

JESUS' RETURN AND THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Beaverton Foursquare Church

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Revelation 20:1-10

*Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key to the bottomless pit, with a large chain in his hand. 2 He captured the dragon, that ancient serpent, also known as the Devil and Satan, and tied him up for a **thousand years**. 3 He threw him into the bottomless pit, locked it, and sealed it over him to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the **thousand years** were over. After that, he must be set free for a little while.*

*4 Then I saw thrones, and those who sat on them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or hands. They came back to life and ruled with the Messiah for a **thousand years**. 5 The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the **thousand years** were over. This is the first resurrection. 6 How blessed and holy are those who participate in the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them. They will be priests of God and the Messiah, and will rule with him for a **thousand years**.*

*7 When the **thousand years** are over, Satan will be freed from his prison. 8 He will go out to deceive Gog and Magog, the nations at the four corners of the earth, and gather them for war. They are as numerous as the sands of the seashore. 9 They marched over the broad expanse of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Fire came from God out of heaven and burned them up, 10 and the Devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were. They will be tortured day and night forever and ever.*

The Millenium Kingdom gets its name from the phrase “thousand years” in chapter 20, from the Greek χίλιοι: (Kee-lee-oy)

Six times that word is used in seven verses. It's the greatest concentration of its use on all of the NT. literally, it indicates 1000. Figuratively, as in 2 Peter 3 (Rev ch. 5 “worshippers”, ch. 9 an army, ch. 11 earthquake-7000), it is, indicating total inclusiveness, showing that no one, or nothing, is left out. “Ten” in Scripture can already express the symbolic meaning “completely”.

“Thousand” carries a sense of completion, but six uses is one hy of seven, a perfect completion. The 1000-year reign is perfect with respect to it's complete expression of God's righteousness, but incomplete as to its duration.

It's not surprising that a resurgent kingdom would be the subject of chapter 20.

In ch. 19, Christ rides forth under the declaration that he would (1) **strike the nations, and (2) **rule them with a rod of iron** This began during the Campaign of Armageddon, a global**

conflict. Now, the “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16) is to **take up His earthly reign as He prayed (Matt. 6:10: “...your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”)**. It would seem most natural that if His Second Coming occurs in Revelation Rev. 19, then the rule described here (Rev. 20:4) would follow His physical return and be part of that continuous narrative.

Revelation 20:1-3 The Binding of Satan

*Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key to the bottomless pit, with a large chain in his hand. 2 He captured the dragon, that ancient serpent, also known as the Devil and Satan, and tied him up (or bound him) for a **thousand years**. 3 He threw him into the bottomless pit, locked it, and sealed it over him to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the **thousand years** were over. After that, he must be set free for a little while.*

- **Continues the work begun in Chapter 19 with the coming of Jesus and is finalized by ch. 21:8**
- **The sure defeat of Satan and his works by Messiah, Jesus**
- **Kee-lee-oy: The total defeat of Satan**
Satan now has three strikes against him. He is: (1) bound, (2) shut up, (3) sealed in his prison

Isaiah 24:

*1 See, the Lord is going to lay waste the earth
and devastate it;
he will ruin its face
and scatter its inhabitants—*

...

*21 In that day (ed., The Day of the Lord) **the Lord will punish
the powers in the heavens above
and the kings on the earth below.***

*22 They will be herded together
like prisoners bound in a dungeon;
they will be shut up in prison
and be punished after many days.*

*23 The moon will be dismayed,
the sun ashamed;
for the Lord Almighty will reign
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and before its elders—with great glory.*

Revelation 20:4-6 Resurrection and Rule of the Victorious Saints

4 Then I saw thrones, and those who sat on them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or hands. They came back to life and ruled with the Messiah for a **thousand years**. 5 The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the **thousand years** were over. This is the first resurrection. 6 How blessed and holy are those who participate in the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them. They will be priests of God and the Messiah, and will rule with him for a **thousand years**.

- **Jesus gives those who are faithful a place of honor and dominion in His Kingdom**
Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice. (Isa. 32:1)
- **Thrones = those who obtained the promises Jesus gave to the church at Thyatira and Laodicea:**
“To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations...” (Rev. 2:26), “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Rev. 3:21)
- **The Resurrections:**
Righteous v4 Jesus = “first fruits” The righteous dead will be raised after Jesus
But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. (1 Cor. 15:20)
Unrighteous v5

Revelation 20:7-10 A Final Rebellion

7 When the **thousand years** are over, Satan will be freed from his prison. 8 He will go out to deceive Gog and Magog, the nations at the four corners of the earth, and gather them for war. They are as numerous as the sands of the seashore. 9 They marched over the broad expanse of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Fire came from God out of heaven and burned them up, 10 and the Devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were. They will be tortured day and night forever and ever.

