



FAITH PRINCETON SUNDAY SCHOOL

REV. 20:7-15 The Final Judgment

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2026

REVELATION 20 Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

20 Satan Freed, Doomed

7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Judgment at the Throne of God

11 Then 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. 12 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. 13 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. 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.

Enduring Word Commentary: **Revelation 20 – Satan, Sin and Death are Finally Eliminated**

- A. Satan bound for a thousand years. (1-3)**
B. Saints reigning for a thousand years. (4-6)
C. The final battle after the thousand-year reign of Jesus. (7-10)

1. (7-8) Satan is released and gathers an army.

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

a. Satan will be released: For the thousand years of the direct reign of Jesus over this earth, Satan was bound and inactive. But after the thousand years are over, he will be released and successfully organize many people of the earth in another rebellion against God.

i. If Jesus has reigned so wonderfully for a thousand years, then why will the earth rebel? They will do it, and God will allow it, as a final demonstration of man's rebellion and depravity. *Outward* conformity to Jesus' rule will be required during His reign, but seemingly, an inward embrace of His Lordship will still be up to the individual.

ii. In this we see more of the important reason God has for the Millennial Kingdom and allowing this final rebellion. For all of human history, man has wanted to blame his sinful condition on his *environment*. "Of course I turned out the way I did. Did you see the family I came from? Did you see the neighborhood I grew up in?" With the

Millennial Kingdom of Jesus, God will give mankind *a thousand years* of a perfect environment – with no Satan, no crime, no violence, no evil, or other social pathology. But at the end of the 1,000 years, man will still rebel against God at his first opportunity. This will powerfully demonstrate that the problem is in *us*, not only in our environment.

iii. "It will be proved once more that man, whatever his advantages and environment, apart from the grace of God and new birth, remains at heart only evil and at enmity with God." (Hoste)

b. Gather them together to battle: Who will these rebels be? They will be those who survive the Great Tribulation, enter into the Millennial Kingdom, and their descendants. "Infants born during the millennium will live to its conclusion and will not be required to make a choice between the devil and Christ until the end." (Walvoord)

c. Gog and Magog: These are prophetic enemies of Israel in [Ezekiel 38-39](#), but the battle described in those chapters of Ezekiel seems to be distinct and different from this final battle.

i. John seems to borrow the term and use it as a symbol. Seemingly, the battles described in [Ezekiel 38-39](#) take place before the return of Jesus, perhaps right before or during the tribulation. This final battle clearly takes place at the end of the thousand-year reign of Jesus.

2. (9-10) A battle ends before it begins.

They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire

and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

a. Surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city: We don't know if the **saints** referred to here are glorified saints who reign with Jesus, or earth-inhabitants who come to faith in Jesus during the Millennium. Either way, the strategy of this vast Satanic army is clear: to destroy God's people, and the "headquarters" or "capital city" of His administration, Jerusalem (**the beloved city**).

b. Fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them: We shouldn't even call this a final battle, because there is no battle. The fight is over before it begins. At this point, God finally deals with the devil and his followers forever.

c. Cast into the lake of fire... they will be tormented day and night forever and ever: After this aborted battle, Satan is then judged and **tormented** forever – together with the **beast and the false prophet**, who were cast into the lake of fire at the beginning of the thousand years ([Revelation 19:20](#)).

i. The presence of the beast and the false prophet in the lake of fire after a thousand years argues against annihilationism. In eternal punishment, a thousand years is just the beginning. It never ends. Commentator John Trapp thought this eternal aspect of hell so terrible that he called it "another hell in the midst of hell."

d. Forever and ever: Is this really *eternal* punishment? Yes it is; the words mean exactly what they appear to mean. "There would be no way possible in the Greek language to state more emphatically the everlasting punishment of the lost than here in mentioning both day and night

and the expression 'forever and ever,' literally 'to the ages of ages.'" (Walvoord)

D. Judgment at the Great White Throne.

1. (11) An awesome throne.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

a. I saw a great white throne: **Great** in status, power and authority; **white** in purity and holiness; and a **throne** in kingly sovereignty.

b. And Him who sat on it: Who is this? The Bible tells us that the Judge is Jesus ([John 5:22-27](#)); or more likely, the fullness of the Triune God.

c. The earth and the heaven fled away: **Earth** and **heaven** flee from this throne, but **there was found no place for them**. There is absolutely no hiding from this throne. No one can escape the judgment that it represents.

i. Many – even most – Bible scholars believe that Christians will never appear before this **great white throne**. It isn't because we can *hide* from it – no one can. The idea is that we are spared from this awesome throne of judgment because our sins are *already judged* in Jesus at the cross. We don't escape God's judgment; we satisfy it in Jesus.

ii. However, Christians will have to stand before another throne – the *judgment seat of Christ*. [2 Corinthians 5:10](#) says, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

iii. Therefore, when we pass from these bodies to the world beyond, we must each give account

according to what he has done, whether good or bad. This describes a judgment of works of believers.

iv. At the judgment seat of Christ, *what we have done* will be judged. Our *motives* for what we have done will be judged. Paul presents essentially the same idea in [1 Corinthians 3:12-15](#), where he speaks of a coming assessment of each one's work before the Lord. In that passage, he makes it clear that what we have done, and our motive for doing it, will be tested by fire, and the purifying fire of God will burn up everything that was not of Him. We won't be *punished* for what was not done rightly unto the Lord, it will simply be *burned up*, and it will be as if we never did those things. We will simply be rewarded for what remains. Sadly, some will get to heaven *thinking* they have done great things for God, and will find out at the judgment seat of Christ that they really did nothing.

