***The Book of Life  
  
RV242-02***

Our subject is "The Great White Throne." This is segment number two in Revelation 20:11-15.

**John's Vision**

The apostle John, in his vision from God, while on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, is transported, with one leapfrog jump across the whole 1,000 years of the millennium to the second resurrection. The first resurrection was the raising to life of believers only at the beginning of the millennium. Unbelievers, of all ages, from Adam on, are raised to life at the end of the millennium, and that is called the second resurrection. John also observes a great white throne on which is seated the divine trinity with the manifest member of the Godhead, Jesus Christ, in charge of the occasion.

The presence of the Godhead in all holiness causes the destruction of the sin-contaminated heaven and earth. The great white throne then hangs out there in space from which Jesus Christ proceeds to verify the guilt, and to pronounce the sentence of the second death upon each unbeliever. Before this throne of final judgment stand the multiplied millions of unsaved, from all levels of society, waiting to be sentenced by Jesus Christ, the judge, to an eternity in the lake of fire.

**The Great White Throne**

So, the great white throne is a place of spiritual doom which believers will never face. But it is a place of inevitability for the unbelievers. Sometimes people have a misconception about the great white throne because it sounds like a nice title. The original songbook we had here at Berean Church back four decades ago from Broadman Press had a song entitled "Lord Lay Some Soul Upon My Heart." And the first two stanzas make an appeal to God to guide the believer to some soul that needs to be saved, and that they would win that one for Christ – to have the capacity to have the power to reach out and transmit the love of God to that person so that they would respond to the gospel. All that is well and good.

Now no third verse. It says, "To win that soul for Thee alone will be my constant prayer, that when I've reached the great white throne, I'll meet that dear one there." I remember the service when the song leader at that time selected this hymn, and hadn't read this verse. You can imagine what a double-take the congregation did when we got to the third verse about all us all standing at the great white throne.

Hymns are very often notoriously non-doctrinal. They have contain bad doctrine for a variety of reasons. Hymn writers are often not very precise in their doctrine, so we're not entirely surprised. But this is really a gross doctrinal misconception: "When I've reached the great white throne, I'll meet that there one there." If you're ever going to meet that dear one that you've led to Christ, you're not going to meet him at the great white throne. You probably won't even be there yourself to observe this very solemn and terrible occasion, closing down the history of rebellious humanity against God. This this Song is an indication of a writer not understanding prophetic Scriptures.

I reiterate again that it is very important for you to know the Word of God. And it has never been more important than the day in which we live for us to know the prophetic Word of Scripture.

The evidence condemning the unsaved at the great white throne is contained in books according to the life works of these unbelievers. Only unbelievers stand before this great white throne. They are going to be judged now for a final sentencing to the lake of fire. Well, God, who is always just, proceeds to publicly prove His condemnation. The books record the lost person's sins which condemn him to hell. And they also record his human good works produced by his old sin nature, which he offers as merit to enter heaven. Sins and human good both flow from the old sin nature, so they're equally evil before God, and they are of no merit for salvation.

The Bible describes man's goodness as filthy rags, and it only adds to his condemnation and punishment because all that human good and so-called compassion that people do from the sin nature only adds to their moral guilt and their punishment in hell. These books of works are an expression of the human viewpoint delusion in the expressed in Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." Millions of human beings are in Hades at this moment because they thought they were following a way that was right. They thought their human good had some merit with God toward salvation. Now they have found that what they were following was not a way of life, but a way of death. The relative righteousness of man can never equal the absolute righteousness of God which is required for entrance into heaven.

**The Book of Life**

So, we come to Revelation 20:12. There we have seen the dead. John describes them as the great and the small, meaning all strata of society. And they're standing before the throne: "And the books were opened. And then 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 works." "The dead" here refers to the unsaved dead, which were referred to back in Revelation 20:5: "And the rest of the dead (that is, the unsaved dead) did not come to life until the 1,000 years were completed."

