

## What John Saw In Heaven!

### Revelation 20:11-15

#### INTRO:

- A. John on the Isle of Patmos. **Revelation 1:1-3** (NKJV) - 1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.
- B. John sees the Judgment scene:
  1. **Revelation 20:11-15** (NKJV) - 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. 12 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. 13 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. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
  2. We would do well to pay close attention to this since a day of reckoning/judgment is appointed for all of mankind - **Hebrews 9:27** (NKJV) - 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
  3. The curtain to this great occasion has been pulled back so that we can see and understand this great mystery that waits us at the close of time.

#### II. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS JOHN SEES?

- A. John in **Revelation 20:11** (NKJV) - 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. --- sees a Great White Throne
  1. The throne and the One who sits on it – **John 5:27; Matt. 25:31; Acts 10:42; 17:30,31**
    - a. **John 5:27** (NKJV) - 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.
    - b. **Matthew 25:31** (NKJV) - 31 “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.
    - c. **Acts 10:42** (NKJV) - 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.
    - d. **Acts 17:30** (NKJV) - 30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,
    - e. **Acts 17:31** (NKJV) - 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”
  2. There have been many thrones down through out time.
    - a. In the Bible thrones are mentioned of the kings
      - (1) Description of Solomon's throne - **1 Kings 10:18** (NKJV) - 18 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.
    - b. In the year that King Uzziah died Isaiah sees a throne that the Lord was sitting upon - **Isaiah 6:1** (NKJV) - 1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.
  3. Son of Man will sit on his throne. - **Matthew 25:31** (NKJV) - 31 “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.
- B. John didn't just see a great throne - He saw A Great White throne.

<sup>1</sup> *The New King James Version*. Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 1982

1. There are a number of white things in the Word of God.
  - a. White is the color of Holiness itself.
  - b. The virgin getting married is adorned in White the color of purity.
2. Some things in the Bible that are White.
  - a. The Hair of Christ - **Revelation 1:13** (NKJV) - 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.
  - b. White Robes - **Revelation 4:4** (NKJV) - 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.
  - c. Horse was White - **Revelation 6:2** (NKJV) - 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.
  - d. A white Cloud - **Revelation 14:14** (NKJV) - 14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.
  - e. Some walked in white- **Revelation 3:4** (NKJV) - 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.
  - f. A white robe was given to the Martyrs - **Revelation 6:11** (NKJV) - 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.
- C. This was not just anyone's throne it belonged to God
  1. A Throne is a seat of authority
    - a. God has all authority
  2. Some think God has no authority - man is at will to do whatever he chooses.
    - a. But it is - Time to get back to God's authority - **Colossians 3:17** (NKJV) - 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
- D. The Seat of this throne is not empty.
  1. There is someone always on the throne.- The Father is on His Throne and the Son of God is sitting at His right hand.
    - a. Some earthly thrones during times of History have no one on the throne.
    - b. Various reasons have kept these thrones vacant.
  2. God's son will sit on the throne of His glory when He returns in Glory - **Matthew 25:31** (NKJV) - 31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.
  3. John saw that someone was on the throne.
    - a. Need to see what John saw - **Romans 2:16** (NKJV) - 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

III. **More of the SETTING** - However, In **Revelation 20 Verse 11** the Great white Throne Is Not All that John sees in heaven.

- A. He Saw Heaven and Earth they fled away - **Rev 20:11** - ..... from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them
- B. The earth and the heavens will be destroyed – **Matt 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:7, 10-12**
- C. In **2 Peter 3:10** which speaks of this final day of Christ's return - (NKJV) - 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.
  1. In the which - three important words.
    - a. heavens will **pass** away
    - b. elements will **melt** with fervent heat
    - c. will be **burned** up.
  2. John saw it do exactly what Peter said it would do - **2 Peter 3:11** (NKJV) - 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,
    - a. Knowing these things - Peter asks the question - "What manner of persons ought we to be?"

