**All judgments preceding the Millennium have *the kingdom in view*. But the wording of** [**Matthew 25:41**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV)**,** [**46**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV) **— those on Christ’s left hand going away into “*everlasting punishment*,” in “*everlasting fire*”; or those on His right hand entering into “*eternal life*” — would appear to clearly teach something different. Such though is not the case at all.**

**SAVED GENTILES ON BOTH HIS RIGHT & LEFT HANDS** (Title by Pat)
*From* [*Prophecy on Mount Olivet*](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/POMO.pdf)

**By Arlen Chitwood of** [**Lamp Broadcast**](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

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Chapter 23

**THOSE ON HIS RIGHT HAND**

*Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

*for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;*

*I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.”*

*Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?*

*When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?*

*Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?”*

*And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”* ([Matthew 25:34-40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34-40&t=NKJV))

When Christ returns to the earth it will be as “*King of kings and Lord of lords*.” Christ, at His first appearance, at the time of His incarnation, was born “*king of the Jews*” ([Micah 5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Micah+5.2&t=NKJV); [Matthew 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+2.2&t=NKJV)); and He will return to exercise that position at His second appearance ([Revelation 19:11-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.11-16&t=NKJV)).

Completely unlike His first appearance — “*in the likeness of sinful flesh* [without the covering of Glory that man had lost in Eden 4,000 years earlier]” ([Genesis 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.7&t=NKJV); [Romans 8:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.3&t=NKJV)) — Christ will reappear with a *body enswathed in Glory, clothed in regal garments, with many diadems on His head* (the type crown showing regality); He will reappear as “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah*,” not as “*the Lamb of God*”; He will reappear as *the rightful King*, as “*He judges and makes war*,” not as One to be ridiculed and arrayed as a mock King by existing powers (*cf*. [Psalm 2:1-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.1-12&t=NKJV); [24:1-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+24.1-10&t=NKJV); [110:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+110.1-7&t=NKJV); [Matthew 27:27-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.27-31&t=NKJV); [Luke 24:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.26&t=NKJV); [John 1:36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.36&t=NKJV); [Revelation 5:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+5.5-7&t=NKJV); [19:11-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.11-16&t=NKJV)).

Christ will not only reappear as “*King*” but He will have in His possession the *kingdom that He had gone away to receive.* Christ’s reappearance after this fashion will mark the beginning of climactic events pertaining to God’s plans and purposes, which date back in time to the period prior to man’s existence upon earth.

In Scripture, the enacting of God’s plans and purposes as they pertain to man are looked upon as occurring at two different times preceding man’s creation — “*before the foundation of the world*,” and “*from the foundation of the world*” (*cf*. [Matthew 13:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.35&t=NKJV); [25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV); [Luke 11:50](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+11.50&t=NKJV); [John 17:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+17.24&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.4&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 4:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.3&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.20&t=NKJV); [Revelation 13:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.8&t=NKJV); [17:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+17.8&t=NKJV)).

The word “*foundation*” is the translation of the Greek word, *katabole*, a compound word which literally means “to cast down” or “to throw down” (*kata* means “down,” and *bole* means “to cast” or “to throw”). The manner in which this word is used in a general sense in the expression, “*foundation of the world*,” could describe God’s past act of casting or throwing down the world (*i.e*., creating the world) out in space.

However, *katabole* appears to be used in a more specific sense in Scripture, referring to God’s subsequent act of restoring the ruined creation in [Genesis 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2&t=NKJV)bff rather than His initial act of creating the earth in [Genesis 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1&t=NKJV). In this respect, matters mentioned in the verses where this expression is used would refer to God’s actions regarding His Son and man at two different times in history, following the creation of the heavens and the earth:

1) “*Before* [Greek: *pro*] *the foundation of the world*” (before the restoration of the ruined creation, in eternity past, which could be any time between the creation [[Genesis 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1&t=NKJV)] and the restoration of the ruined creation [[Genesis 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2&t=NKJV)bff]).

2) “*From* [Greek: *apo*] *the foundation of the world*” (the time of the restoration of the ruined creation [[Genesis 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2&t=NKJV)bff], when God began counting 7,000 years of time in relation to His Son and man as it pertained to regality and this earth).

Thus, God’s plans and purposes as they pertain to His Son and man had their beginning in eternity past. The kingdom prepared for saved Gentiles “*from the foundation of the world*” in [Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV) had been planned in the eternal council chambers of God at a time “*before the foundation of the world*” ([Ephesians 1:4-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.4-10&t=NKJV)). Prior to God’s restorative work delineated in [Genesis 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2&t=NKJV)bff, in eternity past, the ages were planned around the preordained activity of the Son; and the Messianic Era is the climactic age in a series of ages.

(At least *three ages* would be in view — one pre-Adamic and two post-Adamic.

At least *one age* [possible more] would have preceded man’s creation. During this time, Satan was placed as ruler over a newly created earth, his fall occurred, and the subsequent ruin of his kingdom followed [[Genesis 1:1-2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1-2a&t=NKJV); [Isaiah 14:12-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.12-14&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 28:14-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+28.14-15&t=NKJV)].

Then *one age* covers Man’s 6,000-year Day, beginning with the restoration of the ruined earth for man and man’s subsequent creation on the sixth day [the one brought forth to replace the incumbent ruler, Satan].

Man’s fall though delayed, for 6,000 years, the purpose for man’s creation being realized, during which time God is performing a redemptive work relative to man [in order that man might one day realize the purpose for his creation in the beginning].

Then, the *last age* in this succession of ages is the 1,000-year Messianic Era, during which time God’s plans and purposes for His Son and for man will be brought to fruition, which is *the goal seen realized at the termination of all three sections of the Olivet Discourse.*

For additional information on “ages,” particularly as distinguished from “dispensations,” refer to [Ages and Dispensations](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/the-study-of-scripture.php#Ages%20and%20Dispensations) and [Dispensations As Distinguished from “Ages”](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Dispensations%20As%20Distinguished%20from%20%E2%80%9CAges%E2%80%9D) in this site.)

God’s preordained activity as it pertains to the ages relating to man, along with the earth, is referred to in [Ephesians 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.11&t=NKJV) and [Hebrews 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.2&t=NKJV), and the respective contexts of these two verses leave no room to question that which is in view. Both point to the same thing — a succession of ages, terminating with an age in which the “*restoration of all things*” will occur ([Acts 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.21&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Acts 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+1.6&t=NKJV)).

[Ephesians 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.11&t=NKJV) should literally read,

*According to a plan of the ages which He formed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

And [Hebrews 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.2&t=NKJV) should literally read,

*Has in these last days spoken to us in the person of His Son, whom He has appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He made the ages* [formed the ages after a pattern in accord with the pre-planned activity of the Son within these ages]” (*cf*. [John 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.3&t=NKJV); [Colossians 1:16-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.16-18&t=NKJV)).

Verses leading into [Ephesians 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.11&t=NKJV) have to do with the mystery revealed to Paul and the purpose for the present dispensation; and verses following [Hebrews 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.2&t=NKJV) have to do with God bringing His Son into the inhabited world once again, but this time to exercise the rights of primogeniture as His firstborn Son.

