

Biblical Facts About Fire

By

Herbert Morehart

Introduction

The purpose of this writing is to examine the many times in the Scriptures that speak of fire. The experience of this preacher is that there are a wide variety of thoughts about this subject. It seems that many associated every mention of fire in the word as a reference to hell. No claim is made that everything that is written here is the absolute truth, but to cause us to give some honest thought to the various times that fire is mentioned in the word.

Hell is presented by the Lord to his disciples as a warning to those who would offend one of his little ones. This is written as a warning to the Lord's people. Ungodly conduct will cause one's life's works to be burned and he will miss reigning with Christ.

Hell is presented as "sheol" in the Old Testament and "hades" in the New Testament. All who died before the resurrection of Jesus went to this place because the redemption price had not yet been paid. After his crucifixion, the saints then were moved to Paradise, which is the place where the saints go at death in this age.

The New Testament teaching about hell is examined. Jesus went there after his crucifixion and was then raised to sit at God's right hand. He suffered so mankind will not have to go there and suffer for their sins.

He paid the price for all who trust in him. Vengeance will be upon those who know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Have all obeyed? One may begin to wonder at this point just who the wicked are. What does it mean to "Fail of the grace of God"? What happens to the servant who "knew his lord's will and prepared not himself?"

Events of the last days that involve hell and fire are examined. Jesus comes to destroy the armies of Antichrist and to pour out his wrath upon the ungodly world that is left after he takes his saints out of the world. No more does Jesus appear as the Lamb slain for the sins of the world, but he comes as judge with garments stained with the blood of those whom he destroys in his vengeance.

An angel from heaven binds Satan in the bottomless pit for one thousand years. He then turns his attention to those who worshipped the antichrist and took his mark during the tribulation period of seven years. One may be surprised to learn that the saved are not taken out of the world at the beginning of the tribulation time. Jesus then determines what nations will be permitted to live into the kingdom age.

The judgment seat of Christ takes place and the saints are rewarded for their faithful work in the church age, and are given their place of rule with him. Jesus is presented in the Revelation as the one who has the keys of hell and of death. There is much misconception about hell and who is in charge of it. In the Old Testament days, Satan did have the charge of this area until Jesus was crucified, went there and took the keys away from him. Satan has no more to say about who goes to hell than anyone else now. Jesus is the gatekeeper.

Hell is presented as the place where the souls of the wicked go until the resurrection just prior to the white throne judgment. In the account of the rich man and Lazarus who is recorded in Luke 16, the wicked are suffering while the righteous are comforted. Jesus said that in this life the rich man had the good things and Lazarus evil, and now Lazarus is comforted and the rich man is tormented.

The beast worshippers during the tribulation period are dealt with in Revelation 14. It is stated that the people who took the mark and worshipped the beast were to drink of the wrath of God. This has caused many to conclude that no saved would take the mark of the beast, for God would surely not do this to any that were saved. Let us not forget that God responds to man as man responds to the opportunities that he has to please God.

The harlot and Babylon are burned with fire and destroyed when the Lord Jesus comes to the earth to set up his earthly kingdom. The harlot is the false religious system that is part of the antichrist who rules in the tribulation period. Babylon consists of the ungodly economic and political system in addition to false religion, which will all be destroyed when Jesus comes to the earth.

God's purification process is dealing with the destruction of this sinful world system and the earth that has been polluted by greedy men as they sought riches in this life. God's people are warned about willful sins and their consequences. The very introduction of the ministry of Jesus was filled with warnings by John the Baptist that Jesus would baptize with fire. Fire will melt this present earth and a new earth will come down to replace it. All of man's accomplishments will go up in smoke. Jesus' accomplishments will take their place.

At the end of the millennium or kingdom age of one thousand years, the White Throne Judgment will take place. This will include all who were not at the Judgment seat of Christ. A great revelation will take place at this time. There will be sad disappointments and dashed hopes when the works of the wicked are revealed. Some will think they do not belong there, but if Jesus places them there, then so it will be. He is the Judge.

Death and Hell as a place and condition of the wicked are presented from the word of God in **Revelation 20**. This tells of the final disposition of the earth's population that were not in the first resurrection just prior to the Judgment Seat of Christ. Death and Hell are cast into the lake of fire and they cease to exist. Those who inhabited hell in death are delivered up and cast into the lake of fire. Hell is no longer needed. The final sentence is announced and the wicked are sentenced to their respective places in the lake of fire to suffer according to their works.

The final chapter deals with the final place for all the earth's inhabitants from Adam down to the time that Jesus comes back and the family life exists no longer. Each person that has been faithful to Jesus will be given the proper reward. Each person that has been wicked or unfaithful is given their proper sentence. The faithful and wicked are each described in the word of God and all should accept this definition in the place of the one that many will give in its place.

Malachi 3:18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Psalms 106:3 -- Blessed *are* they that keep judgment, *and* he that doeth righteousness at all times.

I John 2:29 -- If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

I John 3:7 -- Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

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Chapter 1 - Gehenna Hell

Mark 9:38-48

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For he that is not against us is on our part.

41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

42 And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

These Scriptures set forth two different ideas concerning service to the Lord. The Apostle John reported to Jesus that they saw one casting out devils in his name and they forbad him, because they did not follow with Jesus and his group. Jesus responded by saying that they should not forbid him since one who does a miracle in his name could not speak lightly of him, and he that is not against us is on our part (is for us).

Much is said and taught in the Lord's house concerning the activities of the churches. One should be reminded at this point that there is much involved in serving the Lord acceptably, the greatest perhaps, is having an honest and good heart. If the intention of one who attempts to serve

the Lord is good, one would do well to be careful about hindering that cause. The idea is that the one who is for us cannot be against us.

It is stated by the Lord that if a person gives a cup of water to drink to one who belongs to Christ, he will not lose his reward. Some mistakenly believe that to be saved and baptized and attending one of the Lord's churches will guarantee a seat beside Jesus in the kingdom reign. This one may have little or no part in the kingdom reign, but will have what he deserves. This scripture seems to teach that there will be some outside the Lord's churches that have a reward. See **verse 41**. There may be some in the Lord's churches that think a reward is forthcoming, and will be sadly disappointed in that day.

Matthew 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.

I. GEHENNA - HELL IS ABOUT ATTITUDE

A. A defining of the place. *geena* = Greek = comes from a term used in the Old Testament designating a place, "Valley of the Son of Hinnom" which came to be known as the place of lamentation. It is first mentioned in Joshua as part of the settlement of the tribes of Israel in Palestine. Its first descriptive mention is found in:

2 Kings 23:10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

The word "*geena*" is the Greek rendition of the name "*Hinnom*" since the words in Hebrew do not correspond with the Greek words. Hinnom came to be synonymous with our word *lamentation*." It was so called from the cries of little children who were thrown into the fiery arms of Moloch, who was an idol having the form of a bull. The Jews so abhorred the place after these horrible sacrifices had been abolished by King Josiah in 2 Kings 23:10, that they cast into it all manner of refuse, even the dead bodies of animals and of unburied criminals who had been executed. And since fires were always needed to consume the dead bodies that the air might not be tainted by putrefaction (decomposition of organic matter), it came to pass that the place was called "*geenna* ton puros" "*gehenna the fire*," which is translated most of the time "hell fire.

This was understood by many that the Scriptures teach that fire was then a symbol of penalty. It is found in **Leviticus 10:2**, that the fire from the Lord went out and devoured Nadab and Abihu because they put strange fire in their censer and offered it before the Lord. This was in violation of the commands of God in **Leviticus 6:12**.

This was carried over into the New Testament language and should be understood to be a place of penalty.

1. This word "geena" which is translated "hell" in the passage from Mark at the beginning of this chapter, has absolutely no relationship to the word "ades" or "hades" which is the usual word for hell in the New Testament. Hades denotes the place where the spirits of the wicked dead are sent after death. The Old Testament used the word "sheol" which is translated "sheol" and designated a place where the spirits of all the dead, including the soul of Christ after his crucifixion, went after death. **Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:25-28**. The soul of Samuel also went there. **I Samuel 28**.

It is believed that when Jesus broke the bonds of hades in his resurrection, he then went and preached to the other spirits in prison (hades or hell). He took them with him to glory in his ascension, **Ephesians 4:8-9**, and that they are with him today, **Revelation 6:9**, just as he promised the thief on the cross in **Luke 23:43**. The Apostle Paul saw one of the dead saints there many years after his death. **I Corinthians 12:2-4**.

It is unfortunate that the translators called "Hades" and "Geena" by the same word "hell" in the New Testament. It poses a theological problem to the Lord's people if we do not make the distinction between the two in our Bible study. The term "whosoever" that Jesus uses in **Mark 9:42** must be understood to apply primarily to those to whom he was speaking, which did include the Apostles and other disciples as noted in **verses 31, 33, 34**. One must apply the rules of interpretation to this word as well as to all others. It is seen that he is not speaking to the wicked of the world, but rather to the disciples. This is true of the same usage in other Scriptures.

Matthew 5:1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

It is easily seen that the people to whom this address is made are the disciples which is understood to be the church. The "hell fire" used in the above scripture comes from "geena" and not "hades" which is the term used by the Lord in Revelation 1:18 -- I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. These keys must be the authority over hell that he

took from Satan when he overcame him and spoiled his goods after having bound him.

Mark 3:27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

2, The people of Israel understood perfectly the usage of the term "gehenna" because the Jerusalem inhabitants used it and were very familiar with it. Jesus is telling the Jews that if their hand offended them, it would be better for them to cut it off and enter into life maimed than having two hands to be cast into hell (gehenna), into the fire that never shall be quenched, and where the worm dieth not.

It is not difficult to see in the mind's eye that at the garbage dump, there would be the worms eating the flesh of the decomposing bodies and assorted garbage that was dumped there. What a shock it must have been to the Jew to say that if his life was not controlled by not offending one of the little ones that believe in Christ, his life was good for nothing but to be cast into the garbage dump with the filth and bodies of dead animals and criminals whom no one would claim. This same application is made to Gentiles as they later came into the church also. This must be the application that is made in the word.

Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in heft. (gehenna)

There is a strong implication here that the destruction of the soul is qualified by the words of Paul to the churches.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

What is left of the life after the wood, hay and stubble is burned out of it? This relates to the salvation of life rather than the spirit. This terminology is used again in the word below.

Matthew 23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell (gehenna) than yourselves.

Judaism had become a failed religion, and those who taught disciples to walk in Judaism after the manner of the scribes and Pharisees would be fit for nothing but to have their lives thrown on the garbage dump. One would not want to follow a hypocrite, which is the name that Jesus used to describe them. This is the reason that Jesus cautioned the disciples

about how the little ones (babes in Christ) were treated. One can easily lead the little ones, and they will be led into the wrong path just as easily as in the right path. All of the Lord's people will be answerable to him for their conduct.

3. It is not difficult to believe that some of the scribes and Pharisees were saved men but walking in darkness, just as Saul (later called Paul) was walking in darkness when God called him on the Damascus road. Could this not be the case also with some today who think they are standing in truth, when in fact, they are about to fall, and great will be their fall?

Matthew 23:33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? This hell is "gehenna" which deals with one's life works. One who spends his life abusing the little ones that believe in Jesus as did the scribes and Pharisees are just as sure for the garbage dump as were these who lived in Jesus' day. One problem is that there is no fear of God before their eyes as noted in Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (gehenna)

This same term is used in Luke 12:5 –

But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; (gehenna) yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

The context is found in verse 1 and speaks of hypocrisy.

Luke 12:1 he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

This scripture speaks of the tongue being a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue among our members defiles the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of (gehenna) Hell. The world's speech today is right out of the garbage dump, and God's people should be careful how it is imitated in their lives. The garbage dump is where the speech will be found when God purges the earth of this ungodliness. The word "gehenna" Hell has to do with loss of reward in the treatment of the brethren in the Lord's churches.

Gehenna hell fire seems to be for the purpose of penalty and punishment. The penalty is loss of reigning with Christ and the bride in the millennium or kingdom age. The punishment is that one will be in an inferior position on the new earth, outside of the holy city, new Jerusalem. This will place one apart from Jesus and the blessings that others accrue from the virtues of Jesus Christ while near to him. This is the meaning of the better resurrection which is mentioned in Hebrews 11:35.

Chapter II - A Visit to Hell

Psalm 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Some facts should be known in order to understand this place or state. The word "hell" is translated in the New Testament from the Greek word "hades." It is defined as "The place of the dead, the unknown." It is called by this title in the Old Testament because no one had gone there and returned to tell about it. In the King James version of the Bible, the Old Testament word for "hell" comes from the word "sheol" and it is so translated thirty times. It is translated thirty- one times as "grave" and three times as "pit."

There are many different opinions about sheol occasioned by the differing approaches to the Old Testament teaching on a future life. For example, some believe in soul-sleeping, that there is no future life after physical death, the grave is hell, etc. The resurrection for the righteous is clearly and repeatedly expressed by Job, Enoch, Elijah and others, especially in types and shadows. See **Job 19:25; Jude 14; I Kings 17th chapter**. There is less emphasis placed on the intermediate state and destiny of the wicked in the Old Testament than in the New Testament.

The future life is affirmed in many places in the Old Testament, although details are not abundant. One problem that some have with "Sheol" is that both good men as Jacob, as is seen in **Genesis 37:35 For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning**, and bad men as Korah, Dathan. etc., go there, as recorded in **Numbers 16:30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit (sheol); then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.**

This led the early church to believe that the saints went to a different partition of Sheol, from which Jesus delivered them at his resurrection. This is verified by New Testament Scriptures such as **1 Peter 3:19** and **Ephesians. 4:8** and also the account of the rich man and Lazarus in **Luke 16:20-31**. Some believe that Sheol does not describe a place where the souls (life = mind and spirit) go, but where the body goes, meaning the grave.

I. SHEOL TRANSLATED AS GRAVE

A. One can see from the following Scriptures that some spoke of going to the place of departed spirits only in the sense of the cessation of life here on earth, which would prevent them from experiencing further accomplishments here on the earth.

1. Such is the case with Jacob as he sorrowed concerning the wicked thing that happened to Joseph when his brothers dug a pit into which they cast him. As they were plotting to sell him to the Ishmaelites, Midianite merchantmen came by, pulled him out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. The brothers put blood on the coat of many colors and took it to Jacob, who thought an evil beast had devoured Joseph. Then the actions and words of Jacob are recorded.

Genesis 37:34, 35 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

2. In a later conversation, yet about the same son that had been lost to him, Jacob is recorded as saying in **Genesis 42:38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave** (sheol). He is quoted again in **Genesis 44:29** and **Genesis 44:31**, saying the same thing.

The same language is used by Hezekiah when he speaks of his own death. Here the language plainly has reference to cessation of life here on the earth, and does not address the eternal state of the dead, as these other Scriptures do also. **Isaiah 38:10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.**

18 For the grave (sheol) cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

David used this word when he was speaking of God healing him in his sickness.

Psalms 30:20 LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. 0 LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave (sheol): thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

The word "pit" in the above Scriptures comes from "bowr" and not "sheol" as in previous places. David used "sheol" when speaking in terms of death as the cessation of life here on the earth. See **Psalms 6:5; 31:17; 49:14-15; 88:3; 89:48.**

B. The same word is used of the place where the wicked would go at their death. All Scriptures below use shed as grave.

1. When David charged Solomon just prior to his death concerning Joab and Shimei, these are his words.

I Kings 2:6, 9-12 Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace. 9 Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and

knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.

Solomon speaks of the end of life for sinners who plot against the innocent for no cause.

Proverbs 1:10-12 My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. 11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: 12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

Ezekiel prophesied in the same manner when he spoke of the death of Pharaoh.

Ezekiel 31:15-18 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. 16 I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth. 17 They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen. 18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

C. Death (the grave) is described as one of the things that is never satisfied.

Proverbs 30:15, 16 The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, it is enough: 16 The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water and the fire that saith not, it is enough.

1. The wise man, Solomon, speaks of opportunities to do things in life that will all cease in the grave (sheol).

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for these is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

2. Solomon speaks of death (sheol) as being cruel, depriving one of joys that could be received.

Song of Solomon 8:6 Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is

cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

3. This same word is used by Isaiah when speaking of the end of the reign of Satan and the kings of the earth when Jesus returns.

Isaiah 14:11 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viola: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

4. Hosea prophesied of bringing Israel back from the dead and restoring them as God's people to live again in the kingdom age. On the surface and at first glance, this may suggest to some that the dead Israelites will be raised to reign with Jesus in the millennial kingdom age. It more probably has to do with the nation of Israel that is grafted back in when they accept the Messiah at the close of the tribulation period when he comes and saves some of them alive physically from the armies of the anti-christ. The Lord speaks and makes promises to the nation of Israel just as he did previously to the church. He includes those who are living at the time his prophecy comes true, and not those who were living when he is speaking.

Hosea 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

II. LIFE AFTER DEATH IN SHEOL

Prior remarks from the Scriptures given above are used to describe the cessation of life on the earth, with not much, if any, reference to the type of experience one would have after going there. In the presentation of the Old Testament word "Sheol" that is used by the King James translators as 'Heir we shall see a different application of the term altogether. One can see from this application that hell (Sheol) is a place where the wicked go after death and also the nations who forget God by living without a thought for the afterlife. This application of the word "Sheol" is quite common in the Scriptures.

A. The Lord uses the word "Hell" in speaking to Israel.

1. He speaks of his feelings when Israel provoked him in their worship of strange gods and abominations that they had done.

Deuteronomy 32:22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

2. The Lord is mindful that this place is there, and the hearts of the children of men are also evident to him, which will determine their destiny.

Proverbs 15:11 Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

3. The Lord compares Israel's deeds when they debased themselves, even unto hell.

Isaiah 57:9-11 And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell. 10 Thou art weaned in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved. 11 And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

4. This is similar to what Ephriam did when the Lord predicted their being trodden under by the armies of the Assyrians.

Isaiah 28:15-18 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: 16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. 17 Judgment also will (lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. 18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

5. The Lord spoke through Amos when he was about to scatter the Israelites throughout the earth.

Amos 9:2 Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

6. He prophesies against Israel and speaks to them as to a drunken and proud man.

Habakkuk 2:5 Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

7. The Lord gives a graphic illustration to Jonah in his disobedience to the call of the Lord to him.

Jonah 2:2 And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

8. Then he was resurrected when he received the Lord as one who expected thanksgiving and obedience to the vows that had been made. He demonstrated this when he said in verse 9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; 1 Will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.
9. Hell is a place where the wicked go at death.

Psalms 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

10. He is speaking here of the place where the wicked went after death in the Old Testament days. More will be said regarding these when the New Covenant promises In Christ are presented.

DEFINE "WICKED" = Those guilty of violating the social rights of others. They were oppressive, violent, greedy and engaged in plotting against and trapping poor people. They were quite willing to murder to gain their ends. They were dishonest in business and in the courtroom.

11. One Israelite smites his brother.

Exodus 2:13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

12. The Israelite was to take no satisfaction (ransom) for the life of a murderer. Numbers 35:31 Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which *is* guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death. This is seen in the words of David to Rechab and Baanah after they had slain Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul just after David had become king of Israel.

2 Samuel 4:11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?

13. Jehu rebukes king Jehoshaphat concerning his alliance with Ahab.

2 Chronicles 19:2 Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

14. All of the above Scriptures deal with the covenant people of God. This is also undoubtedly true of the rich man in [Luke 16](#).
15. The definition of the wicked in God's word is vastly different from that which is used in the pulpits of the world when

religious people begin to admonish those whom they call wicked. It is clear from the following scripture that the Lord considers the wicked as those who do not serve God. Many call unsaved people "wicked" but this is man's work. Saved people can be and are wicked if they do not serve the Lord. One is not righteous when he is saved, but rather when he devotes his life to the Lord and serves God as the Scriptures require.

Malachi 3:18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

DEFINE GENTILES = All nations in the world with the exception of Israel after the call of Abraham. These are generally considered to be non-covenant people, though not necessarily unsaved. They are generally addressed in the word of God as unbelievers.

16. Covenant people, Israel, addressed.

David speaks of the betrayal of a friend who went to the house of God with him. This is similar to the statement concerning the one who would betray the Lord.