- b. God is a powerful being - He spoke the world into existence in Genesis 1 - therefore we must tread lightly when it comes to the fact that we are simply His creation.
- 3. If we can see that can see the need to be Holy and Righteous.
- D. After Earth and Heavens gone John still saw great White Throne.
  - 1. No shelter or place to hide from God's judgment now
    - a. Even tho everything is naked and seen by God - we get the feeling many times in this life that God can't see what we hide away from Him.
    - b. That which is done in the dark is like daylight to Him.
      - (1) There is nothing secret to God - **Ecclesiastes 12:14** (NKJV) - 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.
  - 2. When this happens where would you go?
    - a. No earth to have caves to hide in.
    - b. Where could you hide?

**IV. The Summons - In verse - 12 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.** John says - I saw - dead small and Great stand before God.

- A. Presupposes the Resurrection from the dead.
  - 1. A lot of folks don't see that.
- B. No one left out - all of Humanity that has ever lived on the face of this earth.
  - 1. The mass of Humanity - however do not for a moment think that we individually are going to be lost in the crowd.
    - a. Every single person - Great & small – All in the graves - **Jn 5:28,29**;
      - (1) All made alive - **1 Cor 15:22**,
      - (2) All nations - **Mat 25:32,33**;
      - (3) The world - **Acts 17:31**;
      - (4) Each of us - **Rom 14:10-12**;
      - (5) Must all appear - **2 Cor. 5:10**
      - (6) No escape – **Heb 2:3**
      - (7) Where do you fit in? On the Righteous side or on the Unrighteous side?
- C. What if man doesn't want to stand there?
  - 1. You will stand there, righteous and the unrighteous, will be raised - cf **John 5:28-29** (NKJV) - 28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.
  - 2. All will be raised.

**V. The Secrets Are Made Known - John sees Books that were opened.**

- A. God has a divine record
  - 1. God's accounting is not like our checkbook accounting - where we fail to record everything maybe at the end of the day after hours of trying to reconcile we just give up.
- B. He has very accurate records.---- **Hebrews 4:13** (NKJV) - 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.
  - 1. Every deed recorded and made known –
    - a. Every secret – **Eccl. 12:13,14**
    - b. Secrets of men judged by Jesus – **Rom. 2:16**
    - c. Every idle word – **Mat 12:36**
    - d. Nothing covered that will not be revealed – **Luke 12:1,2**
    - e. Reveal the counsels of the heart – **1 Cor. 4:5**
- C. As humanity stood before Him He knows all too.
  - 1. You see on this great day “every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess.” - This is a recognition of our Creator.

- a. I liken this to a famous movie star - all may recognize them - but they do not in turn recognize the faces in the crowd of admirers.
  - (1) Billions upon billions of souls are here resurrected in this scene - all will recognize God and He will recognize you.
- 2. **Jn. 12:48; Rom. 2:16** - there is no excuse why we should be unprepared for this day.
  - a. **John 12:48** (NKJV) - 48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.
  - b. **Romans 2:16** (NKJV) - 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.
- D. We have the Word of God to tell us what to do to be saved.
  - 1. In The Book of Life
    - a. Name there he knows you.
    - b. Don't have to say don't you know me.
    - c. God knows the difference.
- E. **In Verse 13** - 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.
  - 1. Every man was judged - you know this fact beforehand
    - a. The fruit of our labors our works - **James 2:14-26** (NKJV) - 14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
  - 2. His will not be an arbitrary Judgment - **Matthew 10:42** (NKJV) - 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.”
    - a. Judged according to each ones works – **Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor 5:10**
    - b. Give to each one according to his works – **Rev 2:23**
    - c. Reward each according to his works – **Mat. 16:27;**
    - d. Render to each according to his deeds - **Rom 2:6;**
    - e. Receive things done in body, good or bad - **2 Cor. 5:10**
  - 3. There have been those buried or lost at sea they will be there **Heb. 4:13**
    - a. **Hebrews 4:13** (NKJV) - 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.
    - b. The sea does not always give the bodies back of those who drown in it - but this does not exclude them from this day of Judgment.
  - 4. We have to do what God says - it is a matter of life or death.
    - a. Not just some things - but all things. The bible (God’s Word) is not a buffet bar where we get to pick and chose what we like.
    - b. Unfortunately many look at the bible in this way.
  - 5. Someone might say count me out - of this great scene we are looking at here.
    - a. **Gal. 3:7** - Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with

believing Abraham.

