

# IS THERE HOPE FOR THOSE WHO DIE UNSAVED?

Bible Truth About People Who  
Never Accepted Jesus

the Expanded Version



GOD'S LOVE. GOD'S JUSTICE. GOD'S PLAN FOR ALL.

TRUTH THAT BRINGS HOPE.

# IS THERE HOPE FOR THOSE WHO DIE UNSAVED?

## Bible Truth About People Who Never Accepted Jesus

### Preface

The question of what happens to those who die without accepting Jesus as their Savior has troubled countless hearts across generations. For many, it is not merely a theological puzzle but a deeply personal concern—one that touches the fate of loved ones, friends, and even entire communities. This book, *Is There Hope for Those Who Die Unsaved?* was written to address these questions with honesty, compassion, and a commitment to scriptural truth.

Throughout its pages, you will find a careful exploration of the Bible's teachings on salvation, resurrection, judgment, and God's ultimate plan for humanity. The approach taken here is rooted in the conviction that God's character is defined by justice, love, and mercy, and that His promises are both trustworthy and offered to all. Rather than assuming that judgment is finalized at death, this study examines the Bible's consistent testimony regarding resurrection, future judgment, and God's purpose to provide every person a full and informed opportunity to respond to Christ.

Rather than relying on tradition or speculation, this book invites you to examine the Scriptures for yourself—to consider the evidence, follow the biblical narrative from beginning to end, and discover a message of hope that is grounded in God's revealed plan. The goal is not to soften Scripture, but to allow it to speak clearly, harmoniously, and without contradiction.

The journey ahead is both intellectual and spiritual. You will encounter challenging questions and clear, Bible-based answers, presented through careful scriptural reasoning and cross-referenced passages, all arranged in a logical sequence. Each section is designed to build upon the last, guiding you through the central themes of God's plan—from the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice, to the purpose of suffering, the promise of resurrection and the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth.

Whether you are a lifelong student of the Bible, someone seeking reassurance about the fate of the unsaved, or simply curious about God's plan for the world, this book is written with you in mind. May it offer clarity where there has been confusion, comfort where there has been fear, and renewed confidence in the wisdom and goodness of our Creator.

Let us begin this journey together, with open minds and open hearts, trusting that God's love—guided by wisdom, justice, and purpose—truly knows no boundaries.

*Note: This is an expanded and more comprehensive version of a shorter and simpler book by the same title. For readers who are less comfortable with deep scriptural analysis, the shorter version may serve as an easier introduction.*

# IS THERE HOPE FOR THOSE WHO DIE UNSAVED?

Bible Truth About People Who Never Accepted Jesus

If someone dies  
without accepting Jesus...  
is that the end?

God's plan is  
bigger, wiser, and  
more loving than  
we imagined.



**TRUTH. JUSTICE. MERCY. HOPE FOR ALL.**

— Exploring God's Plan from Beginning to End —

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Note: All scripture quotes are from the New King James Version translation unless otherwise indicated.



# PART I: DOES GOD HAVE A SALVATION PLAN FOR THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE?

## 1. Have you ever wondered what happens to those who die without accepting Jesus as their Savior?

*Many Christians struggle with the fate of loved ones who died without professing faith in Jesus. This section introduces the emotional and theological dilemma, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of God's plan for salvation.*

Where are those you care deeply about who died without accepting Jesus as their Savior? Have you ever prayed beyond hope that someday you might again hug them, hold them, kiss them, or even talk to them?

What about people you never knew or met? How can those who lived and died before Jesus was even born be saved? What happens to those who never heard His name or had any opportunity to respond to the gospel?

And what of the most vulnerable? Do babies who die automatically go to heaven? What if they were never baptized? Are good people—moral, kind, and sincere—who died without accepting Jesus as their Savior now suffering eternal torment?

Many Christians have been taught to expect the worst outcome as answers to these questions.

Some have been taught that God works in mysterious ways and there are many questions to which we cannot know the answers.

Other Christians hope for a more encouraging answer and struggle with trying to harmonize seemingly conflicting scriptures.

Some struggle to reconcile how Scripture might apply to babies or morally sincere non-believers.

These deeply personal concerns cannot be answered by sentiment alone; they must be examined in the light of Scripture as a whole. If both babies and good atheists are to be saved, how do we explain the Bible verses below that plainly state following Jesus is the only path to salvation?

These verses are often cited to support the belief that salvation is limited only to those who consciously accept Christ before death.

- **Acts 4:12:** *...there is **no other name**...among men by which we must be saved.*
- **John 3:36:** *He who believes in the son has everlasting life; and **he who does not believe** the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*
- **John 14:6:** *...I am the way, the truth, and the life. **No one comes** to the Father except through me.*
- **John 10:9:** *I am the door. **If anyone enters by me**, he will be saved...*

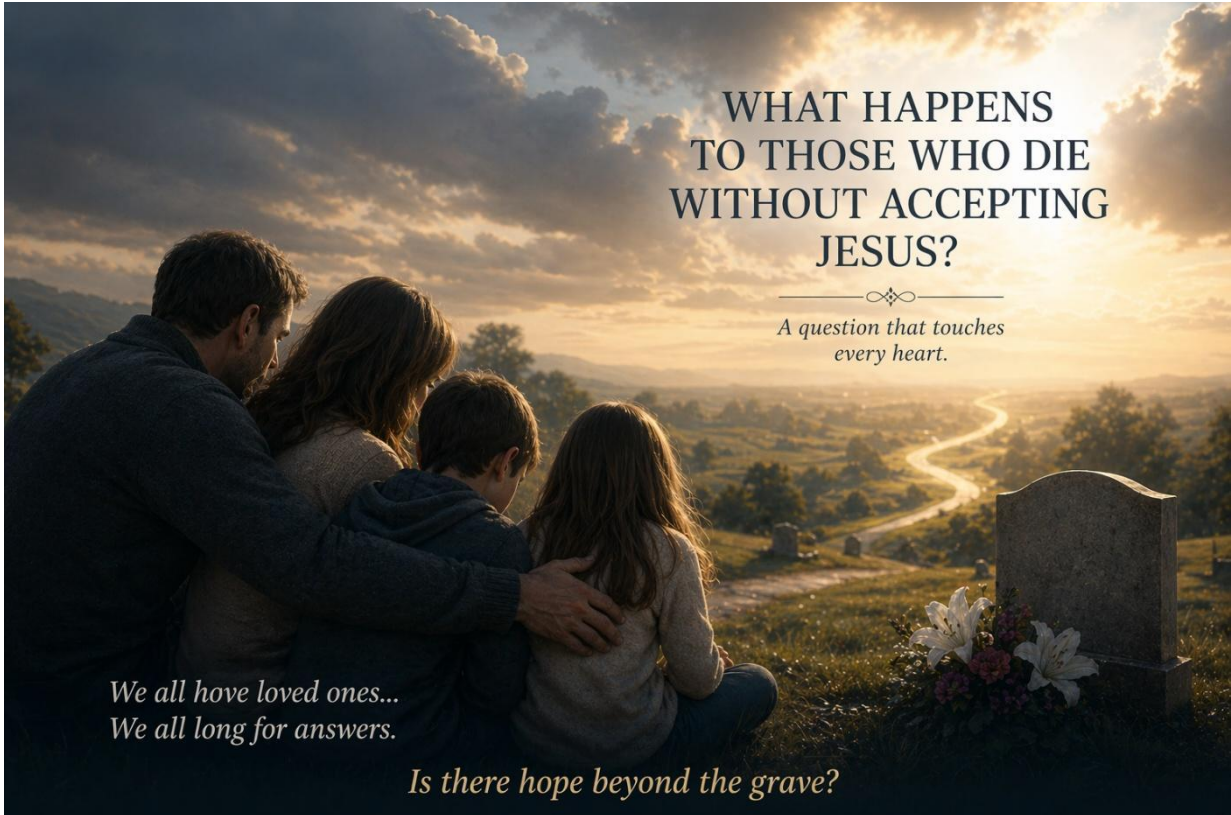
- **Ephesians 2:18:** *...through him we both have access by one spirit to the Father.*
- **Romans 5:1-2:** *...having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus.*
- **John 3:16:** *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*
- **Acts 16:31:** (ESV) *...Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...*
- **Romans 10:9:** *...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- **John 6:40:** *And this is the will of Him who sent me, that everyone who sees the son and believes in him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*
- **John 20:31:** *...Jesus is the Christ, the son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.*
- **John 8:24:** (NASB) *Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.*

These verses create a tension: exclusivity of Christ vs. God's love for all. We understand from these scriptures that God does have a salvation plan for faithful Christians who, saved by faith in Jesus, will join him in heaven (**1 Corinthians 15:40,47-49; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**). However, let's search for a more complete understanding of God's plan to also save the world while fully affirming Jesus as the only path to salvation. In Part I, we explore the many scriptures found throughout the Bible, page after page, from Genesis to Revelation, which demonstrate God's plan to rescue mankind out of death--including the unbelieving world of mankind (**1 Timothy 4:10**). This book will focus on what the Bible explicitly teaches—not tradition. In Part I, let's allow the Bible to speak for itself with only limited comments on what scripture says.