So, the first resurrection completed the resurrection of believers. The second resurrection is the resurrection of unbelievers. The souls from Hades of these unbelievers are now joined to their bodies, and we're told that they are judged. Jesus Christ judges them relative to their qualifications to enter heaven. The word "judge" in the Greek Bible looks like this: "krino." This word means to pass on the qualifications. This is done at the point of the great white throne judgment. It is in the Greek language in the passive voice, which means that the unsaved do not pass on their own qualifications. So, no discussion is involved here.

This is the great mistake that unbelievers always make. They think that it is reasonable to them how they approach God to get into heaven. They think that God is going to say, "OK. You were sincere. I'll accept your plan. I'll accept your approach." This passive voice makes it very clear that the unbeliever is silent at the great whit throne. He has no argument to offer. The reason for that is that there is a written record. There is a document on the works of the unbeliever. This Greek word for this written record is "grapho." The tense is important here. It's perfect tense, which means that it was recorded during the believer's lifetime, and it is now a completed record presence at the great white throne judgment. All during the person's life, the record was being added to. Every sin was recorded of this unbeliever. And every expression of his human good was recorded against that unbeliever as an evil from his sin nature. This stuff has been piling up for all the years of his life. "This is written" is in the passive voice, which means that the unbeliever doesn't do the writing.

If we were to ask you to write a little summary about yourself, you would tell us all the nice things and you would keep all the bad things secret. Well, God says, "I'll write the record, and it's all going to be in there – all the evil; all the mean; all the ugly; and, all those secrets that you never wanted people to know are going to be there."

The unbeliever has a very serious problem. The Christian never faces exposure of his sin in eternity. The unbeliever will face the exposure of his sins and his human good in eternity here is a great white throne judgment, because the book is going to be written in which it's all recorded. These are recorded in the books, and what is recorded is "according to," indicating the source of the contents, "their works." These are their lifelong sins and human good.

Up in the middle of verse 12, we're told that there is a book which is opened. The Greek word for "another" here is a word that indicates another book of the same kind as the books here in the context. Well, what are the books in the context? They're books, which record information about a person relative to his qualifications for going to heaven. The "another book" is the same kind of book. It also has to do with a person's qualification for going to heaven. And this book is called the book of life. This is a single special book which is now in view in which God records the final confirmation of the unbeliever's sentence to eternal death in the lake of fire.

This book has in it the names of those who qualify for eternal life in heaven. Of course, this is the final evidence. If your name is not written in the Lamb's book of Life, you are not going to heaven. At the great white throne judgment, this book will be the final evidence.

So, what God has here is a divine record of salvation. But it needs some explanation because there are some Scriptures that refer to the book of life that would lead you to certain misconceptions and contradictions. One of the things that the Bible is very clear about is that salvation is entirely a work of God, and this comes to us as a grace gift from God upon our faith in Christ as the one who has covered our sins. Yet, that being the case, then, we cannot expect that there is any threat to our salvation. If God does it all, man cannot be contaminated it in any way so that we could again be lost. That is why Jesus compared salvation to the new birth to and Nicodemus, because you can't reverse the birth process.

**Names are Erased from the Book of Life**

So, here we have the doctrine of eternal security. Yet, we read in the Bible about names being erased from the book of life. So, you have to understand the relationship of these books.

**The Book of those who are in God's Family**

First of all, God has a record in heaven of those born into this family through faith in Jesus Christ. God keeps a record of those who are in and those who are out. We have this indicated in Luke 10:20: "Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

Also Hebrews 12:23: "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all; the spirits of righteous men named perfect." It says, "Those enrolled in heaven." So, the Bible makes it clear that God keeps records. Since He has plenty of angels, and they all need something to do, He does not use computers. This is all handwritten, personally reviewed name by name, line-by-line, written out.