Psalm 55:12-15 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: 13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. 14 We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company. 15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

Psalm 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

17. The Lord warns those who are classified as "strange women" or adultresses and their destiny is told in the Scriptures by the wise man, Solomon.

Proverbs 5:5 Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

Proverbs 7:27 Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

18. God also deals with those who were non-covenant people. Note how God dealt with Pharaoh.

Ezekiel 31:16-18 I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth. 17 They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.

18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

19. The strong and the mighty of Egypt speak from hell.

Ezekiel 32:18-21 Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit. 19 Whom dost thou pass in beauty? go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised. 20 They shall fall in the midst of them that are slain by the sword: she is delivered to the sword: draw her and all her multitudes. 21 The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

III. HELL IS DESCRIBED IN TYPICAL LANGUAGE

- A. David speaks of this time of terror when his enemies were after him.

1. David praised God for delivering him from the hand of all his enemies including Saul. He likened his position to that of the sorrows of hell.

2 Samuel 22:1-6 And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: 2 And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; 3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour, thou savest me from violence. 4 I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. 5 When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; 6 The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

2. David praised God for being with him even if he made his bed in Hell.

Psalms 139:8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

3. 3. Solomon was inspired of God to write that man can escape hell with a higher and better life.

Proverbs 15:24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

4. Chastening will deliver the soul of a child from hell.

Proverbs 23:13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

B. Hell will make room for all.

1. Hell and destruction are never full (satisfied).

Proverbs 27:20 Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

2. Hell has enlarged herself because of the sinfulness of the people of Israel Hell's mouth is opened wide, ready to devour.

Isaiah 5:14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

3. Hell beneath is moved (stirred up in anticipation) to meet those who are coming.

Isaiah 14:9 Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it bath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

4. Satan shall be brought down to hell.

Isaiah 14:15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

5. The soul of Jesus went there after his crucifixion.

Psalms 16:10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

IV. SHEOL IS TRANSLATED THREE TIMES AS PIT.

A. This seems to be a special treatment of the word "sheol" for these special circumstances. 1. Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On rose up before Moses with two hundred fifty princes of Israel and began to question the authority of Moses. There was a discussion with these men, and it eventually came before the Lord to settle the issue.

Numbers 16:3 And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?

It was time for God to re-establish Moses' authority before the people, and he did it in a way that could not be misunderstood by the

children of Israel. Moses told Korah that tomorrow God would show who was his and who is holy.

Numbers 16:5 And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.

Dathan and Abiram were invited to come, but they refused. Instead they accused Moses of bringing them up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill them in the wilderness arid make himself altogether a prince over them. They also accused him of not bringing them into their inheritance and asked if he would put out the eyes of these men. See verses **13-14** Korah and his followers brought their censers with fire in them to the tabernacle and the glory of the Lord appeared there. **Verse 19.**

The Lord instructed Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation that he might consume them. **Verse. 21.** Moses interceded and asked if he would be angry with the whole congregation for the sin of one man. **Verse 22.** The Lord told him to tell the congregation to get up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. **Verses 28-35** record the judgment of the Lord against these men who questioned the authority of Moses. They did not die a common death. The Lord provided a special fiery punishment for these who rose up against the order of worship that he prescribed for Israel.

Verse 29 if these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me.

30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

Chapter III - Deliverance to the Captives

Luke 4:17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

These Scriptures tell of the many things the Lord would accomplish

while in the world. It is certain from this scripture reading that Jesus came to do more, much more, than to save the lost. This is certainly part of it, but let the reader look at some of the things that Jesus said that he was to accomplish during his personal ministry on the earth.

I. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME

A. Some things are evident from this statement. It is easy to

determine from the word of God when the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. He was anointed to do his work as high priest over the house of God before he began his ministry. The fact that he was anointed and the exact time of his anointing is defined in the word.

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy

Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

These Scriptures also establish beyond question that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead. Jesus was being baptized, Holy Spirit came upon him like a dove, and God the Father spoke out of heaven placing his approval upon the Son. It is difficult to understand how one can deny the existence of a triune God when it is so plainly taught in the word. It is important to follow the will of God revealed in the word when

baptizing or doing anything for him if one expects his life works to be accepted of him.

1 Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to

God by Jesus Christ.

Holy Spirit is the silent one in the Godhead He makes no claims for himself. He does not speak on his own behalf nor defend himself, This may be the reason that Jesus told the self-righteous Pharisees that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Spirit) would not be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come. **Matthew 12:31-32.** He testifies of Christ and glorifies Christ to God's people. One should not praise Holy Spirit, for this is not the will of God. Holy Spirit leads people to glorify Christ. **John 16:13-14.** If one brags on and glorifies Holy Spirit, then that person is being led of another spirit that is opposed to Holy Spirit. **I John 4:1.** Then it follows that one must be careful how he responds to the leading and conviction of Holy Spirit, being careful to not mistreat one who does not defend himself.

B. The Reason for the Holy Spirit Anointing.

This reason is explained in **Acts 10:38** to which reference is made above, it is stated that he was anointed with Holy Spirit and POWER. It is Stated in **Luke 4:18** at the beginning of this chapter that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Jesus because he (God) had anointed him to preach the gospel to the poor. The gospel that Jesus preached was the gospel of the kingdom, meaning that the kingdom is coming and preparation must be made to enter into this kingdom to reign with Jesus for one thousand years. This preaching of Jesus went far beyond the good news that Jesus died for sinners that they might be saved. He preached to people already under covenant to him, with the understanding that they were already saved, just as church members today are under covenant to God, being qualified for church membership by salvation and scriptural baptism. Note what the words say of the preaching of Jesus. This was also the message of John the Baptist who was the one who came before him, announcing the coming of the Messiah.

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

God anointed Jesus to preach the gospel to the poor. These poor are defined by J.H. Thayer in his "Greek *English Lexicon*" as "to be thoroughly frightened, to cower down or hide one's self, one who slinks or crouches.

These may be mistaken as the poor in the flesh or destitute of earthly things only, but one does not qualify for the kingdom by being poor in worldly goods, but by the things mentioned above. These are addressed in the Scriptures by Jesus in the sermon on the mount.

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus also testified to the Jews in the audience in the synagogue that God had sent him to heal the broken hearted.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.

The above scripture tells of the pitiful condition of mankind when Jesus came on the scene several hundred years later. The covenant people of God were the ones addressed here. It told of the awful condition of his people under the law that had been given by God, but corrupted by the ungodly leadership of his chosen nation. These people were listening to their leaders, but their leaders were not following God's instructions. As a result there was no hope for them in their lives. Dashed hopes means broken hearts in any time or nation, even the people of God when God's word is not preached in simplicity and fullness.

It is said that Jesus was anointed to preach deliverance to the captives. Deliverance is bound up in the word "redemption" and implies the setting free of a captive. The Israelites were captives to the law that they could not keep, and under the lead of their pastors, they were in bondage to the law that they had so corrupted. The gospel that he brought to the New Testament church delivered them from this captivity. This is the preaching of Jesus to the captives that is recorded by the Apostle Peter.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; 20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

By the power of this same Holy Spirit anointing, Jesus brought recovering of the sight to the blind. It is interesting that Jesus did not perform one miracle until Holy Spirit came upon him at his baptism. Some may want to re-think their position on baptism that says, "Baptism is not really important, it only pictures outwardly that which has happened inwardly to the saved person." It is not known where this statement originated, but one thing is sure, it did not come from the Bible. One may be sure that this is not the reason that Jesus was baptized, nor does the Scriptures give this as the reason. Some claim to be able to heal the sick, even restore sight to the blind today without

the anointing of Holy Spirit, being not members of the Lord's church. The New Testament reveals that baptism always precedes the receiving of Holy Spirit except in the case of Cornelius, which was a special situation. Jesus' ability to perform miracles was one of the proofs that he was who he claimed to be.

Acts 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Luke 7:22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

C. How he delivered the captives.

1. First, it would be necessary to determine how the human race became captive. Adam, in the garden of Eden, obeyed the voice of Satan in the serpent instead of the voice of the Lord. This caused the whole earth to be subjected to sin and death and captive to the god of this age. As a result, when man died, he was in the clutches of Satan and under his control. The first Adam sold mankind into sin and now there must be someone to pay the redemption price.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

2. Jesus came to preach deliverance to the captives, but it is an entirely different matter to carry out the promises made in **Luke 4:18**. In order to do this, the seed of the woman had to bruise or crush the serpent's head according to the words of the Lord to Adam and Eve. Jesus also had to be the sinless sacrifice in order for God to accept his person and work. It was necessary also for Jesus to be willing to offer his body as a sacrifice for sin. This one sacrifice superseded all other sacrifices that went before him.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Psalms 40:8 I delight to do thy Will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

Hebrews 10:5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure

therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, 10, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

D. He delivered the captives because he is stronger than Satan and overcame him.

Mark 3:27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

Jesus now has the keys of hell (hades) and death (thanatos). In the new covenant blessings, there is the promise of life that the saints before Christ did not enjoy. This life is described as (zoa aionios= quality life) which is the new thing that came to the people of God through the works of Jesus Christ. This is what the angels and prophets of old desired to look into but were not permitted to see. This life came about when Jesus delivered the souls of the saints from Sheol - Hades into paradise into the presence of God.

Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

II Timothy 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

2. Jesus interrupted every funeral that is recorded in the Scriptures that he came into contact with during his personal ministry. He raised them all up from death, and even raised Lazarus after he had been buried for four days. Satan lost his grip on these, and it happened because they were delivered from the region and shadow of death by the receiving of the gospel of the kingdom which Jesus preached.

John 11:38-44 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days. 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I

said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Matthew 4:16, 17 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3. The Apostle Paul called it, **Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Colossians 1:13.** This word, "death" comes from "thanatos" in the old language and is the place where the dead outside of Christ go when the body dies. On the other hand, the saints "sleep" in Jesus and are in the light and the life of Jesus Christ

1 Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

D. The result of the deliverance of the captives is wonderful.

He is my brother and he is not ashamed of it. He will declare his name among the brethren and will sing praise in the midst of the church. There is an intimate relationship in the church that does not exist any other place. The church saint has a new name, a close relationship of spiritual communion with God through the Spirit and the conscious assurance of salvation.

Hebrews 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

Revelation 2:17 To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

2. He redeemed us and set us free from the curse of the law and also made us free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. Knowing the truth will make one free, and if the Son makes one free, then he is free indeed (really). This freedom can only come through knowledge of the Scriptures. Being free obligates us to be servant of all. The saints are

not to use this freedom as a cloke of maliciousness, but as servants of God.

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

1 Corinthians 9:19 For though I be free from all *men*, yet have I made myself servant unto aft, that I might gain the more.

1 Peter 2:16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

These escaped the fires of penalty and punishment by submitting to the purifying fires of having their works tried and approved as gold, silver and precious stones. **1 Corinthians 3:12-15.**

Chapter IV—New Test. Teaching on Hell

It has already been pointed out that there are two different words in the New Testament language that are translated as 'heir in the King James version of the Bible. One of them is (geena = gehenna) which has been dealt with previously. This chapter Will be presenting the other word that is (ades = hades). It is used concerning several different people and, strangely enough, used concerning cities wthio have since disappeared from civilization. It is intended that "hell" be examined in the context of its use in the New Testament, for the purpose of our understanding of life, and the consequences of it as one makes plans to meet the Lord in eternity. It shall be seen that the decisions made in life will determine our eternal destiny in the after life.

I. HELL AND JESUS CHRIST

A. Hell is set forth as a reality in the word of God.

Luke, chapter sixteen, tells of a rich man who died, and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments. It has been pointed out also that Lazarus was in the same area, with a gulf fixed between the two of them. It also tells us that the rich man had enjoyed the good things in life and Lazarus the evil things. It also says that the rich man is now tormented, and Lazarus is comforted.

Luke 16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. **24** And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger *in* water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. **25** But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. **26** And beside aft this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would* come from thence.

1. The soul of Jesus went to hell (Hades) after his crucifixion. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter quoted the Scriptures that prophesied that Jesus would go to hell. God forsook him on the cross. **Matthew 27:46. Isaiah 53** describes the sorrows and grief he endured. It also tells how he was afflicted, wounded, bruised and

chastened with stripes for our peace and healing. He became sin for us and God laid on him the iniquity of us all. His soul was made an offering for our sins.

Acts 2:25-28 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

Psalm 16:8-10 I have set the LORD always before me: because he *is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. 10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

2. The suffering of Jesus on the cross is stated vividly in the Scriptures, when Jesus asked why God had forsaken him. This suffering must have been caused by the separation from his Father when he became sin for us. Saints will probably never fully know what happened when Jesus became sin for us in the eyes of a righteous God. The unrighteous will know one day, but it will be too late to appreciate it. This may be a point to remember as this study progresses. One can only assume that Jesus had to go to the place of all the dead in order to release the prisoners from the prison house. As has been mentioned previously, Jesus overcame the strong man and then spoiled his house. This indicates that Jesus took something very valuable from Satan, that is, the souls of the saints of God who died and were being held in hades until they were delivered.

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

1 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit

death and controls the destiny of those that are his. Satan previously controlled Mark 3:27 No man can enter into a strong men's house, and

spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and **then he will spoil his house.**

It is said in **Acts 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up** and in **verse 27 neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.** This is fully explained in the discourse later in the book The thought seems to be that raising up of Jesus from the dead prevented his seeing corruption as did David in his death. God raised him up on the third day, which may have some significance. When Lazarus became ill and later died, Jesus came to Bethany where he was told by a sister **Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. John 11:39.** Jesus showed that he had power over corruption of the body in death, for he overcame death when God raised him up and prevented his suffering corruption.

Acts 13:34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. 35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

So enduring Hell must have been suffering the curse of all mankind under the control of Satan until God raised him up by his power. Then Jesus overcame the strong man and spoiled his house by removing everything from it that was valuable. This must have been the souls of the saints of God who had died in Old Testament days who did not have the assurance of resurrection life that the church saints enjoy in this age.

A Jesus accomplished some things in Hades. The words of the Apostle Paul tell us that the sting of death is gone, the victory of the grave is ceased to be because God has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He went and endured, overcame the strong man, spoiled his house and pulled the stinger out of death.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ

1. There is no fear in the hearts of the saints regarding the future state of God's people. The reason that the fear is taken out of death for the saints is that Jesus has the keys of hell and of death and controls the destiny of those that are his. Satan previously controlled but there is nothing there now that is of any value to our Lord since he took the saints to Paradise.

Revelation 1:17, 18 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto

me, Fear not; 1 am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

2. This must be one of the reasons that Jesus told the church in Matthew 16:18 upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The idea of prevailing according to J.H. Thayer in his *Greek English Lexicon* is to be strong to another's detriment, to prevail against; to be superior in strength, to overpower." W.E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* states "The importance and strength of gates made them viewed as synonymous with power. By metonymy, the gates stood for those who held government and administered justice there." This means that Satan will not deter the work of the church in the power of Christ.

H. JESUS TEACHES ABOUT HELL AND CERTAIN CITIES

Luke 10:15, 16 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. 16 He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

A. An interesting statement is made by the Lord to this city for refusing to hear the message of the seventy and their despising of them which Jesus said is the same as despising him. He has just previously pronounced woe upon Chorazin and Bethsaida for failing to respond to the mighty works done there. He told them that it would be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for them.

He had instructed the disciples regarding this attitude of rejection of the message of the kingdom.

Matthew 10:14, 15 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. 15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

He pronounced woe upon the scribes and Pharisees because they asked for a sign from him. He called them evil and adulterous. He said that no sign would be given then but the sign of the prophet Jonah. This sign was that Jonah was three days and nights in the whale's belly and he would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. He then spoke of Nineveh rising up in judgment against them.

Matthew 12:38-41 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be

three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

B. An effort should be made to understand the message given here. Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum are cities that were located at the north end of the Sea of Galilee. They have all ceased to exist because they did not receive the messengers of the covenant that were sent by the Lord to tell them of the coming of Christ.

Tyre and Sidon were two cities that existed for many years on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The Lord caused them to die because they became rich and proud in their pomp and they died and do not exist today as a result.

Sodom and Gomorrah were the cities where Lot lived that God destroyed with fire from heaven because of the sin of sodomy that existed there in such a rampant manner. This terrible sin gave their city its name.

Jesus said that Sodom and Gomorrah and Nineveh would fare better in judgment than the cities of Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Jerusalem, the center of the Jew's religion. The reason is plain. They refused to hear the words of the Messiah and be persuaded by the mighty works done in them to accept him and worship him as their Lord.

A question is raised by the statement of Jesus in Luke 10:15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. Is he planning to cast the buildings, their animals, their people into hell? The city no longer exists, so it would be difficult for this to happen. It will be necessary to look further in the word for an answer.

C. A suggested answer to this question is found in the Scriptures that will be analyzed in order to find an explanation that will be both scriptural and logical.

2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

The subject here is judgment and some of the things that Will take place when Jesus comes to set things aright at the end of the tribulation period. Much of the understanding of the word has to do with how one perceives the events at the return of the Lord. For example, what is the meaning of verse 8 when it is said that he will be revealed (**verse 7**) in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?

It would be easy enough to say that these are the unsaved and let it go at that. It becomes a little difficult when it is noted in the Scriptures that two different words are used, both of which are translated "know' and

can make the usage to mean different things. It will be readily seen that this is true as the Scriptures unfold.

III. VENGEANCE TO THEM THAT KNOW NOT AND OBEY NOT GOD

A. In order to have a view of this scripture from different scholars, three versions of this verse 8 will be given.

1. Diaglott - 'In a flame of fire, dispensing retributive justice to those not acknowledging God, and to those not being obedient to the glad tidings of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

2. A.T. Robertson - from his *Word Pictures in the New Testament*.

"Greek (didontos) = "taking" vengeance = "renderings from root word in Greek (didomi) which means to give. "Vengeance" comes from late word in Greek from (ekdikao) which means to vindicate." The meaning that should be drawn from these words is that God is rendering or giving out justice that vindicates his holiness. For God to be a just and righteous God, one must understand that when he loves good and righteous conduct and rewards it. Then he must also render judgment to the unrighteous and

thereby vindicating the claims that he makes for himself. If he did not do this, he would stand in the position of being rightly criticized.

"To them that know not God." Paul is referring here to Gentiles as those who are not only are not in covenant with the Lord in the church but do not even acknowledge him.

1 Thessalonians 4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

Galatians 4:8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

"And to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus.'

Repetition of the article 'to' looks like another class and so Jews.

Romans 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

Both Jews and Gentiles as officials (politarchs) were involved in the persecution in Thessalonica.

Acts 17:5-9 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 Whom

Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

2 Thessalonians 1:6 Seeing *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;*

3. Phillips translation - it will bring full justice in dazzling flame upon those who have refused to know God or to obey the gospel of our Lord.'

B. It is of importance to note that it is said here that the Lord will take vengeance' upon these. This term is translated by Diaglott as "*dispensing retributive justice.*" Robertson states that it comes from the root word "*vindicate*" and Phillips says "*bring full justice.*" It

should be noted here that the subject is retributive justice, that is, meting out the proper punishment for one's deeds. it also contains the idea of "paying a just penalty."

This vengeance or retributive justice or paying a just penalty is spoken regarding those who "know not God." According to W.E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, he says here of the word used for "know' which is 'eidoo' in the old language of the New Testament, suggests that "you stand in no relation to me, "meaning no covenant relationship. it does not refer to personal salvation, neither does most of this type of statement in the New Testament.

1 Thessalonians 4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

2 Timothy 3:3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

The word "trucebreaker" in the above scripture means "one that is unable to be persuaded to enter into covenant' These people are referred to by Diaglott as 'those not acknowledging God.' Robertson calls them "Gentiles' and quotes **1 Thessalonians 4:5; Galatians 4:8; Ephesians. 2:12.** Phillips says they are 'those who have refused to know GOD.' These have either chosen to refuse to come into the fellowship of the New Covenant, or after having come into it, turned from it and invited God's retributive justice upon them.

Titus 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Romans 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

1. The other word in the New Testament that is translated "know" comes from "ginosko" and frequently indicates a relation between the

person knowing and the object known. In this respect, what is known is of value or importance to the one who knows, and hence the establishment of the relationship, e.g., especially of God's knowledge.

