

## Lesson Fifty-Two

## THE GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 15:20-28, 2 Pet. 3:1-13, Rev. 21:1-8, 22:1-5.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24). "But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13).

175. Q. What, according to the Scriptures, is to be the disposition of the bodies of all those who are lost?

A. The Scriptures teach that the bodies of the lost are to be raised up and reunited with their spirits, but not glorified.

(1) 1 Cor. 15:22—"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." John 5:28, 29—"all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." Rev. 20:13—"And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades (the grave) gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." (2) This general resurrection of the dead is obviously to occur at the close of Christ's millennial reign. Rev. 20:5—"the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished."

176. Q. For what event is this general resurrection of the dead to be a preparation?

A. It is to be a preparation for the Last Judgment. The Scriptures teach that the Last Judgment is (1) something to be expected in the future (Acts 24:25, Heb.

10:27); (2) something that is to follow death (Heb. 9:27); (3) something that is to be attended by all humanity (Matt. 12:41-42, Acts 17:31, Matt. 16:27, 2 Cor. 5:10, Matt. 25:31-32); (4) something for which those who are evil are "reserved" (2 Pet. 2:4, 9; Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43); (5) something for which the resurrection of the dead is a preparation (John 5:29, Rev. 20:11-15).

**177. Q. What is the Last Judgment?**

**A. It is to be that event in which all humanity will, with all the angels, be assembled before God in the person of Christ, for a final reckoning.**

See Acts 17:31, Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:11-15.

**178. Q. Who will be the Judge in the Last Judgment?**

**A. The Scriptures teach that Christ will be the Judge.**

(1) Though God is the Judge of all (Heb. 12:23), yet His judicial activity is exercised through Christ, both in the present state and at the last day. John 5:22—"for neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son." Cf. Matt. 19:28, 25:31-32; Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 3:21. (2) Christ will appear in the Judgment in His threefold official capacity. As Prophet, He will reveal the Father to His saints in glory (John 16:25, 17:24-26). As Priest, He will present His saints before the Throne as an elect race, a redeemed people, a purchased possession (1 Pet. 2:9). As King, He will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31).

**179. Q. Who are to be the subjects of the Last Judgment?**

**A. Two classes: (1) the entire human race, and (2) the evil angels.**

(1) All humanity, each person possessed of body reunited with spirit, the dead having been raised, and the living hav-

ing been changed. 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Matt. 25:31-33; Rev. 20:12-13. (2) **The evil angels** (2 Pet. 2:4, Jude 6); the good angels appearing only as attendants and ministers of the righteous Judge (Matt. 13:39-42, 24:31; Matt. 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7-10).

**180. Q. What will be the grounds of the final judgment?**

**A. They will be two in number: (1) the grace of Christ, and (2) the law of God.**

(1) Rev. 20:12. Those whose names are "written in the book of life" are to be found approved on the ground of their union with Christ and participation in His righteousness. They will be presented in the Judgment clothed in glory and honor and immortality. (2) Those whose names are not "written in the book of life" will be judged by the law of God, as it was revealed in the particular dispensation under which they lived. For instance, those who lived under the law of Moses, will be judged by that law; and those who live under the Gospel, the law of the Spirit, are to be judged by the law of the Spirit, etc. Heathen nations that had no revealed law on earth, are to be judged by their respective moral codes (i. e., existing in the form of tradition). Rom. 2:12-16.

**181. Q. What is to be the nature of the Last Judgment?**

**A. It will be "the revelation of the righteous judgment of God."**

(1) Not the ascertainment of the moral character of those appearing for judgment, but the **revelation of God's righteousness, justice, and holiness**. The idea that God will line all men up in a row and look them over, to ascertain their moral standing, is absurd. Our moral standing is known to God fully every moment of our lives. (2) Judgment will be, rather, the "revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2:5-6), to all intelligent creatures, both angels and men. (3) Thus the saints will be presented in the

Judgment clad in the fine linen of righteousness (Rev. 19:8, 14), their sins having been covered by the atoning blood of Christ, forgiven and forgotten, put away from them forever; and clothed also in glory and honor and immortality, the habiliments of eternal redemption. **In their manifestation, the greatness of God's love, mercy and salvation will be fully disclosed to all His creatures.** (4) The wicked will be presented in the Judgment as they really are, i. e., in all the realism of their rebelliousness, neglect and iniquity. Even their secret sins will be brought to light and revealed to the whole intelligent creation. For the first time perhaps, they will thus be made to realize the enormity of their sin, and the corresponding awfulness of their loss of God and heaven; and the result indeed will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth (i. e., not of hate, but of remorse and despair). (5) This final demonstration will be sufficient to prove to all intelligent creatures that Satan's charges against God have, from the beginning, been false and malicious. **The result will be the complete vindication of God Almighty, which is, in itself, the primary design of the Last Judgment.** Cf. 1 Cor. 6:2, 3—"know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? . . . know ye not that we shall judge angels?" This final demonstration of God's matchless love, in the salvation of His saints, will be sufficient of itself to condemn Satan and his rebel hosts forever. (6) This demonstration will also be sufficient to deter the saints from ever lapsing a second time into apostasy and sin; and thus the possibility of sin in the future state will have been entirely eradicated.

182. Q. What is to follow the Last Judgment?

A. The Scriptures teach that, following the Judgment, both the saved and the lost will enter upon their respective eternal states of being.