Our first indication in the Bible that God keeps records on those who are in his family, and those who are not, is found actually in the Old Testament in Exodus 32:32-33: "But now, if You will, forgive their sin." This is Moses interceding with God not to wipe out the Jewish people for this one more horrible rebellion against Him. Moses says, "Please don't do that. Forgive them their sin. If not, please blot me out of Your book which You have written." Moses said, "If you destroy this people; if you fail to keep Your promise to Abraham; and if you don't come through, just take my name out of the book." What is he referring to? The book of salvation:

"And the Lord said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will block him out of My book.'" God says, "Don't be silly, Moses. I don't do things unjustly. I'll block some names out of the book all right, but they will be the names of those who have rebelled against Me, and have refused to subject themselves to Me in salvation for the Messiah which is coming." Those who rebelled against God there, in the Jewish experience in the wilderness, were the same people who were not born again, and who did not look to God to provide for them a Savior in the future.

So, the Old Testament made it clear that God has a book. He has some kind of a book, and that book records those who are going to heaven. But it's also a book from which names can be raised. God has a roster of those who are to inherit eternal life.

Philippians 4:3: "Indeed, true comrade, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life." Paul says, "Please help these Christians, particularly these women who have so nobly assisted me in my ministry, and all those who have helped, whose names are also in the book of life."

**"I will not Erase his Name"**

Revelation 3:5 says, "He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments. And I will not erase his name from the book of life. And I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."

**A Christian cannot lose his Salvation**

Of course, the people who do not believe in security of salvation have a field day with this verse. Here is a verse that tells them that if you sin beyond a certain point as a Christian, then you will lose your salvation, and have to start all over again. So, what does it mean to be erased from the book of life?

Revelation 3:5, whatever it means, does indicate that a name can be removed from this book of life. But it cannot mean that there is a loss of salvation. We may establish that, and begin with that premise, because the Bible is very clear that you can lose your salvation.

John 11:26, for example, says, "And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die." Once you believe in Him, you will never die. Then there is Hebrews 7:25: "Hence also He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Christ has paid for our sins. We're in His family. Satan accuses us. Yes, he does accuse us day and night of our sins. Yet, we cannot be declared guilty because we have someone who intercedes for us.

The writer of Hebrews is referring to 1 John 2:1 that says, "My little children, I'm writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if any Christian does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." We have a lawyer up there who is defending our right to salvation on the basis of His sacrifice on our behalf.

So, the Bible is clear that you cannot lose your salvation. The book of life is a record that we have to understand. When we put all the pieces together, it comes out like this: The book of life is a record of everyone who has come into the human race from the point of conception on. It is the book of life. Number one is Adam; number two is Eve; and, it goes down the line until they get to your number. And it just goes on, one after another. As people are conceived, they're put into the book of life. ... That's what this book is all about.

**Unlimited Atonement**

Now they're in here for this reason: that Christ died for all mankind. So, all are potentially eligible for eternal life. The penalty for sin is death, and it's been paid for everybody. So, as soon as you're conceived, you're in the book of life. This is the book indicating who's going to heaven. That's what's so important. You are covered by the death of Christ automatically. That's known as unlimited atonement in theology. It is based upon 1 John 2:2, among other verses: "And He himself, Jesus Christ, is the propitiation (the satisfaction) for our sins; and, not for ourselves, but also for those of the whole world." Christ has satisfied the justice of God, not only for the sins of Christians, but for the sins of all the whole world – all the people who go to hell, as well.

Let me put it this way: Those who die physically while they are spiritually dead, having never accepted Christ as Savior, are erased from the book of life. So, here we come along, and a Christian dies who never accepted Christ Jesus, and he is erased from the book. Now there is a solemn blank space. He looked pretty good on the outside, but the truth of the matter is that he was a rebel against God, and his name is erased. He's out of the book of life. Throughout all the centuries of mankind, these names of unbelievers, as they die, are removed from this book of life, which is recording the people who are going to heaven. And that's what Revelation 3:5 is referring to as being erased from the book of life.