- **Satan is first and always a deceiver**
- While many explanations have been made, one of the intriguing ones is that **Gog refers to the ruler and Magog to the people as in Ezekiel 38:1**. Hence, what the passage means is that the nations of the world follow Satan, including the rulers (Gog) and the people (Magog) under the rulers.
- **Where do these easily-deceived people come from?**
Rev 19:19-21 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. 20 But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. 21 The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

- **Beloved City: Jerusalem**
“The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob” (Ps. 87:2)
- **“Thrown into the Pit” God wins!**

Symbolic or Literal?

View	Christ Returns	Characteristics	“1000 years” Interpretation
Premillennial	Before the 1,000 year kingdom.	Christ returns before establishing His literal kingdom on earth. He will reign with his saints in fulfillment of OT and NT prophecy. The reign on earth will last for 1,000 years	Literal
Postmillennial	After a golden “Kingdom” age on earth.	Christ will return after the “1,000 years” which represent a golden age of unspecified duration when the gospel triumphs as the world converts, in large part, to Christianity through the efforts of the Church.	Literal and symbolic
Amillemial	There is no literal earthly kingdom prior to the return of Christ with the new heavens and earth	There is no literal reign of Christ over an earthly kingdom. He is presently reigning over a spiritual kingdom in either: the hearts of men, heaven, or the church. The 1,000 years is a symbol representing an extended period of time.	Symbolic and/or allegorical

Foursquare has been traditionally Premillennial but without dividing over differing views.

Why Premillennial?

The witness of the Apostles and the Early Church Fathers (external evidence)

- It's probable that those who had a close association with John would also have a correct understanding of what John meant by the millennium.
- Papias represented a premillennial tradition which originated in Palestine.
 - Papias's dependence on the oral teachings of the apostles and elders has been documented by both Irenaeus and Eusebius.
 - Eusebius points out that Papias received the "doctrines of the faith" from the "friends" of the twelve apostles. He also said of Papias, *"It is worthwhile observing here that the name John is twice enumerated by him. The first one he mentions in connection with Peter and James and Matthew and the rest of the apostles, clearly meaning the evangelist."*
 - Eusebius notes, "And Papias, of whom we are now speaking, confesses that he received the words of the apostles from those that followed them."
 - Papias was a premillennialist. Eusebius records that Papias believed things that "came to him from unwritten tradition" and "teachings of the Savior." Among these beliefs were "that there will be a millennium after the resurrection of the dead, when the kingdom of Christ will be set up in material form on this earth" (Ecclesiastical History, 39.11–12).
 - Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp (who was, again, John's disciple) also refers to Papias as "a hearer of John" (*Against Heresies*, V. 33.4)
- Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian
- JND Kelley

Biblical/text itself (internal evidence)

- The term for "1000" can be used symbolically as in 2 Peter, where it is clear that it is symbolic, but a symbol also points to a reality; "Dragon" is Satan
- The importance of repetition (rev 5 and 9 "thousands upon thousands" versus rev 11/"7000". Why the repetition in 20?)
- Determinate time (repetition of a precise amount "χίλιοι") versus indeterminate time (*"After that, he must be set free for a little while."* rev. 20:3)

Historically Literal Fulfillment of Messianic Prophecy: "According to the Scriptures..."

- Consistency?: Should the prophetic fore-tellings about Messiah and His Kingdom be taken literally or symbolically?
- Example of literal fulfillment
 - Luke 4:16 and following
He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” — (Isaiah 61:1-2a)
Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down.
The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by
saying
to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

and the day of vengeance of our God,... Isaiah 61:2b

The prophet Isaiah described a coming judge—the Lord—who would save Israel (Is. 33:22). The Messiah was to personally exercise judgment. And as the Apostle Paul explains, Jesus is ultimately that judge (2 Tim. 4:1: *“In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the word;...”*).

The Messiah was expected to have a special anointing of the Holy Spirit (Is. 11:2). In his baptism in the Jordan River, the Spirit of God uniquely descends on Jesus and the Father affirms he is His “beloved Son.”

According to rabbinic commentators, Isaiah 40:3 describes the Messiah—the “Lord”—who would be preceded by a messenger. The Gospel of Mark begins by citing both Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 to indicate John the Baptist is the messenger preparing the way for the Messiah.