#### Key Takeaways:

- The fate of the unsaved is deeply personal because it forces us to confront the future of our own family and friends.
- More than Scripture itself, religious tradition has often created fear and uncertainty
- Scripture insists Jesus is the only way—so the key concern becomes exclusive salvation texts versus a broader hope.

The Bible's teachings have led to diverse expectations about the fate of the unsaved. While some fear eternal torment, others hope for a more merciful outcome. This section frames the central question: **Is there hope for those who die unsaved?** This question naturally leads to an even deeper one: **What does God truly desire for humanity?** Before we can understand how salvation is offered, we must understand God's intent—whether it is narrow or generous. That question is where our investigation begins.



## WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO DIE WITHOUT ACCEPTING JESUS?

A question that touches  
every heart.

*We all have loved ones...  
We all long for answers.*

*Is there hope beyond the grave?*

### 2. Does God truly desire to save everyone—or just a select few?

*This section examines whether God's intent is to save all people or only a chosen group. Understanding God's desire is crucial for grasping the scope of His salvation plan.*

God's desire is for all people to be saved and to come to repentance, not just a select few. This desire is not expressed through divine compulsion, but through a plan that is consistent with God's justice and His respect for human choice. The following verses show both God's universal desire to save and His power to accomplish what He purposes.

**2 Peter 3:9:** (ASV) *The Lord is...longsuffering...not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

**1 Timothy 2:4:** (KJV) *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

**John 3:17:** *For God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.*

**Isaiah 14:24:** *The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand* (see also **Isaiah 46:9-11; 45:22-23**). This verse establishes that God's will is not a mere 'hope'—it is a purpose backed by Almighty Power. While many focus on God's power to judge, Scripture emphasizes His power to redeem. If God purposes for all to come to the knowledge of truth, His wisdom is surely capable of designing a timeline where that knowledge reaches every ear.

This principle—that God accomplishes what He purposes—is not limited to judgment but applies equally to salvation. If He desires to save everyone, we must consider if He is wise enough to design a

plan that offers a genuine, unhindered choice to every soul without ever violating the sanctity of their free will. The following sections will explore how Scripture reveals this perfect balance.

If He wants to save everyone, isn't He powerful enough and wise enough to develop a salvation plan to accomplish that purpose? But can He give every human being the best opportunity possible for eternal salvation without violating free will? Let's find out by continuing in our investigation through the sections to follow.

### Key Takeaways

- Scripture clearly affirms that God desires the salvation of all people.
- God's desire is matched by His power and purpose.
- God's saving purpose operates through justice and free will, ensuring that salvation is a genuine choice rather than an act of coercion.

**SECTION 1 & 2: THE DIVINE DILEMMA:  
RESOLVING THE 'EXCLUSIVE' & 'UNIVERSAL' QUESTION**

**A: EXCLUSIVE SALVATION**  
(The Necessary Condition)

**EXCLUSIVE VERSES:  
NO OTHER NAME.**

1. JOHN 14:6:  
"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life..."  
No one comes to the Father except through me.
2. ACTS 4:12:  
"...no other name... ..no other among men... saved."
3. JOHN 3:36:  
"...wrath of God abides on him."

**RESOLUTION: BOTH ARE TRUE.**  
Exclusive Requirement + Universal Desire =  
The Future Restoration of All

**B: UNIVERSAL DESIRE**  
(God's Purpose)

**UNIVERSAL DESIRE VERSES:  
ALL TO BE SAVED.**

1. 1 TIMOTHY 2:4:  
"(God) desires all men to be saved... and come to the knowledge of the truth."  
Not wishing that any should perish...
2. 2 PETER 3:9:  
"...all should come to repentance."
3. ISAIAH 14:24:  
"(God) has purposed, so it shall stand."

**FAITH & REPENTANCE (NOW)**  
(The condition that **MUST** be met)

**THE BRIDGE OF RECONCILIATION**  
(Provision made for ALL)  
**THE BRIDGE OF RECONCILIATION**  
(He tasted death for everyone – Heb 2:9)

**THE PURPOSE THAT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED**  
(The purpose that **WILL** be accomplished)

The Exclusive Condition (Faith in Jesus, ✝) is not canceled, but its fulfillment is made possible for ALL in God's two-stage timeline. The current "Advancement Party" (Rescuers) helps implement this. (Hebrews 11:39-40; Acts 3:19-21; 1 John 2:2).

If God wants all to be saved and has the power to accomplish His purposes, then the next question becomes: **Who is included in His plan—only certain people, or all humanity?** Later sections will answer the question, "If everyone is included, then why bother being a Christian now?"

### 3. Who is included in God's plan for salvation?

*Who qualifies for God's salvation? This section explores whether the plan is limited to certain nations or individuals, or if it truly encompasses all humanity.*

To understand who is included in God's plan of salvation, we must pay close attention to how broadly Scripture speaks about its intended reach. Scripture reveals a salvation plan that is all-encompassing, extending to every nation; all people and all flesh—no one is excluded from the opportunity to be

blessed. To understand the scale of this plan, we can look at the Bible's testimony in three distinct stages:

### **The Ancient Promise: God's Intent for the Nations**

From the very beginning, God's goal was not limited to one group, but encompassed every family on earth.

- **Genesis 22:18:** "In your seed **all the nations** of the earth shall be blessed..." (See also Genesis 12:3; 18:18-19).
- **Isaiah 40:5:** "The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and **all flesh** shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- **Haggai 2:7:** "And I will shake **all nations**, and the desire of **all nations** shall come..." (This desire of all nations is Messiah and his kingdom: Isa 2:2-4; 11:10; Matt 12:21; Dan 2:44; John 12:32)

### **The Sacrifice: A Provision for the Entire World**

The work of Jesus was not a partial "remedy"; it was a comprehensive solution for a universal problem.

- **John 1:29:** "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of **the world!**"
- **Hebrews 2:9:** "...that he... might taste death for **everyone.**"
- **John 6:51:** "...and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of **the world.**"
- **John 1:9:** "Jesus was the true light, which gives light to **every man** coming into the world." This verse suggests that even those who lived in the dark corners of history or died in infancy are not outside the reach of Christ's light.

### **The Global Reach: Good News for All People**

The actual application of this salvation is described as reaching every single person, without exception.

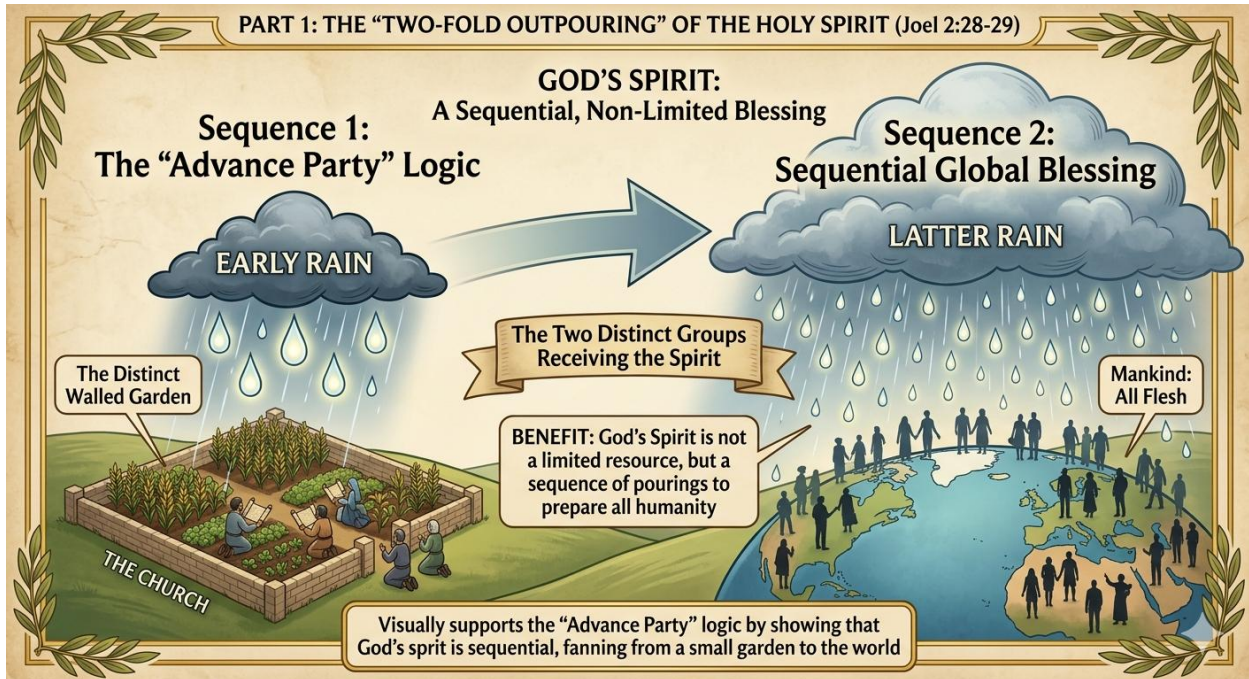
- **Luke 2:10:** "...behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to **all people.**"
- **John 12:32:** "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all peoples** to myself."