*The whole of Scripture moves toward a climactic age in which a new order of Sons will rule the earth for the express purpose of bringing all things under subjection to Christ, anticipating the eternal ages beyond* ([Romans 8:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.19&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 15:24-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.24-28&t=NKJV)). This plan was conceived and enacted “*before the foundation of the world*,” and the kingdom — the central focus of the plan — was prepared “*from the foundation of the world*.”

ORDER AND BASIS OF JUDGMENT

The Gentile section of the Olivet Discourse is normally looked upon by premillennial students of the Word as pertaining to a general judgment of all the Gentiles surviving the Tribulation — both saved and unsaved, living at the time Christ returns — with the works of those being judged revealing their saved or unsaved status. A judgment of this nature though is not what is taught either in this text or anywhere else in Scripture. *Such a judgment would be completely out of line with the teaching of Scripture not only on salvation itself but on the timing and basis of all future judgments pertaining to man.*

Salvation is by “*grace through faith*,” and man’s works can have *no part* in the matter. Salvation is based entirely on *the finished work of Christ*, and man must be completely passive. Man cannot perform works to be saved, to stay saved, or to show that he has been saved. If he could do any one of these three, then works would have entered into an area where works *cannot exist*, and salvation would cease to be by grace through faith ([Romans 11:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.6&t=NKJV)).

Insofar as judgment is concerned, neither can “a general judgment” exist within the framework of that which Scripture reveals. “The saved” must always be judged *first* ([1 Peter 4:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17&t=NKJV)), requiring a separation of the saved from the unsaved preceding judgment. A general judgment — both the saved and the unsaved called before Christ at the same time to be judged — would violate this principle.

Then again, future judgments in Scripture can have nothing whatsoever to do with eternal salvation or eternal damnation. One’s eternal destiny will *always* be a settled, closed matter before the person stands in the presence of Christ to be judged at a future date, with judgment relative to one’s acceptance or rejection of Christ having already occurred.

[John 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.18&t=NKJV) makes this very clear:

*He who believes in Him is not condemned* [judged]; *but he who does not believe is condemned* [judged] *already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*.

The issue surrounding one’s eternal destiny can never be raised at any future judgment, for judgment relative to this matter will have already occurred in *past time*. God judged sin in the person of His Son at Calvary, and this judgment affects both the believer and the unbeliever in the same *passive sense*.

It is not possible for a believer to ever be brought into judgment where issues surrounding his eternal destiny come into view. Sin has already been judged vicariously in God’s Son, and *God is satisfied*. The believer possesses the imputed righteousness of Christ ([Romans 5:15-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.15-18&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.21&t=NKJV)), and the penalty for sin has already been paid on his behalf ([Romans 6:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+6.23&t=NKJV)).

Nor can the unbeliever, as well, ever appear in a future judgment where issues involve his eternal destiny. Though he is completely outside the efficacy of Christ’s vicarious act, judgment relative to the matter at hand (judgment upon sin at Calvary) *has already occurred*. This is why [John 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.18&t=NKJV) clearly places the judgment of the unbeliever in past time. *Everything is based on Christ’s past, completed work and God’s judgment of sin within the scope of this completed work.*

An unbeliever is looked upon within the framework of the entire matter in *the same passive sense* that the believer is viewed. A vicarious judgment for sin occurred in past time; and even though the unbeliever is outside the scope of this vicarious act, he is looked upon as having already been judged since the judgment for sin has already occurred.

To bring any individual — saved or unsaved — into judgment at a future date where *even one issue* involves matters surrounding his eternal destiny would be to judge once again that which God has already judged. Thus, every future judgment — pertaining to the saved and the unsaved alike — can only involve *issues completely separate from one’s eternal salvation or eternal damnation.*

INHERITING THE KINGDOM

The key word to acquire a proper understanding of the judgment of living Gentiles when Christ returns is the word “inherit.” Those Gentiles placed at Christ’s right hand (the hand of “power,” symbolic of *strength* and *force* [[Genesis 48:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+48.17-19&t=NKJV)]) and dealt with first are said to *inherit a kingdom* prepared for them “*from the foundation of the world*” ([Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV)).

The issue at hand in Christ’s judgment of saved Gentiles (*all*, both those placed at His right hand and those placed at His left hand) at the end of the Tribulation is clearly *inheritance*, not eternal life.

Gentiles placed at both His right hand and His left hand will be judged on the basis of “works” relative to realizing or being rejected for an inheritance in the kingdom. And the reason they can be judged in this manner is because they will have already been judged on the basis of the work of Another — on the basis of Christ’s finished work at Calvary.

1) INHERITANCE AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

In the Scriptural framework, inheritance is *always a family matter*. In the Old Testament, “sons” were first in line to receive the inheritance, with daughters next. If there were no sons or daughters in the immediate family, the inheritance passed to the nearest family member or members designated by the law of inheritance ([Numbers 27:8-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+27.8-11&t=NKJV)).

In the New Testament, insofar as Christ, Israel, and the Church are concerned, it is “Sons” alone that are in view, more specifically *firstborn Sons*. It is *God’s firstborn Sons* who will come into possession of the inheritance and exercise the rights of primogeniture. And these rights will begin to be exercised in the Messianic Era by and through God’s firstborn Sons ruling over the Gentile nations.

Firstborn Sons hold their positions either through *relationship* (Jesus and His relationship to the Father — God’s only begotten firstborn Son) or *adoption* (Israel and the Church [Israel was adopted in time past, and the Church is yet to be adopted]); and firstborn Sons hold (or, as in the case of the Church, will hold) their respective positions in view of one day exercising power and authority following their coming into possession of the awaiting inheritance.

Inheritance within the kingdom to be realized by saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation though has nothing to do with exercising the rights of the firstborn. Nothing is said in Scripture about God adopting Gentile nations, as He adopted Israel (or as He will adopt the Church). National adoption among the nations of the earth belongs to *Israel alone* ([Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV)).

Thus, inheritance as it pertains to firstborn Sons and inheritance as it pertains to the saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation would have to be looked upon in different respects. Exactly what position saved Gentiles will occupy in the kingdom is unrevealed. They are said to inherit the kingdom and reign with Christ (*cf*. [Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV); [Revelation 20:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4&t=NKJV)), though evidently not as firstborn sons.

The nations of the earth coming out of the Tribulation and populating the millennial earth will be ruled by, reached with God’s message, and blessed through Israel. And Gentiles inheriting the kingdom at the beginning may very well have a part, under Israel, ruling and reaching the nations with God’s message.

Then again, the Gentiles inheriting the kingdom could occupy a similar regal place on earth under Christ and His co-heirs as they rule the nations from the heavens.

The matter though is unrevealed. And the preceding has been set forth only as possibility for thought, nothing more.

2) INHERITANCE AND SALVATION

Contrary to what is often taught, the word “inheritance” *never* appears in Scripture as a synonym for *the salvation that we presently possess*. *Eternal life* is one thing, and *inheritance* is something entirely different; and confusion abounds when proper distinctions are not made.

The offer of “eternal life” is reserved for *those outside the family*; and the offer of “an inheritance” is reserved for *those within the family* (“. . . *if children, then heirs* . . . .” [[Romans 8:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.17&t=NKJV)]). One is *a free gift*, but the other requires *merit*. One is *non-forfeitable*, for it is based on the finished work of Christ; but the other can be *forfeited*, for it is based on actions of the individual family members.