Isaiah 40

*1 Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.
2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the Lord’s hand
double for all her sins.*

*3 A voice of one calling:
“In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.*

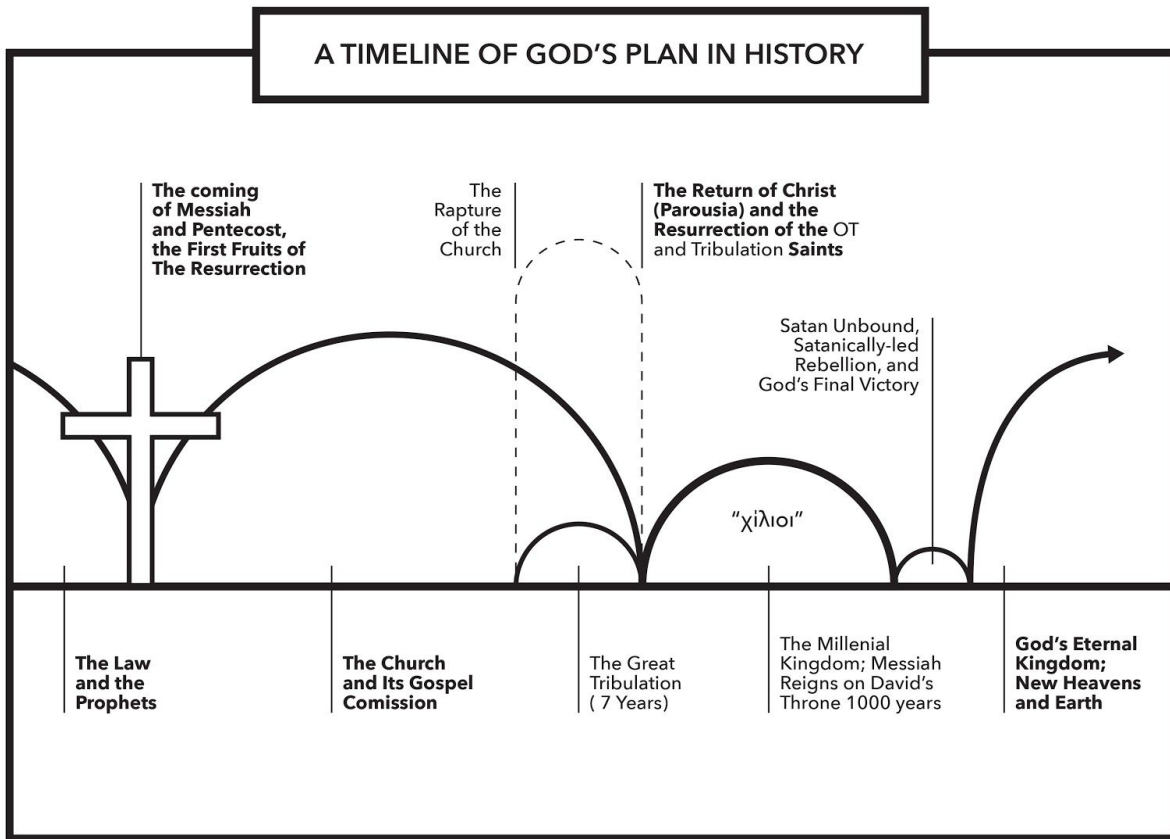
*4 Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
5 And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”*

The prophet Isaiah predicted that when the Messiah comes, the blind shall see, the deaf shall hear, the mute shall speak, and the lame shall walk again (Is. 35:5, 6). And this is exactly what Jesus did (Matt. 9:5: “*Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?*”).

The prophet Zechariah (9:9-10) predicted that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem “mounted on a donkey.” And according to Luke, this is exactly what Jesus did (Luke 19:35-37).

Zechariah 9:

*9 Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and victorious,
lowly and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim
and the warhorses from Jerusalem,
and the battle bow will be broken.
He will proclaim peace to the nations.
His rule will extend from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.*



Acknowledge the primary and secondary (bold/non-bold)