Note that these scriptures do not say 'some' from every nation, but 'all' nations; they do not say 'many' flesh, but 'all' flesh. The language is exhaustive, leaving no room for a plan that excludes a single soul from the blessing.

### **The Two-Fold Outpouring: The Advance Party and the Main Body**

A key distinction in the "scope" of salvation is found in the prophecy of Joel, quoted in the book of Acts. It shows God working with two distinct groups in two different stages:

- **The Advance Party (Acts 2:18):** "...on My *menservants and on My maidservants*, I will pour out My spirit in those days..." This describes the "calling out" of a specific team—the Church—who receive the Spirit during this present age. Like an **Advance Party** sent into a disaster zone, they are prepared first so they can help facilitate the massive rescue effort that follows.
- **The Main Body (Acts 2:17):** "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My spirit on **all flesh...**" (see Acts 3:21) This is the arrival of the **Main Body**. Once the Advance Party has been prepared, the Spirit is poured out on everyone else in the 'last days'—the period of time where God's Kingdom is fully established on earth. This ensures that the rescue is not just for the few but is truly for everyone.



**Understanding the Contrast is Crucial:** If the Holy Spirit were only intended for "believers" in this life, the promise to "all flesh" would remain unfulfilled. By distinguishing between the **servants** and **all flesh**, Scripture provides a clear map of how God's plan expands from a small group to all mankind.

Being included in God's plan does not mean identical roles, timing, or rewards—but it does mean no one is excluded from opportunity. Scripture consistently points toward saving ALL people, ALL flesh, ALL nations and the WORLD. The testimony of Scripture is unanimous: the reach of the **remedy** is every bit as vast as the reach of the **curse**.

### Key Takeaways

- God's plan of salvation explicitly includes all people, not just believers or a single nation.
- Jesus' redemptive work was for the entire world, not only faithful Christians.
- The outpouring of the Spirit follows a sequence: first upon the "Advance Party" (the Church) and ultimately upon the "Main Body" (all flesh).



Now that we see the scope of God's promises—all nations, all people, all flesh—some natural questions follow: If God's plan is truly this vast—encompassing every nation and every generation—then what is the purpose of the Church today? Are Christians the only ones being saved, or are they the Advance Party of all mankind? How does God carry out His purpose across time, roles, and calling?

#### 4. Is it possible that both faithful Christians and the rest of humanity can be saved?

*This section examines scriptural evidence to determine whether salvation is reserved only for Christians or if others will also receive an opportunity.*

The Bible reveals a two-stage plan of salvation. In the present age, faithful Christians (Advance Party) are called, tested, and rewarded with a heavenly hope. In the age to come, all humanity (Main Body) will be resurrected and offered the opportunity to learn righteousness and receive eternal life on earth. Each group has a unique and important role in God's loving purpose. Scripture presents salvation as one work accomplished by Christ but applied in different ways and at different times. This does not mean two paths to salvation, but one Savior and one redemptive work, applied according to God's purpose and timing. Notice how the verses to follow present both of these two groups.

**1 John 2:2:** (Weymouth) *He is an atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

**1 Timothy 4:10:** *...God...is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.*

*Especially* denotes a special reward to faithful believers above and beyond the rest of mankind.

**Revelation 22:17:** *And the spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who thirsts come. **Whoever desires**, let him take the water of life freely.*

The invitation in this verse happens after the “bride” (faithful Christians) is in heaven (**Revelation 21:3-6**). As earth’s future kings, priests and judges, the 'bride of Christ' is inviting mankind to enter the righteous and peaceful kingdom on earth. Here, the world will finally drink from the refreshing waters of lifegiving moral and spiritual truth—an opportunity made possible by the sacrifice of Christ.

**Romans 8:19-21:** *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God...in hope; because **the creation itself also** (both faithful Christians—sons of God—and ALSO the rest of creation) **will be delivered** from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

Notice this passage is telling us the whole creation with *hope* (**verse 20**) has been eagerly waiting for the *sons of God*—the bride of Christ, who with their bridegroom (Jesus) will bring to earth God’s righteous and peaceful kingdom and deliver the creation into *the glorious liberty of the children of God*.

**1 Peter 2:12:** *having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, **they may**, by your good works which they observe, **glorify God in the day of visitation**.*

The *day of visitation* is in the future kingdom of God on earth when people will glorify God for the very acts of Christians which they had spoken against.

**2 Thessalonians 1:10:** *when he (Jesus) comes, in **that Day**, to be glorified (future) in his saints **and** to be admired among **all** those who believe (future mankind—not his saints), because our (the Apostle Paul’s) testimony among you (early Christians) was believed—who are the future glorified saints.*

*His saints* are faithful Christians. *Those who believe* refers to resurrected mankind who will admire Jesus in the future kingdom of God on earth.

**Genesis 22:17-18:** (KJV) *That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.*

- *stars of the heaven* (spiritual seed—body members of Christ in heaven)
- *sand which is upon the seashore* (natural Israel and all mankind converted to Christ)
- *thy seed* (spiritual and natural—with Jesus as their head)
- Notice there is one Savior, two groups, and two distinct locations—a heavenly throne for the Advance Party and a peaceful earth for the Main Body.

**2 Corinthians 5:19:** *...God was in Christ **reconciling the world** to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

Jesus has provided the opportunity for reconciliation for all mankind and has committed to *us* (faithful Christians) the *word* or preaching to explain the future reconciliation of mankind.

**Acts 15:16-17:** *After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up (the nation of Israel restored); so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles (the world of mankind in God’s kingdom) who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.*

The *tabernacle of David* is the nation of Israel fully restored to faith in Jesus, their Messiah (**Amos 9:11-15; Jeremiah 30:3; 31:28,31-34; Zechariah 12:10; Ezekiel 36:26,27; 39:28-29**). The *rest of mankind* will seek after the Lord in His future kingdom on earth. *Your kingdom come...ON EARTH (Matthew 6:10)*.

**Romans 11:30-31:** *For as you were once disobedient to God (before becoming Christians) yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience (natural Israel), even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you **they also may obtain mercy**.*

This verse shows that disobedient Israel who rejected their Messiah will in the future obtain mercy (not eternal torment) from God. This will be at the time *they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son (Zechariah 12:10 KJV)*.

All these verses combined are sufficient to prove that God not only has a plan to save and reward faithful Christians, but He also has a merciful plan to save all mankind.

*Two groups will be saved:*

*Faithful Christians now, and the world of mankind in God's future kingdom on earth.*

In later sections of this book, we will see how the salvation for faithful Christians includes rewards far beyond that of the rest of mankind (the majority). This is not claiming all will be saved regardless of choice—only that all will have opportunity. We are reminded of the Christian worship song by Brian Doerksen, "Come, Now Is the Time to Worship."

*One day every  
Tongue will confess  
You are God  
One day every knee will bow  
Still the greatest treasure  
Remains for those  
Who gladly choose You now*

This captures the idea of special reward for choosing Christ now.

### **Key Takeaways**

- The Bible reveals a two-stage plan of salvation with one Savior.
- Faithful Christians receive a special calling and reward, not exclusive salvation.
- Faithful Christians play an active role in God's future work of restoring humanity.



If Scripture shows a two-stage plan—believers now and the world later—then we must ask: **How can those who never knew Christ receive a real and informed opportunity?** That requires one crucial doctrine; resurrection.

## 5. Will everyone who has ever lived be raised from the dead?

*Resurrection is a central theme in Christian hope. This section asks whether it applies to all people, and why it matters for you and your loved ones and for our understanding of God's justice.*

To answer this question, we must consider three things: what resurrection means, who it includes, and why it is essential to God's promises and justice.

When the Bible speaks of resurrection, it does not mean a symbolic survival, an immediate transition to heaven or hell or a vague spiritual continuation. Resurrection means a real return to conscious life from the grave—a restoration from death itself. Scripture consistently describes the dead as asleep, unconscious, and awaiting a future awakening at God's appointed time.

Jesus himself used this language in John 11:11-14 when he referred to the death of his friend Lazarus as a 'sleep' from which he would be awakened. Resurrection, therefore, is not a metaphor, but a literal act of God by which those who have died are remembered by Him, brought back to life and given opportunity once again. If death were an immediate transition to a new life in another realm, there would be no need for an *awakening*. Jesus' use of the word *sleep* implies a temporary suspension of activity that only a literal resurrection can end. Understanding this is essential, because without a real resurrection, God's promises to bless all humanity—and to deal justly with every life—could never be fulfilled.

## If There Were No Resurrection

If there were no resurrection, God's promises to bless *all* families of the earth would remain unfulfilled, justice would be incomplete, and countless lives would end without explanation or hope. Those who lived and died in ignorance, oppression, or suffering would be forever lost—not by choice, but by circumstance.

Without resurrection, God's plan would be a 'lottery of birth'—where a person's eternal destiny is decided simply by when or where they were born. If there is no resurrection for the 'unjust' or the ignorant, then God's justice would be a hostage of history—limited to those lucky enough to be born in a Christian era or culture. Resurrection is the only way God remains 'no respecter of persons' (Acts 10:34). Without resurrection, death would have the final word, and God's love and justice would be limited by history and geography. The Bible's promise of resurrection ensures that no life is wasted, no injustice ignored, and no person denied a fair and informed opportunity for life.