1 Corinthians 8:3 But if any man Jove God, the same is known of him.

Galatians 4:9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

"To be known of God" here suggests that the "knowing" implies "to be approved" and also in **II Timothy 2:19; John 10:14,27; Genesis 18:19 and Nahum 1:7.**

This relationship that is implied here usually involves remedial chastening. **Amos 3:2** You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

Hebrews 12:6-8 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof aft are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

The same idea of appreciation as well as knowledge underlies several statements concerning the knowledge of God and his truth on the part of believers.

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 14:20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

See also **John 17:3; 1 John 2:3,13,14; 4:6,8,16; 5:20.**

Such knowledge is obtained not by mere intellectual activity, but by operation of the Holy Spirit consequent upon acceptance of Christ as mediator of the New Covenant after having been saved and baptized by a scriptural church. What seems to be said by these various scholars is that these spoken of in **Hebrews 12:8** are saved people who have had an opportunity to come into covenant relationship with the Lord, and as such, to "Know = ginosko" God by acknowledging that he is God and Master of their lives. These have chosen not to do so and have invited the retributive justice of God in the judgment.

There seems to be the implication also that some have come into this covenant relationship by salvation and baptism into the Lord's church, but have turned from it. In so doing, these have invited the same penalty upon themselves as those who did not enter into covenant at

all. In fact, the penalty implied in the word of God is quite plain on this subject.

James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Hebrews 12:15-17 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Luke 12:47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

C. Two other translations of verse 9 will give the student of the word some other thoughts on the verse than that which is read in the authorized version.1. Diaglott - *Who shall pay a just penalty - aionion destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his strength.*

2. A.T. Robertson - *Word Pictures in the New Testament.* Who shall suffer punishment (dike tisousin). Future active of old verb 'tino' defined as 'to pay a penalty' (diken - defined as right, justice), used here only in the New Testament but we find 'apotino' once also

meaning to repay. **Philippians 19 I will repay it.** In other writings 'dike' is used for a case or process in law. This is a regular phrase in classic writings for paying the penalty.'

D. The conclusion of **II Thessalonians 1:8-9** reveals some truths that should make each servant of Christ thankful for the blessing of our Lord for providing preservation from this fiery judgment.

The Lord will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that, 1) know not God, and 2) them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let it be understood that this group includes those who are walking in opposition to the gospel of Christ and, in this position, are persecuting the saints of God. This punishment is described in detail by the previous three translations quoted above. From the King James version the promise is made in **verse 9, "who shall be punished."**

1. Diaglott - *pay a just penalty = Aionion destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his strength.*

A. T. Robertson = "Eternal destruction = stands in apposition with penalty "dike." Destruction (See **I Thessalonians 5:3**) does not mean here annihilation, but separation from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, an eternity of woe. Age long is the coming age. Aionios itself only means age-long, the coming age, in contrast to this age."

The coming age is the kingdom age or the one thousand year reign of the saints, the bride of Christ, with Jesus over all the earth as taught in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 20:4-6 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Verse 4 describes these who Will reign with Christ and verse 6 describes the activity that they shall be engaged in for the one thousand years. The word described by Dr. Robertson "dike"

is a kindred word to "dicotomasei" used in **Matthew 24:51** to describe the fate of the evil servant. One must come to grips with the prospect of an evil servant being given his portion with the hypocrites. This term is never applied to one who has never been saved, but rather to one who is a servant (disciple) refusing to do the will of the Lord in his life. His portion with the hypocrites is given at the return of Jesus to the earth to set up his earthly kingdom. This is the subject of **Matthew 24**. One may want to consider that this is what is denied the disciple who denies the Lord while here in this life.

Matthew 10:32, 33 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

2 Timothy 2:12 if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

In summation of **2 Thessalonians 1:6-9** it is pointed out by inspiration of God through the Apostle Paul that he rejoiced in the steadfastness of the church saints at Thessalonica He knew they were suffering for the Lord and that he Will come and judge righteously those who had been persecuting the church folks. He admonished them to rest with Paul and his fellow helpers who had also suffered much for the Lord's cause. The only description of these folks is that they persecuted and brought

tribulations upon the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some church members could fit into this category.

The righteous judgment of God is declared, in that, the tormenters will pay a just penalty or receive retributive justice for their actions. This concept is fine unless one is in the condition of the person who stood before the judge and was assured that he would receive justice for himself. He realized that he was guilty and he knew what justice meant. He therefore, pleaded with the judge for mercy instead of justice. It was too late for him, and too late for the people who were troubling the saints, and now are being paid back for their actions.

The promise is that they will be punished with everlasting destruction, 1) from the presence of the Lord and, 2) from the glory of his power. These will be required to pay a just penalty which is denial from Jesus to be with him in the kingdom age or millennium. Salvation of the spirit of man is a gift from God conditioned only on one's repentance of sin and placing faith in the crucified Saviour.

The reward comes as one builds upon that foundation of Jesus Christ with good works that will stand the testing fires of God. This is the reason for the mention of flaming fire in this passage of scripture. All fire does not mean that hell is being discussed. However, one should not take lightly the attitude of the Lord Jesus when he comes in fiery judgment taking vengeance on these folks. One can escape this penalty and punishment by purifying his life by the teachings of the Scriptures. This will permit him to enjoy the relationship that the bride has in Christ by making herself ready by the washing of the water by the word.
Revelation 19:7, 8; Ephesians. 5:25, 26.

Chapter V - Hell and the Last Day(s)

Revelation 20:1-14 gives the order of events that will take place in the last day, beginning with the return of Christ to the earth. At this time the wrath of God will be poured out upon those left on the earth after the rapture of the saints. Then there will be the judgment of nations to determine what nations will enter into the kingdom age in the flesh. After this, the new government will be established by Christ on the earth. During the one thousand years that will follow, there will be those who will complain about their plight in being excluded from the reign of Christ.

At the end of one thousand years, Satan will be loosed and will gather the nations together to fight against the saints and God will destroy them. Then Satan is cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are. Then the resurrection of all who were not raised in the first resurrection will take place. Death and Hell are cast into the lake of fire. Those not found written in the book of life are then cast into the lake of fire.

1. EVENTS AT THE RETURN OF CHRIST TO THE EARTH.

A. His return is described in **Revelation 19:1-16; I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Matthew 24:27-31. Verse 31** mentions "**great sound of a trumpet.**" **I Thessalonians 4:16** when speaking of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, says "**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:**" When speaking of the event in **1 Corinthians 15:52**, God's word says "at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound." **In Revelation 11:15**, it is stated that "**the seventh angel sounded,**" and then the Scriptures proceed to tell of the return of the Lord to the earth and the setting up of his kingdom. So there is no doubt of the precise time of his return, that being after the tribulation. See **Matthew 24:29.**

1. When Jesus returns, the wrath of God will be poured out upon at! those who accepted antichrist and worshipped him and took his mark during the tribulation period. Some have a problem with the warning concerning taking the mark of the beast that is recorded in **Revelation 14:9-12.** This is in contrast to God's instructions. It is not a light thing to align one's self with Satan in the person of anti-christ; and God will deal with it accordingly.

Exodus 13:9 And it shalt be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that

the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:4-8 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

This has been dealt with in a previous chapter, using the words found in **II Thessalonians 1:8-9**. Let us keep in mind here that this everlasting destruction is understood to be the unpleasantness associated with being cast from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. The wrath of God is upon the whole earth, after the saints have been taken out at the end of the tribulation period. Antichrist has had his say during the seven years of the entire earth worshipping him. Now it is the Lord's turn to be worshipped after the coming of his wrath upon the earth and the casting of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet into the lake of fire.

Jeremiah 25:29 For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which Is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye Shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.

30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, aid say unto them, The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 A noise Shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. 35

33 And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

Zephaniah 3:8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon

them mine indignation, even aft my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

The wrath of God will come when the armies of the antichrist nations Will be laying siege to Jerusalem.

Zechariah 12:1 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.

3 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

4 In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.

6 In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.

7 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.

8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

2. Results of the wrath of God are revealed. In this siege of the armies of the nations against Israel, God pours out his wrath upon them with the results described in his word. It is not dear whether this scripture is speaking of the number killed of the armies of antichrist, or whether it is speaking of the entire population of the earth.

Ezekiel 39:2 And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:

The number of the Israelites that will perish in this siege is recorded in the word of God also. This is the time in which Israel will turn to Christ and accept him as the Messiah that their forefathers rejected some two thousand years before. The Armageddon battle is also described in his word.

Zechariah 13:8 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Revelation 14:14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Isaiah 63:1-6 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

2 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

4 For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

5 And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

The beast and the false prophet are taken at this time and cast 'alive' into the lake of fire. An angel comes down and takes the devil and casts him into the bottomless pit, where he stays until the end of the reign of Christ in the kingdom age of one thousand years. It should be significant to the Lord's people that one angel took care of Satan. It did not require all the assets of the Godhead to handle him. One should evaluate the one that he is worshipping. He may be just an insignificant, weak god.

Revelation 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

3. One thing that is missing here that some overlook is that there is no mention of the resurrection of the unfaithful saved at this time. The saints are definitely mentioned as has already been discussed, but the scripture in **Revelation 20:5** is very plain that the "rest of the dead" lived not again until the thousand years were finished. The Scriptures seem to reveal only two resurrections; one, of the saints who are designated as "have done good" and one, of the wicked who are designated by the term "have done evil." Bad fruit comes from bad trees. Good fruit is not found on a tree that does not abide in Christ. See **Matthew 7:16-20; 12:33.**

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

The judgment that is meted out in the wrath of God at the second coming of Jesus to the earth is twofold. 1) The antichrist is to be defeated and he and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire. 2) God's wrath is poured out upon an ungodly world that took the mark of the beast and worshipped the beast and his image. Some teach that the unfaithful saved who have died will be raised to go through the wrath of God. If it would be kept in mind that Jesus pours out his wrath on people that have worshipped the beast during the tribulation period, this theology would not stand. This would mean that another resurrection would take place, and the Scriptures Will not support that theory.

Revelation 14:9, 10 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

These people who lived and worshipped the beast have a special punishment waiting them. This is because they have actually made a conscious decision to accept antichrist (mark in the forehead) and worshipped the beast and his image by using one's energy to support his cause and work to promote his cause (mark in his hand). They did not receive the love of the truth and God sent them a strong delusion that they would believe a (literally the) lie. The lie that antichrist is telling is that he is God. The result is that they might be damned (judged as ones whose works are condemned) who believed not the truth but **had pleasure in unrighteousness** (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

The Lord's people have a unique opportunity to serve him today and have a witness for the light in a sin-darkened world. The punishment for the church people who fail is going to be severe. God's people must understand that the work of the church is to preach the gospel to the world. The condemnation mentioned above is that they believed the lie that antichrist was telling that he was God. One can live a good moral life, be judgmental of others in the world who do not, and still have no

reward for his work unless he preaches the gospel to the sinner to convert him from the error of his way.

James 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

Psalm 51:12, 13 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit 13 Then Wilt I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Other saved people who have had an opportunity to know the truth and become a part of the Lord's church and its work, will be guilty of this sin also, and have a part in this judgment at the return of Christ. Those who have died previous to this time will be dealt with in a later chapter.

4. At this time the judgment of nations takes place. **Matthew 25:31**. There is no resurrection mentioned here so it is not possible that this can be the judgment of the unfaithful saved. This judgment takes place later as will be shown. This judgment of nations is for the purpose of determining who among the nations of the world will be permitted the grand and glorious privilege of entering into the one thousand golden years of the kingdom age or millennium with Christ sitting on the throne in Jerusalem as king of all the earth.

These nations are those who were not killed in the wrath of God when Jesus returned to the earth. See **Ezekiel 39:2 and Zechariah 12:9**.

The determining factor seems to be that all those nations who are fighting against Israel when Jesus returns are the nations who will be destroyed. These are not permitted to exist as a nation in the kingdom reign of one thousand years. These are many of the same nations that have persecuted the people of God down through the years.

It is true that Israel was not considered to be the "brethren" when the nations gathered to fight against them, but they are at the time of the writing about them in **Matthew 25**, and have been in the past God promised to graft them back in if they do not continue to abide in unbelief according to **Romans 11:23**. The principle for the judgment of nations is found in the teachings of Jesus in **Matthew 18:1-10**. The world has been guilty of offending the people of God since there have been people who worshipped God, beginning with the death of righteous Abel at the hand of wicked Cain.

A glorified people will sit on thrones and will reign with Christ a thousand years. There will also be this group of nations that survived the wrath of God and will live in natural bodies and carry on the normal life of rearing children, working for a living much like people do today, but under different circumstances. It seems that the earth will revert to conditions described in **Isaiah 11:1-9**. Satan will be bound and living conditions will be such that the only distraction to mankind will be the Adamic nature. The nation of Israel will be living in the flesh at this time,

and their function will be the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom according to the Scriptures.

Isaiah 66:19-24 And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.* 20 And they shall bring all your brethren *for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.* 21 And I will also take of them for priests *and for Levites, saith the LORD.* 22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. 23 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto aft flesh.

Malachi 1:11 For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall *be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.*

The entire world will be at peace because the Prince of peace, Jesus Christ will be sitting on his throne in Jerusalem. The saints will reign with him and Israel will be preaching the gospel to the inhabitants of the earth, who will enjoy one thousand years of peace such as the earth has never known.

Isaiah 65:18-25 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. 19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. 20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed. 21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. 22 They shalt not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their

hands. 23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. 24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall* be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

See also **Zechariah 14:16-21**.

II. THOUGHTS ON RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT

A. Resurrection of all people is plainly taught in the Scriptures.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

1. This scripture tells us that all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and **SHALL** come forth. Some may not want to come forth due to being unprepared to meet the Lord, but it will happen. Some believe in a general resurrection and judgment and use this scripture to prove their position. The thing being taught here is that **"all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth."**

Many other Scriptures tell us of the order of the resurrections.

Revelation 20:4-6 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

2. This scripture tells of the first resurrection. If there is a first, then there must be at least one other. There is one other, and it is explained in the Scriptures.

Revelation 20:11-15 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 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. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The first resurrection calls some to the judgment for reward in the millennial kingdom to reign with Christ as he sits upon David's throne in Jerusalem. This does not apply to all the world as shall be seen below, but to the faithful saints in the New Testament church and the faithful saints who lived under the Old Covenant.

1 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. John 5:29; Revelation 20:4.

The second judgment is called the "great white throne" in **Revelation 20:11** above. The first resurrection is for the purpose of rewarding the faithful saints for their works according to **11 Corinthians 5:10** above.

1 Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. The second resurrection is for the purpose of determining the disposition of all who were not included in the first resurrection. It will include some who lived in the kingdom age of one thousand years after Jesus came to the earth and rewarded the faithful of the church age at the judgment seat of Christ. There is not much said of these, but the presence of the book of life in **verse 12** indicates that there may be some in the second resurrection that are written there. These may be the faithful Jews who preached the gospel during the kingdom age. The word promises that they shall be grafted back into the covenant promises of God Which include living in the holy city.

Others came into the kingdom age out of the judgment of nations in **Matthew 25:31-40**. They lived in the millennium or kingdom age in the flesh and accepted the rule of Jesus as king for their lives. The presence of the book of life may indicate that their names are written therein. Whether they have access to the holy city is not clear. They may be those classified as the nations that live in the light of the city.

The Bible is not clear about the destiny of the folks who live in the millennium or kingdom age. Whatever God does with them will be fair.

3. Some interesting statements are found in the word regarding the resurrection of the saints in the Scriptures. Jesus made some promises and Martha made a statement regarding the raising up of her brother Lazarus. All of these promises contain the words "at the last day" and harmonize with promises made to the saints that they would be raised

up at the time of the return of Christ to the earth. These words carry the force of 'at the beginning of the last day.'

John 6:39, 40, 44, 54 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

4. Other Scriptures tell us of God's dealing with certain cities "in the day of judgment" This, apparently, has to do with God's determining the result of judgment upon the inhabitants of the respective cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and those not receiving the

Apostles. It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the cities of Palestine who refused the message of the covenant preached by the twelve that went out announcing "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 10:7, 13, 14 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or 15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Jesus is apparently saying that Sodomites, who did not have the same opportunity of hearing the message of the kingdom, would be judged less harshly than those in the days of Christ who had opportunity to hear the Master himself and refused the message of the covenant. This is the same message that Jesus preached to Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who were all cities in Palestine, occupied by his covenant people.

Matthew 11:21-24 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. city, shake off the dust of your feet 22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. 23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee,

had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

Jesus responded in like manner to the scribes and Pharisees that brought the woman taken in adultery to Jesus.

John 8:3, 4 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

The response of Jesus to them is the same one that the Lord's people should give today regarding those who have set themselves up to be the judges of others because they believe that they are better than those who are being judged. This group today is no better than the group that judged the adulterous woman, having caught her "in the very act" "Aha, we have caught you and now we will see what this Jesus does about it" They were not concerned about this woman, but rather they wanted to set a trap for Jesus. The Scriptures state in **John 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.**

These modern scribes and Pharisees are not concerned about the welfare of the people either. They are only interested in making other people look bad in comparison to themselves. Moral sins are considered to be the worst kind that can be committed. Jesus did not think so and told the self righteous group so in so many words. It is believed that the writing of Jesus on the ground once and then again, reminded the Jews of something in their past. When Moses came down from the mount after receiving the ten commandments from God, he found the Jews dancing around a golden calf and worshipping it as the god that brought them out of Egypt. In his anger, Moses cast the tables of stone to the ground, breaking them. He had to go back up the mountain and receive the commandments again.

Israel promised to keep the law that God would give them when they were questioned about it. They had not even received the first part of it until they had left God and began to worship an idol. When the scribes and Pharisees heard what Jesus had written on the ground, they were convicted by their own conscience they "**went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last:**" **John 8:9.** These fellows were worse sinners than the adulterous woman and they admitted it by abandoning their quest to embarrass the Lord.

Lest someone mistake the actions of the Lord, let it be remembered that although he condemned the self righteous accusers, he did not condone what she had done. The emphasis should be on the relative evil of the two courses of action, and Jesus judged the religious people as acting in the wrong. One is made to wonder if any person of that group had ever preached the gospel to this woman in order to instruct her in the way of righteousness. One could be almost sure that the answer is a resounding "NO." Jesus told her to "**go, and sin no more.**"

5. An interesting scripture is found in God's word regarding the judgment of the saints for reward.

Matthew 7:21-23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

What is interesting here is that this is being done "in that day," which could be at any time during the kingdom reign of Christ after it had become evident to these folks that they had been left out of the glorification of the body and reign of Christ on the earth in the millennium. It is noteworthy that those who came to Jesus claiming to have done wonderful works are called in **verse 22, "Many,"** which is defined by JH. Thayer in his *Expositio. y D~ictiona, y of New Testament Words* as "a large part of mankind." This is the same expression that the Lord used in **Matthew 7:13 when speaking of the broad way and "many there be that go in thereat"** compared to the strait gate and saying **"few there be that find it."**

This seems to be saying that there are more folks preaching about Jesus that have never been authorized, than those who have been truly called of God. This is certainly sad from the human view, when one realizes that this work will be for naught, and these self authorized preachers are destined to the destruction of their life as a result. More tragic than that is the fact that these false preachers have led multitudes astray with their unauthorized preaching, and have contributed to the confusion in the religious world that opposes the work of God.

The truth of this passage is that these false preachers will be left behind on the earth in their natural bodies when Jesus comes to rapture or call out his saints. Their entire life in the kingdom age, if they are permitted to live through the wrath of God, will be lived in this state of unfulfilled expectations and dashed hopes. This is a good example of the people who will be cast into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

6. There is a source to whom a person must go if the desire is there to preach the gospel. That person can go to the Lord's church which Jesus authorized to preach the gospel, recorded in **Matthew 28:18-20.** In the church, Holy Spirit will lead one into all truth. **John 16:13.** He will teach one to glorify Christ instead of man. **John 14:16.** He will also teach men the things that Jesus has said while he was here on the earth. **John 14:26.**

The proclamations of these false preachers will not stand in the day of judgment in the last day when this appeal is made to Jesus as recorded in **Matthew 7:21-23** above. The Lord's people should not accept this doctrine of easy believism today for it will only bring shame in the judgment. The only authority that is given to the Lord's churches is that

which is contained in the words of the Great Commission. **“Teaching them to observe all thing WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU”** is all the privilege that is given by the Lord to his people when dealing with his word.

