**The lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels following their sin (which had to do with regality — Satan seeking to exalt his throne [**[**Isaiah 14:13-15**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.13-15&t=NKJV)**]), but it is also presently being reserved as the place where those rejecting the very reason for man’s creation (which had to do with regality as well [**[**Genesis 1:26-28**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)**]) will ultimately find themselves — non-overcoming Christians first, and then the unsaved.**

**There is simply no such thing in Scripture as companies of saved and unsaved individuals being judged together, at the same time.**

**Hurt By the Second Death, plus Sheep and Goats Metaphors
By Arlen Chitwood of** [**Lamp Broadcast**](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

Exactly what does it mean *“to be hurt by”* the second death in [Revelation 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV)? In light of [Revelation 20:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4-6&t=NKJV); [21:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.7-8&t=NKJV), which deals with overcoming and being overcome, this can mean only one thing: Non-overcoming Christians are going to “*have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death*” ([Revelation 21:8b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.8b&t=NKJV)).

“Fire” in Scripture is associated with the *judgment of the saved as well as the judgment of the unsaved*; and, following judgment, non-overcoming Christians will be *“hurt by the second death,”* which is *associated with the lake of fire*.

Thus, the time when this will occur is following events at the judgment seat. And though the Christians’ works will be tried in fire at the judgment seat, this is not synonymous with Christians having a part in “*the lake that burns with fire and brimstones*.”

Rather, at this judgment, Christians will be shown to have either overcome or to have been overcome, with the carrying out of decisions and determinations made at the judgment seat occurring at a time following these events.

(Note in the judgment of the unsaved in [Revelation 20:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.11-15&t=NKJV) that the lake of fire and the second death enter into the matter only following judgment. The lake of fire and the second death come into view *only following decisions and determinations surrounding their judgment*.

And it will be the same for the saved preceding this time. They will first be judged. Only then, *only following the decisions and determinations surrounding their judgment*, do the lake of fire and the second death come into view.)

The lake of fire is empty today, and it will be empty at the time Christians are judged. The first individuals to inhabit the lake of fire will be the beast and the false prophet, and their being cast therein *follows* the judgment of Christians.

Non-overcoming Christians themselves will not have their part in “*the lake that burns with fire and brimstone*” until the actual millennial reign of Christ, which *follows* the beast and the false prophet being cast therein. Overcoming Christians will be crowned at this time, and non-overcoming Christians will experience the second death at this time. For the latter, the entire scene, from the judgment seat on into the millennium, is apparently what is being referred to in [Hebrews 10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10&t=NKJV) — that which awaits the one guilty of the “willful sin” ([Hebrews 10:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.26&t=NKJV)), for which there is no sacrifice (*ref.* [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Ch. 3](http://bibleone.net/JSC03.htm)):

*but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.* ([Hebrews 10:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.27&t=NKJV))

It should not be thought strange that the same lake of fire appearing in connection with the outcome of the judgment of the unsaved first appears in connection with the outcome of the judgment of the saved. The very reason God brought “*the lake burning with fire and brimstone*” into existence was the entrance of sin into one province in His universe — a province where man, following his creation, found himself.

The lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels following their sin (which had to do with regality — Satan seeking to exalt his throne [[Isaiah 14:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.13-15&t=NKJV)]), but it is also presently being reserved as the place where those rejecting the very reason for man’s creation (which had to do with regality as well [[Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)]) will ultimately find themselves — non-overcoming Christians first, and then the unsaved.

Thus, “*the lake of fire*” is connected with *sin in relation to regality and this earth* — whether angels or man (saved or unsaved). And though this lake of fire was prepared for “*the devil and his angels*” (the first to rebel in this respect), man, ignoring or rejecting the reason for his creation (whether saved man, or unsaved man), will have a part in the same lake of fire. For saved man, it will be *millennial*; and for unsaved man, it will be *eternal*.

(Added Arlen Chitwood commentary regarding the lake of fire:

It appears plain that the expression is metaphorical when used relative to Christians [see below, Pt. 1]. But, when uses relative to the unsaved, the opposite is true. There is no indication that it is anything other than real [see below, Pt. 2].

1) Through comparing Scripture with Scripture, it is plain that these are simply different ways of expressing the same thing. And since a literal casting into outer darkness, Gehenna, or a furnace or lake of fire could not possibly be in view (for these different places could not possibly be looked upon as referring to the same place in a literal sense), it is evident that metaphors are being used throughout.

2) But relative to the unsaved and the lake of fire, this is simply not expressed other ways in Scripture as it is with the saved, leaving no room for any thought other than understanding the matter as literal, not metaphorical.)

See [The Second Death](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-three.php#The%20Second%20Death) in this site for additional commentary.

