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Episode 56 - Unveiling Revelation 20: The Final Judgment Explored

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Join Scott Stanley from DTG Ministries as he continues the deep dive into the Book of Revelation, focusing on chapter 20. This episode explores the division of Revelation 20 into three major parts, revealing the roles of the messenger who binds the adversary, the groups arising in the first resurrection, and the destiny of the wicked in the second resurrection. Discover the profound interpretations of the great white throne judgment, the role of divine conscience, and the spiritual significance of resurrection and judgment as portrayed in Revelation.

Modified Transcript:

Scriptures are directly transcribed with notations. See KJV for verbatim wording.

Hi. I'm Scott Stanley with DTG Ministries. We're continuing to study the deep things of God in the Book of Revelation, and we've worked our way up to Revelation, chapter 20. Revelation 20 is divided into three parts, which we have been covering. Part number one- the messenger who can bind the adversary for a thousand years. That is the last-generation church that receives the complete gospel, not just the fact that Jesus died for your sins and rose from the dead, but what happened on the cross. "*Jesus, and him*

crucified" go together (1Co 2:2), and we need to understand how to unite with him in his death to be free from all iniquity. So this is the group that receives that truth, and they can bind the adversary, the author of iniquity.

But you have another group of people who come up in the first resurrection. I put these people in two categories: 1) The people who lived before the Holy Spirit was given, and 2) the people who lived after the Holy Spirit was given, who had a perfect heart toward God. God knows those who are His, and He will raise those who can be given the truth and overcome. Because they did not have a complete understanding of the cross, Satan is still in them. Satan is not a being outside of you; it's in every person's heart. Even the people in the first resurrection will need to be given the truth so that Gog and Magog, as described in Revelation 20, can be destroyed out of them.

But there is a third group of people. 3) These are the wicked; they are in the second resurrection. If you're in the first resurrection, the second death has no power over you. It's the people in the second resurrection that will face the second death. These are the people that are wicked; they have rejected truth, or they were given the truth and didn't live up to it. This is the wicked. This begins in Revelation 20, verse 11,

Rev 20:11 I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.

Now, I've always been taught this is God the Father, and I know that Jesus told us in the Gospel of John, chapter 5, and I think it's verse 22, that the Father judges no man. He's given all judgment to his Son. I know in 2 Corinthians 5, that Paul refers to the judgment seat of Christ. But when I look at Revelation 20, verse 11, connecting that to verse 12,

Rev 20:12 I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God...

Well, that word "God" has the definite article in front of it. It is the Divine One. It's the Father. Now, how can this harmonize when Jesus says, "*The Father's not going to judge anybody. He's committed that to me*" - to the Son of God (Jhn 5:22)? Well, I want to remind you of a verse. It was the last verse in Revelation, chapter 3, dealing with Laodicea, and Christ makes the statement,

Rev 3:21 To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

How can that be? Because the throne is the conscience. Wherever you see, literally, Jesus, it is his Father guiding his conscience. For you and me, the Father and the Son sit on our throne. That doesn't mean you don't have any choice in what's going on. It means that the Father and Son will give you direction, but it's up to you to make it happen, to follow through. If you don't want to do it, you don't have to do it. The Father and the Son are not going to force anybody. To me, it's the same thing that you're reading in the Old Testament, like the Throne of David or Solomon. Look at 1 Chronicles 29:23.

1Ch 29:23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of Jehovah ...

What do you mean? That meant whoever sat on that throne was to be led by God. You can call it the throne of David, but it was the throne of Jehovah. Just like in your life, you can say this is me in my conscience... it is, but it is the throne of God, and it is always and will always be that with Jesus Christ. Remember, when you're looking at Revelation, you're seeing visions. For instance, a great red dragon in the heavens- that is a vision of iniquity in the mind of believers; so, here's the picture, the red dragon in heaven.

Well, here is a picture of God on the throne because it is Jesus on the throne, and God is his guide. You cannot leave the Father out of the judgment because Jesus is declaring only what He has seen the Father do. All of His understanding has come from God. That's why it is a great white conscience, a great white throne, and the Divine One is sitting there. But so is Jesus, and we'll see that in just a minute.