Consequently, inheritance in Scripture is connected with eternal life only to the extent that one has to first be in possession of eternal life before he can be in line to receive the inheritance.

There is though a salvation that is inherited (note that the word “salvation” is used in a much broader sense in Scripture than just a reference to eternal life [as is the word “gospel,” as well]).

For *Christians*, salvation in connection with inheritance has to do with exercising the rights of the firstborn during the coming age. It has to do with *the saving of the soul*, *the saving of the life* (*cf*. [Matthew 16:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24-27&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 1:14-2:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.14-2.5&t=NKJV); [10:35-39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.35-39&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9-11&t=NKJV)). Coming into possession of this salvation will be synonymous with coming into possession of *an inheritance in the kingdom as Sovereigns.*

An inheritance for *saved Gentiles* coming out of the Tribulation though, as previously noted, will be a different matter. There is nothing in Scripture that would connect their inheritance with sonship and positions of sovereignty of a nature sonship would portend; nor is their inheritance referred to in Scripture in the sense of a salvation or deliverance, as is the Christians’ inheritance.

Saved Gentiles living at the time Christ returns, who enter into an inheritance in the kingdom, will have endured to the end of the Tribulation and be “*saved* [physically delivered]” out of that period ([Matthew 24:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.13-14&t=NKJV)). They will then realize an inheritance of some unrevealed type in the kingdom.

3) INHERITANCE AND MERIT

[Matthew 25:34-40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34-40&t=NKJV) clearly attests to the fact that inheritance is based on the righteous acts of individuals in the family (works of the redeemed) rather than the righteous act of the Head of the family (the finished work of Christ on Calvary, allowing redeemed individuals to occupy a place in the family). And this same teaching regarding “inheritance” is covered elsewhere in Scripture by showing the possibility that one’s inheritance can be forfeited by improper conduct, seen in the parables in the Christian section of the Olivet Discourse ([Matthew 24:40-25:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.40-25.30&t=NKJV)) through a failure of household servants to properly carry out the responsibility entrusted to them by the Householder during His time of absence.

As in the Christian section of the Olivet Discourse, both positive and negative aspects of the matter are dealt with in the Gentile section of the Discourse. The positive side is seen by and through Christ’s dealings with those on His right hand, and the negative side is seen by and through His dealings with those on His left hand.

But, again, detail of the nature seen in Christ’s prior dealings with Christians is not seen in His dealings with the Gentiles in [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV). One can rest assured though that within God’s perfect justice and righteousness there will always be a just recompense in His Son’s judgmental dealings with mankind — within both positive and negative aspects of these dealings — for Christians on the one hand and saved Gentiles on the other.

Scripture abounds with information concerning Christ’s dealings with Christians in that coming day; particularly with warnings concerning that which awaits household servants who fail in their responsibility to properly handle that which the Householder entrusted to them during His time of absence.

Failure in this realm will result in a forfeiture of the rights belonging to firstborn sons. Such Christians will have forfeited their birthrights and thus the inheritance belonging to the firstborn.

In this respect, Scripture provides two classic examples of individuals who forfeited the rights belonging to the firstborn and consequently forfeited their inheritances. One example can be seen in the actions of Esau, and the other in the actions of Reuben.

And these things occurred “*as examples* [‘types’]”; and they have been recorded “*for* *our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come*” ([1 Corinthians 10:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.6&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.11&t=NKJV)).

These events occurred within God’s sovereign control of all things in order that He might have these accounts to draw upon to teach Christians deep things within the mystery revealed to Paul concerning the inheritance awaiting firstborn sons.

Esau, Isaac’s firstborn, forfeited his birthright to satisfy a fleshly gratification. He sold his birthright for a single meal ([Genesis 25:27-34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+25.27-34&t=NKJV)). When it came time for the father to bestow his blessing on the firstborn, Jacob was the one who received the blessing, not Esau. Esau had forfeited these rights; and once forfeited, they were irretrievable.

After Isaac had blessed Jacob as firstborn, Esau tried to get his father to change his mind and bless him as well. But his efforts were to no avail. The father’s blessing had already been bestowed upon Jacob, and the forfeited rights of the firstborn were gone forever ([Genesis 27:26ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+27.26ff&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:14-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.14-17&t=NKJV)).

Then, a forfeiture of these same rights is seen in events surrounding Jacob’s firstborn son. Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, was in direct line to inherit the rights of primogeniture; but because of one grave sin committed during his life, Reuben forfeited these rights. Reuben’s sin, resulting in the forfeiture of his birthright, was sexual impropriety of a nature that dishonored and shamed his father:

*. . . Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine; and Israel heard about it . . .* . ([Genesis 35:22b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+35.22b&t=NKJV))

As a consequence, Reuben’s birthright was divided among three of his brothers.

The *tribal rulership* was bestowed upon “Judah,” *the priestly office* was bestowed upon “Levi,” and *the double portion* of the father’s estate was given to “Joseph.”

The tribe of “Judah” became heir to *the kingly line*, the tribe of “Levi” became heir to the *priestly line*, and the tribe of “Joseph” inherited *the double portion*, realized through Joseph’s two sons (Ephraim and Manasseh), who each received a full inheritance ([1 Chronicles 5:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+5.1-2&t=NKJV)).

The preceding reveals the proper Scriptural distinctions between being a member of the family on the one hand and being in line to receive an inheritance on the other. Though Esau and Reuben forfeited their inheritances, they remained sons within the family.

And it is the same for a Christian. Becoming a member of the family, being born from above, places one in a position to inherit. The Christian as *a child* of God is an “*heir*”; and the Christian as *a son* is awaiting the “*adoption*” in order to realize the inheritance ([Romans 8:14-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14-23&t=NKJV)).

Christians have been saved for the purpose of one day exercising the rights of the firstborn, seated on the throne with Christ. However, as in the cases of Esau and Reuben (historical accounts forming types, set forth as warnings for Christians), these rights can be forfeited; but also, as in the cases of Esau and Reuben, such a forfeiture can produce no change in one’s family relationship.

Understanding these distinctions will allow one to see exactly what is in view when Christ calls attention to entering into an inheritance because of merit at the time He judges saved Gentiles following His return. Note that Christ will say to these Gentiles,

*“Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”* ([Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV)).

And this will be said because of *works* performed following their salvation ([Matthew 25:34-36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34-36&t=NKJV)). They will have *merited* this right because of their previous positive treatment of Christ’s brethren ([Matthew 25:40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.40&t=NKJV)).

Thus, the works of these saved Gentiles are clearly associated with *an inheritance in the kingdom*, not with eternal life — an impossibility. To teach, as many do, that Gentiles appearing before Christ in [Matthew 25:31ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31ff&t=NKJV) will show by either their works or their lack of works a saved or unsaved status not only does violence to biblical teachings concerning salvation by grace but it completely obscures that which is being taught in [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV).

Good works or a lack of such works can never have anything to do with showing one’s saved or unsaved status. Man’s works, after any fashion, either before or after a person is saved, can *never* enter into the realm of One’s eternal salvation. *The finished work of Christ alone is seen in this realm.*

Christians appearing before the Judgment Seat of Christ will be judged on the basis of works in relation to an inheritance in the kingdom; and saved Gentiles appearing before Christ following His return will be judged after this same fashion in relation to the same thing. The issue of one’s eternal destiny can occupy no place in either one of these judgments or in any other future judgment.