**Daniel 7:14,27:** *Then to him (Christ) was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that **all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him...his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.***

Some Christians have reasoned that *ALL PEOPLES, NATIONS AND LANGUAGES (Daniel 7:14)* worshipping the Lord in his kingdom only includes the small number of those who survive Armageddon and does not include all the billions of people who died prior to that. If true, then the wonderful provision of *the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets (Acts 3:19-21)* would only apply to a tiny percentage of all the people who ever lived. If that were true, it would be difficult to reconcile God's promises with the reality that billions died in ignorance, never having had any meaningful opportunity to know or serve Him.

Do the scriptures teach that **all who have ever lived** will be resurrected? What will be their opportunity for everlasting life in Christ's kingdom? Let's see how the Bible answers.

**Acts 24:15:** *I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.* (This promise requires a future context—because history shows it hasn't been fulfilled yet.) Paul calls the resurrection of the *unjust* a **hope**. If the unjust were only being raised to be punished and sent back to death, it wouldn't be a *hope*—it would be a horror. This resurrection is a *hope* because it provides the opportunity for restoration that they lacked in their first life.

**John 5:28-29:** *Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which **all** who are in the graves will hear his voice and come forth...*

Together, these two passages leave little room for limitation. Resurrection is universal in scope and future in fulfillment.

**Romans 5:18:** *Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man's righteous act the free gift came to **all** men, resulting in justification of life.*

How can this *free gift* apply to those who lived before Jesus was born, or those who were raised in religions other than Christianity? Paul's logic in Romans 5 is inescapable; the solution cannot be smaller than the problem. If Adam was able to bring death to every soul without their individual permission,

then Christ's sacrifice must be powerful enough to bring the opportunity for life to every soul through the resurrection. Since most people never had the opportunity to hear of him, they can only benefit from this gift if they are brought back to life. Note the perfect balance in Paul's writing: The same 'all men' who were condemned by Adam's act are the same 'all men' who receive the free gift. To limit the second 'all' while keeping the first 'all' universal is to break the logic of the verse.

**1 Corinthians 15:21-22:** *For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ **all shall be made alive.***

These Bible verses clearly indicate that everyone who has ever lived will be raised from the dead.

Remember the promise to Abraham:

**Acts 3:25:** *...the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed **all the families of the earth shall be blessed.***

Obviously, ALL the families of the earth have not yet been blessed. We can see people all around us who suffer a lifetime of oppression and injustice, those who know only hunger and poverty. Many live in war zones in constant fear for themselves and their families, or in uncivilized parts of the world without basic human comforts.

We can be confident the fulfillment of this promise is yet future since we know that God is not a liar (**Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18**), and He is more than capable of fulfilling every promise He makes (**Isaiah 14:24; 55:11**).

### Key Takeaways

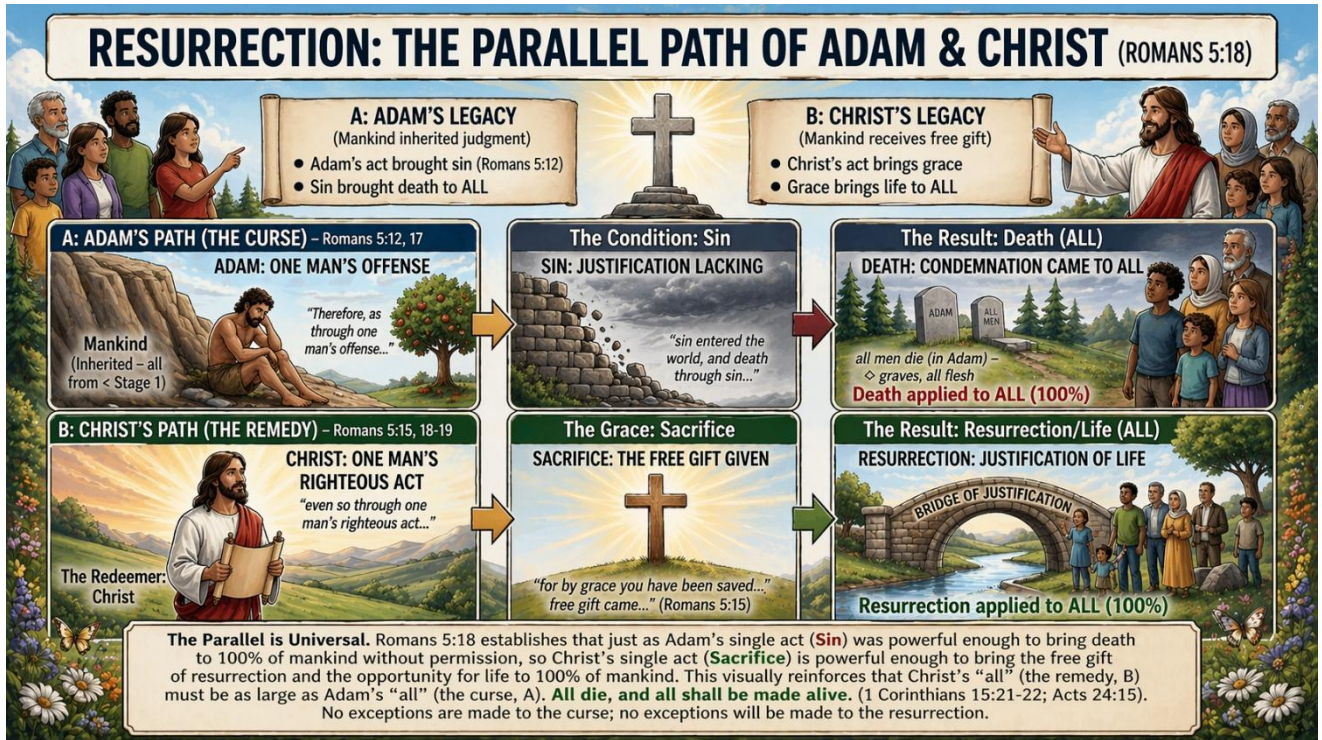
- The Bible teaches a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.
- Resurrection is essential for God's promise to bless all humanity.
- Resurrection ensures that *unsaved* is a temporary condition of the past, not an eternal sentence for the future.
- God's promises to bless all families require future fulfillment.

Resurrection ensures no one is judged without knowledge and that no life is lost to historical accident.

### A Reflection of Hope

For many, the question of resurrection is not academic—it is deeply personal. It carries the faces, names, and memories of those we have loved and lost. Parents, children, spouses, friends—some taken too soon, some without ever knowing Christ, some burdened by hardship, ignorance, or pain. The promise of resurrection assures us that none of these lives are forgotten, misplaced, or beyond God's care. In God's plan, death is not the final word and loss is not permanent. The resurrection stands as a testimony to God's justice and compassion, declaring that every life will be remembered, every story heard, and every person given a full and fair opportunity for life. In this promise, sorrow finds comfort, grief finds meaning, and hope is reborn.

If resurrection is universal, the question is no longer if it will happen—but when and how. Does God raise everyone at the same moment, or does the **Advance Party** play a role in preparing for the arrival of the **Main Body**? To understand this order, we must examine the biblical timing.



## 6. When does the resurrection happen? Is it immediate, or does the Bible point to a specific time in God's plan when all humanity will be brought back to life? Let's explore the timing and meaning of this promised event.

*Timing is important for understanding God's plan. This section explores when the resurrection will occur and its significance for humanity.*

The resurrection for all humanity is set for God's appointed future time, after the current world order is replaced by His righteous kingdom.

Job asks the question *If someone dies, will they live again?* His answer helps to establish the timing of the resurrection. Job does not distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. Hence the answer applies to all people, whether good or evil.

**Job 14:13-15:** (NIV) *If only You would hide me in the grave and conceal me till your anger has passed! If only You would set me a time and then remember me! If someone dies, will they live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait for my renewal to come. You will call and I will answer you; you will long for the creature Your hands have made.*

Notice what **verse 15** states about God—*You will long for the creature Your hands have made.* Job knew that after death, God would raise people back to life after His *anger has passed*. Some translations read *wrath* in place of *anger*. So, raising mankind from the dead occurs after God's anger and wrath has passed. Job says that God "will call and I will answer you." This mirrors Jesus' words in John 5:28 ("all who are in the graves will hear his voice").

**Romans 1:18** indicates *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness*. How is God's wrath revealed? It is by abandoning mankind to their *lusts* (verse 24) and *degrading passions* (vs 26)—their self-destructive behavior. God allows mankind to suffer the natural consequences of their own self-inflicted evils. After this long period of God's wrath comes to an end, He will raise mankind from the dead to the opportunity for everlasting life without any pain or suffering. (**Job 33:24-28; Revelation 20:13; 21:3-4**). God's wrath is a temporary necessity to demonstrate the results of sin, but His 'longing' for the creature (Job 14:15) is His permanent character.

**1 Timothy 2:3-6** (KJV) *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

How do other translations render the end of these verses?

