**Love And Judgment**

Hope Chapel Honolulu

Revelation 20:6-21:8

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. 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. 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. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 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)

**Introduction**

Will God bring us into judgment for words and works which we have no power over? Secular humanist and atheist thinkers like neuroscientist Sam Harris have maintained that “the idea that we, as conscious beings, are deeply responsible for the character of our mental lives and subsequent behavior is simply impossible to map onto reality,” (Free Will, 2012, p.13). While we fail to recognize the limits of our observations, the Word and Spirit of God state that man is appointed once to die and then to judgment. Let’s look for answers to McLaughlin’s question: “How could a loving God send people to hell?” (p.210).

**1. A glimpse of what awaits us all. (Revelation 20:6-10)**

 a) The first resurrection and the second death.

 b) The millennial reign of Christ

**2. The Lamb seated to judge on a great white throne. (Revelation 20:11-15)**

 a) The Lamb that was once slain to save, is glorified to rule in righteousness.

 b) Books of the words and works of men, and the Lamb’s Book of Life.

**3. A new heaven and new earth. (Revelation 21:1-8)**
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 a) A new heaven and a new earth are just part of God’s promised new creation.

 b) A wedding, a reunion, reconciliation, restoration and the reward for faithfulness.

**Conclusion**

While McLaughlin’s following comment—“all our relationships hinge, to some extent, on hiding” (p.212)—might seem out of place, perhaps it helps us to reframe that question of how a loving God might send people to hell to “how could God both know us so well and yet love and save us from sin and death?”

**For our prayerful study, discussion and application:**

1) Read Romans 1:18-32 slowly and carefully. What reason is there for God’s wrath in your world?

2) Read Revelation 20:11-15. Which is more important here: our performance for or relationship to Christ?

3) What are the Word and Spirit of God saying to you about the coming wrath and judgment of God?

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