

The Concept of Judgment according to Rev 11:15-18

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SUMMARY: The presented paper analyzes the text of Rev 11:15-18. The analysis showed that the divine judgment depicted in the discussed text has two dimensions. First, it is the reward for the faithful which is defined as “giving reward” (*dounai ton misthon*). This reward is being given to the faithful (designed as *douloi, phoboumenoi to onoma, prophetai, hagioi*). The other aspect of the judgment is a negative one. The act of punishment is expressed by the verbs *krino* and *diaphtheiro*. The people being judged and punished are defined as *nekroi* and *diaphtheriontes ten gen*. The term *nekroi*, in the author’s opinion, is to be understood in a spiritual meaning. The sentence pronounced on the culprits is a typical example of retributive justice. Because the term *nekroi* is to be understood spiritually (i.e., the matter is “the spiritually dead”) one cannot see in Rev 11:15-18 a direct announcement of the last judgment. The analysis of the following context shows that the beginning of the last judgment is performed by means of events depicted in Rev 12. The main criterion of affiliation regarding one of the two groups (the rewarded or the punished) is the attitude towards the Messiah presented in Rev 12:5. It does not mean that there is no relationship between the judgment having been already executed and the last judgment. The verdict pronounced by the last one will be a logical consequence of what takes place now.

KEYWORDS: Book of Revelation, judgment, reward, punishment

The concept of judgment is one of the essential issues investigated by scholars dealing with the Book of Revelation¹. The topic of judgment is examined especially in the context of the eschatology of this book and refers to the end of the world. Therefore, it means the removal of the old world and its replacement

¹ The state of research on the subject of the judgment in the Book of Revelation is presented in: W. Linke, *Jerozolima jako miejsce i uczestnik sądu Bożego w Apokalipsie według św. Jana* (RiSB 18, Warszawa: Vocatio 2005) 13-25. Other important studies are: J.A. Bollier, “Judgment in the Apocalypse”, *Int* 7 (1953) 14-25; R. Bauckham, “Judgment in the Book of Revelation”, *ExAud* 20 (2004) 1-24; A. Kiejza, „Sąd Boży według Apokalipsy”, “Stworzył Bóg człowieka na swój obraz”. *Księga pamiątkowa dla bpa prof. Mariana Gołębiewskiego w 65. rocznicę urodzin* (ed. W. Chrostowski) (Warszawa: Vocatio 2002) 173-194; B. Widła, *Antropologia egzystencjalna Apokalipsy Janowej* (Warszawa, Wydawnictwo „Medium” 1996) 77-105.

by the new creation. Examining this theme, scholars often focus on terminology. They make an attempt to specify the function of God and Christ, the Lamb as well as the angels in this event. The question of the temporal perspective of judgment is still the subject of a brisk academic discussion.

The text of Rev 11:15-18 is one of the most significant ones on judgment in the Book of Revelation. As this text is placed outside of the part of the Book which scholars consider as dealing with eschatological events (that is, Rev 20–22), the question arises whether it is only an announcement of what will occur in the eschatological time or whether the author is focusing here on the temporary dimension of judgment. Another important issue is the question of the relationship between Rev 11:15-18 and the text following it, i.e., the vision of the Woman and the Dragon (Rev 12).

The aim of the paper is to present the idea of judgment in light of Rev 11:15-18 in several steps. First, the state of research will be presented. Then, we will examine the relationship between Rev 11:15-18 and the text following it (Rev 12). The analysis of the terms which appear in the key-verse, 11:18, will help answer the question of what sort of judgment is intended and who is being judged here. Finally, on the basis of the results of the research on the context of Rev 11:15-18, we will try to place the judgment in its temporal perspective.

1. State of research

The scholars examining Rev 11:18 in the context of the seventh trumpet are commonly of the opinion that this pericope should refer to the last judgment connected with the resurrection of the dead. Therefore, according to them, the verse at issue has an unambiguous eschatological significance. For example, Robert H. Charles claims that even the sequence of the individual events presented in Rev 11:15-18 agrees with the sequence presented after the coming of the millenary Kingdom in Rev 20². Gerhard Krodel also shares this idea³. An interesting remark is made by Stephen S. Smalley, following the opinion of Gregory K. Beale, that the vision of Rev 11:15-18 indicates the last judgment. Nevertheless, it is to be noticed that in the eschatology of Revelation, one can

2 R.H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark 1920) I, 295-296: "There is progressive movement in these words – the recognition of a development of events in their true order. After the close of the Millennial Kingdom mentioned in the preceding verse the song refers to the twofold uprising of nations (cf. 19:19, 20:8–9ab), and their destruction (cf. 19:21, 20:9c), the judgment of the dead (cf. 20:11–15), the final recompense of all the righteous in the New Jerusalem, which together with the new heaven and the new earth should become their eternal abode (cf. 21:1-4, 22:3-5)".

3 Cf. G.S. Krodel, *Revelation* (ACNT; Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House 1989) 230-231.

discern a kind of balance between earthliness and eternity. In such a situation, we would have – as Smalley notices – a perspective similar to that of the Fourth Gospel⁴. A similar view is presented by Heinz Giesen who, in discussing Rev 11:15-18, states that here one cannot discern any announcement of the resurrection and there are no convincing arguments that the judgment announced in the analyzed verses concerns both the living and the dead. Instead, it concerns “the dead ones”. The argument which supports this statement is to be found, according to Giesen, in Rev 20:4–5, where the two groups are mentioned: the faithful (defined by means of various descriptions) who “came to life” and “the rest of the dead” who “did not come to life”⁵. David E. Aune holds the view that the pericope of Rev 11:15-18, made up of two parts, constitutes a hymn which juxtaposes the proclamation of the rule of God to the proclamation of the last judgment concerning all dead⁶. Robert H. Mounce notices that Rev 11:15-18 anticipates the judgment presented in 20:11-15. An argument in support of it would be that the resurrection of the dead is mentioned both in the examined text and in the description of the judgment in Rev 20:11-15, though the latter text does so implicitly, as it contains only the statement that the dead “are standing in front of the throne” (καὶ εἶδον τοὺς νεκρούς [...] ἐστῶτας ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου)⁷.