Matt. 26:34, 41—"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the

kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." John 5:29—"they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (literally, **condemnation**).

183. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the righteous?

A. It is to be essentially a state of personal union and communion with God.

It is also described as **eternal life** (Matt. 25:46); **rest** (Heb. 4:9), i. e., release from earthly afflictions and trials; **spiritual society** (Heb. 12:23); **communion with God** (Rev. 21:3); **worship** (Rev. 19:1); **glory and honor and incorruption** (Rom. 2:7); and **perfect holiness** (Rev. 21:27).

184. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the lost?

A. It is to be essentially a state of separation from God and from the society of the redeemed.

It is described under such phrases and terms as: **eternal fire** (Matt. 25:41); **the outer darkness** (Matt. 8:12); **weeping and the gnashing of teeth** (Matt. 8:12); **the pit of the abyss** (Rev. 9:2, 11); **eternal punishment** (Matt. 25:46); **torment** (Rev. 14:10, 11); **wrath of God** (Rom. 2:5); **eternal sin** (Mark 3:29); **second death** (Rev. 21:8); and "**eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might**" (2 Thess. 1:9). Obviously its essential characteristics are to be **remorse, despair, and hopelessness**.

185. Q. What, then, is hell, according to the teaching of the Scriptures?

A. Hell is the penitentiary of the moral universe in which all the wicked will, with the devil and his angels, be segregated forever.

(1) For the Scripture doctrine of hell (literally, *Gehenna*), see Matt. 5:22, 29; 10:28, 18:9, 23:33; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6; Rev. 20:14-15, 21:8, etc. (2) Hell has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). Wicked men will eventually go to hell, not because God will cast them into it, but because their own consciences will drive them, instinctively, to their proper place, as in the case of Judas (Acts 2:25). As water seeks its own level, they who in this present life fit themselves only for the society of the rebellious, wicked and unbelieving, will instinctively seek that type of society in the next world. For, without doubt, the devil and all his kind would be miserable in heaven. (3) "Sin is self-isolating, unsocial, selfish. By virtue of natural laws the sinner reaps as he has sown, and sooner or later is repaid by desertion or contempt. Then the selfishness of one sinner is punished by the selfishness of another, the ambition of one by the ambition of another, the cruelty of one by the cruelty of another. The misery of the wicked hereafter will doubtless be due in part to the spirit of their companions. They dislike the good, whose presence and example is a continual reproof and reminder of the height from which they have fallen, and they shut themselves out of their company. The Judgment will bring about a complete cessation of intercourse between the good and the bad" (Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 1035). Cf. Rev. 22:11-12. A truly asinine notion is explicit in the claim one hears so often in our day that New Testament passages alluding to hell (and to heaven, as well) are "merely figurative." This claim ignores the evident fact that a figure, in order to be a figure, must be a figure of something (just as a symbol is a symbol of something, a proposition is an affirmation or denial about something, a sentence is a predication about something, etc.): in short, without the genuine, the counterfeit is impossible. (Indeed, in the Platonic dialogues, the *mythos* is poetic imagery to which men must resort, because of the inadequacy of language, to reveal

profound truth which cannot be set forth in propositional terms. It is the device, according to Plato, which men are compelled to use to communicate the **ineffable**. Cf. Rom. 8:26-27). Hence, if Scripture passages which describe hell as "eternal fire," "the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone," "outer darkness," "the bottomless pit" ("abyss"), etc., are figurative, I shudder to think what the reality (the separation of the soul from all Good) is. To try to pass off these expressions as "figurative" is not to "explain them away," — it is to multiply the problem a hundredfold. Need we be reminded of the awful internal pain of mental anguish. Perhaps conscience will turn out to be the fire that is never quenched and memory the worm that never dies. See Luke 16:19-31, Rev. 6:15-17; Heb. 10:31, 2 Cor. 5:11, Gen. 28:16-17, Mark 9:43-48, etc.

**186. Q. What is to be "the consummation of all things"?**

**A.** The "consummation of all things" evidently will include: (1) the renovation of our earth by fire; (2) the establishment of new heavens and a new earth; and (3) the return of Christ's authority to the Father, that God may be all in all.

See Acts 3:20-21, 2 Pet. 3:1-13, 1 Cor. 15:24-28, Rev. 21:1-8, Rev. 22:1-5.

**187. Q. By what criterion will the success of God's Plan of the Universe be evaluated, in the finality of things?**

**A.** It will be evaluated, not by the number who are saved, but by the greatness of the salvation that God will ultimately reveal in His saints.

A holy redeemed race! The consummation and realization of His eternal purpose and plan! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!" Praise His holy name forever!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON  
FIFTY-TWO

175. Q. What, according to the Scriptures, is to be the disposition of the bodies of all those who are lost?
176. Q. For what event is this general resurrection of the dead to be a preparation?
177. Q. What is the Last Judgment?
178. Q. Who will be the Judge in the Last Judgment?
179. Q. Who are to be the subjects of the Last Judgment?
180. Q. What will be the grounds of the final judgment?
181. Q. What is to be the nature of the Last Judgment?
182. Q. What is to follow the Last Judgment?
183. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the righteous?
184. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the lost?
185. Q. What, then, is hell, according to the teaching of the Scriptures?
186. Q. What is to be "the consummation of all things"?
187. Q. By what criterion will the success of God's Plan of the Universe be evaluated, in the finality of things?