Isaiah 43:2 “. . . when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned.”

Revelation 22:4 “They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.”

We will “see His face” and we will not be consumed. We will “walk through the fire” and will not be burned. The saved will receive immortal spiritual bodies, and will live “in His presence.” This is why “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God”(1 Cor. 15:50). Mortal flesh is consumed in the glorious presence of God.

The angels are spirit beings - beings of energy. This is why the evil angels must be destroyed in the Lake of Fire.” It was “prepared for the Devil and his angels” because they could not be destroyed by physical means (Matt. 25:41).

MADE OF DUST

I believe that God created Adam and Eve from dust because He wanted to spare them the punishment of the rebellious spirit beings. Satan had already led one-third of the angels in revolt. The real danger existed that human beings would be taken in by Satan’s sophistry. If God had created Adam and Eve as spirit beings (like the angels) then they could end up in the “lake of fire,” to be consciously “tormented” just like Satan and his angels, for at least some period of time. To spare them, God created them as carbon based beings of flesh and blood. Yes, that means we humans suffer physical pains. But that is nothing compared with the “forever and ever” (*unto the age of the ages*) torment, which will precede the end of Satan and his angels. (NOTE: *Only God has immortality, therefore angels can die. 1Tim. 6:16*)

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A PERSONAL OPINION - ABOUT DEATH

Our brains are very sophisticated bio-computers. This is how the LORD confused the languages at the Tower of Babel. He simply plugged in a language program. This is how He caused persons from distant lands to hear (each in his own language) as Peter preached the Gospel, in Aramaic with a Galilean accent. This is how He communicates “speaks” to us in a voice no one else can hear. We each have a built in “receiver.” I know this is over simplified, but it’s the best I can do. Imagine Jesus trying to explain something called an “iphone” to Galilean fishermen.

I believe that God retains a memory of the mind of each human being, at the moment of physical death - the “soul” or “spirit.” Jesus said, “Father, Into Your hands I commit My spirit.”

It is this memory (this saved mind) which God uses to resurrect each person, so that their thoughts may continue with memory and mind intact, after they are given a new body. It is THIS STORED MEMORY which God the Father will destroy - in the Lake of Fire. This is the “second death” - the death from which there is no resurrection. This is spirit death.

CHRIST NEEDS NO BOOKS OF RECORD

Revelation 3:5 “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life,”

*Christ knows all things. He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. Jesus said, “I know my sheep.” He certainly does not need to open books and look through records of deeds done, in order to decide whether someone should be blotted out of existence. **For whose benefit then, is the final judgment?***

FOR WHOSE BENEFIT IS THIS JUDGMENT?

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 “Do you know that the saints will judge the world? . . .
Do you not know that we shall judge angels?”

The mind of a created being, be he man or angel - is nothing, compared with the mind of the Almighty. God could so easily overpower our thoughts and our will - but He does not. The LORD has restrained Himself, for the sake of His creation - for the sake of love. For love cannot be forced. It must be freely given. Without trust - there can be no love.

The Israel of the first Exodus experienced the power and glory of the LORD. They saw the Red Sea opened. They heard Him speak, and saw His glory at Mt Sinai. But this display of His power was not enough to save them from disobedience and rebellion - because love cannot be forced. Love is only awakened by love. It is the love of God - poured out at Calvary that wins the hearts of men.

For thousands of years HE has waited and worked, using only those means which would not overpower humanity. Finally - some human beings have come to understand that His way is love. They understand that His way is the only way - to life. They have come to agree with His law of love. Now - at the final judgment, He is about to blot out perhaps many millions of human beings - to destroy all trace of them. What will His creation think of this? Will He lose their trust - and their love?

This is why the books are opened. Human beings cannot read minds. They cannot know the heart. They can only see the record of the “works” - the actions. I believe they will take one last look at the life-record of each dead human being. They will “read” the record of God’s patient pleading, of His love shown, of His messages of warning. **They will conclude that God the Father and His Son did everything divinely possible, to win that person (or that angel) to Themselves.** They could do nothing more.

The redeemed who judge, will understand that these persons refused all healing, and were committed to selfishness and rebellion. They will understand that - if resurrected, these people would simply continue to take (not give), to steal, to kill, to lie, to manipulate, and to destroy. They would be the worst possible danger to the community of God. There would be no peace!

It is only with the consent of the governed that God will execute. To do otherwise would destroy the trust - and therefore the love of His creation. **The final judgment is closure - for His redeemed.** It is a final review of the controversy between God and Evil - the perpetrators and the actors. His redeemed must understand that all the pain was necessary. They must agree with HIM - with what He did, and with how He did it.

After the resolutely wicked are finally blotted out of existence - the intelligent creation of God will be able to put it behind them. They will go forward into eternity completely trusting the honesty, the openness, the self-restraint, the patience and the unwavering love of the Father who gave His beloved Son.

The crisis of sin brought God’s love into stark relief. **Without the display of love necessitated by the crisis of sin, created beings would never have known the depth of His love.** Yes. They would have continued to worship Him, and to praise Him. But now - now that they know how much He truly loves them, they will praise Him with a depth of joy and gratitude they could not have known, but for the crisis. Our experience of His love, is the super glue that will bind us to Him forever.

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
Prophecy Viewpoint*

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Addendum Final Judgment - Lake of Fire

I separated this addendum about Satan and his angels, because they are not considered in the final judgment. They are cast into the Lake of Fire, before the final judgment begins.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS ?

With his angels, he was cast out of heaven (*Rev. 12:9*).

His kingdom (The Beast/Babylon) will be burned up at the Glorious Return (*Rev. Chpt 18*).