It is easy to slip into the habit of saying I think” or I believe” without citing chapter and verse in the Scriptures to support the statement. Many false statements are adopted by the hearers in this type of preaching. A false doctrine concerning the second coming of Christ was adopted by this preacher, just from hearing some well-meaning person make a statement which was supported only by I believe” and not with “thus saith the word.” Only when one required a scripture to support such a position, did it become a reality that it was not taught in the word. It only came as the surmisings of men, from those not having scriptural baptism and leadership of Holy Spirit in the New Testament church.

It will be a sad time to spend the kingdom age unable to reign with Christ because one did not have proper authority to work for the Lord. If a saved person is honest and has a desire to know the truth, God will help that person find a godly person who will lead them to a scriptural church where the truth will be set before him. See **Acts 10**.

Re: Cornelius and Peter.

7. Evidently these “many” have varied reasons for doing what they do. It is obvious that some work apart from the church in order to have the freedom to do whatever is desired without having to answer to the body of Christ for their actions. This could be done for many reasons, perhaps the greatest of which is the amount of money that can be elicited from the ignorant and unlearned listeners to these on the radio and television that come in sheep’s clothing. The word says they are really ravening wolves who destroy the faith of those who are unfortunate enough to get caught in this system of unauthorized preaching. See **Matthew 7:15-20**.

It will be found that those who have followed these unauthorized preachers are building their houses upon the sand instead of upon the rock. See **Matthew 7:24-29**. They, too, will spend the kingdom reign of Christ apart from him, cast into the outer darkness, with weeping and gnashing of teeth. One is made to wonder if the gnashing of teeth will not be upon those who led the multitudes astray, and destroyed the faith of Christ that could have been such a blessing to them.

Preachers must preach to save lives (yuch psuche, in the Greek) which is translated many times as “souls” in the King James Version of the Bible. This tends to be confusing, and many bible students will then assume that soul and spirit can be used as synonyms in the word, which is not the case at all. The word “spirit” refers to the part of man which God breathed into him when he was created that makes him different from the animal creation, it comes from the Greek text (pneuma) = pneuma, and is easily seen to be a completely different word from the lives at the beginning of this paragraph.

The spirit of man is that which is saved when he places his faith in Jesus Christ and repents toward God. **Acts 20:20-21**. The soul or life of an individual is that which is produced as a result of Holy Spirit leadership or following Satan and his men as they teach false doctrine. Saving one's life means to live it in accord with the teachings of the Scriptures. To lose one's life is to ignore the teaching of the word and live after the advice of false prophets or self will. Preaching must be done with a view to saving men's lives as Jesus did. To preach differently is to enter into the kingdom age excluded from the privilege of reigning with Jesus. The determining factor is found in the word, which requires that if we would reign with him, we must suffer with him.

2 Timothy 2:12 II we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Luke 9:56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

The options are very dear. One can obey the teachings of the word of God and suffer while so doing. This will purify his life and make him acceptable to God.

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

The word says to draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. The other option is that one can refuse to draw nigh to him and one will stand apart from him and his blessings. As a result of being deprived of the presence of God, one will be penalized and punished from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.

2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9 in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power

See also: Matthew 18:1-10.

Chapter VI - Jesus and the Keys of Hell

Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

I. The Keys of Hell and Death

A. This scripture is significant in the relationship of man and God. Scriptures teach that sin entered into the world by one man (Adam) and death (qanatos = thanatos in the Greek) by sin, and so death is passed upon all men for that all have sinned. This death is defined as a separation from God, and is a result of Adam's sin, and then the sin of all who were born as the offspring of Adam.

See **Romans 5:12, 14, 17, 21.**

Death is the opposite of life, and is so used in the Scriptures. The words of Jesus tell us that there are some who are "**passed from death unto life**" in **John 5:24**. It is also stated in the word in **I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life.**

It becomes obvious that death is the penal consequence of sin, whether it be the death of the body or separation from God in spirit.

Thus when Jesus took our place on the cross, he was doing so in order that he might die in the sinners' place, for sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God IN HIM." **See I I Corinthians 5:21.** There is a penalty for sin, and it will be paid, whether by Jesus on our behalf, or by the sinner himself. This is the central theme of the New Testament, and is not limited to salvation of the spirit, but also the life after salvation.

1. Keys are the symbol of authority and the keeper of the keys has the power (authority) to open and shut. The word "keys" is used in the New Testament to denote power and authority of various kinds. Scripture reveals that a heavenly being was given the key to unlock the pit and smoke and locusts with the power of a scorpion came out of it.

Revelation 9:1-3 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

2. An angel came down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and cast Satan into it and shut him up and set a seal upon him.

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

3. Jesus also has the power (authority) to bring men out of hell or to leave them there. See **Revelation 1:18** above. It is believed that Jesus took some from death (thanatos) when he was raised from hell by the power of God according to the word. He also overcame the strong man by binding him and then spoiled his house by taking everything that was valuable to him.

Ephesians. 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Mark 3:27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

4. Where one goes at death in this present age is determined altogether by what he does about accepting Jesus Christ as his Saviour and then obeying his words. Death and hell are closely linked together in **Revelation 1:18** meaning that those who die without living and believing in Jesus will be sent there to await the white throne judgment of God.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

See also **Revelation 20:1-14.**

B. Death is the penal consequence of sin.

1. When Jesus died for us as a sinless sacrifice for sin, then he stood to receive the penalty for sin which was to be sent to hell, there to suffer for sinners. Scriptures reveal that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. **Romans 5:10.** His innocent blood became the payment for the sins of mankind, and the suffering of Jesus was that which satisfied the righteous God. Surely the sufferings of our Lord were great, in order for them to pay for the sufferings of all those that he has justified, for he has borne their iniquities. This may help to some degree to understand the great cry of Jesus on the cross when he realized that he was going into the region of the dead without the presence of God. He

knew that he would have to suffer there until God said that he was satisfied.

Isaiah 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Matthew 21:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

2. The Scriptures further tell us of the price of being a part of the body of Christ in the church. It is said that we are baptized into the death of Christ by baptism. This baptism in water then becomes that which identifies us with our Lord. The raising up from the dead, the ones in Christ, testifies that saints are not to be living as dead (thanatos) ones (those outside of Christ), see **John 5:24**, but as those alive from the dead (nekros), and not like those who are of the world. The saints' testimony after baptism must be that which Jesus had after his resurrection from the dead, for this is what the Scriptures teach that is to be portrayed in that life. Anything else is to present a false gospel of Jesus Christ

Romans 6:3-5 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Romans 6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

3. That the death of Jesus was a painful one and involved suffering, can be seen from the Scriptures that speak of it. The Lord's Supper shows the pain and suffering of the Lord in his death. The church is commanded to do this to show his death till he comes. The elements used are the unleavened bread which Jesus said was his body that was to be hanged in shame on the cross at Calvary for sin, and the fruit of the vine which is said to be the blood of the covenant which he shed for many. Since the price of the body of Jesus Christ was required to free men, evidently the claims of death and the sufferings of hell were very great.

1 Corinthians 11:26, 27 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shalt be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Matthew 26:26-28 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

When Jesus placed himself in the place of sinners, he became the object of the wrath of God. This will justify God when he takes action upon those who refuse to worship Christ, and instead worship the antichrist and receive his mark in their forehead and in their hand.

1 Peter 2:21-24 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Revelation 14:9, 10 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

4. In the writings of the Apostle Paul by the inspiration of God, he said in **Philippians 3:10** That I may know him ... the fellowship of his sufferings. The Apostle Peter also speaks of the "partakers of Christ's sufferings" in **1 Peter 4:13**. One must consider strongly the claims of Christ, for the response to them will determine whether or not he will go to the place called hades or hell when death comes to the physical body, or to be with the Lord in Paradise. For this reason one should not want to avoid the sufferings of Christ, but join with Paul in desiring to know him in this manner. saints holy, unblameable, and unproveable in his sight. This is the reason that Jesus came as he did. He was made a little (for a little while) lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. In order for him to die he had to become one that was subject to death and then agree to do it - and he did agree to do it

Colossians 1:21, 22 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

C. Jesus Obtains the keys.

Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

1. We are told in the word that he became flesh and blood in order to die, and through his death he might destroy him that the power of death. Make no mistake about it, this scripture tells us that the devil had the power over death, which is called in the Scriptures, thanatos. This is the place where all went after death before Jesus overcame the devil by moving the saints to paradise after his resurrection. This word "power" is used other places in the New Testament Scriptures and is translated as "strength" or "dominion." Satan was the big man in Sheol or hell before Jesus went there and took the keys away from him and now Jesus has the strength and dominion and authority over this place. Jesus is the one who determines who goes into the Paradise of God.

II. DEATH AND HELL IN THE END TIME

A. Revelation 6:8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

This scripture speaks of those who die in the opening of the fourth seal in the wrath of God upon the wicked when Jesus comes back to judge the earth. These are the people who have rejected Jesus as Lord and accepted the rule of the antichrist during the tribulation period in order to escape his displeasure. Now they must endure the wrath of God. A fourth part of humanity will die in these plagues, and Hades (hell) will receive the souls of those who die in these plagues.

B. Death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them Revelation 20:13. Death (thanatos) describes the condition of those who are in hell. Hell comes from sheol in the Old Testament and from Hades in the New Testament. These are the folks in all ages that refused to hear the word of God and make the proper preparation to meet him in eternity. They are enumerated as those without the holy city New Jerusalem and apart from the promises made to the citizens of it.

Revelation 22:14, 15 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers,

and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which bumeth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

These are the true off-scouring of the earth, and they are judged at the white throne judgment. See **Revelation 20:11-15**. Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire which is the second death. Death and hell are needed no more. Death will cease to operate since those who enter eternity will remain so forever and ever. **Ecclesiastes 11:3 if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the free falleth, there it shall be.** Those inhabitants of hell will be cast into the lake of fire, the final penitentiary and the place that held the prisoners pending their trial is now empty. The lake of fire is the final doom of the wicked. The people that have been in heath and hell are cast into the lake of fire. This is the end of earthly life and joys for the wicked and the beginning of an eternity of woe.

Chapter VII - God's Penitentiary

Matthew 24:48-51 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:41 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:

I. SOME PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED

A. The last chapter ended with some reference to the place that was referred to as God's penitentiary. It is the term, ~hetr in the authorized version of the Scriptures and comes from the old language 'Hades.' It is the place where the wicked went at death until the resurrection and judgment at the white throne. The punishment is described here as everlasting (aionion). The word 'eternal' and 'everlasting' come from this word and is generally understood to mean forever or without end. This has caused confusion to Bible students and rightly so.

When the writers meant 'forever or without end' they used the term "forever and ever." It is used of the destruction of Babylon in **Revelation 19:3**; the suffering of the beast worshippers in **Revelation 14:11**; the torment of Satan, the beast and the false prophet in **Revelation 20:10**; and the reign of the saints in the holy city with Jesus and the Father in **Revelation 22:5**. The remainder of the times that it is found in the New Testament, it has reference to men giving glory to God or the reign of Christ in the future. The meaning of this phrase in these instances is "without end." This expression come from the words in the old language (eis tous aionas ton aionon), and carries the idea of 'into the ages of the ages.' One can readily see that it is quite different from the word that is translated eternal or everlasting as seen above.

Most of the time when the word 'eternal or everlasting' is used in our English Bible, it is a translation from the word (aionion,) mentioned above. This word comes from the root word (aion) which is used many times in the New Testament by the translators as "world' or 'age." Jesus promised to be with the church until the end of the 'world' or "age' as the church uses his authority to operate in the world today. At the end of this, the church "age' or 'world," the millennium "age" will begin and a new relationship exists during these one thousand years. **See Matthew 28:20.**

Another instance of the word 'eternal' that causes a problem is found in **2 Pet. 1:11** where he speaks of an "everlasting kingdom." It is

understood by Bible students that the kingdom age is one thousand years, and not for ever and ever. See **Revelation 20:4-6**. So it is seen that the everlasting fire in **Matthew 25:41** is actually age long or lasting for the duration of the kingdom age. Then these are raised up and cast into the lake of fire. This is when an endless life of torment begins for the wicked.

B. The 'eternal or everlasting' life promised in the New Testament

does not relate to the length of life but the quality of life. 'Eternal' is qualified by life' which implies a quality life. J.H. Thayer in his *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, describes it by "of the absolute fullness of life which belongs to God; life real and genuine, life active and vigorous, devoted to God, blessed, the portion even in this world of those who put their trust in Christ, but after the resurrection to be consummated by new accessions (among them a more perfect body) and to last forever.' He adds that this means "to denote a happy life and every kind of blessing which is obtained in fellowship with Christ.'

The quality life is one that is enjoyed here by a living contact with Jesus and then going into the kingdom age with the promise of living and reigning with him for one thousand years. When this thousand years is over, then Jesus takes his bride to the new home, the holy city new Jerusalem which John saw coming down from God out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. From the time of entering into the kingdom age with Jesus on into the ages of the ages, nothing will ever change for the saint, either in happiness or in the kind of person that one is at that time, a resurrected, glorified son of God. So if one has life into the age, then this amounts to life for ever and ever, but it is not associated with being saved alone, but also by being prepared to reign with Christ through suffering for him.

C. This quality life is found in those who discharge their proper duty toward God in this life. In **Matthew 24:48-51** above, the one who is described as a 'wicked servant' was cut off from the kingdom blessings that could have been his. He mis-treated his fellow servants by smiting them and lived with and like the world around him. His lord Will come and cut him asunder or cut him off. One may well ask 'from what will he be cut off? The answer is given by the Psalmist in Psalm 37. What was Israel promised? A land, the joy of being God's chosen people, God's protection, the authority to do business for the Lord, and many other things as enumerated in **Romans 9:4**.

The spirit of easy-believism has pervaded the churches of the land today. The general attitude is that if one is saved, then the future is rosy and all the saved will receive the kingdom blessings. Logic tells one that this attitude will bring sure failure in the business world. No employer would tolerate a person with the attitude that it doesn't make any difference how the job is done, the reward Will be the same. Two Scriptures will destroy this heresy. Many others could be cited.

2 Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

II. THE PUNISHMENT

Matthew 25:41-46 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: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

A. The setting for this pronouncement is set forth in verses **31 and 32**.

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: 32 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:

This event seems to take place at the time of the return of Jesus to the earth at the end of the tribulation. See **Matthew 24:27-31**. There is no resurrection, so the judgment seems to come upon those who are living on the earth at the return of Christ He has called his elect out (**Matthew 24:31; 25:21,23**) and is now dealing with the people of the world who are left in fleshly bodies. This process is for the purpose of determining who will be allowed to enter into and enjoy the kingdom blessings in the flesh under the reign of Christ on the earth.

Verse 41 says "**Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.**" **Verse 46** says of these same people, "**And these shall go away into everlasting punishment**" (kolasin = cutting off). The question must be asked, 'Are these terms synonymous, only couched in different means of expression?' This punishment has been described as age-long which is what 'aionion' generally means in the New Testament. What ever this punishment is, it will last for a thousand years, or the entire kingdom age. No parole board will be there to let them out early for good behavior.

2. This is not purgatory, as some have assumed that this is teaching. This has nothing to do with the destiny of the people who died previously. This only deals with the people who are living at the return of Christ and tells how they are dealt with for the age that is just ahead of them. At the end of the kingdom age of one thousand years, those who lived in the flesh during that time Will be judged as to their place on the new earth Which is yet to be prepared. Those who were confined to the cutting off, from the reigning with Christ in the kingdom age, will

be resurrected out of hell or Hades, along with the rest of the dead that are mentioned in **Revelation 20:5, 11-15**. These are all judged with the appropriate sentence being passed upon them according to the Scriptures mentioned above.

B. Satan and His Trinity.

1. This everlasting fire is said to have been prepared for the devil and his angels. This scripture certainly sets forth the principle that all who defy and oppose the will of God will be sentenced to the appropriate punishment for their crime. It will be the suffering which was described above. The terms used to describe the endless suffering of Satan and his trinity is found in **Revelation 20:10** which says **"shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."** Please note the words "for ever and ever." This is the common term used when an endless time is meant. It literally says instead of "age-long"

(aionion), it says "into the ages of the ages" (eis tous aionas ton aionion), which signifies that one goes into it but never comes out of it. This is the true meaning of the suffering of Satan, the anti-christ and the false prophet.

2. It was prophesied in **Isaiah 14:15** **thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.** This was fulfilled in **Revelation 20:3** **And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.** He is then cast into the lake of fire where he will be punished for ever and ever according to **Revelation 20:10** above.

The sides of the pit refers to the backside or farthest part of the pit. The word usually refers to the extent of a border, **Genesis 49:13**, the back country, **Judges 19:1**, the deepest part of a cave and the inner parts of a ship. **Jonah 1:5**. The remotest parts, particularly the distant north, are conceived as those away from God. The attack on Jerusalem in the great battle will come from the North. Farthest part away from God is the idea. The time of the pronouncement of being cast into hell into the sides of the pit seems to be when iniquity was found in Satan. God's sentence for rebellion will be found to be the hardest sentence of all.

Ezekiel 38:15 **And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:**

Ezekiel 28:13-17 **Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. 14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the**

midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. 16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have fitted the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 mine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

3. Many think that Satan has been in hell and is still there, but this is far from the truth. He went into the presence of God to accuse Job, however, this privilege seems to have been taken away when he was cast out of heaven. It seems from **I Samuel 28** and other Scriptures, that Satan had control over all the souls who died before the resurrection of Christ, but he, himself, has not been confined there. Hell (Sheol - Hades) seems to have been created to contain these souls until the redemption price was paid. Control over it was given to Satan by Adam when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. **11 Corinthians 4:4** says that Satan is the god of this world (age), but he knows that he only has a short time.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour

Luke 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Revelation 12:7-12 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

4. Sheol-Hades is now a holding place for all but the saints, whom Jesus moved to paradise at his resurrection. Since that time the saints go to paradise at death. The difference now is that Satan is

not in charge of the place any more. Jesus has the keys of Hell (Hades) and death (thanatos), meaning those outside of Christ.

5. It is noteworthy that God does not cast the beast (anti-christ) and the false prophet into Hades. It is said, rather, in **Revelation 19:20 These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.** It is interesting that at approximately the same time, Satan is cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years. The answer to the riddle may be found in that the beast and false prophet may not be individual men, but rather institutions or organizations -governments, that Satan uses to carry out his purpose. Their destruction is described in **Revelation 17 - 18** chapters. At the end of the kingdom age, Satan is cast into the lake of fire where the beasts and false prophet are. **Revelation 20:10.**

III. GOD AND FIRE

A. Why does God use fire to describe the punishment of the disobedient? It is stated in **Deuteronomy 4:24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.** It is repeated in the New Testament in **Hebrews 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.**

1. When God saw Israel in their vanities, worshipping strange gods and sacrificing to devils, He said in Deuteronomy 32:22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall bum unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. Fire defined = to purify, to punish or to penalize. It is used of gehenna fire that will bum the life works of those who do not live according to the Scriptures.

Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Matthew 18:9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

Mark 9:43-47 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out:

It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

It is used of the Lord when it is said that he will burn up the chaff (**unscriptural life works**) with **unquenchable** fire.

Matthew 3:12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will bum up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Luke 3:17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

It is said that every tree that does not bear food fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. The non fruit-bearing branches were cut off and cast into the fire. The tares are said to be gathered and burned in the fire.

Luke 3:9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the tire.

Matthew 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

Matthew 13:40-42 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. **41** The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; **42** And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

2. This is pictured in the destruction of Sodom just as soon as Lot left the city. Kind actions toward enemies will heap coals of fire upon his head, that is, it will increase the fires of judgment when he stands before the Lord. This flaming fire is described as the vengeance on them that know not God and those who obey not the gospel of the Lord. This vengeance is the just penalty for the actions of these who are described here. The works of the church saints will be tried with fire. One may ask the question, "What will be left after the purifying fires of the Lord are applied?"

