The Great White Throne

Foundations: Day 357
By Derek Prince

The scene of the third and final judgment is described in Revelation 20: 11-15:

"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. 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. 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." (Rev. 20:11-15)

Here is the ultimate end of all sin and rebellion against the authority and holiness of almighty God: to be cast forever into the lake of everlasting fire. Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life will escape this final judgement. The names recorded in this book are of those who during their life on earth availed themselves, through faith, of God's mercy and grace. These fall into various categories.

All those who put their faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice on behalf of mankind will already have been resurrected at the commencement of the millennium. They will have passed through their own appropriate judgement before the judgement seat of Christ – not for condemnation, but to assess their reward.

It seems certain that the majority of those who appear before the great white throne will not have fulfilled the conditions for receiving God's mercy and will therefore be condemned to the lake of fire. Nevertheless, as was pointed out in part 6 'The resurrection of the dead', there will definitely

be at least two categories of people before the great white throne who will escape condemnation and enter into eternal life.

The first category will consist of people such as the queen of the South and the men of Nineveh, who availed themselves of the mercy which God offered to them in one brief but decisive revelation of Himself. Scripture does not indicate how many others there may have been in the course of history who were given a similar opportunity.

The second category will consist of all those who died in faith during the millennium.

Can we anticipate that there will be others to whom God will extend mercy from His great white throne? The answer to this is locked up within the omniscience of God. For us, with our limited knowledge and narrow perspective, it is foolish to speculate. Let us rather adopt the attitude expressed by Abraham.

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25)

Lord, what a wonderful, safe and secure feeling that we are serving an everlasting, ever-just Judge, who will judge on the basis of what we have been able to do here on Earth, in the power of Jesus. Thank You that I may serve You every day, from the power that You give me for it Yourself! Amen.