In Revelation 20:11, these people who are coming before this throne and this judgment, it says, "*From whose face the earth and heaven fled away?*" Well, the "heaven and the earth" is your understanding of God and your understanding of self, and there's no place found for them. He's not talking about the people; he's talking about the way they understand. See, look at it again.

Rev 20:11 I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the understanding of self and God fled away; there is no place found for that understanding.

I think of John 14.

Jhn 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, well, believe also in me.

Jhn 14:2 In my Father's house are many abiding places. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

See, what Jesus did on the cross in sharing the expression of iniquity and how to overcome it- in doing that, he creates in you a new heaven and a new earth. The people standing here in this judgment, there's no place for their heaven and earth. Jesus says, "*go to prepare a place for you*" (Jhn 14:2). Well, that's accepted, but what these people believe is not acceptable. "*I saw the dead*" - they're not physically dead; they've been raised from the dead.

Rev 20:12 I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the Divine One. The books of their mind were opened, and another book was opened. What book? It's the Book of Life. That is Jesus Christ, the Prince of Life.

In this verse, you have the Divine One, and you have the Prince of Life, and you have one on the throne. Literally speaking, they will see the Son of God. Spiritually speaking, they are standing before the judgment of God the Father and what He has taught His Son. Remember, in Revelation 4:2.

Rev 4:2 Immediately I was in the spirit, and behold, a throne was set in the heavens, and one sat on that throne.

It's the Father. It's the Father and the Son, but the Son is subject to his Father and will always be throughout all eternity. So, "*You will sit with me in my throne, even as I am set down with my Father in his throne*" (Rev 3:21). You are on that throne to listen to divine guidance and light and love from God the Father through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to you.

Here, these people who had fled from the truth or fled from living what they understood, there's no place found for their heaven and earth. There's no place found for that. They are standing before the Son of God, the judgment seat of Christ, being

judged by the Son of God as He has been taught by His Father. Now I want to show you something here. Let me just read verse 12 again.

Rev 20:12 I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the Divine One. Their understanding was opened, and there was another understanding opened.

This is the understanding of life. It has to be coming from Christ. The dead were judged out of those things: 1) written in the book, and 2) according to their works. How can I make that distinction? Look at the next verse.

Rev 20:13 The sea gave up the dead which were in it. (The sea is the world.) Death and the grave delivered up the dead which were in them. They're judged according to their works (not according to what's written in the book).

You've got two groups of people here: Those who died having been told the gospel- I'm going to say, believing the gospel, but not receiving the tools of deliverance, versus the people who were never told the truth, who never had an opportunity to believe it. Listen, it means something when God says your leaders are leading you to destruction. You can believe in God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit, but if it isn't explained to you, you do not have the tools to turn from all iniquity.

Now, are you happy with your life? Are you happy with the way things are going? Or are you saddened because you can't overcome sin in your life? Because you can't live in freedom from sin? Are you being dumbed down so that you can't overcome sin? "You won't be able to overcome sin until he gives you a new body." Is this what you're being taught?

Well, Revelation 20 says the opposite. Revelation 20 says that when you look at the first resurrection, these people still have Satan in their hearts. Their minds did not change. Their body changed, but it didn't change the way they thought. They have to be taught the truth, and God knows that they're open to receiving it. "*He knows them that are His*" (2Ti 2:19).

But here, in Revelation 20, starting at verse 11, you're seeing the judgment of the church. You're seeing the judgment of the people who claim to be the church, who claim

to believe in God but deny God's ability to help them be free from all iniquity. Some of them probably don't even know what iniquity means. I want to read something to you. Paul describes these people. 2 Timothy, chapter 3,

2Ti 3:1 This know also, in the last days perilous times will come.

2Ti 3:2 Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2Ti 3:3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers (which is the word "devil" in chapter 2, verse 26), incontinent (so they have no self-control). They're fierce, despisers of those who are good,

2Ti 3:4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;

2Ti 3:5 They have a form of godliness, but they deny the ability: from such turn away.