Another scholar, Akira Satake, unambiguously underlines how the matter of the text in question is the last judgment concerning all the dead. He adds that the verb κρίνειν is neutral sense here, which is then specified both positively (δοῦναι τὸν μισθόν) and negatively (διαφθεῖραι). However, the Japanese author notes that the terms κρίνω, κρίμα, κρίσις reveal a negative (condemnatory) aspect of the judgment in Revelation. Moreover, an additional question arises with relation to juxtaposing the two expressions: ἡ ὄργη σου and καιρὸς τῶν νεκρῶν κριθῆναι. Having carried out his analyses, Satake draws the conclusion that here the term “dead” fails to include Christians⁸. Waldemar Linke,

4 Cf. S.M. Smalley, *The Revelation to John. A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 2005) 291; cf. G.K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans 1999) 615.

5 Cf. H. Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (RNT, Regensburg: F. Pustet 1997) 265-266. Giesen concludes: “Die zu richtenden Toten sind ausschließlich die gottfeindlichen Menschen, die ungehorsamen Verderber der Erde“. Giesen invokes here an opinion by Roloff (“Weltgericht und Weltvollendung in der Offenbarung des Johannes”, *Weltgericht und Weltvollendung. Zukunftsbilder im Neuen Testament* [ed. H.-J. Klauck] [QD 150; Freiburg: Herder 1994] 114).

6 D.E. Aune, *Revelation 6-16* (WBC 52b; Nashville: Thomas Nelson 1997): “Rev 11:15-18 consists of a two-part responsory hymn that juxtaposes the celebration of the reign of God with the final judgment in which all the dead are judged; the righteous are rewarded and the wicked are punished” (p. 635).

7 Cf. R.H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (NICNT, Grand Rapids – Cambridge: W.B. Eerdmans 1997) 227.

8 Cf. A. Satake, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (KEK, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2008) 275. A similar opinion is presented by Lohmeyer (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes* [HNT

discussing Rev 11:15-19, states that this text constitutes the first mention in the whole book of a judgment that has already been executed. The very moment of the judgment has not been defined precisely in this pericope. In his opinion, it is because what is more important here is not the act of the judgment itself but rather its results, strictly speaking: a new age of the world which is coming about by means of this act⁹.

Finally, Michał Wojciechowski notes that “the divine judgment includes the dead, therefore it assumes them coming back to life”. In his opinion, the result of the judgment is first the reward for the faithful, who are described in the analyzed text as “the servants of God, prophets, saints and those who fear him”, and then the punishment for the unfaithful. The latter group includes “those who are destroying the earth”¹⁰.

The above-mentioned opinions of scholars show that Rev 11:15-18 is generally considered to refer to the last judgment, especially to the stage presented in Rev 20:11-15. Most often there appear opinions that the analyzed text includes an implicit announcement of the resurrection, because if the dead are to be judged, they must first be resurrected. The evidence supporting this would be Rev 20:12, where “the standing dead” are mentioned. Only a few exegetes (e.g. Heinz Giesen, Jürgen Roloff, Stephen S. Smalley) suggest that this text must be examined in a different perspective. In our opinion the latter view is right. Thereby, we shall propose that the divine judgment announced in Rev 11:18 is not a part of the last judgment and therefore it is not an implicit announcement of the resurrection of the dead. In our view, the term “dead” in Rev 11:18 should be interpreted spiritually. It denotes all who are in opposition to God, to the Messiah and to his people. In the followings parts of the present article, we will try to expose our understanding of the judgment mentioned in Rev 11:15-18.

16a; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr 1926] 95).

- 9 Cf. Linke, *Jerozolima jako miejsce i uczestnik sądu Bożego*, 174-179. At the center of Linke’s attention is the syntactic structure of Rev 11:18, whereas he does not focus on the significance of the term νεκροί analyzing the verb κρίνω he states that in Revelation it is used in order to show an activity of God – Judge, concerning the saints. Divine judgment has been caused, for example by means of persecutions which afflicted the saints. God begins to judge the oppressors. J.A. Bollier („Judgment in the Apocalypse”, 14-25) notes that the basic aim of the judgment presented in Revelation is defeating opposition to God and his Messiah. Therefore the attitude of people to Christ is being judged. In this context the punitive aspect of the judgment must be underlined, which is expressed by the verb κρίνω. Examples of such an application of this verb are the texts of Rev 6:1 and 19:2, where two verbs are juxtaposed: κρίνω and ἐκδικέω (“to avenge”). Cf. T. Siemieniec, *Rola „Zasiadającego na tronie” w dziejach świata i ludzi. Studium z teologii Apokalipsy św. Jana* (Biblioteka Kieleckich Studiów Teologicznych 2, Kielce: Jedność 2012) 173-174.
- 10 M. Wojciechowski, *Apokalipsa świętego Jana. Wstęp – przekład z oryginału – komentarz* (NKB NT 20; Częstochowa: Święty Paweł 2012) 265.

2. The Context of Rev 11:15-18

The text of Rev 11:15-18 is defined as the description of the seventh trumpet. The cycle of the seven trumpets has its beginning in 8:2. However, the question arises whether the end of this cycle may be set up in 11:19 or not. In other words: can the vision of the woman in Rev 12 be included in this cycle? It should be noted that there are a few scholars who radically separate 11:19 from 12:1. Even though they claim that 11:19 makes a conclusion to the whole cycle of the seven trumpets, they add that this verse can simultaneously be an introduction to what follows¹¹.

What are the arguments in favor of the connection between 11:19 and the text following it? Above all, it should be noticed that in Rev 12 there is a lack of the characteristic expression which appeared at the beginning of the individual visions. Such expressions are – as Ralph J. Korner states – temporal and spatial references (there is only one such reference in the whole book: Rev 1:9-10), *μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον* and similar to it as well as *καὶ εἶδον*. The units introduced by spatial and temporal references are designated by Korner as “vision episodes”. *Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον* would introduce so called “vision blocks” and finally – *καὶ εἶδον* – would delineate “individual visions”¹².

If we assume such a proposal regarding the criteria marking smaller units in Revelation, we will place Rev 11:15-18 in a larger complex containing 10:1–12:18. In 10:1 there appears a technical expression, *καὶ εἶδον*, which indicates an “individual vision”. The next time such an expression appears in 13:1; therefore, the end of this vision can be placed one verse before – in 12:18¹³.

Heinz Giesen claims that all the events described in Rev 12–14 should be included in the cycle of the seven trumpets. This cycle finishes in 15:1, where another sign appears – the seven angels with plagues¹⁴. Regardless of whether we accept Korner’s proposal or we opt for Giesen’s theory, there is no doubt that one must not separate Rev 11:15-18 from the following vision. This implies that, starting with 12:1, we will notice the development of the idea of judgment announced in the analyzed pericope. Is such an understanding proper? It seems to be right, as it should be noticed that the judgment in Revelation cannot be

¹¹ Cf. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 621.