(1) Through Him all families of earth would be blessed.

- b. One group remains - who should be afraid of this day - and it is all those who are outside of the blessings which is in Christ - **Ephesians 1:3** (NKJV) - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

VI. **Sentence Is Rendered** - **In Verse 15** - "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

A. End of Death & Hades – the second death – **1 Cor. 15:26, 53; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 21:8**

- 1. **1 Corinthians 15:26** (NKJV) - 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.
- 2. **1 Corinthians 15:53** (NKJV) - 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.
- 3. **2 Corinthians 5:10** (NKJV) - 10 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.
- 4. Revelation 21:8 (NKJV) - 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

B. Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire –

1. Book of life - **Phili 4:3; Rev 3:5; 20:12; 21:27; 22:19**

- a. **Philippians 4:3** (NKJV) - 3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.
- b. **Revelation 3:5** (NKJV) - 5 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.
- c. **Revelation 20:12** (NKJV) - 12 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.
- d. **Revelation 21:27** (NKJV) - 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.
- e. **Revelation 22:19** (NKJV) - 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

2. Lake of fire – **Rev 21:8; Mat 25:41; Mark 9:43-48**

- a. **Revelation 21:8** (NKJV) - 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
- b. **Matthew 25:41** (NKJV) - 41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:
- c. **Mark 9:43-48** (NKJV) - 43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 44 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 46 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire— 48 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'

C. What if your Name is not there?

- 1. Some things that don't matter.
  - a. Skin Color; nationality, gender. Your earthly Background or heritage does not matter.
- 2. If have not been faithful name not there.- we must be faithful unto death (Rev 2:10) - this in the Greek has the concept of - even if death is the result of ones faith.
  - a. We have all witnessed the horrors of the ISIS beheadings - would we remain faithful to God or

- would we denounce Him to preserve of life?
3. The Books are not just in Library. GOD is using them.
  4. Can you imagine standing before God and your Name is not found there?
    - a. Might say look again!
    - b. No doctrine of purgatory for a while and then enter into heaven.
      - (1) Ever have this happen to you - that because of bad behavior you have to sit in the corner to get an attitude adjustment before you can enjoy the ice cream.
      - (2) This is the purgatory concept some have - this scene that we are looking at does not have this depiction - those not there are cast into the lack of fire with Hades.
- D. Do you like the lake of fire more than the gates of heaven?
1. **2 Thessalonians 1:7-10** (NKJV) - 7 . . . when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

## VII. CONCLUSION:

- A. What did John See?
  1. A Throne not just any throne
    - a. A Great White Throne and The Son of God
    - b. The Dead Standing in Judgment.
    - c. Books opened - The Dead were being Judged
      - (1) Those not in the Book in the fire.
    - d. Things are being wound up here.
- B. Can You see it?
- C. Are you prepared for it? If not why not start preparing today.
  1. If you are not a Christian - H R B C B - live faithfully
  2. If a Christian - examine yourself as to whether you are in the faith.
    - a. Make corrections when faults are found - no matter how great or small. Sin will not enter into heaven.
- D. What If It is TODAY?
  1. The day of judgment Will Come!!!
  2. The day of judgment will Be Inescapable!!!
  3. All Things Will Be Made Known –
  4. It Will Be According To Truth – **John 12:48**
  5. It Will Be Final –
    - a. Not a trial – No excuses – No second chance – **Hebrews 9:27**
    - b. If you were called to meet your Lord today – where would you be for all eternity????
- E. Have you obeyed the gospel? – **Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38**
  1. Are you living faithfully for the Lord? – **Hebrews 3:14; 6:11; 10:26-30**
  2. Today is the day of salvation – **2 Cor. 6:2** (NKJV) - 2 For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.