Montgomery: *to be attested in due time.*

Webster: *to be testified in due time.*

Tyndale: *to be testified of in due season.*

NAS: *the testimony given at the proper time.*

RVIC (Revised Version (American Edition), Improved and Corrected; manuscripts discovered and published AD 2009–AD 2020): *the testimony to be borne in its own times.*

If the ransom was for all but only some have heard it, then the *due time* or *proper time* for the testimony to reach the world is still in the future.

### **What else has to happen before mankind can be raised from the dead?**

**Zephaniah 3:8-9**: (NASB) *Therefore wait for Me, declares the LORD, For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal. For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder.*

How can people *call on the name of the LORD* if they are literally destroyed by fire? Scripturally, fire is a symbol of either destruction (**Matthew 3:11-12**) or purification (**1 Peter 1:7; Malachi 3:2-3**). In a furnace, gold is purified by destroying or burning away the impurities, the dross. "Lips" represent communication and heart-intent. God isn't just saving their bodies; He is healing their ability to speak and think truthfully.

Again verse 9 reads, *...for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal*. How can the earth be *devoured* or destroyed by fire if, *then I will give to the peoples purified lips, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder*? We must look for a solution to an earth that is destroyed by fire, but the people still exist to serve God.

God's anger is against earth's social order under the control of Satan (**2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2**.) That existing social order is what will be *devoured by the fire of God's zeal*. The LORD's indignation will burn hotly against all unrighteousness, all iniquity, and all falsehood that these may be thoroughly removed. He will set up a new earth (**Revelation 21:1**), a new *purified* righteous social order under His

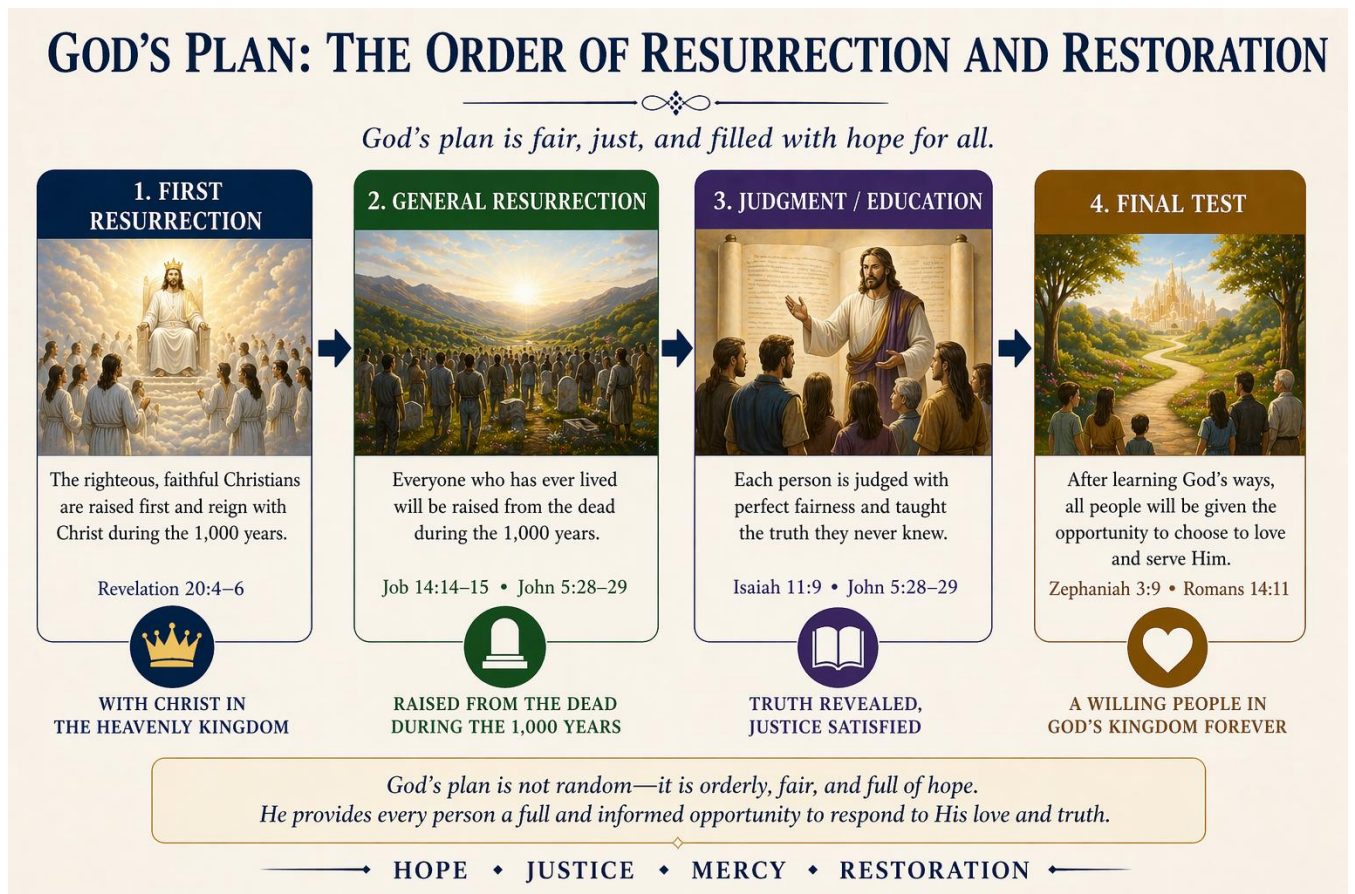
control. At that time, the unbelieving world of mankind will be raised from the dead and will see their hopes realized by being *delivered from the bondage of corruption* with all its ill effects on them.

**Romans 8:19-21:** *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God...in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

Suffering mankind longs for a future time, a better tomorrow; to be raised from the dead and restored to health while living in a paradise condition. Why then are they unable to really believe in wonderful blessings for all mankind? Having repeatedly heard the opposite all their lives, they cannot even imagine a merciful God who loves all humanity (but not sin) like good parents love their children.

**Key Takeaways**

- The resurrection of mankind will occur at God’s appointed future time.
- God’s saving purpose is carried out “in due time,” not all during this world order.
- The resurrection follows the removal of the present corrupt world order.



Once the timing is seen as future and kingdom-centered, another question emerges: **Why didn't Jesus convert everyone during His ministry if salvation is so important?** Scripture provides a surprising and purposeful answer.

## 7. Why didn't Jesus try to convert everyone during His earthly ministry?

*Why did Jesus speak in parables and limit understanding to a few? This section explores the purpose behind Jesus' approach and its implications for God's broader plan.*

Jesus intentionally limited understanding to just his followers during his earthly ministry, reserving the full revelation and conversion of the world for God's future kingdom when spiritual blindness will be removed.

For now, the world is still blinded by Satan to God's true gospel message (**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**).

**Matthew 13:10-11:** *And the disciples came and said to him, Why do you speak to them in parables? He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given."*

Jesus says here that he is speaking in parables because his followers are the only ones who have been given the ability to understand *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*. The world is not able to appreciate these mysteries at this time.

Let's read on to **verses 14 and 15:**

**Matthew 13:14-15:** *And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.*

Jesus spoke to them in parables, *Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them*. Wow! Does that mean that God doesn't want everybody to be converted (*turned*) now? If not now, when? In God's future kingdom on earth, all mankind will be educated in His plan and all who are willing will be converted at that time. For the present age, Jesus veiled his statements in parables so that only believers would understand. By not converting them before they were ready, Jesus protected the world of mankind from the greater responsibility and judgment that comes with full knowledge. He was 'hiding' the truth until the environment was right for their success.

**Romans 10:14-17:** *...how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?...So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Compare **1 Peter 1:10-12.**)*

Throughout history billions of people never heard the name of Jesus. Since God requires faith in Jesus to be saved, why would He not have arranged for all to hear about him? We can't conceive that God has slipped up. Can you imagine Him apologizing that there just were not enough missionaries to spread the Good News?

God's true plans and purposes have been unseen by mankind for thousands of years. Prior to Jesus, what we now refer to as the Old Testament was for the nation of Israel. Only rarely were other nations exposed to the prophets or the books of the Old Testament.

During the Dark Ages, illiteracy prevailed among the common people in Christian countries, though not among the priests. Plus, the Catholic church forbade the people from reading the Bible. General knowledge of the Scriptures was limited to formal worship in Latin, a language not understood by the masses.

With the invention of the printing press, the Gutenberg Bible was printed in 1455. During the Reformation, a growing number of Christians were able to read the Bible. Finally, in the early 1800's, the Bible Societies published and distributed the Bible in various languages worldwide. Still, most people around the world remain ignorant of the Bible's teachings. This historical gap isn't a sign of God's weakness, but proof of His timeline. If salvation were 'now or never,' God would have allowed the invention of the printing press in 33 AD.

Clearly, it has not been God's purpose to convert the world before His future kingdom is established on earth. At that time, blindness will be removed from mankind and they will then be able to see clearly. This doesn't deny urgency for believers now; it explains God's timing.