The Final Judgment

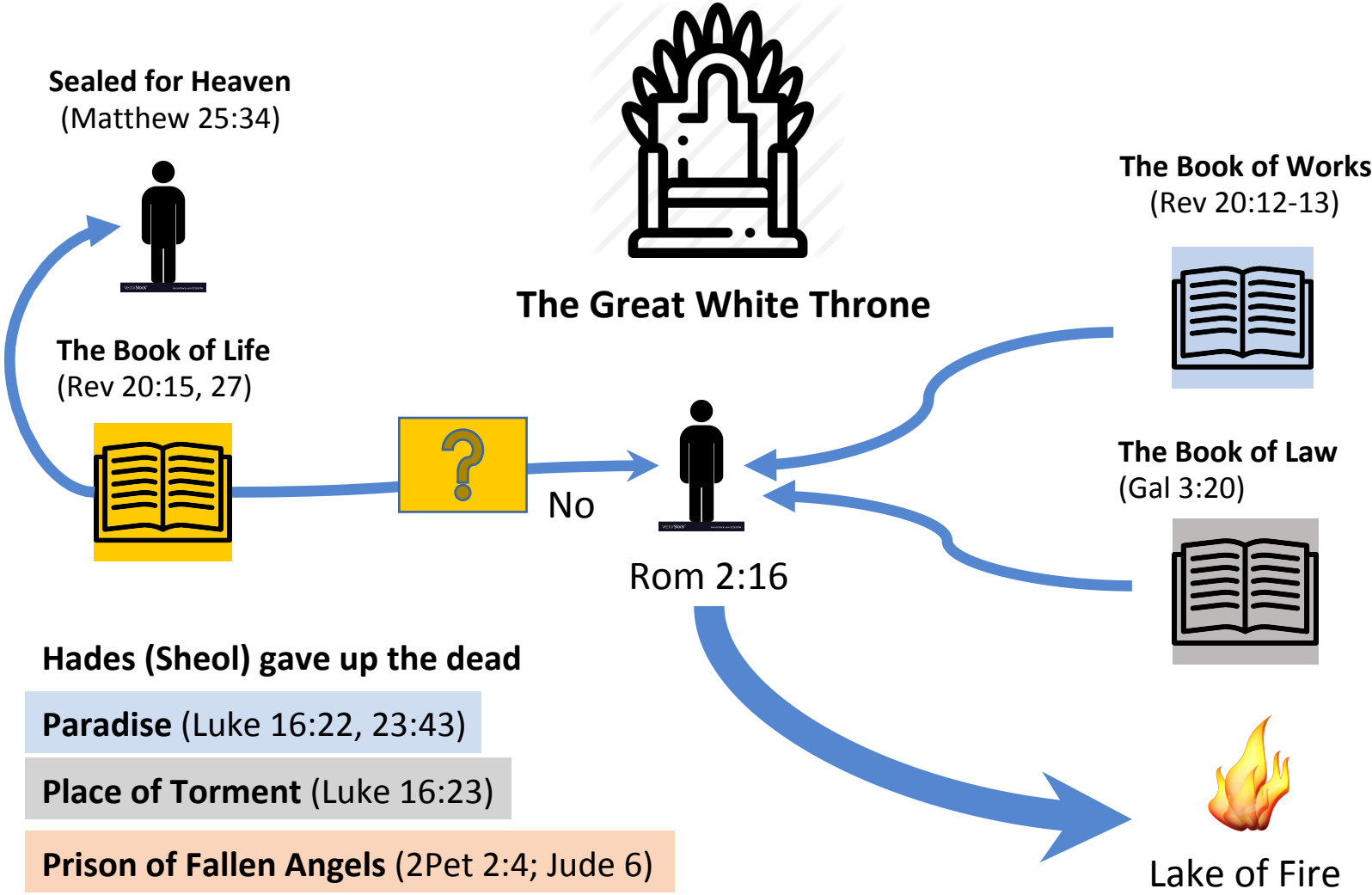
Matthew 25:31-46

- When the Son of Man comes He will sit
- Glorious Throne
- Before Him are gathered all the nations
- Judgments – Works? Yes, but out of a heart of love for Jesus or rejection.
- For believers: inherit the Kingdom prepared for you
- For nonbelievers: eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels

Revelation 20:11-15

- Him Who was seated on it (Jesus)
- Great White Throne
- The dead, great and small, stood before Him
- Judgments – the Books of Life – of Law, of Works, of the Lamb
- For believers: whose names are written in the Book of Life, Heaven
- For unbelievers: the second death, the lake of fire.

The Great White Throne Judgment



On faith I will build my people and the gates of death will not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18)

Great White Throne Judgment Handout

[11] Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. [13] And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. [14] Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. [15] And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (**Revelation 20:11–15** ESV)

Great White Throne (Rev 20:11)

The seat of eternal judgment (Matthew 25:31-34, Romans 2:16, 14:10-12, 2Corinthians 5:10) where both believers and nonbelievers appear. The dead are judged at it according to the books (see **Books** below).

Note 1: Some say that the *Bema Seat of Christ* (2Cor 5:10) is not a throne, but akin to the place in Olympic theater where rewards are meted out by the judge at the end of competition. Could this be a different place of judgment than the Great White Throne (for believers)? Some would say so and regard the time of rapture to be the time of judgment. This difference hinges on a meaning of the word *bema* (βῆμα). However, this same word *bema* (βῆμα) seat is used elsewhere in Scripture as a place of judgment, so it is not consistent with Scripture to regard the *bema* (βῆμα) seat of 2Corinthians 5:10 as uniquely associated with rewards. These are also *bema* (βῆμα) seats...