**Eternal Security**

Those who are born again, that the Bible refers to as overcomers, can never be erased from the book of life. John 10:28-29 make this very clear. Jesus says, "I give eternal life to them (those who believe in Him), and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." It is clear that once you are in the hand of God, you can never again be taken out. That's what it means to be saved.

So, the book of life, when it starts, has in it both those who are destined to go to heaven and those who are destined to go to hell. That's what you have to understand about the book of life. It is a book recording those who have been conceived in the womb. And all those children who have been aborted by their murderous mothers in the womb have their names permanently inscribed in the book of life. They have not reached the age of accountability, and their salvation is secured and provided by Christ for them. So, millions of aborted children will be in heaven because they're in the book of life, while their mothers who murdered them, as unbelievers, will have their names erased from the book of life.

**A Book of Results**

Now we come to a book of results. We've come to the end at the great white throne, and everything is finished. There are no more human beings being born. The record is now complete. And this book now has names left in it, and names removed from it.

**The Lamb's Book of Life**

At this point, the book of life becomes the Lamb's book of life. It is the final edition of those who are going to heaven. In the Lamb's book of life, there are only born-again people. Revelation 13:8: "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him (the antichrist). Everyone whose name was not written, from the foundation of the world, in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain." Anybody who worships the antichrist is not a person whose name was recorded in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Those who are going to heaven had been selected for that destiny by God way back there when He was creating the universe, before any of us ever came on the scene. We are in this final edition of the book of life when it becomes the Lamb's book of life, because we have trusted in Christ as Savior.

Note Revelation 17:8: "The beasts that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, that they may see the beast that was, and is, and is not." Those who are unsaved are not in this Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21:27: "And nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. And here it is describing those who will come into heaven. Those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. So, the permanent portion of the book of life (that which has not been erased) makes us the Lamb's book of life. These overcomers cannot be removed from this book because they are permanently saved.

So, Revelation 13:8 refers to a record of names from the foundation of the world. The reference here is to those who are regenerated. These names of believers only are recorded in the Lamb's book of Life. This is the final official record to determine those who go to heaven.

Psalm 69:19-28 talks about Judas Iscariot, and it also makes a reference to this concept of the book of life and the Lamb's book of life: "You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor. All my adversaries are before You. Reproach has broken my heart. I am so sick, and I look for sympathy, and there is none; and, for comforters, but I've found none." This is Christ speaking: "They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. May their table before them become a snare, and when they are in peace, may it become a trap." Christ is speaking about His enemies, into whose hands he was placed by Judas Iscariot: "May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see. May their loins shake continually. Pour out Your indignation on them, and may Your burning anger overtake them." This is Judas Iscariot and his associates: "May their camp be desolate; may none dwell in their tents. For they have persecuted Him whom You Yourself have smitten. And they tell of the pain of those You have wounded. Add guilt to their iniquity, and may they be not come into Your righteousness. May they be blotted out of the book of life, and may they not be recorded with the righteous."

In verse 28, in these terrible men (Judas Iscariot and his associates), you have both forms of the book. You have the book of life. Then here it is called in the Old Testament, the book of the righteous; that is, the Lamb's book of life – those who are born again.

So, there is a record from Adam of all who were conceived into the human race. And there is a record remaining, after the erasures, of those who were born-again unto eternal life. The principle of 2 Timothy 2:19 applies here: "Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal: the Lord knows those who are His. And let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness." God knows who belongs to Him.

There are a multitude of moral people who have felt no need to trust in Christ as Savior for salvation, and they are not in the Lamb's book of life. They all began in the book of life, but because they lack God's imputed righteousness, which they would receive by trusting in Christ, they have been erased from the book of life. And in the final edition, the lamb's book of life, they are not there.

So, this is God demonstrating, here in Revelation 20:12, that He has another book. He matches the books recording their works. It's not enough. It falls short of the glory of God. He opens the book of life, the final decision, and He looks for the name, and it's been removed. There's nothing but a horrible blank. That confirms beyond the shadow of a doubt that justice will be served when these people are sentenced to the lake of fire.