**Isaiah 60:1-3:** *Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you (natural Israel). For behold, the **darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people**; But the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. **The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.***

**Isaiah 25:6-8:** *...The LORD of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces...and **He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over ALL people, and the veil that is spread over ALL nations** (veil of blindness, ignorance, superstition and deception). *He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces...**

Isaiah clearly states that the veil is over ALL people and ALL nations. We see that scripture teaches a future time will come when blindness is removed and the truth will become common knowledge.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Jesus intentionally limited understanding during His earthly ministry.
- Scripture frames this as temporary—full understanding is future.
- God's primary work in the present age is not the conversion of the world, but the selection of the 'Advance Party' who will help convert the world later.

**WHY DIDN'T JESUS TRY TO CONVERT EVERYONE?**  
*Jesus spoke in parables and limited understanding to a few—for a purpose and a future hope.*

During His earthly ministry, Jesus revealed truth in parables...

**MATTHEW 13:10-11**  
 "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given."

**MATTHEW 13:14-15**  
 "Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive... Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them."

**UNDERSTANDING GIVEN TO A FEW (MATTHEW 13:11)**

The "Advance Party" called now to learn, serve, and be prepared.

**SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS ON THE WORLD (2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-4)**

The world is blinded by Satan for a time—until God's future Kingdom.

**BUT THIS IS TEMPORARY.**  
 A day is coming when the veil will be removed from ALL people.

**ISAIAH 25:6-8**  
 "He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations... He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces."

**ISAIAH 60:1-3**  
 "The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

**FULL REVELATION. FULL RESTORATION. EVERY WILLING HEART TRANSFORMED.**

All mankind will be educated in God's plan, and all who are willing will be converted in His future Kingdom on earth.

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**FAITH COMES BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD**    **Romans 10:14-17**    *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*

**GOD'S TIMING THROUGH HISTORY**  
 Not everyone had the opportunity to hear—until now.

♥ **GOD IS NOT UNFAIR—HE IS WISE, JUST, AND RIGHT ON TIME.**    *His plan is perfect. His timing is perfect. His purpose will be fulfilled.*

If Jesus intentionally limited understanding during His first advent, it was not to keep the world in darkness forever but to reserve their spiritual enlightenment for a better time. This leads us to the most hopeful promise of the kingdom: **Will there ever come a day when every person—regardless of when or where they lived—will finally have the veil of blindness removed, so they can see and hear the truth clearly?**

## 8. Will everyone eventually have a chance to hear and accept the gospel message?

*This section addresses spiritual blindness and the future opportunity for all people to know God's truth.*

In the present age, the Gospel is a message for the *few* who have been given eyes to see, but in the kingdom age the truth will no longer be hidden; it will become the common language of all humanity. Once spiritual blindness is removed and Satan is fully bound during the 1,000 years (Revelation 20:2), all people will have the opportunity to learn, understand and embrace the Gospel and God's righteous ways. At that time and in that kingdom on earth, the Scriptures say:

**John 1:9:** (NASB) *This was the true Light (Jesus) that, coming into the world, **enlightens every person.*** The fulfillment of this scripture must be future, because every person has not yet been enlightened. Jesus is the *True Light*, and just as the sun eventually rises on every part of the globe, His light is destined to reach every human mind, not just a select few.

Once the veil of blindness, ignorance, superstition and deception is removed, mankind will be ready and anxious to learn all about God's righteous principles in His future kingdom on earth.

**Isaiah 29:18,24:** *In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. These also who erred in spirit will come to understanding, and those who complained will learn doctrine.*

**Isaiah 26:9:** *...For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*

**Isaiah 11:9-10:** *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse (Jesus), who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek him, and his resting place shall be glorious.*

**Micah 4:1-2:** *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; **and peoples shall flow to it.** Many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

Learning will come from *the house of the God of Jacob* (Israel). *Out of Zion...from Jerusalem* will the Lord speak and teach.

**Jeremiah 31:33-34:** (KJV) *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

The mention of the *house of the God of Jacob* and *Jerusalem* is significant. It shows that God's kingdom will have a visible, earthly headquarters. Just as the Advance Party (the Church) serves from a heavenly position, a restored and faithful Israel will serve as the earthly representatives of that kingdom.

Together, they form the 'teaching faculty' of the new world order. Out of Zion and Jerusalem, the truth will flow like a river, reaching every nation and every culture. This is the fulfillment of God's ancient promise that through the *seed of Abraham*, all families of the earth would finally be blessed with the knowledge of His ways.

**Hebrews 8:11:** *None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for **all shall know Me**, from the least of them to the greatest of them.*

Eventually, this education will be so complete that the knowledge of God will be intuitive—written on every heart.

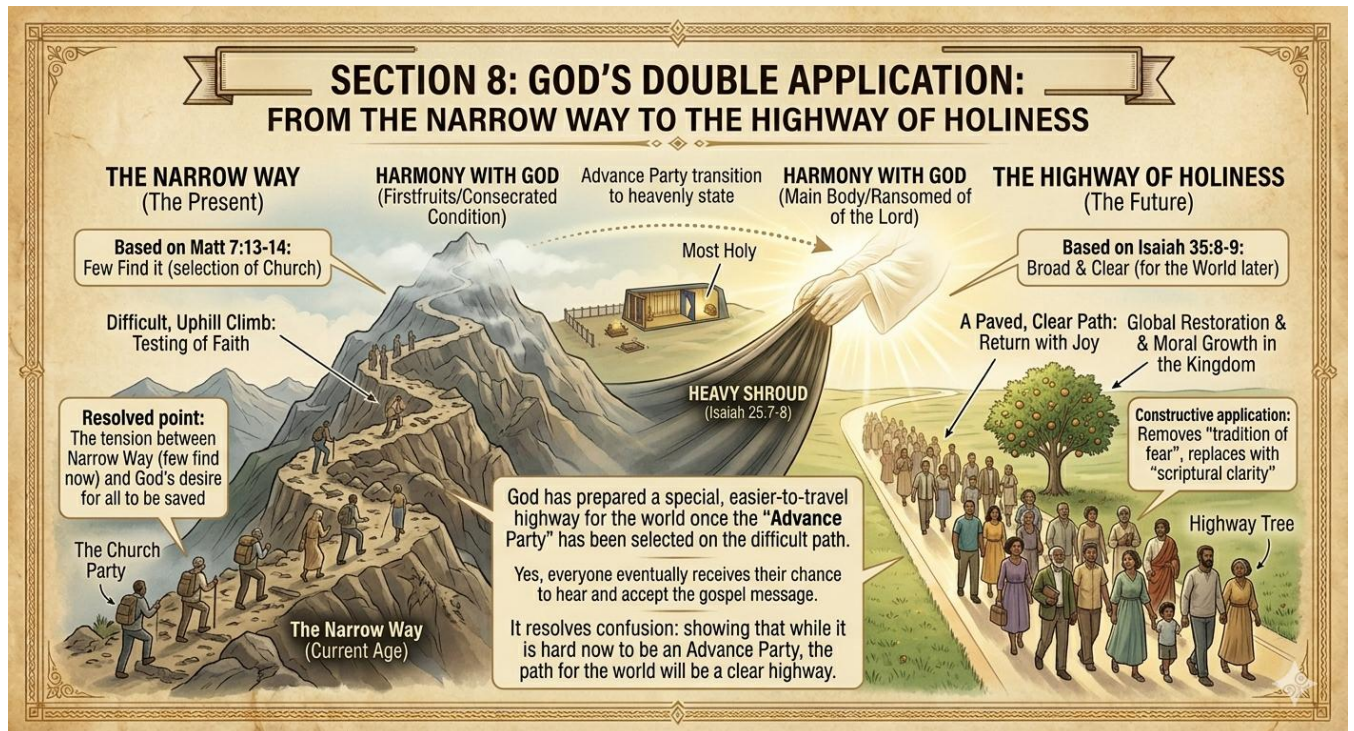
**Isaiah 35:8:** (ESV) *And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.*

In the present world, the way is narrow (Matthew 7:13-14) and difficult to find among the thorns of deception. But in the kingdom, God's truth will be a *Highway*—so broad, so level, and so well-marked that all will be able to follow it without confusion.

These passages describe not private faith but public, worldwide instruction.

**Key Takeaways**

- Spiritual blindness is temporary and will be fully removed in God's future kingdom.
- All people—without exception—will be taught God's truth clearly and fairly.
- The opportunity to hear and accept the gospel belongs to the kingdom age, not this present world order.



**If the world is finally given the truth clearly and fairly, how will they respond? Will the knowledge of God lead to a world that finally chooses to worship Him?** Scripture reveals the ultimate outcome of this grand education.

**9. Is it possible that every person—past, present, and future—will one day worship and serve God?**

*Will universal worship of God ever be realized? This section explores scriptural promises of worldwide recognition and praise for the Creator.*

Ultimately, every person—living and resurrected—will acknowledge, worship, and serve God and Jesus, giving them universal recognition and praise.