How can you be living a life manifesting those characteristics, not realizing something isn't right here? All of those things give me a feeling that you're dissatisfied. You can't be serving God, carrying out those characteristics, and think it's okay. See, if I could put this together, look at Acts 2:38. Peter said,

Act 2:38 Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus for deliverance from sin.

I can remember being in the Baptist Church and getting baptized. It wasn't for deliverance from sin. It was for deliverance from the sin penalty. It was the same thing in every church. I got baptized more than once. Never did I ask anyone to baptize me, to set me free from all sin and iniquity. I wanted to be baptized to go to heaven because I was told that God is angry and he has to be appeased. If you believe in Jesus, then God looks at you and sees Jesus, and Jesus paid your penalty. Never did I get baptized so I could stop sinning. I was told I couldn't stop sinning. But listen to this verse again.

Acts 2:38 Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the deliverance of sin.

I didn't do that. And you know what? The universal church doesn't expect you to do that. You don't do that. You get baptized into their church. My gosh, you could be a baby in the crib, and they'll sprinkle water over you, just in case ... just in case you die, you're good, you've been baptized by a priest.

I'm telling you, if you just stop and think about it, think about your own life. Have you ever been baptized to be delivered from all sin? Well, this baptism is a baptism of the water of the word. If you were to come to me to be baptized for the remission of sin, I would explain to you the meaning of the cross. I would explain to you the meaning of the crown of thorns; what the stripes, the nakedness, and the darkness meant, trying to help you relate to all of that in your own life, so you could unite with Jesus in his death ... so that you could experience the resurrection of the dead, now, in this life.

In so doing, I would be giving you the gift of the Holy Spirit. *"Out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit"* (Jhn 7:38, 39). I would be giving you living water, teaching you, encouraging you, and showing that you can be free from all iniquity. I would baptize you into the name of Jesus, and you would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

These people didn't do that. Their heaven and earth fled from that truth; they ran from that truth. They didn't want that truth. It contradicted their pastor, their church; it contradicted their parents. It contradicted all of the people that they held so dear. And here they are- this is the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. Their books are opened, and there's another book opened. It's the understanding of Jesus Christ, and they are judged according to their books and according to their work.

The other group, the world, death, and the grave, are delivered up; they're judged according to their works. Now, does that mean that Jesus is going to say, "Did you do this? Did you do that? Did you lie? Did you commit adultery? Did you get drunk?" It doesn't work like that. They're going to come before Jesus Christ. No one has to tell them what they've done wrong. They know what they've done wrong.

You know, I've got to say this because it reminds me of the Last Supper and Jesus telling his apostles, *"There's one sitting here who's betrayed me."* Why did he do that? You know *"love covers a multitude of sins"* (Pro 10:12). Why would he say that in front of the apostles? Because he was not revealing Judas's sin to the apostles. He was saying to Judas, "I know what you're going to do, and you know what? I love you." Because when he said, *"There's one sitting here that's going to betray me,"* he knew nobody in that room but Judas knew who it was, except for himself. He knew that no one knew, but he knew Judas knew. Why would he say it? Because he loved Judas. He even washed the

man's feet to get him to turn around. Yeah, he didn't do that to expose him to the people. He did that to help the man. Look at Psalm 68.

Psa 68:1 Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him, flee from before him.

Psa 68:2 As smoke is driven away, (How is smoke driven away? By wind, by that spirit.) As smoke is driven away, so drive them away (See, by your spirit.) As wax melts in the presence of fire, let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

Anybody who stands in this judgment will not survive it. Their own guilt will slay them. Jesus in love, all he has to do is show up. Their own guilty conscience will destroy them. Remember who's leading the show here, God the Father. He is nothing but patient, long-suffering, and kind. He doesn't have to reach out and kill anybody. Coming into his presence carrying guilt and shame, anger, and lust will be enough to put you down. You will melt like wax in the presence of God.

I want to read Job. Listen, getting into these texts in Revelation about the second resurrection, you don't have enough time to do this. So I thought, just take your time and explain what you need to explain. In Job, chapter 21, I want to start reading verse 7,

Job 21:7 Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

Job 21:8 Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

Job 21:9 Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.

