

Premillennialism True or False?

The Great White Throne Judgment

Bible Answers About Denominations

“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. 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. 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. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:11-15 NAS).

Having shown how God would bring the church through her trials and persecutions, John then turns to show that at the final judgment the Lord's people will be ushered into heaven where they will celebrate their victory forever while the wicked will be lost in the place designed for the eternal punishment of Satan and his angels.

In the vision John sees a great white throne with Jesus Christ sitting upon it (Matt. 25:31; 2 Cor. 5:10). Jesus is sitting upon this white throne that symbolizes holiness and purity. Paul states: “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31 NAS). In writing to Timothy, Paul again stated: “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:” (2 Tim 4:1 NAS). So awesome was the scene that the earth and the heaven fled away. Peter affirms that in the day of the Lord, “...the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up” (2 Pet 3:10 NAS). This is because the saved will dwell in “a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away” (Rev. 21:1). It is called a new heaven and a new earth because it will be the dwelling place of both God and man. Every one must admire the sublimity of this image; no one can contemplate it without being awed by the majesty and glory of the final Judgment of mankind.

John also sees “the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne.” In this chapter the dead are mentioned three times. In verse 4 we see the souls on thrones, those who died for the Lord; in verse 5 the rest of the dead who are not allowed to live and reign with Christ, the wicked, and now in verse 12 both of these groups are seen before the throne of Jesus Christ. The whole of mankind is composed of the “small and great.” Thus, in other language, the same idea might be expressed by saying, the young and old; the rich and poor; the bond and free; the sick and well; the

happy and the unhappy; the righteous and the wicked; for all the human family might, in these respects, be considered as thus divided. It is the judgment of all the dead. Since both the righteous and the wicked are to be in this judgment scene, it follows that they are all to be resurrected at the end of the thousand years mentioned in the chapter. This agrees with what Jesus said about the resurrection. "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28-29 NAS). Paul likewise said there is to be "a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked" (Acts 24:15 NAS). There will not be two bodily resurrections, one for the righteous and another one thousand years later for the wicked. Paul teaches very clearly (2 Thess. 1:510) that "when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven" is "that day" when the wicked (those who know not God and who have not obeyed the gospel) "shall be punished with everlasting destruction," yea "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints." There is something to be done for both saint and sinner alike on that Day of Judgment. Both are to be recompensed at the same time! The wicked "shall be punished" "WHEN He shall come to be glorified in His saints." Then, as if to show us that there is no parenthesis (as Premillennialism teaches) between the two, Paul adds, "in that day!"

Observe next that John saw "books were opened" "...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds." The books may represent the different laws under which people have lived such as the Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian. Or, the books may be the recorded deeds in the life of each person. The opening of the book of a person's life is simply the revealing of one's whole life and judging him/her accordingly.

Next, John saw "another book was opened, which is the book of life." This would be the book in which are recorded the names of the saved, the elect (cf. Rev. 3:5). The meaning here is, that John saw not only the general books opened containing the records of the deeds of people, but that he had a distinct view of the list or roll of those who were the followers of the Lamb. It would seem that in regard to the multitudes of the impenitent and the wicked, the judgment will proceed "on their deeds" in general; in regard to the righteous, it will turn on the fact that their names had been enrolled in the book of life. That will be sufficient to determine the nature of the sentence that is to be passed on them. He will be safe whose name is found in the book of life because they were washed in the precious blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7); no one will be safe who is to have his eternal destiny determined by his own deeds. "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15).

Finally, John saw "death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire." Death is called the last enemy (1 Cor. 15:26). Hades is the unseen abode of the dead. So when these two are cast into the lake of fire, the last enemies of the people of God have been destroyed. John then wrote "This is the second death, the lake of fire." According to this chapter in verse 10 this is the place where the devil and his accomplices, the beast and the false prophet were placed, and where they are to be tormented for ever and ever. Death and Hades are personified here as enemies of God's people and the conclusion is that all of their enemies have been destroyed and there is nothing left for them to fear. The first death is physical death, the death of the body and is only for a little while. The second death is for eternity and is the separation of the spirit from God forever. All humanity suffers the first death, except those living at the time Jesus comes (1 Cor. 15:51, 52); but the second death cannot touch those who are the faithful of God.

Therefore, the doctrine of Premillennialism is false from the beginning to end because it is not taught in God's word and because it contradicts passage after passage. If they cannot sustain their theory in Revelation chapter 20, then they cannot sustain it at all.

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