He will be imprisoned in “the bottomless pit” during the 7th millennium (*Rev. 20:2-3*).

He will be “released” with the great resurrection of the 8th millennium (*Rev. 20:7*).

He will finally be cast into the “lake of fire” at the Battle of Gog/Magog (*Rev. 20:10*).

Revelation 20:10 “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone . . .”

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SPIRIT BEINGS

We are talking about a higher order of beings - spirit beings. Though they were cast out of heaven long ago, Satan and his angels are still spirit beings. We human beings cannot possibly fight against them. Only God Himself and His divine “fire” can overcome such powerful beings. That is why “the lake of fire” was “prepared for the Devil and his angels” (*Matthew 25:41*).

Revelation 20:10 [At Gog-Magog] “And 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.”

The words “are” and “they” are supplied words. They are NOT in the original. They were supplied by the King James Translators. Other translations read, “where the beast and the false prophet were thrown.”

Revelation 19:20 [At the Second Coming] “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

The “Beast” is Satan’s geopolitical system on the earth, going back thousands of years and incorporating perhaps millions of people. **The False Prophet is Satan’s spiritual system.** Whatever the church, the religion, the deity, (even the speaker or the media), if the message subverts, confuses or opposes the truth of God, then it is part of the False Prophet system of misinformation and disinformation, to deceive human beings.

To say, in a prophecy, that the “Beast and the False Prophet” are “cast alive” into the fire at the Glorious Return, is to say that all human beings who were part of those systems, will face judgment and the Lake of Fire, at this event.

Peter says, “the elements will melt with fervent heat” (*2Pet. 3:10-12*). The earth will be a “lake of brimstone” - melted elements. The earth is “burned up.”

The “fire” into which the Devil is “cast,” is the same fire that consumed the Beast and the False Prophet back at the Glorious Return. It is divine fire. It is the fire that consumes evil. It is the “fire” which will slay the wicked with its brightness (*2 Thessalonians. 2:8-9*). Jesus said that He will come “in the glory of His Father, with His angels” (*Matt. 16:27, Mar. 8:38*). We cannot even imagine such glory - the glory of the One who created a billion suns.

When Satan is cast into this divine “fire,” he (with his angels) “will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” The words translated as “forever and ever,” if literally translated word for word, say “**unto the age of the ages.**” No one knows exactly what that means.

Satan and his angels (powerful as they are) are not divine beings. They were created. Their power is far below that of omnipotence. What is a just punishment for spirit beings who caused so much pain?

CAN ANGELS DIE?

Hebrews 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.”

This verse might seem to suggest that angels cannot die. To me, it says they cannot die physical death. Death in the lake of fire is spirit death - which is different from physical death.

God alone “has immortality” (1Tim. 6:13-16). Angels can die. I understand this verse to say that Jesus was made “a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of [physical] death.” If Jesus was divine, prior to His incarnation - then He could not die in the human sense, or even in the angelic sense.

Luke 20:35-36 “But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

We define death as the loss of physical life. Those who receive “spiritual” bodies, can no longer die physical death. In this, they are like the angels. When we expand our understanding to include the spirit dimension, then our definition may include spirit death, meaning loss of existence in any dimension.

FOREVER AND EVER

For human beings, the “lake of fire” is “the second death.” We have looked at many passages which say that wicked human beings will be destroyed. Satan, and his angels are spirit beings. They have never “died.” So the lake of fire would not be a “second death” - for them. Will the Devil, with his angels be consigned to continuing conscious torment without end? They are - after all - created beings. What do the words mean?

The Greek words translated as “forever and ever,” are “eis tous aionas ton anionon,” which literally translates to “unto the ages of the ages.” It is an idiomatic phrase and is difficult to translate directly into English. It all depends upon the context. When “age” is used in connection with physical human beings, then it can mean a human lifetime. If the human has been given “immortality,” then that lifetime would be without end. It can mean a period of time, as in Matthew 13:39,40 & 49 (from creation, or from Christ to the His Glorious Return). When the subject is God or Christ, it means eternity without end (*Matt. 13:39*). In the Old Testament, we have many examples where the Hebrew ‘*olam* (#05769 - translated as ‘*forever*’) means only the life-time of an individual.

The meaning of the Hebrew ‘*olam* changes with the subject.

Here are a few verses where “ ‘*olam*” clearly does NOT convey an unlimited past, or an unlimited future:

Genesis 6:4: “of old” - meaning of the far distant human past

Exodus 21:6: “for ever” - meaning for the rest of his life

Deuteronomy 32:7: “the days of old” - meaning distant human history past

Deuteronomy 33:15: “the everlasting hills”

Joshua 8:28: “forever” - meaning it has not changed since the day it was destroyed

1 Samuel 27:8: “from of old” - meaning distant human past

Proverbs 22:28: “the ancient” - speaking of a landmark set up in the distant past

Isaiah 42:14: “a long time” - meaning for a long period of time

How can we understand “unto the ages of the ages?”
Quite simply - we cannot!

I believe that the “spirits” of rebellious unrepentant human beings will be instantly consumed in “the lake of fire.” They can never be resurrected to continued life.

I understand that only God has immortality (*1Tim. 6:16*). He sustains life, and can therefore give life without end, to those whom He chooses.

I do not believe that our Divine Father would resurrect human beings - already judged and consumed by divine fire, to judge them again and destroy them again. That just does not fit with His character of love. There would be no good reason to do so.

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I do not believe our God will sustain the life of any created being for eternity, simply for punishment. There would be no purpose to such. It could be that the “lake of fire” is the only way to destroy Satan and his angels, so they cannot rise up a second time. I believe the “age of the ages” will come to an end, when Satan is finally and fully consumed.

Beyond is eternity.

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