Luke 17:29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Romans 12:20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Jude 7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Jude 23 And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Many of the things taught in the Bible are used in our society today to reward or punish the citizens of the country. One can obey the laws of the land, and he will escape the penalties and punishment of going to prison for breaking the laws of the land. This one is then declared not guilty and given the privilege of living as one who is freed from the penalty of a broken law.

All have the choice of refusing to obey the laws of the land and the penalties and punishment that he must suffer as a result. The good life is available in Christ, and can only come through obedience to the word, or the laws of God. One is saved by grace, and can live by grace and enjoy God's best. He can also be denied the grace to live by when he is found guilty by failing to believe the teachings of the word of God. Some have said, "Don't worry *about me*, I will be all right when the time comes." This is foolish thinking in the face of what the Bible teaches in most familiar Scripture. This one is already guilty, the sentence pronounced, and only the carrying out of the sentence remains.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Chapter VIII - Fire and the Beast Worshipers

Revelation 14:6-12 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, **7** Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. **8** And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. **9** And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, **10** The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: **11** And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. **12** Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

The events in these Scriptures include, 1) The reminder of the gospel message to the inhabitants of the earth, 2) The announcement of the fall of Babylon, the anti-God system that has been in place since Adam sinned, and 3) the punishment ready for those who worship this evil system. The latter is based upon whether the ones living on earth hear and heed the message that is sent forth.

It is acknowledged that Protestantism and most of the members of the Lord's churches that have been met by this writer, believe that all the saved on earth will be raptured in the group specified in I Thessalonians 4:13-17. It is believed that this is a position based sentiment and false hope rather than the teachings of the word of God.

Universalism has lulled many saved members of the Lord's churches to sleep with this doctrine that began with a woman in England nearly two hundred years ago that claimed to have seen it in a vision. One should beware of a doctrine that is born in a vision and especially one that is different from what the word of God teaches.

I. THE PROPOSITION FROM GOD

A God is the one who will decide what happens to each of the inhabitants of the earth. It will not be decided by religious leaders, individuals who choose their own path, nor any other person or group. It is simply stated in **Acts 17:31** **he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained;**

whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Context shows that "he" is God.

1. Since there is not a committee, religious hierarchy, ministerial alliance or any other group that will decide the issues of life, it would behoove us to attempt to find out what God would have us to do to please him. Judgment Will not be carried out by committee, democratic gathering of people, or by a singularly appointed religious head person. God's world is a monarchy with God being the sovereign monarch.

2. It should be understood here that the time frame seems to be the tribulation period with antichrist on his throne and proclaiming himself to be God, with most of the world being given a strong delusion that they would believe a (the) lie. Verse 12 states the result of their believing this lie that antichrist is God. **Thessalonians 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:**

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. It is stated in **verse 9** If any man worship the beast and his image. It is not said that this address is to any lost man, but rather any man that dwells on the earth at that time.

Many believe that the saved person cannot take the mark of the beast. This seems to be based upon the punishment that is promised to the one who does take the mark. Do the Scriptures allow this position? Let us see about the scripture where God promised to punish the circumcised (covenant Jew) with the uncircumcised (non-covenant Gentile). He names these whom he called uncircumcised, and names them: Egypt, Judah, Edom, children of Ammon, and Moab. All will recognize the names of several Arab nations along with Judah which had already forsaken God and been classified with the heathen. He says that the nations are uncircumcised, and the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.

Jeremiah 9:25, 26 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised; 26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

Scriptures teach that one can escape this judgment upon the world by judging self and staying in the will of God. This same warning is repeated in the word. It is interesting that no one has found the scripture that permits one to rule in the kingdom with Christ on the basis of salvation of the spirit. Rather, one can find many Scriptures that teach the contrary.

1 Corinthians 11:31, 32 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

2 Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

The mark of the beast is said to be placed in his forehead or in his hand according to Revelation 14:9. This should remind us of the principle found in the Old Testament when God dealt with Israel as his chosen people. Scriptures tell of God instructing them to wear frontlets (small leather cases) on their hand and between their eyes. These frontlets contained portions of the Scriptures. They were instructed to take them out during the day and read them as they had the opportunity. This was done in order to remind them that they were God's people and they were to be obedient to his word.

Exodus 13:9 And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:4-8 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

This mark of the beast in the forehead denotes that this person has agreed, after deliberation, to worship and accept the leadership of anti-christ. Instead of hearing the message of Christ unto salvation of the life, they believed the message of Satan unto condemnation (judgment) of life.

2 Thessalonians 2:10,11 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be

saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

The mark in the hand is described as being in the "right" hand.

This is normally the power hand, since most people are right-handed.

It is said in many places that Jesus is sitting on the right hand of God, and in one place, it is called the "right hand of the power of God."

Luke 22:69. This seems to signify that the person taking this mark will use his power (energy and effort) to serve and forward the cause of the antichrist.

Revelation 13:16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

Luke 22:69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

II. MAN'S RESPONSE TO GOD'S PROPOSITION

A. Man has the right to consider different alternatives and respond according to his will that God gave to mankind in Adam.

1. With this right comes the responsibility of answering to God for the choices that are made. God gave Adam the ability to choose his will or to reject God's will. Adam chose to reject the will of God. The result is that he was driven from the garden, curses placed upon him and his wife and the earth also was cursed because of his wrong choice.

2. Cain chose to offer the wrong sacrifice to God and suffered as a result. Joshua admonished Israel to "**choose you this day whom ye will serve.**" **Josh. 24:15.** God's word says that "**they - did not choose the fear of the LORD:**" **Proverbs 1:29.** "**Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way.**" **Proverbs 1:31.** The Bible is filled with countless other examples of man's free will to choose, but with the warning that man shall reap what he sows.

Galatians 6:7, 8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

B. This Same Principle **is** Applied to Those Who Receive the Mark.

1. The warning is recorded in **Revelation 14:9** above. Many have taken the position that only the unsaved will take the mark. The reasoning is that no saved will be here at this time since it is believed by many that the first resurrection and rapture takes place at the beginning of the tribulation period. It is, however, futile to search for a scripture that will support that theory. If this premise is true, then no saved will take the

mark. One should be careful not to build his hopes on a foundation of sand.

Matthew 7:26, 27 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

2. Others object to the idea of some saved receiving the mark because of the dire consequences mentioned in verses 10 & 11 of Revelation 14, printed at the beginning of this chapter. This is also a shaky foundation, since it has already been pointed out that many of God's people suffered down through the years because of wrong decisions that they made. What is being said by those objecting to some saved taking the mark, is that no saved WOULD take the mark. It should be noted that many saved people in life today make wrong decisions in worship, such as supporting false religious practices, unfaithfulness in church attendance, placing family before the Lord, etc. Why would one think it will be any different when the master deceiver comes? It will be different, that is, it will be worse.

3. The statement in **Revelation 14:9 "if any man"** should be enough to convince the doubtful that any person who is on the earth at this time is capable of making this wrong decision. One does not wonder why many insist that the saved are taken out of the world at the beginning of the tribulation. Most of the warnings in the Scriptures regarding obedience to the word of God are written to the people of God, who normally read the Scriptures, and not to the world. The book of Revelation was written to **"his servants"** in **1:1** and **"to the seven churches"** who are representative of Christ for all the years since he was on the earth. The address is to "any man" among those who read the Scriptures in the normal course of worship.

4. Most of the world outside the body of Christ~ have already aligned themselves with the antichrist and his doctrines, so it would be nearly impossible for this group to heed these words. Receiving the mark will be just the natural thing for them to do. World-wide government and a flourishing economy will be the deciding factor, along with the universal religion. The world outside the body of Christ equates peace and prosperity on earth with well-being with God.

III. GOD'S RESPONSE TO MAN'S CHOICE

A In **Revelation 14:6-8** it is recorded that the angel flies in the midst of heaven with an everlasting gospel, which is **"Fear God, and give glory to him."** For many years, religious people have preached that the gospel is the plan of salvation that tells of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ

1 Corinthians 15:1-3 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures:

What most fail to see is that the salvation mentioned here is the salvation of the life or works, made conditional in the passage most quoted to support this theory. The condition in verse two requires that the saved do something in order to have this life salvation.

The fog would be cleared if one would accept the many different translations of the Bible that say that verse two says "by which you are being saved." No Baptist and not many others want to make this conditional to spirit salvation, for it would then be by works. The Greek language renders this word "saved" as "being saved" because it refers to the life, and always presents the action as ongoing, never completed.

The gospel was first offered to the Jew, then to the Greek or Gentiles. This is evident by the message and the people to whom it was preached by John the Baptist and also by our Lord. The gospel presented was not a new way of salvation, for Paul preached the message of salvation of the spirit to the Gentiles, and also the kingdom message after they were saved. The message of John and Jesus was the kingdom message.

Matthew 3:1, 2 in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying. Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Acts 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

So the everlasting (age-long) gospel says in Revelation **14:7 "Fear God and give glory to him."** This tells us that the gospel preached here is one of a walk by faith in the promises of God to the New Covenant people, with the understanding that man's works under this covenant will be judged by fire.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he

hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

I. God's Penalty Described

In verses 10-11 the warning is given to the worshippers of antichrist. There are two extremes of people mentioned in these Scriptures, with the proper reward or punishment for each group.

1. There will be joy throughout the eternal ages for the person who worships God and gives the glory to him. This joy is in the holy city new Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife, the bride, and is described in **Revelation chapters 21 & 22**. There will be eternal woe and misery for those who refused to worship Christ through fear of God, with the idea of giving God the glory. It is difficult to imagine the mind set of God that will be displayed toward those who have heard the gospel story and then refuse to walk in the steps of the one about whom it is written. One has but to read the story in **Isaiah 53** along with the gospel writers of the new Testament, to know the depths of the love of God that would cause him to permit men to treat his only Son as they did. They arrested him as a common criminal, tried him in a most disgraceful manner, spit upon him, crowned him with thorns and then hit him on the head with a rod, put a purple robe on him in mockery, and cried out "**Hail king of the Jews.**" Will you say that God is not justified in doing to the antichrist worshippers what he has promised in these verses **10 & 11**? God is love, but there is another side of him that men must consider.

Hebrews 10:28, 29 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

2. Scriptures that warn us of God's impending wrath are many, a few of which are listed here.

Isaiah 33:14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

Isaiah 66:23, 24 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

1 Corinthians 11:31, 32 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

The Lord's people can judge themselves by repentance and coming back to following the Lord when it is known that sin is present in one's life. The stubborn can let the Lord judge by chastening, which is defined by J.H. Thayer in his *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament* as "to chasten by the infliction of evils and calamities." This great truth is illustrated by the evils that came upon King David as a result of his sin, the death of Ananias and Sapphira because they lied to the Holy Spirit, and the adulterous man at Corinth.

Hebrews 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Proverbs 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Chastening is done in this life for the correction of a life gone astray. Those refusing to heed the chastening will receive the opposite of the promise in the Scriptures.

Hebrews 12:9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

Romans 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

1 John 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Judges 16:19-21 And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. 20 And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Sameon. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him. 21 But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

3. The ultimate end of those who refuse to heed the warning of God is that they stand in danger of losing their fellowship with God which is

tantamount to death or separation from his blessings. The usage of the word "bastard" in Hebrews 12:8 denotes one whom the Lord will not claim as a covenant son, and hence is abiding in death or separation from God. This is not the loss of salvation of the spirit, for this cannot be undone once a person is born of God. The one outside of Christ is the person who is in "Thanatos' death, outside of the covenant and body of Christ. This is the opposite of "live" in Hebrews 12:9. He is not lost, but he is dead to God and to the body of Christ and the covenant blessings.

Deuteronomy 23:2 A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

Matthew 7:14 Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

This condition is described in many places in the Scriptures. Let it be understood that the context of these Scriptures does not imply that these are lost people, nor does it specify that they are saved people. It should be noted that most of them are referred to as servants, and one does not become a servant while he is lost. A servant can be or become an evil servant. A covenant person, destined for the kingdom can, through slothfulness and disobedience to the word of God, lose his claim to the promises of God. He is the unprofitable servant who is cast into the outer darkness and goes where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. These may find themselves in worse condition than if they had never known the way of righteousness after salvation, and be thrust away from the Lord and the glory of his power.

Matthew 8:12 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 24:48-50 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My ⁵¹ lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

2 Peter 2:20, 21 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Some will object to the position taken on Revelation 14:10-11, saying that it is being taught that some saved people are going to hell. This is not true at all, and it will be dearly seen before this study is completed. Nevertheless it cannot be ignored that many false prophets are giving promises of dwelling in eternity with Jesus and the Father in all their glory, based upon one's experience in grace when he repented and trusted Jesus for salvation. Salvation is wonderful, a gift from God in grace, but it will not prepare one to reign in the kingdom with Jesus and dwell in the holy city new Jerusalem with him and the Father.

4. it is said that those who worship the beast will **"drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation:" Revelation 14:10.**

"Without mixture" means pure or undiluted. Two words are used in the New Testament that are translated "wrath" that would help to define the wrath of God in this place. The and subsiding soon again," according to J.H. Thayer in his

Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament. It may compare somewhat to one who is said to "fly off the handle" at a moment's notice and then returning to normal in just a few moments. Examples of this type of anger are seen in the following places in the word of God.

Revelation 14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Revelation 15:1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

The one used here is 'thumos

Revelation 15:7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

Revelation 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

Revelation 16:19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

All of the scripture references mentioned above have to do with the reaction of the Lord to the people on the earth worshipping the antichrist instead of the true Christ. It is easy to see that God's patience has run out with man, and he is voicing his displeasure in a most convincing way.

The other usage of the word "wrath" comes from the word in the language of the New Testament which is "orge." This word is defined as "that which stands opposed to man's disobedience, hardened in feeling, unyielding, especially to God's gospel message, and sin, and manifests itself in punishing the same." J.H. Thayer in his *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Many Scriptures tell of this wrath of God.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Hebrews 3:11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

The nature of God comes into conflict with the nature of the people who heard and knew the word of God and refused to submit their wills unto the will of God. Now the war is engaged and the battle lines drawn. Man has chosen and now will suffer because of the wrong choices that have been made. A rebellious mankind cannot stand before a righteous God without a mediator, and expect to receive anything but the wrath of God. God's wrath "thumos" is the other side of his love that was manifested when he sent his Son into the world that the world might be saved. Now man chooses to worship antichrist as God and will suffer the consequences in God's terrible anger that he displays at this time.

5. It is said **in verse 11** that the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. This term "forever and ever" is the one used to designate a state or condition that will never change. This corresponds with the truth taught in the Scriptures and also does away with the idea of purgatory in the life after death. It will be necessary to place the events of **Revelation 14:9-11** at the end of the millennium or kingdom

age, as it shall be seen later. The rich man suffering in the flames two thousand years ago is still suffering today.

Ecclesiastes 11:3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

It may be necessary at this time to be reminded that people on the earth are warned in **verse 7** to **"Fear God, and give glory to him"** and this judgment is based solely upon this thought. The one who did not receive the mark of the beast will be kept from this terrible punishment. The one who received the mark and worshipped the beast will suffer this terrible judgment of the wrath of God. This is the penalty for unfaithfulness to God.

6. It is said in **verse 11** **"they have no rest day nor night?"** The word reminds us **"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."** **Heb 4:9** Jesus invited the nation of Israel to this rest when he was here on the earth, but was refused. **Matthew 11:28** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. The Thessalonian church was invited by Paul **"to you who are troubled rest with us."** **II Thessalonians 1:7** They were to be comforted by the fact that Jesus is coming back and will set things aright when he comes. The rest with Jesus is complete and is for ever and ever. So is the tack of rest to the one who receives the mark of the beast.

C. Contrasts are Made with the Saints' Position.

Where there is a negative, there is a positive. One cannot say that there will not be any person who is fit to be with the Lord and to share in the blessings that God promised to Jesus and the faithful. It is said in **verse Revelation 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.** Three things should be noted here.

1. This verse mentions the patience of the saints. Patience = endurance. It accomplishes something. Saints are holy ones, a term used to address the church people, yet this term is qualified by the words found in the Scriptures themselves.

Romans 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:

1 Corinthians 1:2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Ephesians. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2. Saints are defined as those who keep the commandments of God. **Revelation 14:12.** What are the commandments of God? They are the things that Jesus Taught the early church, and by Paul and other inspired

writers which they received by inspiration. See **Galatians 1:11-17**. He then commanded them to teach the disciples that were made to observe the things that Jesus taught the disciples himself. One cannot be included in the term "saints" without being diligent to observe the teaching of the word of God. This term applies to the body of truth that Jesus taught personally, and by the Apostles after his death. The church saints are admonished "**that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.**" **Jude 3**. It is the one faith mentioned in the word of God. "**One Lord, one faith, one baptism,**" **Ephesians. 4:5**. It is that system of doctrines that our forefathers died for by the millions. What a shame that modern day church folks, including Baptists, are willing to throw this faith on the trash heap in order to fellowship with Babylon and the false prophets.

Ephesians. 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Acts 6:7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

The church saints in are also said to **Keep. . . the faith of Jesus."** **Revelation 14:12**. This is the faith that Jesus had in the promises of the Father that justified him in his works. In order to have this justification of life mentioned in **Romans 5:18**, one must believe in Jesus Christ. This is a continual believing, a way of life, and not a one time thing that many think one receives at the point of repentance and faith in Jesus for salvation of the spirit. The word speaks of justification of one's works when he keeps on believing in Jesus after he is saved.

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:

The faith of Christ Will carry us on through even though we, at times, will lapse in our faith and quit believing.

See: **2 Timothy 2:12; John 1:16; Matthew 3:6; Isaiah 11:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:24.**

Chapter IX - Burning of the Harlot and Babylon

Revelation 17:16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shalt hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

Revelation 18:8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

In the study of fire in the Scriptures, let all be reminded that it is used in many different ways. It is seen in **1 Corinthians 3:13-15** as that which tries the works of the church members. Faith works will stand, but unfaithful works are unacceptable and will be burned as dross or chaff carried away by the wind. They will cease to be, are done away, and the life lived in this manner will be lost, in that there is nothing to show for it. Fire is then used for the purpose of purification.

Fire is used in the word to denote suffering under the hand of divine judgment bringing retributive justice in the form of banishment from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. This promise is to those who know not God and them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The destruction of the harlot comes under this category of people.

I. THE HARLOT INTRODUCED

A. Harlot defined = One who yields herself to the defilement for the sake of gain. Idolatress. It is associated closely with Babylon, which is the anti-God power that has been ruling the world since the eviction of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. The father of it is Satan, who has attempted to ruin and confuse the work of God on the earth ever since he was cast out of his original place as ruler of the created universe.

1. Babylon comes from the word "Babel, which is used in **Genesis**

11:9 to describe a place that Nimrod founded. He built the tower to reach heaven, to make a name for themselves lest they be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. The Lord confounded their language and scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth. Babel means confusion, and this is what the Satanic kingdom has been promoting ever since that day.

2. Babylon includes the Satanic political system of the world. No other place can boast of having as many immoral people as does the governing bodies of the leading nations of the world. The only explanation for it is that those who elect them to office want this kind of person to represent them. It is a reflection of the attitude of the general population. It is described in Revelation 18:2 as being the habitation of

devils, and the hold of every foul (unclean) spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

If one wonders what happened to the demon spirits of Christ's time, they can be found here, operating in Babylon today. Involved in it also is every foul spirit, and every unclean and hateful bird. This alt describes the religious aspect of Babylon, system.

3. Revelation 18:3 speaks of the nations and kings that have committed fornication with her, and the merchants that have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. These people are described as undisciplined, unruly, marked by arrogant recklessness of justice, or the feelings of others. This is evident in everyday life. One is given a place of responsibility, and soon, his will and wishes take precedent over all others, often at the expense of the many that he represents.

This is illustrated in the near collapse of the banking industry in the United States in the nineties. Those who advocated de-regulation forgot, if they ever knew, that man is a depraved creature, and left to himself, will live the life of luxury at the expense of others who are completely innocent of his actions. Plush offices, expensive paintings, luxurious yachts and automobiles, multiple lavishly furnished expensive homes, etc. are all examples of man's depravity.