**The Sea Gives up the Dead**

Now we come along to verse 13. Here is the resurrection of the unsaved – those who are part of the second resurrection: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." "The sea" refers here to the saltwater bodies that cover the earth. "They gave up" means that the bodies of those who are buried at sea are now resurrected. This is done at the point of the great white throne as an act of God. These dead are millions of people who have been buried in the seas of the world. One of the largest burial occasions was the Noahic flood, when millions of unbelievers were buried in mass in the waters that covered the earth so that the flood made the whole earth one huge sea. So, you have, from time to time, people who have been buried at sea, and their bodies have just disintegrated completely, and they're gone as bodies. But matter cannot be destroyed, and they are not gone. Somewhere the atoms of those bodies still exist. And when it says that the sea gave up the dead, it is referring to the fact that unbelievers whose dead bodies have been left in their disintegrating condition in the sea for the 1,000 years of the millennium are now raised back to life.

**Death and Hades Give up the Dead**

Furthermore, death and Hades give up the dead which were in them. The word "death" here refers to the unsaved dead again. ... The dead here are the unsafe dead. Death here refers to the grave. Death refers to the grave which holds the dead bodies on the land. The dead in the sea is one thing. Death refers to the dead bodies which are on the land. The words "death" and the "grave" are often used as synonyms in the Bible. 1 Corinthians 15:55 is an example of that: "O death, where is your victory? O grave, where is your sting?" The reference there is to the fact that death and the grave are synonyms. So, the body is in the grave. It returns to the dust of the atoms that it was made from. They are brought together, and these bodies are resurrected to be brought together again by God.

**Cremation**

Some bodies, of course, have been cremated. Their ashes have been scattered, but they're still on the earth. Some bodies have been cremated, and they've been stored in urns in cemeteries places. So, the whole thing here has two kinds of dead. There are only two cemeteries are on earth: the sea; and, the land areas. In these areas, dead unsaved bodies have been stored.

**Hell**

Furthermore, we're told that Hades (the place of the souls of the unsaved dead) is empty. The word "Hades" is the Greek word "hades." "Hades" is the word the New Testament. It is called Sheol in the Old Testament. It is wrong to translate this as "hell," as our King James Bible does. The word "hell" is a permanent residence of the unsaved, and that is the lake of fire. This is indicated in Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:20; and, Matthew 18:9, indicating that the lake of fire is the permanent place that people reside who are lost. That is what we mean by "hell." Hades is a temporary holding station, and the lake of fire is a permanent place of punishment. Hades is a temporary place of punishment. The lake of fire is a permanent place of punishment. The lake of fire is also called Gehenna in the New Testament, after the Valley of Hinnom outside of Jerusalem, in which the garbage was burned. So, at the physical death of the unsaved, the body goes into the grave, but their souls go into Hades. The soul of the unsaved go into Hades.

At this point in time, at the end of the great millennial kingdom, you have bodies of unbelievers in the ground and in the seas. You have their souls held in Hades. At the great white throne event, everything is empty. Hades and death gave up the dead which were in them. The souls of the unsaved are released from Hades, and they're reunited with their bodies. The unsaved bodies from the sea and from the earth are reunited at the great white throne. The unsaved dead have suffered temporarily in their souls in Hades, but they'll be suffering eternally now in their body and soul, following the great white throne judgment.

Believers who died during the millennium (and there probably will be some) will probably be raised before the great white throne judgment. We have no indication in Scripture about that, but I think they would be saved as the last contingent of the first resurrection. The bodies of believers, of course, are glorified like Christ, which means they have no sin nature. They are no longer mortal, and they can't die. But the bodies of unbelievers retain the old sin nature with all of its lusts forever.