¹² Cf. R.J. Korner, „‘And I saw...’. An Apocalyptic Literary Convention for Structural Identification in the Apocalypse”, *NovT* 42 (2000) 160-183. R.H. Charles (*Revelation*, I, 106) notes that *μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον* always introduces a new and important vision, while *καὶ εἶδον* introduces smaller units thematically interrelated.

¹³ Cf. Korner, “‘And I saw...’. An Apocalyptic Literary Convention”, 174.

¹⁴ Giesen, *Die Offenbarung*, 269. Referring to the connection between Rev 12 and the preceding texts we can regard the opening of the temple of God in Rev 11:19 as an introduction to the vision of the woman. E.B. Allo (*Saint Jean. L'Apocalypse* [Etudes Bibliques; Paris: J. Gabalda 1921] 152-153) denotes even Rev 11:19 as *Petit Prologue Symbolique* not only of the chapter 12, but of the larger unit reaching 21:8.

confined to pronouncing a sentence. The judgment in the Book of Revelation is an eschatological event, i.e., what is connected to it will result in the final age. Therefore, the matter is not only the moment when people will have to stand before God, the Judge. The matter is also all that will lead to this final moment. This is in accordance with a biblical (especially prophetic) understanding of the judgment. As such, the judgment is connected with divine intervention in the history of the world and people. This intervention is motivated by love and has in its sight the salvation of the people of God. The intervention mentioned above can take various forms. Realizing it, God may employ as examples other nations which will become instruments of the judgment¹⁵.

Therefore, we can assume that the divine judgment presented in Rev 11:18 will be connected with a divine intervention in the history of the world. The texts following Rev 11:15-18 show in what this intervention will consist. Because each judgment is executed on a specific kind of people we shall seek answers to other questions: what are the criteria for this judgment? What will be the basis of the assessment of the men?

3. Who is the Object of the Judgment in Rev 11:15-18?

At the beginning of our research aiming to discover the interpretation of the term νεκροί we must examine the structure of verse 11:18, because a closer examination shows that this verse has been composed as a precise parallelism in which the former element specifies the latter one. In the history of research on this text, scholars have given various proposals of composition of the whole hymn found in Rev 11:17-18. Above all, they focused on the relationship between individual verses within the whole hymn. They have however failed to examine the mutual relationship between individual expressions within verse 18 itself¹⁶. Our proposal for the structure of this verse is as follows:

καὶ ἦλθεν ἡ ὀργή σου

Α καὶ ὁ καιρὸς τῶν νεκρῶν κριθῆναι

15 Cf. W. Schneider, "Judgment", *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (ed. C. Brown) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1976) II, 363-364.

16 For example David E. Aune (*Revelation 6-16*, 636-637), following Jörns, notes that the whole hymn consists of two parts. The verse 17 has a hymnic character, while verse 18 is prose. Another scholar – Waldemar Linke (*Jerozolima jako miejsce i uczestnik sądu Bożego*, 174-175) focuses primarily on the function of the conjunction ὅτι in verse 17 and tries to determine whether it should be referred, apart from the verbs εἴληφας and ἐβασίλευσας, also to the verb ἦλθεν in verse 18.

B καὶ δοῦναι τὸν μισθὸν τοῖς δούλοις σου τοῖς προφήταις καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις
καὶ τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸ ὄνομά σου, τοὺς μικροὺς καὶ τοὺς μεγάλους,

A' καὶ διαφθεῖραι τοὺς διαφθείροντας τὴν γῆν.

Within part B we can also notice a precise composition that is built according to the rule of parallelism:

C τοῖς δούλοις σου

D τοῖς προφήταις καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις

C' καὶ τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸ ὄνομά σου,

D' τοὺς μικροὺς καὶ τοὺς μεγάλους.

In such a situation, the judgment of the dead mentioned in part A would be elaborated in part A'. Therefore the judgment of the dead would signify the destruction of those who are destroying the world, i.e., what characterizes “the dead” is their destructive action in relation to the world. As a result, the term “dead” has an unambiguously negative connotation. Thereby the question arises whether the other texts in which the term νεκροί appear confirm this significance. First of all, we should notice that we can discern such an understanding in many texts of the New Testament (see: Matt 8:22; Luke 9:60; 15:32; John 5:25; Rom 6:11.13). In the Book of Revelation itself, the situation is similar. In the letter to the Church in Sardis, Jesus says: οἶδά σου τὰ ἔργα ὅτι ὄνομα ἔχεις ὅτι ζῆς, καὶ νεκρὸς εἶ (3,1b). Rev 20:4–5 includes a similar view. There we can perceive a division of people into two groups. On the one side, there are those who are faithful to Jesus¹⁷. They receive a reward defined as “revival” (ἐζήσαν),

17 Those who are faithful to Jesus are designated by means of two expressions: οἱ πεπελεκισμένοι διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ οἵτινες οὐ προσεκύνησαν τὸ θηρίον οὐδὲ τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἔλαβον τὸ χάραγμα ἐπὶ τὸ μέτωπον καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν χεῖρα αὐτῶν. With relation to this, the main question arises: whether these two expressions specify one another or should they be referred to different groups. Answering this question we should note first of all that the relative pronoun οἵτινες lets us establish a division between these two groups. A similar application we can find in Rev 1:7, where two groups are mentioned who had to see Son of man: “every eye” and those, “who pierced him” (οἵτινες αὐτὸν ἐξεκέντησαν). Therefore it should be assumed that two groups are mentioned here. Regarding the former one there is no doubt. They are the martyrs. Regarding the latter, there is a wide discussion among scholars: whether it is about the Christians who died unlike martyrs or whether it is about the living who remain faithful. More on this subject you can find in: Giesen, *Die Offenbarung*, 432-435 and Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 999-1001. Regarding “the first resurrection” it should be assumed, as it was convincingly demonstrated by N. Shepherd („The Resurrections of Revelation 20”, *WTJ* 37(1974/75) 34-43) and Meredith G. Kline (“The First Resurrection”, *WTJ* 37(1974/75) 366-375, that it should be understood as a spiritual, not physical, reality. Thereby

on the other side, there is “the rest of the dead”, who did not come to life (οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔζησαν). In Rev 20:11-15 the term “dead” should also be understood spiritually¹⁸.