Many only condemn this practice, not because it is immoral, but because of the great debt that has been accumulated that the citizens of this country must pay. It is riot condemned because it was wrong, so one can conclude that many who have not had the opportunity, would do the same thing if given the chance. What, then, is the problem? It is the system that is wrong. It should be changed, but it will not be, for men love riches that can be accumulated by adopting this ungodly system.

When Jesus comes and destroys this ungodly system, there will be weeping and wailing because the system has been destroyed in one hour that made people rich. The political aspect of Babylon is that which gives power to the anti-christ. They are the ones who hate the whore (the religious part of Babylon) and burn her with fire, and eat her flesh.

Revelation 18:15 **The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,**

16 **And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!**

17 **For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,**

18 **And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!**

19 **And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made**

rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

Revelation 17:16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and bum her with fire.

17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

II. THE WOMAN ON THE BEAST.

A She is the religious part of Babylon with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication. The marriage or uniting of the kings of various countries is accomplished by having joined hands with the Roman church and her daughters in order to have power over the masses. The woman is associated with the beast (Babylon) full of names of blasphemy. She is pictured as being in the wilderness (a place devoid of the Holy Spirit, the region of false religion and dictatorial governments).

Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

The woman is dressed as a queen (See **Revelation 17:4**) arrayed in purple and scarlet color, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. Many false religions have come out of the group that split off from the true churches in AD. 251, and have become the richest institutions in the world. In many places, their cathedrals and other places of worship, are worth millions and literally cast their shadows upon the dwellings of their members that are literally dirt-floored hovels. In all of this the whore sits as a queen, unfeeling and unloving for the masses over which she rules.

2. It is said that she has a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. She sits as the worldwide authority in religious matters, and deals with every fundamental doctrine of the New Testament church in an unscriptural manner. Many religious faiths have come out of her in the last 1750 years, and all teach a variation of the error that is embraced by the harlot church. One thing that they have in common with their mother is that they preach just enough of the truth to make some believe that they are truly the Lord's churches, when in reality they are their enemies.

3. She not only deals illegitimately in religious matters, but persecutes and kills those who dare to differ with her stand on the word of God. It is said in Revelation 17:6 that she is drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of martyrs, yet she claims to be the true witness of Jesus Christ. This has been admitted publicly by the pope of the Roman church in 1998. He said that the former popes authorized the inquisition of the dark ages that causes the death of millions. Yet, he is asking for forgiveness for the Roman church and to be accepted

as the religious leader of the world. The sad fact is that not many care, and their mission will be accomplished.

The tragedy is that many saved people identify with the harlot religion that has slaughtered more of the saints of God than have died in all the wars of all the ages since the time of Adam. The attitude is expressed in **Revelation 17:14** When this unholy conglomerate goes to make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb overcomes them. Jesus has never lost a battle yet, and this one is no different from the rest.

4. There is no doubt that the woman is Rome, where the seat of the world-wide Roman religion is located. Her destruction is described in verse 16, and it seems to indicate that she will cease to exist. In her place will come another harlot that is more suitable to antichrist and kings of the world. She is called Jezebel in **Revelation 2:20** and her fate is the same as the literal Jezebel, who was the wife of Ahab and led the children of Israel to commit fornication with the idol gods of their day. The promise is to kill her children with death (literally in death) according to **Revelation 2:23**, so it would seem that all those who came out of the Roman church Will die with their mother at the hands of the anti-christ.

5. A new religion has arisen that is growing faster than all the other ones combined. It is the religion of compromise that will encompass everything that fleshly men desire, without having to make any commitments in so doing. The general tenets of this religion (they really do not claim a name), no creed, don't worry about baptism or doctrinal position. one is fine, 3) The Lord's supper is open to all, 4) The church is universal, invisible, and is composed of all the saved, and 5) There is no church roll. The pastor is the boss and he is preparing the hearts of people to accept anti-christ, who will rule every aspect of their lives.

In this group, one *is* not required to think, rather it is better if one does not think The only requirement is to subscribe to the program by supporting it with your money and your silence if there should happen to be one that did object. Pay for not working. free insurance, free everything, just don't rock the boat - let us do the thinking for you. God will destroy this Babylon.

Revelation 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

Musicians will be quieted, craftsmen will cease, the bride and bridegroom shall be heard no more. Silence - what a miserable world it will be - deception will be revealed.

Revelation 18:22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

Babylon is the evil system that has opposed God since the Garden of Eden. Much misery and suffering has been caused by false religion, evil government and wicked rulers in the world. This is the time that the Lord God will burn these ungodly things with fire. He will also bring the proper penalty and punishment upon all who have lived in and supported this antichrist system with their time, money, efforts, etc. God warns folks to come out of her in order to escape the things that are coming upon her. This will be penalty and punishment under the wrath of God that rages hot against his vilest enemy.

Revelation 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Only the pure in heart will see God. **Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.**

Chapter X – God’s Purification Process

Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

These verses tell of the response of God to those who sin willfully after having received the knowledge of the truth. Sin is willful when one knows what God requires and then intentionally refuses to bring that life into conformity with the word of God.

According to **W.E. Vine** in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, this word, “knowledge” (epiginosko), this word implies a special participation in the object known, and gives greater weight to what is stated. He states that it’s meaning “Lays stress on participation in the truth,” “is knowledge directed towards a particular object, perceiving discerning,” “knowing full well.”

This terminology is applied to those who have been saved and come into the body of Christ and fully understand the blessings of this participation and the cost to the individual to maintain that relationship. What has happened here is that this teaching is directed to those who sin willfully after having come into this relationship, seen the cost, and are not willing to finish the course.

These Scriptures use many of the same words that are found in **II Thessalonians 1:6-9**, such as recompense, flaming fire, fiery indignation, punishment, vengeance, etc. These two Scriptures are addressing the same problem. The person to whom God has given much, from him God will require much,

Luke 12:48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto

whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

I. JESUS' MINISTRY ASSOCIATED WITH FIRE.

Matthew 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, **0 generation of vipers, who bath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

A. Fire and His Coming to the Earth.

1. John the Baptist told the multitudes that came to his baptism that Jesus was to come, and that he would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He also said that Jesus would gather the wheat into his garner, but would burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. This seems to harmonize with **1 Corinthians 3:13-15**. This promise was partially fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when Holy Spirit came down upon the church saints who were gathered in Jerusalem. This was in accordance with the words of Jesus which he spoke before he left to return to the Father.

It may be understood that the cloven tongues of fire that sat upon each of the church saints on the day of Pentecost as the baptizing in fire. Yet, there are many warnings to the Lord's people that involve the Gehenna fire that Jesus mentioned to the disciples in **Matthew 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43,45,47**. This involves the loss of life works that will be tested by fire at the judgment. This has been dealt with in an earlier chapter.

2. Jesus said that he had come to send fire on the earth.

Luke 12:49 I am come to send fire on the earth. He elaborated on this statement in **verse 51** **Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.** In the context of this verse, he mentions division in a house where there are three against two. He then stipulates father against son, son against father,

mother against daughter, etc. With division comes dissension and discord, which is a most miserable state.

11. JESUS' PERSON DESCRIBED IN FIERY TERMS

A. His appearance is described by John.

1. **Revelation 1:14 his eyes were as a flame of fire.** This is significant in that Jesus sees the sinful works of men, and he is about to rise in judgment of these evil works committed by a world that willfully rejected and crucified him on a cruel cross. Since that time that same evil world has refused to hear and obey the written words of Christ in the Scriptures. This same word will judge that person who rejects Jesus as his Lord today.

"In the last day" = at the end of the millennium when the unfaithful saved are raised and judged. **John 12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.**

2. Jesus is pictured again as the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, **Revelation 2:18.** This statement, along with the words that his feet are like fine brass, tells us that Jesus is upset with this church and comes to them in flaming anger of Judgment. The Thyatira church age represents the period of approximately one thousand years of the dark ages in which the church suffered terribly under the barbarian tribes of the North and east of Europe as they overran the Roman Empire. Their tendency seemed to be to destroy whatever civilization and culture that existed. Coupled with this allied force was the policy of the Roman church to hold the masses of the people in the bondage of ignorance.

During this time, millions of the saints were killed for their testimony, which caused them to worship in secret, with little of their history generally known to the world. Yet, Jesus tells them that he has been true, and they have not been true, allowing Jezebel to teach in the church and seduce the servants of Christ to commit fornication (spiritual).

3 It is said of Jesus again in **Revelation 19:12 His eyes were as a flame of fire.** This is the time that he comes to judge and make war upon the earth at his second coming when the battle of Armageddon is raging. He comes and destroys the majority of the armies and establishes his kingdom on the earth. He is clothed in a vesture dipped with blood (not his own - but that of his enemies) and his name is called the Word of God. This will be the basis of his judgment seat of Christ.

III. FIRE AS RELATED TO THE CHURCH & The Church of Laodicea.

1. This church is admonished to buy of him gold tiled in the fire. This tells us that Jesus expects his church to endure trials that come upon her, that gold tried in the fire becomes more pure and precious to the owner. The Laodicean church is representative of the Lord's churches in

the last days just before the return of Christ **Revelation 3:14-22** describes this church. Jesus does not commend this church for one thing, but rather points out that they are worldly rich, active in church work, but indifferent to Holy Spirit leadership and the word of God.

The thought of this church buying of him gold tried in the fire, is in keeping with the words of Paul to the churches that he established and encouraged in Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

B. The Two Witnesses During the Tribulation Period

1. Their activities are described in **Revelation 11:3-12**. It is said that they prophesy three and one half years as the Lord's witnesses, calling them the two olive trees and two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. During this terrible time of the reign of antichrist the only witnesses left on the earth are the faithful members of the Lord's churches. They are set in opposition to the rest of the religious world that is banded together under the rule of the impostor god, anti-christ.

These two candlesticks and two olive trees seem to represent the authority of God in the activity during the tribulation. It is said that if any man hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies. This devouring could very well happen at the end of the tribulation period, not very long in time from the events recorded here.

It is believed that these two witnesses, two olive trees, two candlesticks, are representative of the authority of Holy Spirit and the Word of God as they abide in and work through the church. It would seem that the church continues on after the enthroning of anti-christ, and is still in the world at this time. If there are truly two special people in addition to the church, then what will the church be doing at this time? If the witnessing is done by these two additional people, why is the church left in the world?

IV. PURIFICATION OF THE EARTH

2 Peter 3:7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

A Fire will be applied to the earth, evidently to purge it from the contamination of sin and ruin brought upon it by the sin of Adam and those who have lived here as sinners after Adam. This burning of the earth with fervent heat takes place at the time that Jesus destroys the

armies of antichrist that have gathered to fight against God at the end of the one thousand year kingdom reign of Christ on the earth.

Some theological differences exist as to the time of this fiery judgment. It seems to occur at the same time of **"the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men"** according to **verse 7**. It is stated in verse 10 that this event will happen in **"the day of the Lord - in the which the heavens shall pass away - elements melt- earth - shall be burned up."** Scripture does not specify in which part of the day (one thousand years - see verse 8) this occurs, whether at the beginning or at the latter end of it. The context seems to favor the end of the kingdom age. This fact is stressed in verse 8, reminding us that many things can and will take place during this time. All activity in the kingdom age does not necessarily happen at the beginning or at the end of the age. There are promises of events that could happen at the beginning, the end and perhaps all during the age of one thousand years.

For example, the Lord promised that he would raise up some people **"at the last day."** The context strongly implies that these are the faithful saints that God will raise to reign with Jesus during the thousand years of the kingdom age. This being true, it will be necessary that they be raised at the beginning of the age. The promise of everlasting life (age life - denoting quality life and not length of life) is promised and is realized in its fullness at the coming of Jesus and the setting up of his kingdom **"at the last day"** implying strongly that this will happen at the beginning of the millennium or kingdom age.

John 6:39 And this is the Father's will which he hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

The world system that we live in now is not the same as God created it and intended for man to rule over. What happened is that the system is broken, and it raises some questions. Who is to fix it? When will it be fixed? What will it be like when it is fixed? It will be seen that the heavens pass away, the elements melt with fervent heat and the earth and its works will be burned up.

1. The heavens will pass away. Pass away = comes from "parerchomai" in the old language and is translated as "generation passing, man pass that way, time is now past, cup pass from me, Jesus passed by, old things passed away." Heaven and earth are not the same as they were in old times. God created the heavens and the earth. He

placed man in the earth to dress and keep the garden. This seems to have been very light gardening duty, for the growing conditions seemed to be ideal. No thorns or thistles existed at that time.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

2. The heavens were constructed differently in those days according to the above scripture. There were waters above the firmament (expanse) and waters below the firmament, and God called the firmament heaven. There was no rainfall at that time, for it was not needed. A mist went up from the earth and watered the whole earth.

Genesis 2:6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. But God promised Noah before the flood that he would cause it to rain forty days and nights upon the earth and would destroy man from off the face of the earth. This is one of the things that caused men to refuse to believe the flood promise, that is, it had never rained before. This is the very point that Peter is making when he speaks of the heavens of old and the heavens and the earth which are now. He makes a distinction between them since they are different from the way God created them.

Genesis 7:4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

I1 Peter 3:4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they* were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they wittingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

3. It is not said what the heavens will be like when Jesus sets up his kingdom. Some notable events will come to pass when the sixth seal is opened just prior to the coming of Christ back to the earth. This seems to be telling us that the old order of things in the heavens is passing on and something new will be set up for the kingdom age.

Revelation 6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, to, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15 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;

16 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

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

B. The Elements Will Melt With Fervent Heat.

1. The elements burning intensely will be dissolved. The same definition is applied to the word "melt" which being defined = dissolved or to pass by or away. This is the result of intense burning that will come upon them. Elements = comes from "stoicheion" which means rudimentary principles of a thing, things in a row or order, elementary things, etc. The elements have to do with the order of things under which the world is operating at this present time.

This is not the order in which they were intended to operate, but Adam sinned and brought man under this curse and under the elements or order of things in this cursed world. The order of things in the world today is operating on the sin principle. Things are not done according to what is right, but rather the powerful, the rich and the devious are the

people who prosper in the world today. It has nothing to do with intelligence, nor God given authority, but rather "might makes right" and the 'survival of the fittest,' the law of the jungle.

2. When Jesus sets up his kingdom, the old order of things will be replaced. The thousand year reign is to be one of righteousness as the principle of rule. The Bible speaks of the reversal of the sin principle by the righteous life of Jesus Christ that will reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. God has decreed it, he has selected the man and there will be no elections. Jesus is the appointee.

Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world In righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Isaiah 32:1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule In judgment.

Psalms 9:8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

Psalms 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

Romans 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ)

18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. According to the Scriptures in **Isaiah 11:1-9**, the earth will be at peace as God intended when he created it in the beginning.

"Nothing will hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." Mountain equates to government in the word much of the time. See **Micah 4:1**. There are no thorns, no thistles, no crooks, no jails, no courts, no lawyers, no locks on the doors, only praise to the Lord.

The enforcer is here.

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white

horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

There will be no more elections on the earth. If one does not like this government, it would be prudent to change, for God is not going to change his mind. One will have to learn to live, work to provide for his family under ideal circumstances and come before the Lord with an offering and worship before him or there will be plagues brought upon those who refuse.

Isaiah 65:20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shalt plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I wilt answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Zechariah 14:17 And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that *have* no *rain* there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

4. It will help one to understand the kingdom age more clearly if it is kept in mind that there are three distinct groups on the earth at this time. There are the people living in the flesh that survived the wrath of God. They continue to live, work, have children, etc., in much the same manner as all the living do today. Group number two is the nation of Israel, who are living in the flesh also, but are preaching the gospel of the kingdom to group number one. Group number three are the raptured saints in glorified bodies who are reigning with Christ over the other two groups. Jesus is reigning in Jerusalem and the saints, the bride of Christ, are ruling over the cities appointed to them.

C. The Earth and Its Works Will Be Burned Up.

1. Just as the tower of Babel was not successful, so Will God destroy the efforts of men today. It appears that everything that man has done in recognition of his own efforts, God will bum up when the kingdom age comes. It would appear that Jesus will not permit works that praise men to stand during this time. The statues, oscars, emmys, tonies, awards and trophies that stand in tribute to the efforts of men Will have to go. Just as man has removed from the eyes of mankind all of the reminders of God and his love and accomplishments today, he will take from the world all the things that remind us of man and his sinful efforts to glorify and praise self and each other.

2. The Scriptures tell us that the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters that cover the sea. Many today will not hear the word of God, and will not receive it, but in the kingdom age, the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord and all will be forced to hear it and obey it. It will be left to the individual to receive it in his heart, but he will be forced to hear it, nevertheless.

Isaiah 11:9 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Habakkuk 2:14 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Luke 1:31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

3. All the works of men will be burned up. The tall building, the magnificent parks and places of pleasure, the great wonders of the world built by men, will come down in a heap when God destroys the literal earth with fire at the end of the kingdom age or millennium.

This will be in preparation for the transfer from this earth to the new earth that John saw coming down from God out of heaven. It is gone, vanished.

Revelation 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

4. This seems to come immediately after the white throne judgment of **Revelation 20:11-15**. Now all things have been accomplished by Jesus Christ that the Father sent him to do, and now he turns the redeemed creation back to God. His work is truly finished according to the word of God. Jesus has fixed it and delivered it back to the Father, repaired and ready for use.

1 Corinthians 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet But when he saith all things are put under *him*, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Chapter XI - The White Throne Judgment

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

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.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The first resurrection is past, coming at the end of the tribulation period, which is the end of the church age. The millennium is past, Jesus has reigned on the earth for one thousand years and the armies of Satan have been devoured by fire from heaven. **See Revelation 20:9.** Satan has been cast into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are.

Two things remain before the entering into glory for the saints of God with Jesus. One is that those not in the first resurrection will be judged at the great white throne. The other is the destruction of the old earth and the creation of the new earth, a fit place for the saints to live with God and the Son. These Scriptures set forth the details of this judgment.

I. THOSE PRESENT AT THE JUDGMENT

A. The dead appear at this judgment according to **verse 12**. The stipulation is made in **verse 5** concerning the rest of the dead, that is, that were not in the first resurrection. There seems to be found only two resurrections in the word of God.

1. The "dead" is an all inclusive group. Nothing is as certain as death of the physical body. Adam was promised by God the penalty for eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. **Genesis 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt** surely die. Adam ate of the fruit and he died, although after a long life, but the promise did come true. **Genesis 5:5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.** The New Testament records the penalty upon Adam, and as a result, death is the common end to all of Adam's descendants. **After death is then the** (a)

- see Greek text of Hebrews 9:27 below) **judgment**. One should understand that there are two and mankind has a choice to make regarding which one he will attend.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Jesus promised a resurrection to all. He said that all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth, but he did not say they would come forth at the same time, nor for the same purpose. He mentions the two resurrections, that is "of life" and the other "of condemnation." These two conditions are explained in the scripture below in **John 5:24**. The "one hearing Jesus' word and believing on him that sent him hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation = krisin = same as damnation **in v. 29?**

The words "heareth and believeth are participial verbs and have the weight of "the one hearing and the one believing." The thought is that this one continually hears and continually believes. It is not a one time belief unto salvation of the spirit. These Scriptures will become more important later in this chapter. The "everlasting life" is "quality life or life into the age" and does not have reference to the act of salvation. This is a blessing available to those already saved.

John 5:28, 29 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

2. The first resurrection is attained by hearing the word of God and believing on that Jesus, that is God, as stipulated in verse 29 "they that have done good." A problem exists here that is easily resolved if one desires to solve it. Some teach that this first resurrection is attained by simple faith in the slain lamb of God unto salvation of the spirit. This verse does not teach that, since doing good is something that must happen after initial salvation. The people in this resurrection are there because they "have done good." This either teaches works for salvation, or it teaches attaining the "resurrection of life" by good works. The latter is borne out, in that there is no judgment mentioned here, only the promise of quality life through continua! believing in Jesus Christ.

The usual term for "judgment" is used in verses **24 & 29**, where in **24** it is translated "condemnation" and in **29** it is translated "damnation." Either term is correct, for the implication many times in the Scriptures when the word "krisin = judgment" is used, it is with the idea of judgment of condemnation. This judgment is for the purpose of determining, not whether one is guilty, but to determine the amount and severity of punishment.

