



# The Burning Bush—Online article archive

## The decision of the Supreme Court and its bearing on us all



The US Supreme Court building

The people of the United States of America waited with a high measure of interest for the outcome of the deliberations of its Supreme Court, when it met recently to effectively decide the outcome of the presidential election. To have permitted the manual recounting of certain votes in the State of Florida which had been rejected by the ballot machines as invalid, would, it was claimed, have resulted in the Democrat candidate, Vice President Al Gore, winning the presidential race. On the other hand, should the Supreme Court rule that such a recount be deemed illegal, then Republican candidate, George W Bush, would be the undisputed winner in keeping with Florida's Secretary of State, Katherine Harris's statement in which Bush was declared and certified as the winner 10 days after the election in accordance with Florida law. The future political and economic direction of the USA hung on the decision of the Supreme Court.

Well, we all know now that the majority in that Supreme Court ruled that the recount was wrong, and so Al Gore shortly after conceded victory and Bush was declared the President-elect.

The court and its decision reminded me of a future court sitting which will decide matters infinitely more important than the future political and economic direction of a nation. I speak of the sitting of that great Court spoken of in Rev 20:12. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

I wish to remind you of some salient truths about that court and its bearing on us all.

### **I. THE COURT AND ITS DECISION WILL HAVE NO BEARING ON SOME**

It will have no bearing on Christians. They will not be there on trial but as observers. The Christian will stand before Christ, let there be no mistake about that. The difference between the court in our text and the appearing of the Christian before Christ is seen in . . . .

**1. Its purpose.** The court in our text is one in which the sinner will receive the sentence of damnation. The court before which the Christian appears is one in which he will receive the rewards due him, be they great or small. *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ* , Romans 14:10.

**2. Its Time.** The Christian's appearance before Christ comes at the beginning of the millennial reign, just after the Saviour's glorious return. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand,*

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*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*, Matthew 25:31-34. Those whose profession of Christianity is a mere sham are dismissed to hell until the judgment of the great white throne at the end of the millennial reign of Christ. Note what Rev. 20:5 says. *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.* The second resurrection sees the ungodly raised from the dead and brought before God for judgment.

We repeat, Christians will not have to stand trial before the great white throne. Rather, they will but observe the judgment of those who had long mocked and denied the witness of Christians about such a judgment. Listen to the psalmist speak of *this day*. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked, Psalm 91:8. Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it*, Psalm 37:34. What a mercy is ours, dear Christian, to know that because of God's pardoning grace, given us in Christ, we will not be summoned to this great court.

### II. THE DECISION OF THAT COURT WILL BRING HOME TO SINNERS THE FOLLY OF NEGLECTING THE GOSPEL

Death will have already done that, as will entrance into hell to an even greater degree. The sinner when he dies will instantly become aware of the folly of rejecting Christ. The horrors of hell will endorse and intensify that realization. But on that day, when the sinner stands before the great white throne, it will be brought home to him, as never before, what a fool he has been to reject Christ and His message of love and mercy. It will be brought home to the sinner by . . . .

**1. The awesomeness of the Throne** . It is great in its appearance and authority. Never has there been a tribunal such as this. Its authority can not be defied or its summons ignored. It is white in its administrations. Only justice is here dispensed. None shall have cause to cry "injustice" at the sentence it metes out nor question the evidence presented or the justice administered.

**2. The fearfulness of its Judge.** This will be the sinner's first sight of God! By that I mean, it is the first time that the sinner will look on the Lord Jesus and acknowledge that He is indeed God. While everything in the sinner would drive him to hide from the Lord, as does creation (verse 1), sinful man is made to stand before Him. Sinners have been hiding from God since the fall. *And they (Adam and Eve) heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself,* Genesis 3:8-10.

Man hid from Christ when He spoke in mercy. *He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not,* Isaiah 53:3. But they will be made to stand before Him when He administers justice and acknowledge him as God. *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God*



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*the Father*, Philippians 2:10-11. The reactions of the followers of Antichrist to the glorious appearing of Christ to deliver Jerusalem, and to what is but a foretaste of the full horror of His wrath, are recorded for us in Revelation 6:15-17. *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

Now the time has dawned when sinners must stand before the wrathful Lamb to receive the consequences of their rebellion and defiance.

**3. The dreadfulness of the sentence.** *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire*, Revelation 20:15. This is beyond contemplation! It is so terrible that men, even good men, are tempted to disbelieve it. But it will be so. What dreadful exclusion is here referred to! *Whosoever was not found written in the book of life.* Here is a matter of the most vital importance. Rest not until you know that your name is there. Cry on the Lamb, Whose book it is, until He has wrought assurance in your soul about your name being written there.

### III. THE DECISION OF THAT COURT WILL USHER IN THE ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE

As in the US Supreme Court decision, the decision on that great day will be but what men have brought on themselves. The United States Supreme Court did not decide who the next president would be. It simply upheld the decision made by those who cast valid ballots. Even so shall it be on that day.

As stated earlier, when Christ returns, He will separate the sheep from the goats within the flock of Christendom. Those that are not His, He will cast into hell to await the judgment of the great white throne. What He will say to the false professors on that occasion reflects the nature of the justice He will administer at the great white throne. *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*, Matthew 25:41. The word **depart** carries the meaning of **continue on in the way you have been going**. Sinners spend their time departing from Christ and they will be told to continue on in that way.

Tonight, those of you who are yet unsaved are living a life of departing from Christ. That is what takes you out of meeting after meeting refusing the gospel. Your heart is set on departing from God as the people in Isaiah the prophet's day. *In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood*, Isaiah 59:13. Beware of that which carries you out from the gospel message and away from God. *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God*, Hebrews 3:12.

### IV. THE DECISION OF THAT COURT WILL DECLARE THE POWER OF CHRIST'S

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What is it that will make the difference between those condemned at the great white throne and the Christian? Among those uncondemned will be men and woman guilty of murder such as David; men and women guilty of persecuting Christians to death such as Paul; men and women guilty of living under the power of the devil such as Mary Magdalene; men and women guilty of shameful wickedness such as some believers found amongst the membership of the Corinthian church -- how is it they escape damnation? It is because of the blood of Christ!

Like the believing Hebrews in Egypt on the night of the Passover who found safety and shelter under the sprinkled blood of the Passover lamb, even so these are they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Christ's blood has washed away their guilt. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*, Romans 8:33-34.

Like that dark night in Egypt, those who are under the blood of the Lamb will be safe and in perfect peace and joy. While sinners will everlastingly lament their great folly in trusting in the false refuge of their own inventions, the saints of God will eternally sing aloud for joy.

Tonight -- flee, flee from the wrath to come! Seek refuge under the blood of Christ.