The expression οἱ διαφθείροντες τὴν γῆν is parallel to the term νεκροί. As Aune notes, the noun γῆ takes here the function of a metonymy and it expresses especially all people on the earth¹⁹. This expression refers to Jeremiah’s announcement of the judgment on the historical Babylon that was called τὸ διαφθεῖρον πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν (Jer 28:25 [LXX]; cf. 51:25 [MT]). In Rev, a similar theme appears in 19:2 again, where it is said concerning the great harlot: ἔφθειρεν τὴν γῆν ἐν τῇ πορνείᾳ αὐτῆς. Babylon – the great harlot – from a historical point of view may be refer to imperial Rome. On the other hand, it may embody every human community opposing God. Just this community will be an object of the judgment made by God.

In what does this destructive activity consist? It has been expressed by the verb διαφθείρω. In Rev, this verb appears also in 8:9, where it denotes the physical destruction of ships. A similar verb, φθείρω, appears more often and with a similar meaning. Both verbs denote corruption, destruction in physical as well as in moral meaning. In reference to the moral sphere, this verb appears many times in the LXX (cf. Gen 6:11–12; Jer 6:28; Hos 9:9; Ezek 16:52; 20:44)²⁰. In the New Testament, the moral meaning is evident, especially in the Pauline Letters, where, for example, in 1 Cor 3:17 the Apostle talks about the destruction of the spiritual temple of God, which is a person. The punishment for this action will be an adequate answer of God, which has been expressed by the same verb. In 2 Cor 11:3, this verb occurs in the context of Satan’s action of seducing Eve, whereas Eph 4:22 talks about the destruction of the one who indulges in sinful desires. In 2 Peter 2:12 and Jude 10, the verb φθείρω refers to radical destruction. Wojciech Popielewski, analyzing this expression, notes that the above-mentioned text of 2 Cor 11:3 is very helpful for understanding the action of the evil ones. This Polish scholar compares this verb with another one, πλανᾶω, which occurs very often in Rev in order to show the action of Satan and his allies (cf. Rev 12:9; 13:14; 19:20)²¹.

it should be regarded that this latter group contains not only those Christians who have passed away but also those alive and remaining faithful. It is confirmed in 20:6, where their royalty and priesthood are mentioned. In connection with 5:10 we should notice that accomplishing this double function takes place on the earth. Cf. U. Vanni, *L'Apocalisse. Ermeneutica, esegesi, teologia* (Supplementi alla Rivista Biblica 17; Bologna: Dehoniane 2001) 349-368.

¹⁸ More on this subject see: T. Siemieniec, *Rola „Zasiadającego na tronie”*, 224-227.

¹⁹ Cf. Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 645.

²⁰ Cf. G. Harder, φθείρω κτλ., *TDNT*, IX, 98-100.

²¹ Cf. W. Popielewski, *Alleluja! Liturgia godów Baranka eschatologicznym zwycięstwem Boga (Ap 19,1-8)* (Studia Biblica 1; Kielce: ITB Verbum 2001) 181-182.

The earth denotes in Revelation especially the space inhabited by humankind. This sphere is the area where the history of salvation takes place. However, the influence of Satan makes this space develop into a sphere with negative connotations. The description of the harlot as destroying the earth emphasizes her influence, which results in the religious and moral corruption of humankind. This corruption takes a particular shape, e.g., social injustice or idolatry and hostility towards the community of people faithful to God²². Who, then, are those who destroy the earth in Rev 11:18? They are all those who adopted the attitude of the harlot as their own. In this way, they begin to propagate religious and moral corruption among other people. Thus they become cooperators with the evil forces.

Returning to the analysis of Rev 11, we will now proceed to the presentation of those who stand on the other side. Within the structure proposed above, they are to be found in part B. This element has a form of a parallelism:

τοῖς δούλοις σου τοῖς προφήταις καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις
καὶ τοῖς φοβούμενοις τὸ ὄνομά σου, τοὺς μικροὺς καὶ τοὺς μεγάλους.

Above we have explicated this parallelism and indicated the two pairs of mutually interrelated expressions. The first pair is: οἱ δούλοι σου and οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸ ὄνομά σου and the second: οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι and οἱ μικροὶ καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι. Now we have to specify who is in question here.

The first of the terms ὁ δούλος/οἱ δούλοι occurs in the whole book fourteen times. Among these occurrences it takes a general meaning three times, i.e., it denotes slaves as opposed to free people (6:15; 13:6; 19:18). In all other texts, οἱ δούλοι is a technical term, but two times in the singular it refers to particular persons: in 1:1 to the author of the Book, and in 15:3 to Moses. It is interesting that in the texts where οἱ δούλοι occurs in the plural, it always appears with the description of whose servants they are. This specification is expressed by the noun in the genitive (τοῦ θεοῦ – 7:3; 15:3) or by a possessive pronoun (1:1; 2:20; 10:7; 11:18; 19:2.5; 22:3.6). Akira Satake, in his elaboration, shows that in eight cases the term οἱ δούλοι refers to Christians in general. It denotes, therefore, all believers²³. The Japanese scholar notes, indeed, that the text 11:18 is the most problematic of all the texts with the term οἱ δούλοι. However, when we take into account the parallelisms indicated above, it seems that this problem will disappear. Having assumed the composition of 11:18 as above, we notice

²² Cf. Popielecki, *Alleluja!*, 182.

²³ Cf. A. Satake, *Die Gemeindeordnung in der Johannesapokalypse* (WMANT 21; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag 1966) 86-87.

that οἱ δούλοι has its counterpart in οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸ ὄνομά σου. It is enough that we make an analysis of this expression and we will understand what this parallelism stands for.

In late Judaism, the expression οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν referred, as a *terminus technicus*, to the people who were not Jews, not circumcised but who attended the synagogal liturgy and kept the rules of Judaism²⁴. However, we should remember that, in the Bible, the expression אֱתֵיכֶם אֱתֵי הוֹדוֹ was used for pious Jews. Therefore it denoted those who were faithful to the Covenant with God. It was especially evident in the literature derived from the Deuteronomistic School (e.g. Deut 4:10; 5:29; 6:2; Jos 4:24; 24:14; 1 Sam 12:14; 1 Kings 8:40). In the Book of Psalms, the expression “those who fear YHWH” referred to the community assembled in a sanctuary (Ps 22:24.26; 31:20; 66:16) as well as to the whole People of the Covenant (Ps 15:4; 60:6; 61:5; 85:10). Later Psalms, arising under the influence of the wisdom circles, used this term in reference to all those faithful to YHWH, i.e., to the pious ones (cf. Ps 25:14; 33:18; 34:8.10; 103:11.13.17). This relationship to God takes both ethical and juridical dimensions²⁵.