CHRIST’S BRETHREN

Gentiles being judged at the time of Christ’s return will be individuals from the nations of the earth saved during the immediately preceding Tribulation. They will have been saved mainly as a result of the ministry of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists called forth by God to proclaim the “*gospel of the kingdom*” to the nations of the earth during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation. These Gentiles will also be those who escaped the wrath of Antichrist as he sought their destruction, along with the destruction of Israel.

Satan’s final, climactic effort to thwart God’s plans and purposes, established in eternity past, “*before the foundation of the world*,” will be carried out through Antichrist. Satan, following his being cast out of the heavenly realm from which he presently reigns, will give to a man (the Antichrist, the beast — actually, his son [[Genesis 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.15&t=NKJV)]) “*his power, his throne, and great authority*.” He will give to Antichrist that which he previously offered to Christ (*cf*. [Luke 4:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+4.5-6&t=NKJV); [Revelation 13:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.2&t=NKJV)).

And through this man, seated upon his throne, Satan will do everything within his power to prevent a future manifestation of the kingdom of Christ. In this respect, he will turn his attention toward both *the Sovereigns* (God’s firstborn Sons, with his wrath vented particularly against Israel during the Tribulation) and *those having anything to do with any of the Sovereigns* (saved Gentiles befriending Israel during those days, destined to realize an inheritance in the kingdom as well), for man inheriting the kingdom will mean an end to Satan’s rule.

The book of Revelation, from chapter six through the opening verses in chapter nineteen, relates events that will occur on earth during the seven-year Tribulation. This portion of Scripture, though relating some events that will occur during the first three and one-half years of this period, is given over almost entirely to events beginning in the middle of the Tribulation and extending throughout the last three and one-half years, followed by the return of Christ at the end of the Tribulation. Consequently, this is the section of Scripture to which one must go in order to properly understand certain things about Christ’s judgment of the Gentiles on the basis of their activity during the Tribulation.

The most instructive portions of Scripture in this respect are Revelation chapters seven, twelve, and fourteen. These chapters deal with the 144,000 Jewish evangelists who will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom throughout the world during the Tribulation, with the innumerable multitude of Gentiles who will be saved as a result of their ministry, and with Satan’s efforts to prevent or hinder everything associated with their ministry.

(*Ref*. [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Prophecy on Mount Olivet, Ch. 2](http://bibleone.net/POMO_02.htm) and[Ch. 3](http://bibleone.net/POMO_03.htm), where events in [Revelation 7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+7&t=NKJV); [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12&t=NKJV); [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14&t=NKJV) are discussed. Also, for a fuller discussion see [A Woman, a Dragon, a Male Child](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-in-revelation.php#A%20Woman,%20a%20Dragon,%20a%20Male%20Child), and [The One Hundred Forty-four Thousand](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-in-revelation.php#The%20One%20Hundred%20Forty-four%20Thousand) in this site.)

Satan and his angels, immediately following their being cast out of the heavens onto the earth near the middle of the Tribulation, will direct their attention toward Israel. The reason given in Scripture is because Israel, at that time, will be about to bring forth the 144,000 evangels (a first-fruit of the nation [[Revelation 14:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.4&t=NKJV)]), who will carry the message of salvation and the coming kingdom to the Gentiles throughout the earth during the last half of the Tribulation; and Satan will seek to destroy the 144,000 as soon as they appear, seeking to prevent the proclamation of this message ([Revelation 12:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.4&t=NKJV)).

His efforts though will be in vain. The 144,000, after they are brought forth, will be supernaturally removed from the earth to escape Satan’s wrath (this is the reason they are seen in heaven in [Revelation 14:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.1-5&t=NKJV)) and shortly thereafter will be sent back to the earth to deliver their message during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation ([Revelation 12:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.5&t=NKJV), [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.17&t=NKJV)).

Satan, immediately following the removal of the 144,000 into heaven, will then vent his wrath upon the nation of Israel. God though will supernaturally intervene and prepare (or will have already prepared) a place in “*the wilderness* [the mountainous terrain of the land of Israel]” for the Jewish people, to which a remnant will flee, where they will remain safe from Satan’s wrath for the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation ([Revelation 12:13-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.13-16&t=NKJV)).

Elsewhere in the world, anti-Semitism will become rampant. Jews will come under the sentence of death, and conditions will deteriorate far beyond those seen in Europe during the years 1939-1945. Many Jews though, as in Europe during the World War II years, will survive this time. These are the ones who will be re-gathered “from *the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*” by angels at the time Christ returns. And the shortening of the days of the Tribulation will occur first and foremost for these particular Jews ([Matthew 24:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.22&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.31&t=NKJV)).

The Israeli nation presently existing in the Middle East, from which the remnant fleeing into the mountainous terrain of the land will come (*cf*. [Matthew 24:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.16&t=NKJV); [Revelation 12:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.6&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.14&t=NKJV)), comprises only a part of world Jewry (about two-fifths). The majority of Jews reside outside the land today, and the majority will probably still be outside the land when Antichrist appears. This segment of Jewry will remain scattered throughout the world during the Tribulation, with those Jews presently in the land (approaching 6,000,000 today) being uprooted in the middle of the Tribulation and scattered out among them (save for the remnant which will escape to a specially prepared place in the land that God will have prepared for them).

And the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will proclaim their message to Gentiles throughout the world where Jews presently reside and where Jews in the land of Israel will be driven when Antichrist enters with his armies in the middle of the Tribulation ([Matthew 24:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.14&t=NKJV); [Mark 13:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+13.10&t=NKJV)).

“Christ’s brethren” in [Matthew 25:40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.40&t=NKJV), [45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.45&t=NKJV) are *the Jewish people* ([Genesis 37:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+37.14&t=NKJV), [16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+37.16-17&t=NKJV); [45:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+45.1-4&t=NKJV)); and the treatment extended to Christ’s brethren by Gentiles would evidently refer to treatment extended to Jews other than the remnant escaping into the mountainous terrain of the land of Israel. This remnant of Jews will be in a specially prepared place and be supernaturally protected by God Himself.

The situation for Jews scattered throughout the earth in that day can only be viewed as *grave beyond description*. They will be hunted, killed, and sold as slaves throughout the Gentile world ([Isaiah 14:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.2&t=NKJV); [Joel 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+3.7&t=NKJV); [Matthew 24:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.9&t=NKJV)); and numerous saved Gentiles worldwide will befriend these Jews, along with befriending the 144,000 Jewish evangelists proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

The mark of the beast will be given during this period, and no one will be able to “*buy or sell*” apart from having received this mark. But those receiving the mark will find themselves under a far greater condemnation ([Revelation 13:15-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.15-17&t=NKJV); [14:9-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.9-12&t=NKJV)).