**Philippians 2:9-11:** *Therefore God also has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus **every** knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that **every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.*

This describes opportunity and clarity—not coercion. Those *under the earth* include those asleep in the grave who will worship God when resurrected back to life in the kingdom. This bowing is the result of the 'Highway of Holiness' being completed, and universal bowing represents the total vindication of God's character. Whether a person ultimately chooses life or not, the day is coming when the truth will be so undeniable that every tongue must acknowledge that God's ways were just and true. For the vast majority, this recognition will lead to a joyful heart-conversion. But for all, it marks the end of deception—where every creature in existence finally sees the Creator as He truly is.

**Revelation 15:4:** *Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For **all nations** shall come and worship before You...*

**Daniel 7:14,27:** *Then to him (Christ) was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that **all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him...his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom**, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

Notice it says, *his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom*. These people on earth will continue to serve Christ forever.

**Isaiah 66:23:** (ASV) *...**all flesh** come to worship before me, saith Jehovah.*

**Psalms 22:27:** *All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and **all the families of the nations** shall worship before You.*

**Psalms 138:4:** *All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O LORD, when they hear the words of Your mouth.*

**Psalms 72:8,11,17:** *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. Yes, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. His name shall endure forever; his name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in him; **all nations shall call him blessed.***

**Revelation 11:15:** *Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever!***

Notice again, Christ reigns over *the kingdoms of this world...forever and ever!* The kingdoms of this world become a part of Christ's kingdom forever and are not destroyed after the Millennium but are transformed and brought into eternal harmony with God's will.

**Revelation 21:23-24:** (ASV) *And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.*

**Malachi 1:11:** *For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.*

**Revelation 5:13:** *And every creature...I heard saying, Blessing and honor...to...the Lamb, forever...*

See also **Psalm 86:9; Psalm 65:1-2; Zechariah 2:11; 9:10; Numbers 14:21.**

### Key Takeaways

- Scripture consistently teaches that **every person—living and resurrected—will ultimately recognize Jesus Christ as Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.
- This universal acknowledgment follows **resurrection, education, and the removal of spiritual blindness**, allowing worship to be a willing and informed response.
- God's kingdom is everlasting, and **the nations of the earth will continue to worship and serve Christ forever**, not under coercion but through understanding and choice.

If every person will one day come to understand God's truth and willingly worship Him, then another important question follows: **What role will faithful Christians play in this future kingdom?** Are they saved only for their own benefit, or are they being prepared now for a greater mission—one that involves helping guide and restore all of humanity?

## 10. What special role will faithful Christians play in God's kingdom?

*Are Christians simply saved for their own sake, or is there a greater mission ahead? This section explores the purpose and responsibilities of faithful Christians in God's kingdom.*

The Advance Party of faithful Christians are being prepared to assist Jesus in rehabilitating and guiding resurrected humanity toward moral and spiritual perfection in God's kingdom.

Jesus as a perfect human being was the only man who could save and redeem mankind by his death on the cross (see Part II). However, when mankind is raised from the dead they come back with their evil and sinful tendencies. How could they not? They have never learned otherwise. Hence the need for rehabilitation work to bring mankind back to sinless and righteous behavior in favor with God. Jesus' faithful followers, his body members, will share in this rehabilitation and reconciliation work for mankind under his direction and leadership.

### What is the purpose of this mission?

**1 Peter 1:9:** (YLT) *receiving the end of your faith—salvation of souls.*

The Amplified Bible translates the word *end* as:

*the result (outcome, consummation) of your faith.*

The result and purpose of our faith is the *salvation of souls*—the souls of the human race!

(Note: Most translations read *your souls*. However, *your* is not supported by any Greek manuscripts. Omission of *your* is supported by translations such as Rotherham, Young's Literal Translation, Ferrar Fenton, Interlinear Texts and Wilson's Diaglott.

In other translations, i.e. American Standard, King James, Darby, and Webster, *your* is italicized to show it was added by the translators.)

Jesus' followers are being trained to support Jesus' future work of bringing mankind back to moral, spiritual and physical perfection here on earth. God's divine grace supersedes all traditions and creeds of men that teach limitations on God's true love for mankind. Let us not make God's love too narrow by false restrictions not supported by the Bible. In other words, the goal of our faith isn't just to get ourselves across the finish line, but to participate in the eventual salvation of the entire human race.

**Obadiah 1:21:** *Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion...*

Notice *saviors* here is plural. The prophet Obadiah is prophetically referring to Jesus' glorified followers, his body members working under his direction to save mankind. The *saviors* are on *Mount Zion*.

**Revelation 14:1-5** tells us the *redeemed...firstfruits* are on *Mount Zion*. These *redeemed* (**Ephesians 1:7**) *firstfruits* (**James 1:18**) are Jesus' Christian followers.

Just as a Head Surgeon is the only one who can lead a life-saving operation, but is supported by a skilled team who carries out his directions, Jesus is the Head Savior. The Church is His 'Body' in action. Jesus' meritorious sacrifice will enable all mankind to be resurrected from the dead. But they will need training to learn righteous behavior. This is how the bride of Christ participates in saving mankind.

**1 Corinthians 15:29:** *Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?*

This passage is not about the substitution of the dead with those who have been baptized, but about the purpose of Christian baptism in view of mankind's resurrection. We are not being baptized in place of the dead, but on behalf of the dead—dedicating our lives now to the training required to serve them when they return.

Romans 12:1-2 tells us our hearts and heads must be transformed morally and spiritually. Our Christian baptism, accepted by God, indicates our willingness to transform ourselves by following Christ. Our following in Jesus' footsteps trains us in moral and spiritual righteousness for the purpose of helping the world of mankind, who are *dead in* (their) *sins* (**Colossians 2:13**). For this reason, then, we are *baptized for the dead*.

### **Who carries out the mission?**

God's promise to Abraham shows us the answer to this question.

**Acts 3:25:** *...the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* This is repeated by the Apostle Paul in **Galatians 3:8**.

**Galatians 3:16,29:** *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He does not say, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to your seed, who is Christ. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

1. So, Christ Jesus and those who *are Christ's* (his footstep followers, body, church, bride, firstfruits—all these terms refer to the same group of people) are *heirs according to the promise*.

2. What was the promise to Abraham? *In your seed (your progeny) all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*
3. Therefore, Jesus and his body members (or church) in the future will bless all the families of the earth—they are Abraham's spiritual seed.

### **What will be their titles and responsibilities?**

What will Jesus and his followers, his saints, be doing in God's kingdom? In their work with Jesus to bless all the families of the earth, these faithful followers of Jesus will reign in a subordinate role under their master Jesus, the *King of kings and Lord of lords* (**Revelation 17:14; 19:16**).

As we shall now see, the Bible teaches three primary job descriptions of the Advance Party of Jesus' resurrected and glorified body members.

**Kings:** To provide righteous order and protection.

**Priests:** To provide spiritual healing and a bridge to God.

**Judges:** To provide education and fair correction.

The following scriptures provide these job descriptions.

**2 Timothy 2:12:** *If we endure, we shall also reign with him...*

**Revelation 1:6:** *and has made us kings and priests to his God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.*

**Revelation 20:6:** *Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection...they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

**1 Corinthians 6:2:** *Do you not know that the **saints will judge the world?** ...*

**1 Corinthians 6:3:** *Do you not know that we shall **judge angels?** ...*

**Matthew 19:28:** *So Jesus said to them (the apostles), Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve **thrones, judging** the twelve tribes of Israel.*

**Daniel 7:27:** (NIV) *Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to **the saints, the people of the Most High.** His kingdom will be an **everlasting kingdom**, and all rulers will worship and obey him.*

What kingdoms are given to the saints? *The kingdoms under the whole heaven*, including their people who have been resurrected from the dead. For how long? *His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom.* In roles subordinate to Jesus, these will be the judges, priests and kings over mankind in God's future kingdom on earth.

What have we learned from the scriptural evidence presented in this section?

1. **What**—there is to be a rescue mission in the future to bring mankind back from the dead.
2. **Who**—Jesus the head, and his followers (his body members, his saints) will work together.
3. **Why**—though resurrected, mankind will come back not knowing how to live righteously. They will need education to learn how to do this.

4. **How**—Jesus, as the supreme Judge, Priest and King, is given power by his Father to judge, guide and righteously rule mankind and angels. In a subordinate role of judges, priests and kings, Jesus’ body members will support his work to rehabilitate mankind back to moral, spiritual and physical perfection in the future kingdom paradise on earth.

**Key Takeaways**

- Faithful Christians are being prepared now for future service, not saved merely for personal benefit.
- In God’s kingdom, Jesus and his followers will serve as kings, priests, and judges, guiding resurrected humanity toward righteousness and restoration.
- This role fulfills God’s ancient promise to Abraham that **all the families of the earth would be blessed** through Christ and his body members.
- This implies judgment as a process, not a single moment.