Among scholars there is a discussion concerning the origin of those “who fear God” in the Book of Revelation. Some claim that here it denotes Christians of pagan origin²⁶. Others maintain that it means here Christians in general (regardless of their origin)²⁷. We concur with the latter opinion. It can be confirmed by the following arguments: 1) the term οἱ ἅγιοι in early Christianity denoted all Christians regardless of their origin; 2) in 1 Clem. 21:7, the expression οἱ φοβούμενοι refers to all Christians; 3) in the Book of Revelation, the expression οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν appears in doxologies which (as far as their subject matter and composition is concerned) are exact reflection of some Psalms (e.g. 22:24). There, this expression refers to the People of the Covenant, obedient to the will of God, being in an exclusive relationship to him; 4) in the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g. CD 20:19n; cf. CD 10:2 1 QH 12:3), the expression אֱתֵי אֱתֵי הוֹדוֹ refers to the members of the community who live in loyalty to God²⁸.

The second pair of parallelisms is built on the two expressions: οἱ προφήται καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι and οἱ μικροὶ καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι. The term ὁ προφήτης (both in singular and in plural) appears in Revelation eight times, of which four occurrences are in connection with the term οἱ ἅγιοι (11:18; 16:6; 18:20.24). The term οἱ ἅγιοι

24 Cf. H. Baltz, φοβέω κτλ., *TDNT* IX, 213.

25 Cf. H. F. Fuhs, ary, *TDOT* VI, 306-309. Fuhs notes: “It is still a matter of debate whether ‘those who fear Yahweh’ in Ps 115,11.13; 118,4; 135,20 are so-called ‘proselytes’ or (more likely) the various groups of participants in the postexilic cult”.

26 E.g. Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 644;

27 See e.g. Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 266; Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 617.

28 Cf. Popielewski, *Alleluja!*, 236-240; 578-579; Satake, *Die Gemeindeordnung*, 37.

itself occurs in this book sixteen times with reference to people, in fourteen of which it is used as a *terminus technicus* describing all faithful Christians. The analogous use as in 11:18 appears in 13:7; 16:6; 17:6; 18:20.24; 20:9. Analyzing this term in the Apocalypse, Akira Satake makes following remarks: 1) This term, having its origin in the Judaism, is used with regard to the members of the community in a general meaning; 2) This term reveals that the community is aware of its being rooted in the chosen people of the First Covenant. The saints are those who experience their bond with “the slaughtered Lamb” (5:8; 13:7) and therefore they understand their existence as something new; 3) The saints are often depicted as those who are persecuted, so the readiness for suffering is a consequence of seriously experienced Christianity. It may be stated that the suffering shows itself as a logical consequence of the connection with the Christian community living in the bond with the Lamb who also suffered (cf. 13:10). For this reason, perseverance is a required attitude; 4) In the Book of Revelation, the issue at stake is only one kind of activity of the community of the saints: this community is praying. Akira Satake concludes that in these four texts where the expressions οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι appear together they point to the Christian community in general. Regarding 11:18, he notes that the expression οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι specifies the expression οἱ δούλοι²⁹.

The expression οἱ μικροὶ καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι, making a parallelism to οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι, constitutes a stylistic form called merism, where two terms “extreme” in their meaning are juxtaposed in order to point to the idea of totality³⁰. Therefore οἱ μικροὶ καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι are not separate groups. Instead, it emphasizes that no one from the aforementioned group (i.e., from the group defined as οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι) is excluded from the reward. The “small and great ones” denotes simply “all”³¹. The background of this expression in 11:18 may be Ps 115[113], where (according to LXX) the plea to YHWH for the blessing for those who fear him appears: εὐλόγησεν τοὺς φοβουμένους τὸν κύριον τοὺς μικροὺς μετὰ τῶν μεγάλων.

To sum up this stage of our analysis, we can conclude that in Rev 11:18, two groups of people are mentioned who are the object of the judgment. The former group is depicted as οἱ νεκροὶ and οἱ διαφθειρόντες τὴν γῆν. This group denotes the people spiritually dead. These are the people whose activity may be ascribed

²⁹ Cf. Satake, *Die Gemeindeordnung*, 26-34.

³⁰ Cf. Satake, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 276: “Die Kleinen und die Großen“ ist sowohl im AT (Gen 19,11; Weish 6,7 u.a.) als auch in säkularen griechischen Schriften belegt und bedeutet immer “alle“.

³¹ The juxtaposition of the small and great ones appears several times in the Apocalypse and it may refer both to the faithful and to the unfaithful. The former case, apart from the text being discussed, occurs in Rev 19:5, whereas the latter appears in Rev 13:16; 19:18; 20:12.

to the activity of the Great Harlot. This group will be punished. The other group has been denoted by the means of some parallel expressions: οἱ δούλοι σου and οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸ ὄνομά σου, as well οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἄγιοι and οἱ μικροὶ καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι. This group denotes those who will be rewarded.

4. A Rewarding and Punitive Character of the Judgment in Rev 11:18

The division of the people being judged into two groups, of which the former one is shown in a positive perspective and the latter in a negative one, leads us to the thesis concerning the twofold character of the judgment depicted in Rev 11:15-18. It is about the positive (rewarding) and the negative (punitive) dimension of the judgment. The judgment in its punitive dimension concerns the group designed as οἱ νεκροὶ and οἱ διαφθείροντες τὴν γῆν. This judgment is presented in two ways. Firstly by means of the verb κρίνω in *passivum* and then by means of the verb διαφθείρω in *activum*.

The verb κρίνω occurs in Revelation nine times (6:10; 11:18; 16:5; 18:8.20; 19:2.11; 20:12.13). In the first of the aforementioned texts it appears in the statement of the martyrs (denoted as ψυχὰι τῶν ἐσφαγμένων διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἣν εἶχον). They address God: ἕως πότε, ὁ δεσπότης ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός, οὐ κρίνεις καὶ ἐκδικεῖς τὸ αἷμα ἡμῶν ἐκ τῶν κατοικούντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. The plea for executing the judgment has been specified here as the plea for taking vengeance which is to be performed by God on the “inhabitants of the earth”. This vengeance is to be executed in connection with shedding the blood of the martyrs³².