Two-thirds of the Jews throughout the earth will die during this time, along with an innumerable host of saved Gentiles ([Zechariah 13:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+13.8&t=NKJV); [Revelation 7:9-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+7.9-17&t=NKJV)). Saved Gentiles befriending both saved and unsaved Jews being hunted and killed will undoubtedly find themselves in similar straits as well (*e.g*., note that which awaited those aiding Jews during WWII in Europe). This will be a time when matters surrounding saved people befriending Christ’s brethren will be quite different than they are today.

(According to present figures regarding the world’s Jewish population, about twice as many Jews will be slain in less than half the time as were slain in Europe by the Third Reich during the years 1939-1945 [they will be slain during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation, but note a shortening of these days for the sake of the Jewish people ([Matthew 24:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.22&t=NKJV))].

The Third Reich had trouble disposing of 6,000,000 Jewish bodies over the space of about seven years, building giant crematoriums and burying others together in common, mass graves. Far more horrific conditions can only exist in this one realm alone during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation.)

We’re really not given details concerning how Gentiles under the sentence of death who cannot purchase food or trade after any other fashion in the commercial world will be in a position to befriend Jewish people in similar straits. The prevalence of anti-Semitism during this period — placing Jews in an altogether different position than Gentiles — would possibly provide one explanation (*ref*. “Anti-Semitism,” in [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Prophecy on Mount Olivet, Appendix 1](http://bibleone.net/POMO_A1.htm) in this site).

For a segment of Jewry, the type of ministry that the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will have would possibly provide other thoughts surrounding the problems Gentiles will have befriending Jews in that day. These Jewish evangels will be in the public eye and have to travel about; and in the course of their travels they will have to acquire food and lodging, at times in unfamiliar surroundings.

They will be carrying on a ministry during extremely difficult times — times unlike anything ever seen in man’s 6,000-year history; and God will use saved Gentiles (saved as a result of the ministry of the Jewish evangels), occupying a different position relative to the public, to befriend, minister to, these Jews in order to insure the worldwide proclamation of their message.

One though does not need to understand all the details of the preceding matter. It falls our lot only to believe that which God has revealed. The facts as given clearly state that saved Gentiles will befriend, minister to, Jews during the Tribulation; other saved Gentiles though will not do so. And at the time of Christ’s return all of these Gentiles will be judged on the basis of their prior treatment of the Jewish people, with a view to an inheritance in the kingdom.

[Genesis 12:3a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.3a&t=NKJV) states,

*I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you . . . .*

And this statement concerning Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob, which God gave Abraham 4,000 years ago and, through His Spirit, moved Moses to record 3,500 years ago, sets forth *the fundamental principle in Scripture that will govern the judgment of saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation.*

They will be blessed because *they had been a blessing to the Jewish people*. And, further, it will be revealed to them that the treatment that they extended to “Christ’s brethren” was actually *treatment extended to Christ Himself*, for Christ, as well, is a descendant of Abraham. In this respect, Christ will say to saved Gentiles in that day,

*“Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it to Me.”*

This is a statement resting on an unchangeable principle that is no less true today than it will be in that coming day.

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Chapter 24

**THOSE ON HIS LEFT HAND**

*Then He will also say to those on the left hand, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:*

*for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;*

*I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.”*

*Then they also will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?”*

*Then He will answer them, saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.”*

*And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.* ([Matthew 25:41-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41-46&t=NKJV))

Contrary to common, widespread interpretative views on [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV), the only time Christ will deal with unsaved Gentiles when He returns to the earth — preceding His actual 1,000-year reign over the earth, with His co-heirs — will be when He treads the winepress at what is commonly called the battle of Armageddon. Christ’s judgment of Gentiles, as seen at the end of the Olivet Discourse, when He returns and sits on the throne of His Glory, *will be with saved Gentiles alone, not with both saved and unsaved Gentiles.*

And this judgment, as any other judgment at this time, will be with the kingdom in view. This judgment, as any of the other judgments, will have to do with *either realizing an inheritance in the kingdom or being rejected for an inheritance in the kingdom*. And the basis of this judgment will be the previous actions of those being judged, whether they ministered or didn’t minister to Christ’s brethren, the Jewish people, during the Tribulation.

Those having ministered to the Jewish people during the previous Tribulation will realize an inheritance in the kingdom; those who didn’t minister to the Jewish people during the previous Tribulation though will be turned away, rejected for an inheritance.

In this respect, the matter will be very similar to that which is seen in Christ’s previous dealings with Christians at His judgment seat, as seen in the four parables covering the Christian section of the Olivet Discourse ([Matthew 24:40-25:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.40-25.30&t=NKJV)).

In the first of these four parables, one is received alongside, and another is turned away. And receiving alongside or being turned away is seen, in a subsequent parable, to be with a view to *the kingdom that the Nobleman had gone away to receive* ([Luke 19:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+19.12&t=NKJV)).

The same thing is seen in the judgment of saved Gentiles. The ones on His right hand will be received in the same manner as seen in the previous parable (actually, all four previous parables, all covering different facets of the same thing) — received alongside; and the ones on His left hand will be turned away, as also seen in this parable (again, in all four parables).

Being received or being turned away in this manner has to do with the same thing previously seen in these parables. It has to do with *an inheritance in the kingdom, which will be realized by some and not realized by others.*

**The Kingdom in View**

Everything surrounding Christ’s return is seen having to do with the *kingdom that He had gone away to receive*. When Christ returns, between the time His feet touch the Mount of Olives and the time He and His co-heirs ascend the throne and reign ([Zechariah 14:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+14.4&t=NKJV), [9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+14.9&t=NKJV)), numerous things, of necessity, will have to occur.

At the time Christ returns, Satan will still be in power, with Antichrist seated on His throne; an unconverted Israel, which Satan will still be seeking to destroy, will still be scattered among the nations; and the Gentiles, saved mainly as a result of the ministry of the 144,000 Jewish evangels, who survived the Tribulation, will still be scattered throughout the nations of the earth as well.

Christ will deal with Israel first, relative to conversion, repentance, and restoration to the land, as well as calling the nation before Him in Judgment; and *everything will be with a view to the kingdom.*

Then the incumbent powers must be removed from their positions, which is what is seen in [Revelation 19:17-20:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.17-20.3&t=NKJV) (allowing Christ and His co-heirs to take the scepter and reign). The beast and false prophet will be dealt with first ([Revelation 19:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.20&t=NKJV)), the armies of the beast (led by the kings of the earth [[Revelation 19:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.21&t=NKJV)]) will then be dealt with, and then Satan himself (which can only include his angels as well) will be dealt with ([Revelation 20:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.1-3&t=NKJV)).

Christ will then deal with the saved Gentiles, both those surviving the Tribulation in [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV) and those having been slain during the Tribulation ([Revelation 7:9-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+7.9-17&t=NKJV); [20:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4-6&t=NKJV)); and His dealings with these Gentiles, as His dealings with the Jews, will be *with a view to the kingdom.*

In short, everything surrounding Christ’s return will have one thing at the forefront: *the kingdom that He had gone away to receive.*

Gentile nations, comprised of unsaved Gentiles surviving the judgments of the Tribulation, will enter into the Millennium and populate the millennial earth. And not only will they enter into this time in natural bodies, capable of procreation, but atmospheric conditions will once again be of a nature that man can, as in the antediluvian world of Noah’s day, live for hundreds of years, even for the entire duration of the Millennium, in a natural body (*ref*. [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Prophecy on Mount Olivet, Ch. 9](http://bibleone.net/POMO_09.htm)). Thus, the population of the earth, over time, can only increase, evidently dramatically.