Bear one thing in mind about *judgment*. *No man* (saved or unsaved) will ever appear in judgment to determine his eternal salvation or eternal damnation. The question surrounding eternal salvation is always taken care of *before* man enters into judgment, and this matter *will not be* an issue at any future judgment. Every man will be resurrected “*in his own order* [in his own company (whether a company of saved individuals, or a company of unsaved individuals)]” ([1 Corinthians 15:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.23&t=NKJV)), and every man will be *judged* in the company in which he is resurrected.

The saved and the unsaved form entirely separate companies, in accord with their separate resurrections, and will be judged at different times. When the saved are judged, only the saved will appear; and when the unsaved are judged, only the unsaved will appear. In each case they will appear in a particular company with the issue pertaining to their salvation being a settled, closed matter at that time. There is simply no such thing in Scripture as companies of saved and unsaved individuals being judged together, at the same time.

All judgment, whether of the saved or of the unsaved, will be on the basis of *works* — the works of the ones being judged (*cf.* [Matthew 16:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.27&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 3:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.12-15&t=NKJV); [Revelation 20:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.11-15&t=NKJV)). And such works can have nothing whatsoever to do with issues pertaining to eternal salvation or eternal damnation. Redeemed man has been saved strictly on the basis of the work of Christ, and unredeemed man abides in his present state simply because he has not accepted the work of Christ. Resultantly, *neither* eternal salvation nor eternal damnation *can be* an issue when the works of man come under scrutiny, as will be the case in *all* future judgments.

No unsaved person will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and no saved person will appear before the great white throne. In each case, the eternal destiny of all individuals involved will have been determined *before* judgment occurs. And the same principle must hold true for *all other judgments* (*e.g.* that of Israel [[Ezekiel 20:33-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+20.33-38&t=NKJV)]; the Tribulation martyrs [[Revelation 20:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4-6&t=NKJV)]; or living Gentiles who survive the Great Tribulation [[Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV)]).

All future judgments will be carried out in orderly fashions. As in resurrection, so in judgment, every man will appear in his own company; and within this company every man will answer for his own actions, performed either as a saved or as an unsaved individual.

**Sheep and Goats Judgment**

The judgment of living Gentiles at the time of Christ’s return, as outlined in [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV), is often looked upon by some as a general judgment of saved and unsaved individuals, with issues of this judgment pertaining to the eternal destiny of those being judged; but such *is not* the case at all. Note that the ones coming under judgment are separated into two categories — referred to as “sheep” on the one hand, and “goats” on the other — with there being one destiny for the *sheep* and another destiny for the *goats*.

The *sheep* will be allowed to “*inherit the kingdom*,” but *not so* with the *goats*. Rather, they will be told, “*Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting* [age-lasting] *fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*” ([Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV), [41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV)).

Sheep and goats are *metaphors*, used in an antithetical sense; and *inheriting the kingdom* or *departing into everlasting* (age-lasting) *fire*, in connection with the sheep and goats, present destinies for each, set forth in an antithetical manner. And *neither* the text nor the context has to do with *eternal* verities. Rather, *both* have to do with the *1,000-year reign of Christ, the coming kingdom of Christ*. Accordingly, either realizing or not realizing an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ is in view throughout. Thus, the thought of “sheep,” “*inherit the kingdom*,” “goats,” and “*everlasting* [age-lasting] *fire*” must be understood with the *kingdom* in view, *not* with *eternal verities* in view.

(The word translated “everlasting” in [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV) is from *aionios* in the Greek text. This is the adjective form of *aion*, from which we derive our English word, *aeon*. Neither the noun nor the adjective means “eternal.” Rather, the two words literally have to do with “a period of time,” usually thought of as “an age.”

There is *no word* for “eternal” in the Greek text of the New Testament [or in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, for that matter]. The only way in which the Greek language can express “eternal,” apart possibly from contextual considerations [*e.g.*, when *aion* or *aionios* is used relative to deity], is through a *plural* use of *aion* [*e.g.*, [Hebrews 13:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+13.8&t=NKJV); “ages”] or through a *double* use of *aion*, in the plural and articular both times [*e.g.*, [Revelation 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+1.6&t=NKJV); “the ages of the ages”].)

The saved *alone* are in a position to come under the type judgment seen in [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV). And the events surrounding this judgment parallel those seen relative to the judgment of Christians. Individuals are seen judged on the basis of *works*; and the outcome of this judgment is two-fold:

1) realizing an *inheritance in the kingdom* on the one hand, and

2) having a *part in the lake of fire* on the other.

(Exactly the same thing is seen relative to judgment in the parable of the net in [Matthew 13:47-50](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.47-50&t=NKJV), along with a number of other parables and statements in Christ’s teachings [*ref*., the Appendix of this book [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Appendix](http://bibleone.net/JSC_A.htm) and the author’s book [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Mysteries of the Kingdom, Ch. 12](http://bibleone.net/MK12.htm)].)

[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Sheep and Goats are Metaphors, Ch. 6](http://bibleone.net/JSC06.htm)