Therefore, in this context, the verb κρίνω is specified by the verb ἐκδικέω, which has unambiguously negative connotations. It denotes punishment and vindication³³. In 16:5, κρίνω has a similar connotation. The angel of water addresses the following words to God: δίκαιος εἶ, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ᾄων, ὁ ὅσιος, ὅτι ταῦτα ἔκρινας, ὅτι αἷμα ἀγίων καὶ προφητῶν ἐξέχεαν καὶ αἷμα αὐτοῖς [δ]έδωκας πιεῖν, ἄξιόι εἰσιν (16:5b-6). This statement is one of the typical examples of the rule *ius talionis* in the Book of Revelation. The accused ones are those who have

³² The prayer found in Rev 6:10 creates some problems for scholars, which are connected with the question: how this prayer may be accommodated with the commandment of love in the Gospels. Furthermore, scholars often juxtapose it with the prayer of Jesus on the cross. Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 161-162) notes: “the wish for retribution is not simply an expression of personal antagonism towards other people, or an opportunity to curse them gratuitously. It is rather a protest of righteousness against iniquity, a demand for God to act justly, and for wrong to be replaced by right”.

³³ Cf. G. Schrenk, ἐκδικέω κτλ., *TDNT* II, 442-445.

shed the blood of the saints and the prophets (i.e. of Christians) – undoubtedly the Beast and its followers (cf. 16:2)³⁴.

In Rev 18:6, the object of the judgment is Babylon. The sentence pronounced on it is presented here as a series of plagues such as death, famine, mourning and burning. In the verse preceding, we can also see the reference to the rule of retribution: ἀπόδοτε αὐτῇ ὡς καὶ αὐτὴ ἀπέδωκεν καὶ διπλώσατε τὰ διπλᾶ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῆς³⁵.

A similar meaning of the verb κρίνω appears in Rev 18:20. There “the great city” (ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη) is the object of the judgment. From a literary point of view, we deal here with the so called paronomasia showing the idea of retribution: ἔκρινεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ κρίμα ὑμῶν ἐξ αὐτῆς. It means that God has exacted from Babylon exactly the same sentence that Babylon has pronounced on the saints³⁶. In 19:2, we can find the identical idea. The verb ἔκρινεν, which appears there, is specified by the expression ἐξεδίκησεν τὸ αἷμα τῶν δούλων αὐτοῦ ἐκ χειρὸς αὐτῆς. So the verb ἐκδικέω appears there again³⁷. Verse 19:11 constitutes the next usage of the analyzed term. There, the Rider on the white horse is the subject of the action. Verse 19:11 opens a larger vision enclosed in 19:11-21. Here it is worthy to invoke Bauckham who comments on this text as follows: “I think this passage describes the consequences of the witness of Jesus and his followers for those who do not accept it. The same witness that is salvific for those who heed it necessarily becomes evidence against those who do not. Like much of Revelation, this passage deploys the imagery of holy war, but the only weapon wielded by the divine warrior is the sharp two-edged sword that projects from his mouth (19:15,21; cf. 1:16; 2:12, 16; the image derives from Isa 11:4). This is the word of his faithful and true witness to God (cf. 19:11; 3:14), now turned into judgment on those who reject the witness. Its power is that of truth to destroy

34 Cf. Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 352; Bauckham, “Judgment”, 1-2. Bauckham notes: “In this surreal visionary context we should not be too concerned that the correspondence of crime and punishment does not really insure that the severity of the punishment is appropriate to the seriousness of the crime. The point is rather a graphic way of claiming that strict justice is being done, a point emphasized in the added insistence that those judged deserve what they get. It is not for nothing that this passage embodying the *lex talionis* principle is one of the rather few in which the act of judgment is explicitly attributed to God as the subject of the verb (cf. 18,8. 20; 19,2)”.

35 Cf. Bauckham, “Judgment”, 3; Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 900-902. It is noteworthy that the translation of this verse obscured somewhat the idea of the rule of retribution (especially in the case of double-paying toward the Great Harlot). Bauckham proposes the following translation: “Render to her as she herself has rendered [cf. Ps 137:8], give her the exact equivalent (*diplōsate ta dipla*) of her deeds [cf. Isa 40:2]; and in the cup she mixed mix for her the exact equivalent (*diploun*). To the extent that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, so give her an equal measure of torment and mourning”.

36 Cf. Smalley, *The Revelation to John*, 461.

37 More on this subject see: Popielewski, *Alleluja!*, 166-183.

illusion and lies”³⁸. The context in which κρίνω occurs unambiguously points to the punitive dimension of the judgment. The last two places where κρίνω appears are in the pericope describing the judgment upon the dead (20:12-15). As it has been noticed above, we are dealing here with the punitive judgment that is executed on the “dead”³⁹.

The analyses made above show explicitly that the verb κρίνω in Revelation presents the judgment understood as a punitive sentence on the enemies of God and his people. It is confirmed by another verb which appears in Rev 11:18, namely διαφθείρω. In this text the relationship between a crime and the punishment for it has been shown by means of a wordplay οἱ διαφθείροντες τὴν γῆν are to be destroyed (διαφθεῖραι). Here the wordplay consists in a double meaning of the verb δια/φθείρω. This verb, on the one hand, means: “to destroy” in a sense: “to ruin”, on the other hand, it can refer to corrupting with evil. Therefore “those who are destroying the Earth” are the forces of evil as well as those who are associated with them. They destroy the Earth by means of their violence, oppression and idolatry (cf. 19:2). Here, we probably deal with a reference to the Deluge described in the Book Genesis (Gen 6:11–13:17), where a Hebrew counterpart of the Greek verb δια/φθείρω, i.e., חָרַשׁ occurs. Divine action consisting in destruction of “the destroyers of the Earth” has in sight the protection against the forces of the evil⁴⁰.