(The common thought and teaching that only saved Gentiles will enter into the Millennium is based on a misunderstanding of [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV), attempting to make this section of Scripture teach a judgment of all the Gentiles at the time of Christ’s return, both the saved and the unsaved.

This though is not what [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV) or any other section of Scripture teaches. The millennial earth, at the very beginning, will evidently be populated by unsaved Gentiles, forming nations, occupying different geographical locations throughout the earth.)

Israel will be placed at the head of the nations here on earth, with the Jewish people realizing their calling. A converted Jewish nation will not only rule over the Gentile nations but will send the evangels out, worldwide, to reach the Gentiles with God’s message; and God will bless the nations through Israel ([Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV); [Isaiah 43:7-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.7-11&t=NKJV); [Jonah 1:2ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+1.2ff&t=NKJV)).

(As the 144,000 of [Revelation 7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+7&t=NKJV); [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12&t=NKJV); [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14&t=NKJV) began carrying God’s message to Gentiles worldwide during the last half of the Tribulation [forming a first-fruit of the nation], the entire nation will continue this task during the Millennium [forming the main harvest].)

Then, in the heavens, Christ and His co-heirs will rule the nations as well, which will evidently be through representatives here on earth. And this could possibly be accomplished through saved Gentiles, those seen on Christ’s right hand in [Matthew 25:34-40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34-40&t=NKJV), who realize an inheritance in the kingdom.

(The present kingdom under Satan is structured after the preceding fashion. Powerful angels in Satan’s kingdom rule from a heavenly sphere through men in corresponding positions of power here on earth [[Daniel 10:12-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+10.12-20&t=NKJV)]. In this passage from Daniel, there is both a “*prince of the kingdom of Persia*” and “*kings of Persia*” [evidently lesser rulers under the prince] in the heavens, which would correspond to both the main ruler and lesser rulers under him who ruled over the Persian kingdom here on earth.

Governmental power and authority originates in the heavens — “*Heaven rules* [KJV: “the *heavens do rule*]” [[Daniel 4:26b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+4.26b&t=NKJV)] — and progresses from rulers in the heavens through rulers on the earth. Governmental powers throughout the Gentile nations possess corresponding governmental powers in Satan’s kingdom in the heavens in this fashion. Powers in the heavens rule through these corresponding powers on the earth. Or, to turn that around, the powers on earth govern under these corresponding powers in the heavens.

This is the manner in which the government of the earth is presently structured, which is also the same manner in which the government of the earth — all of the Gentile nations — will be structured yet future, though under Christ and His co-heirs rather than Satan and his angels.

There is one exception to the preceding — the government of the nation of Israel, for Israel *is*” *not reckoning itself among the nations*” [[Numbers 23:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+23.9&t=NKJV)]. Israel, though possessing a government of the same type, with powers in the heavens ruling through powers on earth [it must, for “*the heavens do rule*”], rules separate from powers in Satan’s kingdom. Israel’s ruling angel in this respect is Michael, separate from Satan’s kingdom [[Daniel 10:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+10.21&t=NKJV)].

And, as previously noted, the coming kingdom of Christ can only be established after the same fashion, with Christ and His co-heirs ruling from heavenly places through corresponding powers among the nations here on earth. This though would be over the Gentile nations alone [note that overcoming Christians have been promised power over the nations, not over Israel ([Revelation 2:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-27&t=NKJV))].

The twelve apostles would seem to be the lone exception, having been promised power over the twelve tribes of Israel [[Matthew 19:27-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+19.27-29&t=NKJV)]. And, since other rulers over Israel will be needed in the heavenly sphere of the kingdom, these positions may very well be filled by Old Testament saints who qualified to rule from the heavens prior to this part of the kingdom being taken from Israel [*cf*. [Matthew 8:11-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+8.11-12&t=NKJV); [Luke 13:28-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+13.28-29&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 11:8-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.8-16&t=NKJV)].)

**“Eternal Life” and “Everlasting Punishment”**

All judgments preceding the Millennium have *the kingdom in view*. But the wording of [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV), [46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV) — those on Christ’s left hand going away into “*everlasting punishment*,” in “*everlasting fire*”; or those on His right hand entering into “*eternal life*” — would appear to clearly teach something different. Such though is not the case at all.

There is a translation problem to begin with, and once this has been straightened out and the whole of the two parts of [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV) are viewed together, along with being viewed in the light of related Scripture, particularly the larger context of the Olivet Discourse — comparing Scripture with Scripture — the matter becomes quite clear. In fact, when this is done, it becomes impossible to teach that which is almost universally taught in this passage (*i.e*., a judgment of both saved and unsaved individuals, with eternal verities in view [eternal life and/or eternal damnation]).

1) The Translation Problem

The translation problem lies in the words “*eternal*” and “*everlasting*” in [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV), [46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV). In the English translation, “*eternal life*” is used relative to all those on Christ’s right hand, and “*everlasting punishment*” is used relative to all those on His left hand.

“*Eternal*” and “*everlasting*” in these verses are both translations of the Greek word *aionion*, which is the adjective form of the noun *aion*. Both words mean the same thing, which is a meaning other than “eternal,” though the words could be thought of in the sense of “eternal” if the context permits.

But this is not the case at all in [Matthew 25:31-36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-36&t=NKJV). Contextually, in this section of Scripture, the word *aionion* could not possibly be understood as “eternal” or “everlasting.”

(Neither the Hebrew text of the Old Testament nor the Greek text of the New Testament contains a word for “eternal.” *Olam* is the word usually translated “eternal,” “everlasting,” or “perpetual” in English translations of the Old Testament; and *aion* [a noun] or *aionios* [the adjective form of *aion*] are the words translated “eternal” or “everlasting” in the New Testament [*aidios*, an older form of *aionios*, used only two times and meaning exactly the same as *aionios*, is the only exception ([Romans 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.20&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV))].

*Olam, aion*, and *aionios* all have to do with “a long period of time,” which, if the context permits, can refer to “eternity” [*e.g*., the *aionios* God in [Romans 16:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+16.26&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Psalm 136:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+136.1ff&t=NKJV)]. But the words standing alone, apart from a context, *cannot* be understood as “eternal.”

*Context* is the all-important factor to ascertain the length of time in view when these words are used.

*Aion* and *aionios* are usually thought of and used numerous times in the New Testament in the sense of “an age.” And a usage of this nature is even brought over into English. For example, the English word “aeon [or ‘eon’]” is derived from the Greek word *aion*.

The only way in which the Greek text can express “eternal” apart from textual considerations is by a use of *aion* in the plural [*e.g*., [Luke 1:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+1.33&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 13:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+13.8&t=NKJV), referring to “the ages,” *i.e*., ages without end, which would comprise eternity] or 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); [4:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4.9-10&t=NKJV), referring to “the ages of the ages,” again, ages without end].

And the use of *aionios* in [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV), [46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV), referring to an inverse of that seen in [Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV) [failing to realize an inheritance in the kingdom] can only be understood as “age-lasting.” It can only be understood as referring to the outcome of a judgment of unfaithful saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation.