2. (12-13) The judgment of condemnation.

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

a. **Standing before God:** This is not a *trial*, trying to determine what the facts are. The facts are in; here is the sentencing of someone already condemned. "Their standing posture means that they are now about to be sentenced." (Walvoord)

i. Because this is a sentencing and not a trial, those who stand before the throne have nothing to

say. Many think they will "tell God a thing or two" at the final judgment, as reflected in this letter to *Dear Abby* (a newspaper advice column) written some years ago:

Dear Abby: *I am troubled with something a reader wrote: "What right do we mortals have to demand an explanation from God?" Abby, that writer has never known the gut-wrenching pain of losing a child...*

God didn't answer my prayers, and I resent being told that I have no right to question God. If there is a God, and if I ever get to meet him face to face, you can bet your life I will have plenty of whys for him to answer.

I want to know why my little girl died and why that drunk was allowed to go on living. I love her more than my life, and I miss her so. I am mad that I am having to live in a world where she no longer lives, and I want to know why. Why shouldn't I have the right to ask God?

Aren't we supposedly created in his image? If so, surely he has a heart and soul capable of hurting just as I hurt. Why would he not expect to be questioned if he has anything to do with miracles?

I don't fear the Lord. And I don't fear hell, either. I know what hell is like. I've already been there since the day my precious daughter was killed.

Please sign me... A Bereaved Mother

ii. Of course, there will be no criticism of God on that day. This desperate woman will see not only the righteousness and goodness of God, but she will also see her own sin and rejection of Him more clearly than ever. One could only pray and hope she came to understand how the Father Himself knew the pain she experienced, and sent His Son to give her hope and redemption.

b. And the dead were judged according to their works: If people are *not* listed in the **Book of Life**, *then* each one is judged **according to his works**.

Those who refuse to come to God by faith will, by default, be judged (and condemned) by their works.

i. “The issue is not salvation by works but works as the irrefutable evidence of a man’s actual relationship with God.” (Mounce)

ii. There are degrees of punishment for unbelievers, according to their works ([Matthew 11:20-24](#)). Here is where they are sentenced to their specific eternal punishment.

c. The sea gave up the dead who were in it: Why does the sea give up its dead? It represents the place of unburied bodies; the emphasis is on the universal character of judgment – *everybody* is included.

3. (14-15) Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire.

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

a. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire: The last echoes of sin are now eliminated. **Death** is the result of sin, and it is gone. **Hades** is the result of death, and it is gone. The last vestiges of sin’s unlawful domination are done away with.

b. The lake of fire: When a person refers to *hell*, **the lake of fire** is what they usually have in mind. The Bible uses three main words to describe where the ungodly may go when they die.

i. *Sheol* is a Hebrew word with the idea of the “place of the dead.” It has no direct reference to

either torment or eternal happiness. The idea of *Sheol* is often accurately expressed as “the grave.”

ii. *Hades* is a Greek word used to describe the “world beyond.” In the Bible, it has generally the same idea as *Sheol*. [Revelation 9:1](#) speaks of the *bottomless pit*; this place called the *abyssos* is a prison for certain demons ([Luke 8:31](#); [2 Peter 2:4](#); [Jude 1:6](#)). Or more generally, it is considered part of the realm of the dead ([Romans 10:7](#) uses it in the sense of *Hades*).

iii. *Gehenna* is a Greek word borrowed from the Hebrew language. In [Mark 9:43-44](#), Jesus speaks of *hell* (*gehenna*). *Hell* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew “Valley of Hinnom,” a place outside Jerusalem’s walls desecrated by Molech worship and human sacrifice ([2 Chronicles 28:1-3](#); [Jeremiah 32:35](#)). It was also a garbage dump where rubbish and refuse were burned. The smoldering fires and festering worms of the Valley of Hinnom made it a graphic and effective picture of the fate of the damned. This is **the lake of fire** prepared for the devil and his angels ([Matthew 25:41](#)). Men only go to this place prepared for the devil and his angels if they reject God’s salvation and condemn themselves.

c. This is the second death: “As there is a second and higher life, so there is also a second and deeper death. And as after that life there is no more death, so after that death there is no more life.” (Alford)

i. “The devil and the damned have punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succor, crying without comfort, mischief without measure, torments without end and past imagination.” (Trapp)

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