So, these people (unbelievers), rejoined from the sea and from the land with their souls from Hades, are now judged. And it says, "They're judged, every one of them;" that is, they are judged person-by-person, and they are judged according to their deeds. The unsaved are judged on the basis of the record of their works which are recorded in these previous books that we have referred to. Human Good Works for salvation are found to fall short of the glory of God; that is, the absolute righteousness which is required by God.

Romans 3:23 says that people fall short, by nature, of the glory of God; that is, His standard of absolute righteousness: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." So, good works do not achieve the glory of God. Men are condemned therefore by their works which are evil products of the sin nature. All unsaved, resurrected dead stand before the great white throne for sentencing to the lake of fire forever on the basis of their works. God's record books will force all to acknowledge justice of God in sentencing them to hell.

Matthew 7:22-23 indicate that people will be inclined to want to argue that Christ is rejecting them, and that they did things in His name, like even casting out demons, and miracles, and they called Him Lord. This, of course, is the delusion that the Charismatics do today, and think that that proves that they are with God. But Jesus says, "Get away from me. I never knew you." All of that was fake.

Human relative righteousness is no good. That's the bottom line. This is said very well in Titus 3:5: "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit." We're never saved on the basis of what is recorded in our book of works.

So, these unbelievers have a record of their works. That proves insufficient to meet the demands for entrance into heaven. Then, to be sure, they go over to the other side, and they look in the book of life, and sure enough, where that name is supposed to be chronologically in time, there's a blank space. The name has been erased.

**Death and Hades are Thrown into the Lake of Fire**

The consequence then is the second death in verse 14: "And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire." Death refers to the graves of the unsaved, which would include the sea areas. The two worldwide depositories of the physical remains of the dead of humanity are in view. The dead and Hades are the depository of the unsaved souls from Adam on. It is a place of fiery torment for the soul. Luke 16:23-24, in the experience of the rich man, show that he was in great agony physically. He was there not in his body, but in his soul. Yet, he felt the pain. Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire. The word "thrown" here means that they are emptied. The bodies and the souls of unsaved heads are cleared out of the temporary holding pens, the grave and Hades. They are now brought together by God as a rejoining of the soul and the body of unbelievers.

They are then taken and thrown into a huge pool of fire, which the Bible describes as the lake of fire, and which we commonly refer to by the word "hell." Somewhere in the universe, there is a great pool of fire created by God for Satan and his demons. Matthew 25:41 tells us that this huge pool of flames was created to punish Satan. The unsaved, in their resurrected bodies, will join Satan in the lake of fire, because they followed him in life. This pool of fire is literal, and it is eternal, and there is no parole for its suffering inhabitants.

**The Second Death**

The Bible says, "This is the second death. The first death is the death of the physical body. That is separation of soul and body. The second death is eternity of the person in the lake of fire, and that is separation of body and soul from God. That is a terrible consequence and judgment of God upon the unbelievers.

**Separation from God**

2 Timothy 1:8-9 says, "Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." These people, in the second death, are separated from God.

**Conscious Pain Forever**

The body is never consumed in these flames of the lake of fire. It never becomes immune to the pain. So, the punishment for unforgiven moral guilt is eternal. People in the lake of fire are always conscious. This is demonstrated by the antichrist and the false prophet, which 1,000 years after being thrown in the lake of fire when they met Satan coming in, were fully conscious; fully alive; and, fully in pain.

So, the second death is identified as a lake of fire. The first death of an unbeliever is his physical body dies. That means separation. Death is always separation. The first death is the separation of the soul from the body. The second death is the separation of the person from God.

It is sad to realize that Jesus Christ died for all those who are going to be in the lake of fire. Their sins have been paid for. Jesus Christ Himself already experienced the separation from God, which is the penalty for sin. It is a fearful thing to die as an unsaved person – to pay the cost of negative volition to the gospel, with suffering in this pool of fire forever. You can never sing of the peace that Jesus gives, as the song lines say: "Which is like the sunshine after rain; which is like the rest that follows; which is like a hope returned again." There will never be any sunshine in the lake of fire – only a dark, vaporous cloud that covers it, and there'll never be any rest following pain. The pain will always be there. And there'll never be hope to return. There'll never be hope. There'll never be any other future or any other destiny.