A judgment of the unsaved, with eternal verities in view, could not possibly be the subject at hand in [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV), [46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV). First, the context will not permit such an understanding of these verses; and second, inheritance in the kingdom, contextually in view, would limit this judgment to the saved alone. Note [Romans 8:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.17&t=NKJV): “*And if children, then heirs . .* . .”

“Sheep” and “goats” ([Matthew 25:32-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.32-33&t=NKJV)), can only be understood contextually as a metaphorical way of describing two classes of saved individuals, similar to the parable of *the wheat and the tares* in [Matthew 13:24-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.24-30&t=NKJV). The unsaved and eternal verities simply cannot be in view in either passage. Rather, in both passages, *only the saved, with a view to an inheritance or non-inheritance in the kingdom, can be in view*.)

2) The Complete Text Itself

The problem seen with the common, erroneous interpretation of [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV) when viewing the complete text has been alluded to in the previous data concerning *aion* and *aionios*. That which is seen in this section of the Olivet Discourse is *a judgment of saved Gentiles at the time Christ returns, with the kingdom in view.* Yet, the translation, “*eternal*” in connection with those on Christ’s right hand and “*everlasting*” in connection with those on His left hand, completely removes matters from the issue at hand.

(The kingdom in view throughout the Olivet Discourse is the coming 1,000-year reign over the earth, when Christ and His co-heirs will sit on the throne as seen in [Revelation 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.21&t=NKJV), “*My throne* [Christ’s throne],” and rule over the present earth.

The kingdom as it will exist beyond that time — after the destruction of the present heavens and earth [the heavens associated with the earth, not the universe as a whole] and a new heavens and new earth have been brought into existence, with power emanating from “*the throne of God and of the Lamb*” [[2 Peter 3:10ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.10ff&t=NKJV); [Revelation 22:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.1&t=NKJV), [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.3&t=NKJV)] — is another matter.

The kingdom in view when Christ and His co-heirs reign over the earth from “*My throne*” has to do with the government of this present earth and will last for 1,000 years. This is the kingdom in view throughout all three sections of the Olivet Discourse, with the overcomer’s promises in [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV) having to do with this 1,000-year kingdom alone.

And, to enlarge upon the preceding, this is the kingdom in view anyplace in Scripture — Old Testament or New Testament — where promises have been made to Israel or to Christians regarding the kingdom. All distinctions for faithfulness and unfaithfulness — whether relative to Jews, Christians, or Gentiles — have to do with this 1,000-year period alone, not with the eternal ages.

The kingdom in view beyond the Millennium has to do with the new heavens, the new earth, and with power emanating from “*the throne of God and of the Lamb*” [which can only be universal in nature]; and this continuing facet of the kingdom will be eternal in length.

Refer to [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Prophecy on Mount Olivet, Conclusion](http://bibleone.net/POMO_Conclusion.htm) for additional details on the preceding.)

The translation in the English text in [Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV), [46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV) has made “*inherit* *the kingdom*” ([Matthew 25:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.34&t=NKJV)) synonymous with “*eternal life*” ([Matthew 25:46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.46&t=NKJV)) for those on Christ’s right hand, which cannot be true at all. Realizing an inheritance in the kingdom can only be equated with “life for the age,” never with eternal life, which is exactly how the Greek word *aionios*, used with “life,” should, contextually, be translated and understood.

And, in like fashion, contextually, “*everlasting punishment*” should be properly translated “age-lasting punishment.” That which those on Christ’s left hand receive would be the antithesis of that which the ones on His right hand receive. Instead of realizing an inheritance in the kingdom, they would be rejected for this inheritance; and, instead of possessing life for the age, they would realize the opposite, expressed in a slightly different way in verse forty-one — “*Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting* [*aionios*, ‘age-lasting’] *fire* . . . .”

3) Comparing Scripture with Scripture

To understand that which is meant by “age-lasting fire,” one of the best places to begin is with the overcomer’s promises in [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV) and see the same thing befalling non-overcoming Christians (also seen in a different fashion in the four parables in the Christian section of the Olivet Discourse). And this can be seen in the second of the overcomer’s promises, in the message to the Christians in the church in Smyrna, in [Revelation 2:11b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11b&t=NKJV):

*. . . He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.*

Not being hurt or being hurt by the second death is in connection with overcoming or not overcoming. The promise that the one overcoming will not be hurt by the second death in [Revelation 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV) clearly portends the opposite for the non-overcomer. That is, the overcoming Christian will not be hurt by the second death, but the non-overcoming Christian will be hurt by the second death. And the whole of the matter is in relation to realizing or not realizing an inheritance in the kingdom, not with eternal life.

The expression, “*the second death*,” appears three times in Revelation chapters twenty and twenty-one ([Revelation 20:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.6&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.14&t=NKJV); [21:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.8&t=NKJV)), where it is used in connection with judgments of both the saved and the unsaved and where it is, as well, associated with “*the lake of fire*” in connection with the judgments of both the saved and the unsaved.

And in the 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 deal with the saved in connection with overcoming or being overcome, referencing the second death, [Revelation 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV) can mean only one thing:

Overcoming Christians, as stated in [Revelation 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV), are not going to be “*hurt by the second death*.” But the inverse of that has to be equally true as well, for the promise carries a clearly implied warning. Non-overcoming Christians are going to be “hurt *by the second death*,” defined in Scripture as having “their *part in the lake which 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 though the Christians’ works will be tried “*by* [‘in’] *fire*” at the judgment seat, this is not synonymous with Christians having a part in “*their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*.”

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. And it will be at this time, following judgment, that non-overcoming Christians will be “*hurt by the second death*,” which is associated with the *lake of fire.*

(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 second death and the lake of fire enter into the matter only following judgment. The second death and the lake of fire come into view only following decisions and determinations pertaining to the judgment of the unsaved.

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 pertaining to their judgment, does the second death and the lake of fire come into view.)

A) THE OVERCOMER’S PROMISES

The word “overcome” is a translation of the Greek word *nikao*, which means “to conquer” or “to gain a victory over.” The thought inherent in the word *nikao* (or *nike*, the noun form of the word) always means to be victorious in a contest or conflict. The “overcomers” are the conquerors, the victors; they are the ones who will have successfully run the race of the faith; they are the ones who will have conquered the numerous encountered obstacles along the way.

There are seven different overcomer’s promises in [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV), and each promise is *millennial in its scope of fulfillment*. That is, these promises will be realized by overcoming Christians, or they will fail to be realized by Christians who have been overcome, during the 1,000-year reign of Christ after Christians have had their works tried “*by* [‘in’] *fire*” at the judgment seat.

(There can be no such thing as Christians being hurt by the second death beyond the Millennium, for [Revelation 21:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.4&t=NKJV) plainly declares that there will be no more death during this time. Former things of this nature will have passed away.

Nor can the Son invite Christians to sit on “*My throne*” [the seventh and last overcomer’s promise; [Revelation 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.21&t=NKJV)] beyond the Millennium, for He will not be seated on this throne at that time. Instead He will be seated with His Father on “the *throne of God and of the Lamb*” [[Revelation 22:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.1&t=NKJV), [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.3&t=NKJV)].