The judgment depicted in Rev 11:18 has also a positive dimension. It is expressed by means of the phrase: δοῦναι τὸν μισθόν. The term μισθός denotes what someone deserves. It may theoretically assume either positive or negative dimension (i.e., a well-earned prize or a well-earned punishment). In Rev, this term occurs only in 22:12: Ἴδου ἔρχομαι ταχύ, καὶ ὁ μισθός μου μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἀποδοῦναι ἑκάστῳ ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ. Aune observes that, in Revelation, the term μισθός embodies all the goods which God will give to the faithful in the end times⁴¹. Such a use of the term μισθός refers to the Septuagint, where it denotes a reward given by God to the faithful (cf. Prov 11:21; Gen 15:1; 30:18; Sir 2:8; 11:22; 51:22.30; 2 Chr 15:7; Ps 126:3; Wis 2:22; 5:15; Isa 40:10; 62:11). However, it should be remembered that this reward is not as much a “payment” for some merits as it is a sign of divine grace. A similar understanding appears also in other books of the New Testament (Matt 5:12; Luke 6:23; 1 Cor 3:8,14;

³⁸ Bauckham, „Judgment”, 8.

³⁹ For more see: Siemieniec, *Rola „Zasiadającego na tronie”*, 223-233.

⁴⁰ Cf. Bauckham, „Judgment”, 2.

⁴¹ Aune makes an interesting observation: “The use of the metaphor of μισθός for spiritual recompense is evident in *Greek Apocalypse of Ezra* 1,14: ‘a slave serves his masters to receive his wage [μισθός]; thus the righteous man receives his reward [μισθός] in the heavens” (*Revelation 6-16*, 644).

2 John 8)⁴². Those goods which are the reward are presented in Revelation by means of various metaphors: eating from the tree of life (2:7; 22:14), freedom from the second death (2:11), hidden manna and a white stone (2:17), authority over the nations (2:26-27), white robes (3:5; 7:14), a role of pillar in the temple of God and in the New Jerusalem (3:12), being seated with Christ on his throne (3:21), etc. Perhaps, as Beale suggests, a part of this reward may be the awareness of the faithful that any wickedness toward them has been vindicated. It may be confirmed by the composition of verse 11:18, where the mention of the reward has been placed within an inclusion raising the issue of punishment⁴³.

It is noteworthy that there is a relationship between the reward and the Covenant. Not accidentally does the announcement of the reward precede the opening of the sanctuary in heaven and the appearance of the ark of the Covenant inside it (11:19). It is the God of the Covenant who gives his faithful the reward for their faithfulness. Such a connection of two realities is deeply rooted in the Old and New Testaments. An example of it is Wis 10:15–17, where personified Wisdom is mentioned that ἀπέδωκεν ὁσίοις μισθὸν κόπων αὐτῶν. Another example is Heb 10:35: Μὴ ἀποβάλλητε οὖν τὴν παρρησίαν ὑμῶν, ἥτις ἔχει μεγάλην μισθαποδοσίαν⁴⁴.

5. The Judgment in the Perspective of Salvific History

In order to complete our analyses we should try to place this announcement of judgment in the perspective of the whole book. It will let us answer the question: to what extent does Rev 11:15-18 constitute an announcement of the last judgment? In order to do so, we should invoke the context in which this announcement appears. Earlier, we noted that there is a close connection between 11:15-18 and 11:19–12,18. This close connection is stressed again by two almost identical acclamations resounding in heaven. The first of them appears in 11:15: ἐγένετο

⁴² Cf. H. Preisker, μισθός κτλ., *TDNT* IV, 697-701; It is noteworthy – as Spicq (μισθός, *TLNT* II, 508) states – that “In the four Gospels, the word *misthos* is found exclusively in the sayings of Christ, notably in the Sermon on the Mount, where it retains its old meaning of ‘compensation, recompense’, but at the same time enriches and focuses it in terms of the interiority and spirituality of the new ethics. If the principle of reward – a major aspect of a religious ethic – remains fundamental (God repays each one according to his or her works), it is applied in an original manner under the new covenant, which is contrasted with the old covenant, especially in St. Matthew”.

⁴³ Cf. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 615.

⁴⁴ Cf. R.A. Sikora, „DIAΘΗΚΗ w Apokalipsie św. Jana”, *Wszystko czynię dla Ewangelii: Księga pamiątkowa ku czci o. prof. Hugolina Langkammera OFM* (ed. G. Witaszek – A. Paciorek – A. Kiejza) (Lublin: RW KUL 2000) 391. The term μισθαποδοσία which occurs in Heb 10:35 came into being by a binding of two words: μισθός and ἀποδίδομι.

ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ κόσμου τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ, καὶ βασιλεύσει εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Here we deal with a “song of victory” (*Siegesruf*), the topic of which is an announcement of the reign of God and his Messiah. The verb ἐγένετο occurs in the *aorist* which might suggest that it would denote an event in the past. However, this verb seems to be considered in a similar key as, for example, the verb ἐβασίλευσεν in 19:6. In a common opinion of scholars, this verb should be understood as a Greek equivalent of a Hebrew tense *qatal* of the root קָנַן which expresses the idea of reigning. The verb קָנַן understood in a static sense, means „he reigns”. The other possibility lets us treat the *aorist* in the expression ἐγένετο ἡ βασιλεία as the so called *aorist* ingressive, by means of which a beginning of some state is announced. Of course, in this case we cannot understand it as if God had not reigned earlier but only from one point of time did he begin to reign. Rather, it is about the moment in the course of history when He manifests his reign, when He starts executing his royal authority⁴⁵.

The second similar acclamation appears in 12:10a: ἄρτι ἐγένετο ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ. Here, salvation (ἡ σωτηρία) and power (ἡ δύναμις) are also proclaimed along with the proclamation of the reign (ἡ βασιλεία). In the following verses (10b-12), the results of this demonstration of the royal power of God are elaborated. Next, the reaction of the defeated Satan is shown (13-18). But the very beginning of the execution of judgment is connected here with the appearance of the Messiah (12:1-5). This appearance of the Messiah is shown very briefly by means of invoking two extreme events of his life (12:5). The former is his earthly birth (καὶ ἔτεκεν υἷον), while the latter is his exaltation (καὶ ἠρπάσθη τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ πρὸς τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ). It is interesting that there is no mention of the cross, contrary to expectations. It seems, however, that this is the intention of the author who wanted to show that the whole earthly life of Jesus has a salvific quality. Referring to the events at the beginning and at the end of Jesus’ earthly life, John shows that all that the Messiah did and said can be understood as a demonstration of the royal power of God and, in consequence, this is an announcement of judgment presented as not imminent but already executed⁴⁶.