The judgment seat (bema) of Christ in **2 Corinthians 5:10** is for the purpose of receiving reward for faithful service. This is not to say that all will receive a full reward, for this is the very thing that John warned about in 2 John 8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. The reward can be less than a full one if one has been lax in hearing and believing the word of God. Yet this person will still be at the judgment seat of Christ and will receive a reward that he deserves for the time that he was faithful to hear and believe the word.

3. The words in **verse 29** "done good" do not imply that the one here was faithful every moment, but that he had done good as a manner of life, as opposed to "doing evil." it may be found that the "doing good" is walking in the New Testament church faith. Being in a false religion and opposing what the true churches teach is an example of "doing evil." The warning to the Thyatira church in **Revelation 2** concerned a woman who was permitted to teach and seduce the church saints to commit fornication (spiritual) and to eat things sacrificed to idols. See Israel as they did also.

1 Kings 12:28 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

29 And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.

30 And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

31 And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

See also **2 Kings 21:1-15**

It is seen that Jesus is teaching two different resurrections in **John 5:28-29**. All will stand before God, but there are two different categories of people, and they are specified as to the timing of the resurrections in **Revelation 20:4-6**. The words of Jesus seem to place emphasis on the fact "shall come forth," whether it is for reward or for condemnation.

II. OPENING OF THE TWO BOOKS

A. it was previously mentioned briefly that the book of life was the roll book of the faithful saints. God and Moses had a conversation about the

names of the children of Israel being removed from it, or not being removed from it. Some take the position that this is the roll book of the saved, and some even go to the extreme of saying it was made up before the world began. Neither of these doctrines seems to fit in the Scriptures. The term 'book of life' is mentioned eight times in the new Testament. Of those eight times, it is called the "Lamb's book of life" twice. If there is a difference in these terms, it is not apparent to this writer. The Old Testament refers to the book on at least three different occasions and seems to mean the same thing.

1. These two books are opened at the white throne judgment. One is the book of life. The Scriptures promise the Israelites that they would be grafted back into the covenant blessing of God should they "abide not still in unbelief." **Romans 11:23**. The book of life here may contain the names of Israelites that accepted the Messiah when he returned to the earth to set up his kingdom. They did so after the first resurrection and judgment seat of Christ. They will be faithful to preach the gospel of the kingdom during the kingdom age, and then will be judged and rewarded according to their works at the great white throne. As a result of their work during the kingdom age their names appear to be put in the book of life. It could be assumed that they will be in the bride and have a part in the holy city in the heaven ages. They are grafted back into the covenant promises when they quit being unbelievers.

2. There will be others, who are living in the flesh, of the nations who were permitted to enter into the kingdom age at the judgment of nations. They will accept the rule of Jesus and will be rewarded according to their works. These may be the people who are described in the word as living outside of the city and the kings of these nations bring their glory into the city. The individuals do not seem to have access to the city themselves, but are able to be blessed with the healing effects of the leaves of the tree of life. Their joy does not seem to be the same as that of those who live in the holy city, it being the place of the residence of the bride. However, it seems that their names may be in the book of life of **verse 12** since those not written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. **Verse 15**. Their faithfulness to Jesus in the kingdom age would seem to be attained with less difficulty than those who lived in the church age.

There will be little or no persecution during the kingdom age since Satan is bound and conditions in the world are vastly improved with the altering of the nature of wild animals, etc. There is not much said in the word about these who come out of the kingdom age, except that they must be judged for reward or punishment according to their works.

3. The other books that are opened are the Scriptures. The standard for judgment for all the world is the word of God. Many will not subject themselves to its teachings, but the Bible is called "the biblios or books" by those who assembled it together, and is generally understood to be the Scriptures. Many references in the Bible itself refer to books of the Bible written by inspired men and quoted by the Lord and others. Jesus warned the people that this would be the standard of judgment for those who reject his words to them.

John 12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

There seems to be at least three different groups in this white throne judgment One is the Israelites who preached the gospel during the kingdom age. These are written in the book of life. The second group could be the faithful who lived in the millennium and are called nations in **Revelation 21:24**, whose names may be also written in the book of life. The third group could be the Wicked of all ages and members of false religious groups who are judged according to their works. Group one may be in the bride. Group two is the nations walking in the light of the city. Group three could pose some problems since it is said that all who are not written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. It is needful for this writer to remind all that there are some fearful things awaiting those who do not bring their lives into harmony with the Will of God. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Luke 12:47, 48 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. 48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

The basis for the judgment by Jesus could be no more fair than that which is quoted above. He will call man into account for what he did with what he knew to do. This is the basis for treatment of our children and this comes from the word in the same manner, being taught by Jesus. When all is finished, all of mankind will say that the Lord has been fair.

Some are not listed in the record of the white throne judgment, if in fact, this is where they appear. They include infants who die before reaching the age of accountability and others who never mature emotionally that will enable them to repent and trust in Jesus as Saviour. It is understood that the blood of Jesus takes care of these. Some have had little or no opportunity to hear the gospel and be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. It will be necessary to leave the judgment in the hands of the Lord and understand that he will do right by all of the world. See **I Tim. 4:10**.

God's word warned Israel and the people of God in all ages that judgment could come to those who are covenant people in the same judgment as the non-covenant people. This will apply today if we will think in terms of some being members of the Lord's churches and in covenant with the Lord, and some are not members of the Lord's churches and not in covenant with the Lord. Of course, the sign of the new covenant today is the baptism of John that Jesus left in the churches.

Genesis 18:25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should

be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Jeremiah 9:25 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I Will punish all *them which are* circumcised with the uncircumcised;

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all *that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of israel are uncircumcised in the heart.*

This is precisely what Stephen told Israel just before they stoned him to death. There is a group among the covenant people of God today that are saved and are members of the New Testament churches that have never had their hearts and ears circumcised. These are too willing to be critical of and join in the persecution of those who preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. These never progress beyond the salvation thesis and promise their converts the joys of the kingdom and citizenship in the New Jerusalem as a result of spirit salvation. One is hard pressed to understand how these expect to be rewarded for something that Jesus did by grace, while they spent their lives in worldly fun and aggravating the true people of God.

Acts 7:51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so do ye.

Their condition was the reason that God had cut them off from the covenant promises that he had made to Abraham and grafted in the Gentiles who constitute the majority of the church membership today. The promise is to the faithful in the church, and the saints are warned to be not high-minded, but fear, lest God, who spared not the natural branches (Israel) spare not the church folks also.

Romans 11:20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Exodus 9:25 And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

God's care and protection for his covenant people are illustrated in the above scripture. Careless church members need to take warning that being a member of the church does not qualify one for God's protection, but faithfulness to his word is necessary.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Psalm 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good:

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD;

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him;

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him:

The promises from the Lord to these people are:

Psalm 37:9 those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

22 For *such as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth;

28 they are preserved for ever:

34 he shall exalt thee to inherit the land:

37 behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

The Lord then makes promises to the evildoers. It has already been established that being saved does not qualify one to be called righteous or a saint. Note that this warning is not to the unsaved but rather to the "evildoers." It is easy to understand that he is speaking of one who does evil. Saved people can and some do qualify for this condition.

Psalm 37:9 For evildoers shall be cut off:

22 *they that be* cursed of him shall be cut off.

28 but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

34 when the wicked are cut off,

38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

The question must be asked, "From what is one to be cut off?" Some will say that it is salvation, since some believe that salvation will gain for them the inheritance. To be consistent, these must take this position. The problem arises when this forces one to embrace the doctrine of

falling from grace, which the Bible does not teach. The cutting off from the inheritance is promised to the wicked of Israel, and is also the warning to the wicked servant today who will stand in judgment with the other wicked. A wicked person is judged by the Lord to be Wicked. This is what brings punishment upon those who receive the mark of the beast during the tribulation period. He is worshipping antichrist instead of the crucified Christ who died for his sins. How can one not see that this person is living wickedly, even as he is today by failing to be faithful to his Saviour? Note how Jesus deals with unauthorized preachers;

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

He also deals with the unfaithful servant. The Old Testament servant was Israel. **Luke 1:54.** As the successor to Israel, the faithful church member is the servant of the Lord today.

Matthew 22:13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few are chosen. Jesus also deals with the evil servant

Matthew 24:48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The Lord dealt with the unprofitable (useless) servant also.

Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Jesus dealt with unfaithful Israel in like manner.

Matthew 8:12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

III. BIBLE TEACHING ABOUT THE WICKED

Psalm 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God.

Malachi 3:18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not

The following comments were taken from Harris, Archer and Waltke their *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Old Testament Scriptures use the word *rasha* - wicked, to define almost every word for sin, evil and iniquity. The wicked stand in sharp contrast to the character and attitude of God. When Abraham questioned God about the inhabitants of Sodom, the implication was that God is against wicked people. See **Genesis 18:23-33**. See also:

Exodus 23:7 Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Wicked people were guilty of the social rights of others, for they were violent, oppressive, greedy, engaged in plotting against and trapping poor people, and quite willing to murder to gain their ends.

They were a threat to the community, dishonest in business and in the courtroom.

Exodus 2:13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

2 Samuel 4:11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?

II Chronicles 19:2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore *Is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

A major trait is in the text above in **Malachi 3:18**. They refused to serve the Lord. Eighty times the word is set in opposite parallel to the word "sedeq" - the righteous. It is from this contrast that we see the clearest picture of the wicked kind of people seen in the Bible. The Psalmist protests that he is not one of them, for they persecute him and take a stand against God's laws.

Psalm 26:5 1 have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

Psalm 119:61 The bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

Psalm 10:13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it*.

The focus is on the quality and life style and the results of these two ways of living. The wicked forsake God and the righteous cling to him. The Wicked are oppressive and dishonest but the righteous are upright and lovers of the truth. The inner lives of the wicked correspond to their actions. They are vicious, haughty, treacherous, vile, polluted and unstable. One might think that these are law-abiding citizens. The opposite is true. Job was very troubled by this, as was the Preacher and also Jeremiah.

Job 9:24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, *and* who is he? See also Job 10:3; 16:11; 21:7,17,28.

Ecclesiastes 7:15 All *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just *man* that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a Wicked *man* that longeth *his* life in his wickedness. See also Eccl. 8:14.

Jeremiah 12:1 Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

God was and still is strongly opposed to the activities of the Wicked. Some doubted this in times of trouble. The righteous pleaded with God to punish the Wicked. God proclaimed his intention to do so, and the terrible judgments are described in his word.

Job 36:17 But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee.

Psalm 9:5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

Proverbs 24:20 For there shall be no reward to the evil *man*; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.

21 My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: *and* meddle not with them that are given to change:

22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?

23 These *things* also *belong* to the wise. *It is* not good to have respect of persons in judgment

24 He that saith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

Jeremiah 25:31 A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead

with all flesh; he will give them *that* are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.

Zephaniah 1:3 I will consume man and beast; I Will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

Matthew 4:3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the LORD of hosts.

Punishment from God upon the wicked did not bring the desired results. The order of things was not corrected. Only in acts of salvation did man see the best way to deal with the wicked. The Psalmist asked for forgiveness.

Psalm 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

God promised to forgive Isaiah55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

God also provided for forgiveness. **Isaiah53:9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.**

Moses, a wise man and Isaiah the prophet, exhorted people to forsake the wicked life and turn to him.

Numbers 16:26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these Wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

Proverbs 4:14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*.

Isaiah 55:7 Let the Wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts

The responsibility for doing this was laid directly on the individual in **Ezekiel chapters 18 and 33**. Scriptures record testimony of those who responded and their commitment to the reality of such salvation by God's mercy.

Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Psalm 37:40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save

them, because they trust in him.

Chapter XII - Death and Hell

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

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.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

There are two distinct uses of the word "dead" in the word of God. One deals with the absence of physical life, that is, separation of the body and soul. The other death has the meaning of being separated from God.

The first physically dead ones who have been raised according to **I Thessalonians 4:13-17** are the saints in Christ and are mentioned in **Revelation 20:4, 6**. The "**rest of the dead**" **lived not again until the thousand years is finished. See Revelation 20:5**. The rest of the dead include all who are not in the first resurrection. In the text Scriptures, these are identified as ones who are the inhabitants of "death and hell."

A Defining the terms.

1. Verse 12. It must be understood that they are in the second category described in the introduction. Note that only "dead" are mentioned, if "dead" means those who have died physically, then there are no living people on the earth when God judges at the white throne. That being absurd, then "dead" must include all that were not in the first resurrection. It does not imply a physical condition, but a lack of a relationship with God in a spiritual sense. Ample Scriptures are available to support this statement.

Romans 6:13 **Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.**

Ephesians. 5:14 **Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light**

Revelation 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Matthew 8:22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

2. Revelation 20:13 says "death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." Evidently the "dead" are delivered up from death and hell." "Death" is a term that is the opposite of life" and the Scriptures define life" as being "in Christ Jesus." It is seen also in the word how one is to get "in Christ."

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

II Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Galatians 3:21 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Death comes from the term "thanatos" and is the place where man suffers the penal consequence of sin, it is the penitentiary that God has prepared for the lawless. One is either in Christ or in the world, and Satan is the god of this world.

John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 17:6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

3. Man can pass from death (thanatos — God's penitentiary) unto life by his continual believing in Christ, keeping his sayings and abiding in him.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

John 8:51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

The last scripture printed above teaches one of two things. There is either really a fountain of youth where a person can drink and never die physically, or this is speaking of a relationship with Christ that is achieved by "keeping the sayings" of Christ. To be in Christ and abide in him is life. Evidence of life is seen in love for the brethren. If one does not love the brethren, he abides in death. **I John 3:14.**

B. Hell (Hades) should be defined. It is the place in these Scriptures in **Revelation 20:11-15** where the souls of those reside who were not raised in the first resurrection. It is God's penitentiary for those who are outside of Christ. Hell (Hades) is the place where the dead ones reside. They are the ones who taste death because they did not keep the sayings of Christ and have not passed from death (thanatos) unto life. See **John 8:51**. Death (thanatos) is the condition of those who are in hell (Hades).

One cannot remain "in Christ" through his own goodness or efforts of the flesh. Jesus is necessary in the life of one in Christ if he is to remain in him. **Galatians 3:3** Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

1. Because Death and Hell will have been emptied of its inhabitants, there will be no more need for them. The terms "eternal hell" or "everlasting hell" are not used in the scripture. The eternal home of these mentioned above will be in the "lake of fire" which will be dealt with in the next discourse. It should be mentioned here that one cannot take comfort in hell being discontinued. The take of fire is the permanent place of torment for those who have been in hell, and it is said to be forever and ever. See **Revelation 14:11**. The promise of reigning with him is also said to be for ever and ever for the saints of God. See **Revelation 22:5**.

2. Death and hell are terms that are used together in several Scriptures. See **Psalm 18:4-5**; **2 Samuel 22:54**; and **Proverbs 5:5**. It is used by the Lord himself in **Revelation 1:18** **I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.** The rider of the fourth horse has Death and Hell associated with him together. **Revelation 6:8** **And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him.**

3. Understanding death (thanatos) to mean the position of those who died not being "In Christ" will help to explain some difficult passages in the Bible.

I John 5:16 if any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. 17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

James 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

4. It is logical to assume that when the words "death and hell" are used together, it is speaking the souls of those who are in the place called hell. These were not raised in the first resurrection. Others have been cast there because they refused to accept the kingship of Jesus in the Millennium. It may be necessary to put some more emphasis on this relationship than has been done by traditional preaching and teaching.

5. The first step that must be taken to reach this position is to understand that only the faithful saints are raised in the first resurrection. The Bible teaches that in the mouth of two or three witnesses let every word be established. Here are three witnesses.

I Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus wilt God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

For the negative side of this truth, see the following Scriptures.

Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

It should be clear that when the saints are enthroned with Christ, that there will be some who will object to being denied entrance to the wedding and refused entrance into the kingdom.

The scripture below has been translated by some "and not be put to shame from him," or "and not be shamed away from him."

I John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Matthew 25:12 But he answered and said, Verity I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the Will of my Father which is in heaven.

These people could very well spend their time on earth in the flesh during the millennium, complaining that they should be reigning with Christ. But having been refused by him, they will live on during the thousand year reign of Christ with unfulfilled expectations, simply because they turned from the word of God and walked in their own self will to the enjoyment of the flesh. It just may be that the phrase 'in that day' applies to unhappy people whom Jesus did not translate in the first

resurrection. Usage permits this statement to mean that it could happen at any time or all the time during the reign of Christ on the earth.

It must be remembered that Jesus will be in Jerusalem, sitting on David's throne. Glorified saints will be reigning with him. Others who have not been raptured (changed into a glorified body) may have access to him to complain about their plight on earth, yet they have missed their opportunity to reign with him.

Luke 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

It appears that those not in the first resurrection will remain in the region called "hell" in the condition called "death" until the end of the thousand years of the kingdom age. They Will then be raised and dealt with according to the word of God.

Revelation 20:13-14. This Scripture has some dire warnings for the world that can be heeded in order to escape God's displeasure. To ignore the death of Jesus for us, and disregard his commands to obey him and follow him, is to invite his wrath. God will be fair to all. He will not demand of any that which cannot be performed. What should one expect of a rebellious child? See **Hebrews 10:28-31.**

Proverbs 1:23-33; Galatians 6:7-8; James 4:4.

7. It is understood that "death" as used in our text Scriptures, refers to those who are outside of the relationship which is called "in Christ" and also not among the faithful saints of Old Testament times, who are listed in **Hebrews chapter 11.** This "in Christ' relationship is mentioned 22 times in the first three chapters of Ephesians alone plus many other places in the New Testament. One is made to wonder why God's word uses this expression so many times, always in the context of the faithful saints, if it is not important to God and to his people, now and in the future.

It is also understood that "heir is from the word "Hades" which defines the place where the spirits of the rest of the dead were left the Lord moved the saints to the Paradise of God at his resurrection and ascension into glory. It is logical to assume that these are still kept in the prison house of God, the penitentiary for the lawless, until the thousand years are finished, then raised according to **Revelation 20:4-6.** It has yet to be shown that there would be any purpose served to raise any from the dead except those who will reign with Jesus in the kingdom age. Their plight will be announced at the white throne judgment one thousand years later.

Those who are living when the antichrist comes, and is accepted as God, Will receive the wrath of God. It seems that this is done as a result of this enthronement of antichrist when they have rejected Christ prior to this. There are many reasons recorded in the Scriptures of God bringing judgment upon a person, a city, a people (Israel) because of a certain situation with which God was not pleased. Yet in the white throne judgment, these will stand and be judged as to their eternal destiny. This seems to be the situation in the judgment of those who enthroned and worshipped antichrist.

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. **John 1:17; Romans 5:15-21.** In Jesus Christ all good things come to mankind. **Psalm 85:10** Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each* other. To reject Jesus' commands is to risk danger and destruction.

2 Thessalonians 2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Chapter XIII - Entering Eternity

Revelation 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which Is the second death.

The lake of fire is not mentioned in all of the Bible until we come to **Revelation 19:20**, where it tells of the final disposition of the beast (antichrist) and the false prophet (the unholy Spirit). The devil, Satan is then cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are according to **Revelation 20:10**. Death and Hell (thanatos and Hades) are then cast into the lake of fire as seen in **Revelation 20:14**. Then those not found in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. **Revelation 20:15**. The inhabitants of the lake of fire are enumerated in **Revelation 21:8**, which is called at that place, "The second death."

I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. One must know and understand the terminology if the truth of the word is to be seen.

1. Death and hell - these are terms that complement each other. Death is the "Thanatos" Which describes the condition of those outside of

Christ. This includes all the wicked who have been enumerated previously. Proof texts of this truth are numerous as mentioned in the previous chapter. They include **John 5:24** where the promise is made of being passed from (out of) death (thanatos) into life (Zoeen), which is the opposite of death.

John 8:12 He that followeth me – shall have the light of life.

John 1:4 In him was life.

Acts 17:28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being;

2 Timothy 1:1 the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2. Hell is the place where those who are “dead” are kept, along with the angels that sinned, and the unjust of mankind who are held unto the day of judgment to be punished. These people are described in the verse following.