You can understand why people recoil when they start thinking about this. They recoil from the concept of a person being in that kind of a situation forever. No matter what a scum ball he was on this earth; to suffer like that; to have that kind of a destiny; and, to have that upon you for all eternity, there is something within us that just recoils from that. But it is the justice of God that demands it.

For that reason, if people only realize what is at stake in depending on a false gospel of salvation, they would look at it more seriously. This is the arrogance of pride of heritage: "Why am I a Catholic? Because my family is Catholic." Your salvation plan is false. It will take you into hell: "I don't care. My church is right. I was born a Catholic."

They might say, "I am a Mormon. I have the gospel – the everlasting gospel. The rest of you churches don't know anything about the everlasting gospel, and I will go through the great exaltation." No, you won't. You're going to be in the lake of fire. That's a false gospel.

Maybe they say, "I am a Jew. I obey the Mosaic Law, and God will take me into heaven." No, He won't. Jesus says, "No man comes unto the Father but by Me." And if you don't accept Christ, there's no way you can go to heaven. Every Jew goes to the lake of fire. Do you realize what you're saying?

People have these misconceptions, and it all shakes down to the idea that one religion is as good as another. In John 14:6, Jesus says, "No man comes to the Father but by Me." Either you believe that, or you don't' and, the consequences will be heaven or hell. It's just that simple. God's grace way of salvation by faith in Christ is the only ... way into heaven. There is no other way to get in.

1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born-again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you; who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." It's a sure thing. It's a sure salvation, and it's all provided by God.

**The Day of the Lord**

Now we come to the last part of John's vision of the day is the Lord. The day of the Lord includes the tribulation and the millennium, and here is the end. Verse 15: "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." The Greek word "if" looks like this: "iei," and as you know, there are four meanings to the word "if" in the Greek language. And this is a first-class condition. Therefore, this "if" means that this is true: "If there are any people whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life (which is the reference here), and, of course, there are a lot of them that are not in that book of life."

**No Exceptions**

It indicates that, without exceptions, if anyone's name is not found (can't be located) in the book of life at the great white throne judgment, that's it. There are no exceptions. There is no higher court to appeal to. The highest court is Christ Himself. He's the judge, and He's making the decision. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, and there are many who are not found reported in that book of life, then this which is the final test. Where the name should have been, there's a horrible blank because it was erased when the person died without justification.

**A God of Justice and Love**

God does have love for lost sinners. And people say, "No, He wouldn't send people to a terrible place like that." But God's love is governed by His justice. That's your answer when people say that: "A God of love wouldn't do that." Yes, he would, because his justice demands it, and it controls His love. He cannot violate Himself. They are thrown here into the lake of fire. The unsaved chose to go it alone, and into eternity without Christ. Those who despise the love of God for heaven must now bear the terrible justice of His wrath in hell.

The visions of John of the day of the Lord, the period of the tribulation and the millennium, which we have been studying for this many long periods of time here, ends soberly with the lake of fire. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

I think it is significant that God the Holy Spirit should end on that sober note, the lake of fire. Starting in chapter 21, we have a description of eternity in heaven. There is no more talk about tribulation. There is no more talk about the millennium. There is no more talk about antichrist, and the false prophet, and Satan's machinations. With this verse, it's all over. And what does it end with? The lake of fire.

You and I have good reason to have a great deal of sympathy and concern for our loved ones who are blinded, and who cannot accept grace salvation, and who pursue their own arrogance in one way or another that is going to lead them into this lake of fire via the great white throne judgment. How good it is, and how sweet it is to have been selected by Almighty God to have been told the gospel, and to have been given the capacity to believe it. This is an event that is not in your future. What is in your future is a magnificent joy that is beyond anything we can imagine. We shall begin to look at that happy state next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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