45 We can see here a reference to numerous texts of the OT, especially to the Psalms, where the expression קָנַן occurs frequently, e.g. Ps 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1. This expression makes an acclamation manifesting the joy of the people because of the royal presence of God and his action for the people. This royal authority of God manifested itself in various manners, especially by his intervention in the history of the world. Executing this rule consisted in executing the judgment over Israel as well as over the nations.

46 Cf. R.H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (NICNT; Grand Rapids – Cambridge: W.B. Eerdmans 1997) 233; J. Roloff, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (ZB NT 18; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag 2001) 126-128.

Thus, when in 11:18 “the right time” (ὁ καιρὸς) is said to have already come, the author probably means the time of the earthly mission of the Messiah. On the basis of Rev 12, we are able to specify what it particularly means to be on the side of the Messiah. According to 12:11, the victory takes place thanks to both “the blood of the Lamb” and “the word to which they [Christians] bore witness”, whereas Rev 12:17 adds only one “definition” of “the rewarded ones”: they are those who “obey God’s commandments and bear witness to Jesus”⁴⁷. Failing to do so, one can be counted among “the dead”.

Such an image of the judgment corresponds with a similar idea in the Fourth Gospel, which can support the thesis that both works originate from the same theological school. It is supported by some evidence:

- 1) The verb κρίνω in the Johannine Gospel seems to have a similar connotation as in Revelation. It is confirmed by the followings texts: John 3:17, where it is said that God did not send his Son into the world ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον (cf. J 12:47); J 3,18a: ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται⁴⁸.
- 2) In the Fourth Gospel, the judgment is shown as already accomplished. Obviously, it is connected with the idea of the so called “partially realized eschatology”: the prince of this world has already been condemned (ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου κέκριται); whoever does not believe has already been judged (J 3:18b: ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται, ὅτι μὴ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ). The instrument of this judgment is the word of Jesus, i.e., his teaching. Accepting or rejecting it, a man sides with God or with the evil one (John 12:48)⁴⁹.
- 3) In the Fourth Gospel the term οἱ νεκροὶ seems to have a similar semantic nuance. It is evident especially in John 5:25: ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν ὅτε οἱ νεκροὶ ἀκούσουσιν τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀκούσαντες

47 On the subject of obeying God’s commandments, see: T. Siemieniec, “Wiara jako zobowiązanie. Teologiczny sens czasownika THREIN (‘strzec’) w Apokalipsie Janowej”, *KST* 11 (2012) 212; on the subject of the blood of the Lamb, see: D. Kotecki, „Misterium crucis Jezusa w życiu chrześcijan w świetle Apokalipsy św. Jana”, *Krzyż Twój wielbimy* (ed. A. Paciorek – A. Tronina – P. Łabuda) (Scripturae Lumen 3; Tarnów: Biblos 2011) 257-292; on the subject of the testimony of Jesus: A.A. Trites, „Μάρτυς and Martyrdom in the Apocalypse”, *NovT* 15 (1973) 72-80 and P. Podeszwa, *Paschalna pamięć o Jezusie. Studium egzegetyczno-teologiczne wyrażenia ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ w Apokalipsie św. Jana* (Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza, Wydział Teologiczny, Studia i Materiały 142; Poznań: UAM Wydział Teologiczny 2011) 98-104 and 273-274.

48 Cf. R. Schnackenburg, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (HTKNT IV/1; Freiburg – Basel – Wien: Herder 2002) 426: “‘Gericht’ wird ... nur negativ als Straf-, Verdammungs-, Todesgericht verstanden. Dieser engere Sprachgebrauch ist neben der Vorstellung vom Gericht über die Guten und Bösen, ‘um einem jedem zu vergelten nach seinen Werken’ (Röm 2,6f; vgl. 2 Kor 5,10; Röm 14,10) schon in Urchristentum vor Joh und als ‘Zorn(gericht)’ Gottes auch in Judentum anzutreffen”.

49 Cf. Schnackenburg, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* 426-428.

ζήσουσιν. The dead ones who will hear the voice of the Son of God are, in fact, not dead, because they have come back to life⁵⁰.

Conclusions

The analyses made above lead us to the following conclusions:

- The judgment presented in Rev 11:15-18 has two dimensions: a positive and a negative one. The matter is, on the one hand, the reward for the faithful, and on the other hand, the punishment for the unfaithful. In the text discussed, a positive dimension of the judgment has been defined as “reward” (δοῦναι τὸν μισθόν). This reward is being given to the faithful, to whom some descriptions refer: οἱ δούλοι, οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸ ὄνομα, οἱ προφήται καὶ οἱ ἄγιοι and οἱ μικροὶ καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι. The punitive judgment has been expressed by the verbs κρίνω and διαφθείρω. Both specify each other. The culprits in this judgment are described as οἱ νεκροί and οἱ διαφθείροντες τὴν γῆν. The former term is to be understood in a spiritual meaning. The sentence pronounced on them is a typical example of retributive justice.
- Because the term οἱ νεκροί is to be understood spiritually (i.e. “the spiritually dead”), one cannot see a direct announcement of the last judgment in the discussed text. The analysis of the following context shows that the judgment is performed by means of the events depicted in Rev 12. A criterion of affiliation regarding one of the two groups (the rewarded or the punished) is the attitude towards the Messiah presented in Rev 12:5. It does not mean that there is no relationship between the judgment having been already executed and the last judgment. The verdict pronounced by the latter one will be a logical consequence of what now takes place.
- The analyzed text shows that the judgment presented in the Book of Revelation corresponds with the idea of judgment in the Fourth Gospel. In both works we have a similar perspective based on the so called “partially realized eschatology”. It would be a successive argument confirming the affinity of ideas in the Fourth Gospel and in the Book of Revelation, and it can support the thesis concerning common authorship of both books.

⁵⁰ Cf. C. Keener, *The Gospel of John. A Commentary* (Grand Rapids 2003) I, 652-653: “Those who believe ‘hear’ or ‘heed’ Jesus’ voice (cf. 18,37), which for John’s audience can allude to the Spirit’s life-giving power in creating and leading disciples (3,8; 10,3-4). Thus when Jesus cries ‘with a great voice’ and Lazarus comes forth alive (11,43-44), this act prefigures Jesus’ eschatological role but also symbolizes his present role as giver of life (11,26)”; B. Urbanek, “Rola głosu i słowa Jezusa w dziele objawienia w Czwartej Ewangelii”, *Słowo Boże w życiu i misji Kościoła* (ed. S. Szymik) (Analecta Biblica Lublinensia 4; Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL 2009) 131-153 (esp. annotation 59).

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