2 Peter 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

2 Peter 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are *they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

3. Death and hell include all who were not in the first resurrection, which is the judgment seat of Christ.

4. The lake of fire is described as “the second death.”

Revelation 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.

This is the second death.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

5. The first death is the separation of the body from the spirit in natural death, or the separation of the person from God. Natural death is seen in the word in the following places:

Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Spiritual death is the condition of those who are in trespasses and sins and are outside of the covenants of promise.

Ephesians. 2:1 And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Ephesians. 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God *in the world*: One who dies in this position will be hurt of the second death. Using the definition of death as being separated from God, then the second death is the second separation from God, the final one, which is for ever and ever. There is no promise found in the Scriptures that teaches that a person will have another opportunity to improve his position after death. Rather the opposite is said of the beast worshippers and also by the wise man, Solomon.

Revelation 14:10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Eccl. 11:3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

II. WHAT THEN, IS THE LAKE OF FIRE?

"Lake of fire" is mentioned only five times in all of God's Holy Word. All five Scriptures seem to refer to the conclusion of all things here on the earth. The doom of the devil, the beast and the false prophet is recorded in the Scriptures.

Revelation 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Revelation 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

1. **Revelation 20:14** records the disposition of death and hell as they had previously existed. **Revelation 20:15** tells of the final end of all who are not recorded in the book of life. **Revelation 21:8** seems to be a listing of those who are referenced in **Revelation 20:15**.

The law of first mention in the word of God speaks of the ultimate end of two of the Satanic trinity that operated during the great tribulation period. Much of the time, the law of first mention will assist one in understanding the basic meaning of the word or term throughout the Bible. In Revelation 19:20 it is associated with the casting into punishment those who opposed God in the tribulation period. It may be understood from this that the "fire" could be representative of "purification, penalty or punishment." The beast, the false prophet, and later in **Revelation 20:10**, the devil, were all cast into the place called the "lake of fire." This punishment is meted out to recompense the beast and false prophet for deceiving the world into worshipping the antichrist as the true God. It is said that "they were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone." The word also reveals in **Revelation 20:10** that the devil is also cast into the lake of fire and brimstone with the beast and false prophet and they shall be tormented for ever and ever.

This is pictured in type in Numbers 16, when Korah, Dathan and Abiram rose up to question the leadership of Moses as Israel was journeying from Egypt to the land of Canaan. God caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow them up and they went down quick into the pit, called "shed or hell" in the Old Testament. This will be the like destiny of the Satanic trinity when they are tormented for ever and ever.

2. The other three usages of the term, "lake of fire" relate to the punishment or penalty of those who are judged at the white throne. The destiny of the bride of Christ has been discussed in previous Chapters. They are the people who are named in the Scriptures as those who "have made herself ready," **Revelation 19:7**, and described in **Revelation 22:14** Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Those who appear at the white throne whose names are not found in the book of life are cast into the "lake of fire." **Revelation 20:15**. The deeds or description of these are found in **Revelation 21:8** **But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, Shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**

These Scriptures have forced many Bible students to take one or more positions regarding the teaching of the word that are impossible to defend. Some take the position that the "lake of fire" is the same thing as hell which comes from "gehenna" in the old language from which the New Testament is translated. This poses a problem in that "gehenna" hell is used in context with the disciples every time that it is used in the Scriptures. In eleven of the twelve places where "gehenna" is used, it is spoken by Jesus himself to his disciples. The New Testament usage is a common form for the garbage dump in the Valley of Hinnom which is located on the south and east side of the city of Jerusalem. Here is the place where refuse was burned, consisting of the bodies of dead animals, assorted trash, and even the bodies of criminals that were executed whose bodies were not claimed by any one.

Fire burned there constantly and also there were present at that place, worms that fed on this garbage, giving use to the term in Mark 9:44, 46, 48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. It should be easy to apply this to the teaching of **1 Corinthians 3:12-15** where man's works will be tried by fire. Therefore, a man's works become synonymous with himself. If one is a persistent drinker, then to hear the word "drunk" is to cause one to think of that particular person. To hear the words "pastor," "singer," "teacher," etc., one's mind goes to certain of God's people that he has known in times past. To say that one is cast into "gehenna" hell then would be saying that his life works are burned. Nothing is left of this offending one's life but a small pile of ashes to show for an entire life before God.

The teaching in the Bible that one's life works being burned is saying that this one is lost is missing the point here. Acceptable works before God is all that God's people will have to show for their life. If the works are burned, then what is left? This is the quandary that too many find themselves in regarding this question. Some say that he loses his salvation in spite of **1 Corinthians 3:15**. Some say that this one was never saved because saved people do not do these things, in spite of the record of David, king of Israel and the teachings of **1 John 1:8-10**.

The reason for such a dilemma is that most religious people believe that saved people die and go to heaven and lost people die and go to hell. This position says that saved people do not sin, and if they do, it is proof that they have never been saved. It is also said that all the saved have ultimate joy and live in the holy city, new Jerusalem, right next to the Lord Jesus Christ. This position will cause one to say that the lost are confined to the lake of fire, no matter that one is a young person that has just reached the age of accountability without being saved, and another is Adolph Hitler, the murderer of millions of innocent people. It is said by this group that the lost go to the lake of fire, all in the same place, without exception.

III. AN HONEST LOOK AT THE LAKE OF FIRE

1. The Scriptures say that all whose names are not written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. Many have come to the conclusion that heaven and hell are the only two destinations for mankind. These believe that by being saved, one goes to heaven and if one is never saved, he goes to hell for eternity. The problem with this teaching is that it cannot be found in the word of God. The nearest one can come to supporting the "going to heaven" thesis is that the thief on the cross was promised to be in Paradise in the presence of the Lord at his death. This is only a temporary position until Jesus comes back to the earth to set up his earthly kingdom of one thousand years on the earth. At this time, it is said that his wife of Revelation 19:7, consisting of the saints who have been in Paradise and the raptured saints follow Jesus upon white horses. It does not say that anyone goes to heaven when they die. Revelation 19:14 And the armies *which* were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Going to spend an eternity in a devil's hell is also a famous expression used by many preachers and church folks alike. This is also not a scriptural term, nor is it even taught in the word of God. Hell is the prison house where the lawless are kept until they are called forth to appear at the white throne judgment of **Revelation 20:11-15**. A similar practice is used in the judicial system today when one is convicted of a crime by the courts and is placed in a jail to wait for his sentence to be pronounced. See **John 3:18** but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He is already condemned, but he is yet to appear before the tribunal to be sentenced. After his sentencing he is placed in a permanent facility in keeping with the nature and seriousness of his crime. The people in hell are brought before the white throne judgment and are judged according to their works. They are then cast into the lake of fire, in the particular place that is determined by the Lord, the judge. It would seem that not all suffer the same, else there is no purpose for judging their works.

Those who are found in the book of life at the white throne judgment are possibly the Jews who preached the gospel during the millennium. Individuals among the nations who lived in the flesh during the millennium and walked according to the word of God preached to them, seem to be placed just outside the holy city, new Jerusalem on the new earth. It is not possible to harmonize the teachings of the Scriptures with the common approach to the take of fire believed by most today. All do not deserve the same punishment or penalty, and provision is made for them on the new earth.

The lake of fire consists, perhaps of all the earth except the space occupied by the holy city, new Jerusalem, where the bride of Christ resides with God and Jesus Christ. One may also conclude that those of the nations outside the city are not included in the book of life. The Scriptures are not clear on this matter. The saved outside the city are not in the bride, but are not suffering as others who are among those in death and hell.

3. An attempt will be made at this time to offer some suggestions for your consideration that may shed some light on this whole matter. It is stated in the message of the angel of God to John in Revelation 1:1 he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John: According to A.T. Robertson in his *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, the word "signified" is "seemaino" in the Greek text. It is also used in **John 12:33** This he said, signifying what death he should die. Dr. Fred Stevenson in his *Commentary on Revelation* agrees that this word is used to mean a sign.

This is the reason that the Book of Revelation is difficult to understand. Right soon in chapter one, it speaks of seven golden candlesticks. They are signs or symbols of something. Verse 16 says that a sharp two-edged sword goes out of the mouth of Jesus. This is a sign or symbol of something. The keys of the kingdom in **verse 18** are a sign or symbol of the authority to allow or deny one entrance into the kingdom. There are no real keys that do this. The scene in chapter four speaks of four beasts and twenty-four elders, who are signs or symbols of some people or created beings.

Chapter five tells of a scene in heaven where a slain Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes is seen. Many believe this is a sign or symbol of Jesus Christ. Chapter nine speaks of locusts who have power as scorpions and looked like horses. Again, these are signs or symbols of something. Chapter thirteen describes a beast coming up out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns that looks like a lamb but speaks like a dragon. Is this a real thing or a sign or symbol of something else?

Many other instances could be cited to show that this is a book of signs, and as such, difficult to understand. The lake of fire could very well also be a sign of some other reality that will serve God's purpose as he determines. A new heaven and a new earth are seen by John coming down from God out of heaven. **Revelation 21:2** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. The old heaven and the old earth are passed away. **2 Pet 3:13** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. God created mankind to live on the earth. God's home is now heaven. God Will come down to dwell with mankind on the new earth. The holy city will occupy a portion of the new earth, being about 1,300 miles high, wide *and* deep, pictured as a cube. There will be a space around the city for the saved of the nations according to **Revelation 21:24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it:**

Five different translations of the New Testament reveal that the phrase "of them which are saved" omitted, meaning that it is not in the older manuscripts. Some Bible students use the present translation to say that all the saved that are not in the bride will be in this group, just outside the city of New Jerusalem. Closer study will reveal that these may be the nations that lived in the millennium and were obedient to the word being taught at that time. It could be that this would not qualify them to be in the city, but would benefit by being healed by the leaves

of the tree of life. **Revelation 22:2.** They would bring their glory into the city as a result of their previous lives.

The remainder of the earth will be the dwelling place of those outside of Christ. It is believed that the ultimate rest for mankind is in the bride relationship in the holy city New Jerusalem for two reasons. God is with them and they shall be his people and he will be their God. **Revelation 21:3 Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.** One could rightly ask, "What will this mean to this special people of God?"

Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying. neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

This passage describes the thing that will be missing from the lives of his people. It also tells of what these will receive from him, that is, "the river of water of life," and "the tree of life." These two things are signs of the attributes of Jesus that are necessary for the continued blessed condition mentioned above. They "shall inherit all things." All of the rest of the inhabitants of the earth will not have these many wonderful blessings. **See Revelation 21:8** The basis for the statement that the ultimate joy of mankind in eternity is being with the Lord is not based on emotion or false hope. It is found in the request of the Mother of Zebedee's children coming to Jesus with a request found **in Matthew 20:20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.**

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Jesus did not rebuke the mother nor the two sons of Zebedee. He merely stated that this would be granted by the Father. Since he did not rebuke them for their request, it is believed that this will be the choice place in glory with Jesus. One cannot understand this unless it is seen that there is a great benefit in being near to the Lord even today. This is enumerated in Mark chapter five. He dealt with three different people who had three different problems. The man who acted crazy because he was possessed with an unclean spirit was attended to by Jesus and he is seen in **verse 15** "in his right mind."

The Lord can help us keep our mental faculties straight See Romans **12:1** **1 beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

A woman had an issue of blood and was not helped by any one. She touched the hem of his garment and she was made whole of her plague. Physical well being will be a feature in eternity. **Mark 5:34** **And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole.** A ruler of the synagogue came with a plea to help his daughter who was dying at the point of death. In **Mark 5:42** it is seen that Jesus raised her up. Death flees from the presence of the life-giver, so it would behoove one to want to be near Jesus in eternity.

John 11:43 **And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.**

44 **And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.**

John 4:53 **So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.**

Luke 7:14 **And he came and touched the bier and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.**

15 **And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.**

4. Many places in the Scriptures speak of his healing the sick, the blind, the lame, etc. If one want to live in eternity without illness nor fear of death, it is necessary to make preparations to be close to

Jesus. Understanding the benefits of being near to Jesus in eternity, let us ponder the consequences of those outside of the city. Those immediately outside the city are said to benefit from the leaves of the tree of life that are for the healing of the nations. One must ask the question, 'Why do they need to be healed? They evidently do not have the same body of glory as those who live in the holy city. The word

“healing’ comes from the old language word “therapeian’ and it can be seen that this is the word from which we get the English word “therapy’. It is evidently necessary for the nations to receive of the virtues of Jesus regularly in order to maintain the quality of life that they possess. The virtues of Jesus are pictured in the tree of life and no one lives without the provisions that Jesus makes for them.

The saints, the bride of Christ, who live in the holy city, eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the river of water of life and thus are sustained as a glorified saint by the virtues of Christ. What then, of those who are away from the holy city? These are living apart from Jesus and any sustenance that he might provide. Jesus stated it precisely in the Scriptures. **Revelation 22:11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.**

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

The unjust, the filthy, the righteous and the holy are destined to be the way that Jesus finds them when he calls them to one of two judgments. Being away from Jesus and his virtues will constitute suffering in the lake of fire. They have a body that is not glorified, dying yet never dead, with tears, sorrow, crying and pain. Many are suffering these things needlessly today simply because they will not submit their will to the will of God while they have the time and opportunity to do so.

Scriptures teach in many places that those who are not approved by Jesus are sent away from his presence with dashed hopes and unfulfilled expectations. Sadness fills the hearts of those who have been rejected by the Lord Jesus Christ. These rejected the Lord in their lives, and now he is telling them to go on their way in the same relationship that they had in life. The most obvious group are the religious people who make their plea to Jesus that they prophesied, cast out devils and did many wonderful works in his name. Jesus did not deny that they had been very active in religious matters, but responded to them in the word by making the following statements.

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:23.

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.

But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. Luke 13:27.

Matthew 24:48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The real problem with the people in the Scriptures mentioned above is that they wanted to be recognized for what they had done in life and Jesus would not allow them to remain in his presence. Being deprived of the virtues of Jesus Christ by being in his presence is the essence of the suffering in the lake of fire. These are necessary for the continued well-being in eternity, just as they are today, however, being ignored by many in the Lord's churches. Revelation 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

They do not have access to the tree of life, nor of the river of water of life. They are deprived of all the good things that God has promised to them that love and obey him. Several things should be obvious from this account in the word. Religious activity does not equate to acceptable works before God. The wise man, Solomon said in **Proverbs 21:3** To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice. The Apostle Paul by inspiration said in **Romans 14:18** For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

The Apostle Peter by inspiration said in **1 Peter 2:5** Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. One must do justice and judgment which equates to righteous living. He must also serve Christ instead of being religious and leaving Jesus out of his life. He must also offer up spiritual sacrifices instead of doing thing in the flesh.

5. Jesus concluded his sermon on the mount by admonishing the hearers to build upon the rock, that is on Christ, and the life Will withstand the storms that come against it He also said that to build upon the sand, that is, without Christ, that the life will fall when the storms of tile come against it, and great will be the fall of it See Man. 7:24-29. Jesus is telling the disciples, and us, that if one wants to be received of him, they must establish a relationship with him and progress in that relationship daily. W.E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, defines 'know' in **Matthew 7:23**, as "I have never been in approving connection with you. This word frequently indicates a relation between the person knowing and the object known. What is known is of value or importance to the one who knows, hence the establishment of the relationship. To be known of God suggests approval and bears the meaning 'to be approved'." This suggests a continuing relationship that grows and becomes more valuable as time passes.

This idea is found when Jesus said in **Matthew 25:12** "I know you not" The oil, the bridegroom and virgins all suggest that this parable is about churches. Some remained true to the commission given in Matthew 28:18-20 and were accepted into the marriage. Others did not remain true to the commission from the Lord and their lamps went out. This speaks of the Holy Spirit leadership in the church and they forfeited the privilege of entering into the marriage with Jesus Christ. Note that he did not say "I never knew you" but rather "I know you not" Religious activity that is not in harmony with the word of God and leadership of Holy spirit is not even viewed by God as being worthy of his attention. It must be remembered that the bride does not choose Jesus but rather Jesus chooses his own bride.

Matthew 20:16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

Isaiah 4:1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.

The idea here is that the Lord is telling these folks to just 'go on our way.' 'You did not want me in your religious activity, so I am not accepting your efforts.' This is the idea when Jesus rebuked Israel and told them But he shall say, **I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. Luke 13:27.** He also spoke the words in **Matthew 25:41 "Depart from me,"** when he spoke to the nations that had mis-treated the people of God.

This principle will not go unnoticed, whether it be an individual or nation as recorded in his word. Man. 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

The lake of fire will also be a place of unhappiness which is noted in several places in the Scriptures. Darkness is a feature of this place. This is the opposite of being with Jesus who is the light. It is said of the holy city, new Jerusalem, the home of the saints, that there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. **Revelation 22:5.** Jesus also said "**I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**"

The followers of antichrist will experience a kingdom of darkness and the people will gnaw their tongues in pain. Revelation 16:10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, The word also speaks of those who are cast into outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Matthew 8:12 But the**

children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 22:13 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The new earth has two principal places of interest. One is the holy city, which is the ultimate place of joy that is described in the verses that introduced this chapter. The other is the lake of fire that is also described herein. There seems to be some areas on the new earth that are not dealt with specifically, yet are there and need to be viewed according to the word. All agree that there are degrees of reward in the kind of body that the saints will receive and the relative position to Jesus in the New Jerusalem.

There must also be degrees of punishment for those outside the city also, since Jesus taught this in **Luke 12**. This chapter deals with the entire cross-section of humanity, from the most righteous and obedient servant, to the one who completely disregarded the commands of Jesus. It includes the one who knew the master's will and did not do it who shall be beaten with many stripes. It also addresses the servant who did not know the master's will and did not do it, who shall be beaten with few stripes. This principle indicates that the Lord will be fair to all in judgment.

This being true, then it follows that all the wicked will not suffer the same punishment from the Lord. Let all approach eternity with the resolve to meet God unafraid. Preparation had been made by making honest decisions, based upon what one knows about his responsibility to God, and doing what he knows is expected of him. The God who created all things will do right by his creation. No one will be able to say to God that he has been treated unfairly. The worst sinner in the lowest part of the lake of fire to the best saint who is nearest to Jesus in the holy city will give glory and honor to God who created him.

The purpose of this writing is to call attention to some things that are being ignored in the word of God today. Easy-believism says that once a person is saved, his past, present and future sins are forgiven and he is going straight to holy city to be with Jesus in the resurrection. Others say that in the final disposition of God to mankind, that all will be saved and will be the same in eternity. The purpose of this writer is not to unduly alarm anyone, nor to be dogmatic about the future, but rather to cause one and all to think of eternity and how to make ready to meet our great God and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. One must spend his life in such a way that God will be pleased with it and will receive his works as acceptable, having been done in harmony with the word of God. The life must be saved one day at a time. Each day is the time to serve the Lord. One cannot make it up at the end of life in one act of repentance. This is one of Satan's deceptions. Live for him now and the

assurance of eternity with God and Jesus Christ will be foremost in the mind of his saints.

There is a vast amount of difference in just barely making a living in this life and enjoying the good things that make life very enjoyable. Some can remember the great depression of the thirties when most people lived, but just barely. To have the bare essentials was the fate of most people. Yet when the good times came after the depression was over, most were not satisfied with barely living. We all determined to have good homes, air-conditioning, central heat, good cars, and better paying jobs so that we could afford these things. To refuse the better life caused one to be considered a little strange. Being born into the world does not guarantee one the quality life today. One must work and strive for the good paying jobs and keep himself within the bounds of proper conduct to achieve these goals.

The better spiritual life is offered to the church folks today by our Lord. This comes to us through the intimate knowledge and walk with him. Just as the birth into the physical life does not guarantee success, the spiritual birth does not guarantee the quality life and joy in the presence of the Lord in eternity. Many places in the Scriptures have been pointed out that define "knowing" Jesus. See page 167 paragraph 3 for this definition. The Scriptures clearly define this life that goes beyond salvation, into a relationship that is of value and continues to grow throughout one's life. This relationship continues then in the holy city New Jerusalem in all of eternity.

1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

May the Lord give us wisdom to understand the way and the courage to strive to enter into the strait gate that leads to life.

Luke 13:24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate:

Matthew 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life and few there be that findeth it.