During the Millennium, regal power over the earth will emanate from *the Son’s throne above the present earth*. But during the ages beyond, regal power over the universe will emanate from *the throne of God and of the Lamb on the new earth*.)

Christians have been saved with a view to being overcomers and bringing forth fruit. This matter comprises the very heart of the message that is to be proclaimed to Christians throughout the dispensation. Israel has been set aside during this time, and God is calling out another people — a separate and distinct people — “*for His name*,” taken mainly from among the Gentiles ([Acts 15:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+15.14&t=NKJV)).

Those whom God is presently dealing with comprise an entirely new creation, which is neither Jew nor Gentile, forming *one new man* “*in Christ*.” And God is extending to individual members of this one new man, to Christians, the privilege of overcoming and bringing forth fruit, with a view to their occupying positions as joint-heirs with His Son in the heavenly sphere of the coming kingdom.

God has set aside an entire dispensation for this purpose, and judgment at the end of this dispensation will reveal man’s response to this privilege. Some Christians will be shown to have overcome, possessing works comparable to “*gold, silver, precious stones*”; but other Christians will be shown to have been overcome, possessing works comparable to “*wood, hay, straw*.”

The overcomers will, at that time, inherit the promised blessings of [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV); but those shown to have been overcome will be denied these blessings. This is the subject matter dealt with in the opening three chapters of the book of Revelation.

B) BEING HURT OF THE SECOND DEATH

That which is in view concerning a non-overcoming Christian one day being hurt of the second death following decisions and determinations at the judgment seat, as previously seen, is explained later in this same book. The second death for the non-overcomer is having a “*part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone*” ([Revelation 21:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.8&t=NKJV)); and having a part in the lake of fire is explained by and through God’s dealings with the unsaved in the previous chapter as being “*cast into the lake of fire*” ([Revelation 20:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.15&t=NKJV)).

And seeing individuals cast into “*the furnace of fire*” in [Matthew 13:42](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.42&t=NKJV), [50](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.50&t=NKJV) is simply another way of expressing the same thing.

(The parables in [Matthew 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13&t=NKJV) deal with the Kingdom of the Heavens and fruit bearing, not with eternal salvation. Thus, the subject matter has to do with the saved, not with the unsaved.

Further, in [Matthew 13:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.1&t=NKJV), Christ going out of “*the house*” [a reference to Israel] and down by “*the seaside*” [a reference to the Gentiles], *the one new man* “*in Christ*” [about to be brought into existence at the time these parables were given] is seen throughout the first four parables. In this respect, those gathered out of Christ’s kingdom, which “*offend*” and “*practice lawlessness*,” who are cast into a furnace of fire, can only be identified as saved individuals.

Also, this casting into a furnace of fire in [Matthew 13:42](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.42&t=NKJV), [50](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.50&t=NKJV) occurs before the Millennium. The unsaved cast into the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.15&t=NKJV) occurs following the Millennium. They are not the same.)

But is the second death, being cast into the lake of fire, something that will be carried out in a literal sense? Or, is Scripture dealing with metaphors at this point? And, if the latter, what about the unsaved being cast into the lake of fire at the end of the Millennium, in [Revelation 20:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.11-15&t=NKJV)?

If one is literal, would not the other have to be literal as well? Or, if one is metaphorical, would not the other have to be metaphorical as well?

C) ALLOWING SCRIPTURE TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE

In [John 15:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+15.6&t=NKJV) and [Hebrews 6:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.8&t=NKJV), saved individuals are spoken of in a metaphorical sense, where a burning with fire is referenced. And the context both places has to do with either bearing fruit or not bearing fruit, which is exactly the same thing that is seen in the [Matthew 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13&t=NKJV) parables. Or, as the matter is expressed in [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV), it has to do with either overcoming or being overcome.

And the negative side of the matter is expressed at least two other ways in Scripture — being cast into Gehenna (a reference to the place of refuse outside the city walls of Jerusalem at this time; [Matthew 5:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.22&t=NKJV), [29-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.29-30&t=NKJV); [23:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.15&t=NKJV), [33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.33&t=NKJV)) or being cast into outer darkness ([Matthew 8:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+8.12&t=NKJV); [22:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.13&t=NKJV); [25:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.30&t=NKJV)).

Overcoming or not overcoming and being unhurt or being hurt by the second death in [Revelation 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV) is expressed a slightly different way in [Romans 8:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.13&t=NKJV):

*For if you* [a reference to ‘brethren’ in [Romans 8:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.12&t=NKJV)] *live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

Whether Gehenna or outer darkness in Matthew, a burning with fire in John and Hebrews, being cast into a furnace or lake of fire in Matthew and Revelation, or suffering death or being hurt by the second death in Romans and Revelation, *different facets of exactly the same thing are in view.*

*All of these are used in contexts showing that they have to do with saved people in relation to fruit bearing and the kingdom*.

By 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.

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.

Aside from the preceding, it is clear that all Christians, faithful and unfaithful alike, will be in the kingdom. This is seen in the type in [Genesis 18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+18&t=NKJV); [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19&t=NKJV). Both Abraham and Lot, in the final analysis, are seen on the mount (a “mountain” in Scripture signifies a kingdom). But note the stark difference in the place that each occupied.

Abraham stood before the Lord, where he had always stood ([Genesis 18:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+18.22&t=NKJV); [19:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.27&t=NKJV)). Lot though found himself in a place separate from the Lord, in a place where he also had always stood ([Genesis 19:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.1&t=NKJV), [30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.30&t=NKJV)).

**“Everlasting [‘Age-Lasting’] Fire”**

*Then He will also say to those on the left hand, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting* [age-lasting] *fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*. ([Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV))

As has been shown, similar verses to the preceding are used different places in the New Testament relative to non-overcoming Christians. And, with this in mind, understanding how these verses are used, the matter concerning how that which is stated in [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV) relative to those on Christ’s left hand is to be understood should be evident without further comment.

(Why does Scripture associate non-overcoming Christians with the lake of fire in relation to Christ’s millennial reign, in the manner previously seen [which would be the same for those on Christ’s left hand in [Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV)]? The answer would be the same as the reason why Scripture associates the unsaved with the lake of fire throughout the endless ages of eternity, following the Millennium.

The lake of fire was not prepared for man. Rather, it was prepared “for *the devil and his angels*” [[Matthew 25:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.41&t=NKJV)]. It was prepared for those who had rejected God’s supreme power and authority, as Satan sought to acquire power and authority above that which had been delegated [[Isaiah 14:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.13-14&t=NKJV)]. Thus, in this respect, the lake of fire is connected with regality.

And man, created to replace Satan and his angels, finds his connection with the lake of fire on exactly the same basis. *Saved man*, ignoring the very reason for his salvation [which is regal], will find himself associated with the lake of fire during the Millennium [an association connected with all that the existence of the lake of fire implies]. And *unsaved man*, ignoring salvation and the reason for man’s creation [which, again, is *regal*], will find himself associated with the lake of fire throughout the endless ages following the Millennium [an association connected with all that the existence of the lake of fire implies].)

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[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Prophecy on Mount Olivet, Ch. 23](http://bibleone.net/POMO_23.htm) Right Hand

[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Prophecy on Mount Olivet, Ch. 24](http://bibleone.net/POMO_24.htm) Left Hand