- Where Pilate judged Jesus (Mat 27:19)
- Where Herod was smitten by worms (Acts 12:21)
- Where Gallio sentenced Paul (Acts 18:16-17)
- Where Festus oversaw the trial and sentencing of Paul (Acts 25:6, 10,17)
- Judgment Seat of Christ (Romans 14:10)

However, the judgment for believers is not like the judgment for nonbelievers. Our names are written in the book, so as in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25), we are separated “to the right” to inherit the Kingdom prepared for us. However we resolve this, we have Scriptural assurance that there is a place of judgment (for which rewards is a good way to understand it) for believers that is unlike that which leads to the second death (Romans 6:16).

Note 2: It is also possible to view the passages from Rev 20:4ff, which references, “*thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed.*” as raptured believers (see 1Corinthians 6:2-3). Perhaps even more inclusively, we have this, “*I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands*” as those who “*came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*” In these cases, the rapture *is* the imminent time of eternal judgment from which follows at a subsequent time (?) a reckoning regarding our works as believers (dealing

with how we will serve in Heaven – 1 Corinthians 3:14-15). Eternal judgment, in that case, seems complete prior to the White Throne Judgment.

As an alternative, some would say that those with *authority to judge* are the 24 elders and the *mark of the beast* is not in our time, so the passage does not include today's believers. In those cases, our resurrection is still future. The mark of the beast is the "anti-shema," for Deuteronomy 6:8 says, "*You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.*" A common Jewish interpretation was that in all you look upon (forehead) and all you do (hands) you should be doing so as unto God. So the *mark of the beast* would symbolically represent those who have a rebellious spirit towards God in all they look upon and all they do.

Note 3: These things illustrate the variety that comes from different interpretive methods. Jesus has confidence that the reader will hear and be able to understand the important things from these challenging visions. Amen!

Him Who was seated on it (Matthew 25:31-32, 2Cor 5:10, Rev 20:11,)
The Son of Man, Jesus, from Whose presence Earth and Sky fled away.

The dead, great and small (Rev 20:12)

No exceptions – no proxy trials – everyone must stand before Jesus. Each will give an account for what we have done with the talents we were given (1 Corinthians 3:14-15). Here we see the dead (νεκρός) given up by death (θάνατος – graves) and Hades (ᾗδης – place of souls awaiting the final resurrection).

Physical

- The sea (the whereabouts of bodies were unknown – Great Flood, Pharaohs army, etc)
- Death (graves)

Souls

- Hades (souls/spirits)

Books

The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. (Revelation 3:5 ESV)

- **The Book of the Law** – the standard of righteousness
- **The Book of Works** (Human Responsibility – Rev 20:12-13)
- **The Book of Life** (aka **The Lamb's Book of Life** – also noted as "another book" in Revelation 20:12)

Here is a collection of verses that reference the Book of Life...

- But the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of **my book**." (Exodus 32:33 ESV)
- You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in **your book**? (Psalm 56:8 ESV)
- Let them be blotted out of **the book of the living**; let them not be enrolled among the righteous. (Psalm 69:28 ESV)

- Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in **your book** were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. (**Psalm 139:16** ESV)
- And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been **recorded for life** in Jerusalem, (**Isaiah 4:3** ESV)
- “At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in **the book.**” (**Daniel 12:1** ESV)
- Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are **written in heaven.**” (**Luke 10:20** ESV)
- My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and **they will never perish**, and no one will 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. I and the Father are one.” (**John 10:27–30** ESV)
- Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in **the book of life.** (**Philippians 4:3** ESV)
- But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are **enrolled in heaven**, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (**Hebrews 12:22–24** ESV)

Judgment

- Men die once and judgment follows death (Matthew 16:27; Hebrews 9:27)
- The Church is not destined for God’s wrath (1Thessalonians 5:9)
- There is a separation at the final judgment (Matthew 13:24-30, 47-50, 25:31-46)
- Final and eternal. No appeals process. This is the last word on Satan and his followers. Has God rejected them? No. They rejected God.
- **Death** (graves) and **Hades** (Sheol – the place of the dead) are thrown into the Lake of Fire – no more graves – no more place of the dead awaiting judgment.

Lake of Fire

The second death – eternal torment.

Trivia

The size of the heavenly city (1,400 miles by 1,400 miles... big). That’s roughly a straight line from Portland to Dallas.