Job 21:10 Their bulls gender, and fail not; the cow will calve, and casts not her calf.

Job 21:11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

Job 21:12 They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

Job 21:13 They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment, they go down to the grave.

Job 21:14 Therefore they tell God, Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of your way. (You see, ... *from whose face the heaven and earth did flee.* Rev 20:11)

Job 21:15 What's the Almighty, that we should serve Him? What is it profit us if we pray to him?

Job 21:16 Lo, their good is not in their work: the counsel of the wicked is far from me. (You could put that in parentheses.)

Job 21:17 How often is the candle of the wicked put out! How often comes their destruction upon them! God distributes sorrow in his anger.

Job 21:18 They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carries away.

Job 21:19 God lays up his iniquity for his children: He rewards him, and he shall know it.

Job 21:20 His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

Remember God's wrath in Romans 1:28, where he gives you up to let you think what you want to think and go where you want to go. So I want to bring this down to verse 27.

Job 21:27 Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices, the plans which you've wrongfully imagined against me.

Job 21:28 For you say, Where is the house of a willing heart? Where are the dwelling places of those who depart from the correct path?

Job 21:29 Have you not asked them that go by the way? Do you not know their signs? (Remember the fourth day: The sun, the moon, and the stars are the signs put in the heavens.) Do you not ask them that go by the way? (Don't you see the way they perceive God and the scripture?)

Job 21:30 That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

What you're reading in Revelation 20, the great white throne judgment, is the day of wrath. This is the wrath where God will let them go their way. Their way is the way of destruction. They will die in the presence of God as he is in his only begotten Son. So, in Revelation 20:14,

Rev 20:14 Death (and that has the definite article, the death), and the grave are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire is something within every one of us that allows us to put away what doesn't need to be in our lives, in our thinking, and to consume it. Jesus Christ has his

own lake of fire. What you are reading in Revelation 20, this lake of fire, is the lake of fire of Jesus. These people will be judged according to what's written in the book and according to their works. They will not survive, and he will put them in his lake of fire, meaning he will forget they even existed. He will forget about them. That's the second death because there is no coming back from that, because if he forgets you, he is not going to raise you again. There's no coming back from the second death.

Now, let me ask you a simple question. Why does God do this? Why would He raise a wicked person only to let them die again in his presence and die the second death? Well, the answer is simple. It's because he said he would do this. He's simply carrying out what he said he would do. Now the hard question is, why would he say it? Why would he tell people, "You'll all be judged and given account of yourself at the judgment seat of Christ"? Why do that?

Because that offers, to some people, a reason not to become fully wicked. What do you mean? Well, if he never said there's going to be a judgment, there are people who would say, "Well, great. Then I'll just live the way I want to live. I'm not accountable to anybody then. I don't care if I'm raised or not. I'll just die and be dead." But when he says, "No, you're going to face a judgment," to some people, that will cause them to think of what they're doing. That is why he would say that. That is why he would say there will be a judgment.

I know people who have said they gave their heart to God because they didn't want to go to hell. They didn't want to suffer in hell. Well, you see, that was enough to cause them to get started- give your heart to the Lord, and now let Him teach you the truth. But if He never said "Yeah, you're going to sit before the judgment seat," then why do anything right? Why give it a second thought?

That's why today, since they've taken God out of everything, the wickedness is abounding because people have no fear of this "magical book," they call it. This is your enchanted book. This is a fairy tale. There is no God. There is no judgment. There is no hell, there is none of that. Well, they're free then, in their mind, to live the way they want to live, and there's going to be no retribution.

So, why would God raise the dead to stand before Him and die? Because he said that's what He was going to do—He said that to offer some restraint in their lives so that they might find the truth. He's doing it because he said he would. He said he would because he loves you, and he wants you to rethink what you're doing in your life and find the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

Two groups of people, those who were told the truth and those who weren't. These people are being judged according to their works, and what does he say? "*You are a worker of iniquity*" (Mat 7:23).

Father, we ask your blessing that you would give us insight into all truth, and that our hearts be made pure. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.