**WHAT SPECIAL ROLE WILL FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS PLAY IN GOD’S KINGDOM?**  
*They will rule and reign with Christ, helping to restore the earth and humanity to perfection.*

**FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS WILL...**

- RULE AND REIGN**  
They will be kings and priests with Christ for 1,000 years. (Revelation 20:4, 6)
- HELP ADMINISTER JUSTICE**  
They will participate in judging the world with righteousness. (1 Corinthians 6:2-3)
- TEACH AND GUIDE**  
They will help educate all nations in God’s ways. (Isaiah 30:20-21)
- RESTORE AND BLESS**  
They will help restore the earth and bring healing, peace, and abundance. (Isaiah 35:1-2)
- BE EXAMPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**  
They will demonstrate God’s character and lead by example. (Matthew 5:16)

**TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES... I WILL GRANT TO SIT WITH ME ON MY THRONE.” (REVELATION 3:21)**

**THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE**  
God’s plan is to bring every willing person to perfection—and faithful Christians will be His partners in making that possible.

**THEN THE EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD, AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEA. (Habakkuk 2:14)**

**IF WE ENDURE, WE WILL ALSO REIGN WITH HIM. (2 Timothy 2:12)**

**HELP JUDGE THE WORLD**  
We will judge angels and humans with righteous judgment. (1 Corinthians 6:2-3)

**TEACH ALL NATIONS**  
We will help all people learn God’s ways and receive instruction. (Isaiah 30:20-21)

**OVERSEE RESTORATION OF THE EARTH**  
We will help restore the land, animals, and the environment to perfection. (Isaiah 35:1-2)

**BRING PEACE, JOY & ABUNDANCE**  
We will help bring lasting peace, joy, and abundance to all people. (Isaiah 11:6-9)

**WE WILL SHARE IN HIS GLORY AND INHERIT ALL THINGS. (Romans 8:17)**

**A GREAT PRIVILEGE. A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY. A GREAT REWARD. “Well done, good and faithful servant...Enter into the joy of your Lord.” (Matthew 25:21)**

Since faithful Christians are being prepared to assist Jesus in guiding and restoring humanity, an important question follows: **How will this work in practice?** When resurrection begins and Christ’s kingdom is established, how will judgment be carried out—and when does it occur? Scripture provides clear answers about the timing and purpose of resurrection and judgment in God’s plan.

## **11. Does the Bible teach that resurrection and judgment happen only after the 1,000-year reign of Christ? Or is there more to the story—an ongoing process that offers hope and opportunity for all?**

*This section examines the timing and process of resurrection and judgment, addressing common interpretations and harmonizing scriptural evidence.*

The resurrection and judgment process begins at Christ's return and continues throughout the 1,000 years, offering all people the opportunity for repentance and life.

This question is important because some Christian churches, based on **Revelation 20:5**, teach that mankind's resurrection and judgment will occur in a 24-hour period at the end of the thousand years. The judgment is considered a formality since it is believed that the trembling sinner has already been judged, then sent to hell and eternal torment based on their behavior before they died. They are then brought back to be formally condemned but are not permitted any further opportunity to repent and be saved.

This sad view seems quite an incredible stretch considering the scriptures we have already examined which teach:

- ALL people will be blessed.
- ALL people will worship the LORD.
- Two distinct classes are saved—the faithful Christians and the world of mankind.
- The future mission of faithful Christians is to **help save** the world of mankind.

A 24-hour judgment for billions is not an 'investigation' or a 'day of visitation'; it is merely a sentencing. For God's justice to be fully vindicated, every individual must have a fair opportunity to hear the truth and respond to it. Yet, since all scriptures should be considered and harmonized and none swept away and ignored, let's look at the text upon which is based the concept of the quick and final judgment at the end of the 1,000 years. Except for this one text, as we shall soon see, the thrust of scriptures on this topic is for the resurrection and judgment to begin early in the 1,000 years (the Millennium).

### **Revelation 20:4-6 (NASB):**

"Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus... and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [**The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.**] This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."



### **The Logical Inconsistency**

The bracketed phrase above creates what scholars call a "logical knot." If we include this sentence, the passage becomes internally contradictory:

- **The Problem of "First":** Verse 4 describes the faithful martyrs coming to life to reign with Christ. Verse 5 then says, "This is the first resurrection." If the "rest of the dead" (who rise 1,000 years later) are inserted right before that statement, the "first resurrection" would technically be describing a *second* group of people.
- **The Definition of Priests:** Verse 6 states those in the "first resurrection" are priests who reign with Christ. If the "rest of the dead" are part of this group, it would imply the entire world of mankind are the reigning priests—leaving no one for them to reign over.

By removing the disputed phrase, the text flows perfectly: the faithful of verse 4 are correctly identified as the "first resurrection" in verse 5, and their role as priests in verse 6 remains distinct.

## 2. Section 11: The "Logical Knot" of Revelation 20:5 - A Manuscript Comparison

Disputed Text (The 'Logical Knot')	Original Flow (The Smoother Reading)
	
<p style="font-size: small; color: #808080;">...they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <b>[But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.]</b> This is the first resurrection. <span style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">?</span></p> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #808080;">Disputed phrase breaks the connection with Revelation 20:4.</p>	<p style="font-size: small; color: #808080;">...they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. <span style="color: green; font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">✓</span></p> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #808080;">Clear connection, seamless logic as in Codex Sinaiticus.</p>
<div style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px; display: inline-block;">Manuscript Inclusion over Time</div>	
 <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #808080;">Visualizing the dense manuscript variations.</p>	

### The Manuscript Evidence

While this phrase appears in many later manuscripts, a "massive weight" of early textual evidence suggests it was a later addition—likely a marginal note by a scribe that was accidentally copied into the main text.

#### 1. The Oldest Witnesses

The phrase is notably absent from the **Codex Sinaiticus** (Ⲙ), which is the oldest complete copy of the New Testament (4th century). It is also missing from several other high-quality early manuscripts (such as 2053 and 2062) and the earliest known commentary on Revelation by **Victorinus** (c. 304 AD).

#### 2. The Trend of "Additions"

Textual analysis shows a clear historical trend. From the 4th to the 13th centuries, about **51%** of manuscripts included the phrase. However, by the 14th century, that number jumped to **69%**. This suggests the phrase "grew" into the text over time rather than being there from the beginning.



**2 Timothy 4:1:** *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.*

Judgment of the living and the dead starts with the faithful Christians (**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**) after Christ returns *at his appearing*, which would be at the beginning of the 1,000 years.

**1 Peter 2:12:** (ESV) *Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God in the day of visitation.*

The only possible way in which the offending *Gentiles* that the Apostle Peter is speaking of can *glorify God in the day of visitation* is if they are raised from the dead. Here we have an example of people repenting (they *glorify God*) after being resurrected back to life in the Kingdom. This is a real hope for those who died unsaved. The *Day of Visitation* isn't a quick glance; it's a period of divine inspection and assistance. Peter is saying that when these unbelievers are eventually resurrected in the Kingdom, the memory of the faithful Christians' good deeds will finally make sense to them, moving them to trust and glorify God.

**2 Thessalonians 1:10:** *...He comes...to be glorified in his saints and to be admired among all those who believe...*

Two distinct groups are identified after Jesus' return. The *saints* are the faithful Christians, and the remainder of mankind are described as *all those who believe* who will accept and admire Jesus after he returns. Since we have already seen that everyone will be resurrected, the latter group includes all of humanity except the saints, who have already been raised. Clearly, mankind will be given a full opportunity to repent after they are resurrected from the dead.

This next passage indicates that the resurrection begins with Jesus' return. Consider that the Sadducees were greatly disturbed that the Apostle Peter preached the *resurrection from the dead*.

**Acts 3:20-4:2:** (NASB) *...that He may send Jesus, the Christ...whom heaven must receive until {the} period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time...It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED. ...the Sadducees...being greatly disturbed because they (the Apostles Peter and John) were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.*

Notice the connections. Jesus' return from heaven is associated with:

- the period of restoration of ALL things,
- the blessing of ALL the families of the earth, and
- the resurrection of the dead.

**Verse 25** shows Christ's return is the time when Abraham's seed (Christ and faithful Christians—**Galatians 3:16,29**) will bless all the families of the earth by resurrecting mankind from the dead to begin the process of restoring them to perfection. This is how the Sadducees realized Peter was preaching the *resurrection from the dead*, by his reference to the *period of restoration* and the blessing of *all the families of the earth*.

The Sadducees didn't just reject the idea of bodies coming out of the ground; they rejected the idea that God was going to restore the world through Jesus. If *restoration of all things* is universal, then the resurrection must begin after the Restorer (Jesus) returns.

Consequently, we can see that the resurrection begins early in the thousand years at Christ's return (**verse 21**), starting with the faithful Christians (**1 Thessalonians 4:16**) and followed by all mankind (**Acts 24:15**). By harmonizing **all** scriptures in the Bible, we attain a consistent understanding of God's plan for mankind. The Scriptures are an extension of God's mind in written form; they demonstrate harmony, consistency, justice and love.

### Key Takeaways

- Judgment is like a school year, not an execution date. The *Day of Judgment* is a 1,000-year semester where the world is graded on its progress under the tutelage of Christ and His Church.
- Judgment in God's plan is **restorative and instructional**, providing accountability, correction, and opportunity rather than automatic condemnation.
- This process allows all people—faithful Christians first, then the rest of humanity—to be judged with fairness after they have acquired knowledge and full understanding of God's will.

If resurrection and judgment unfold over time as part of God's restorative plan, then another important question arises: **What is the “great white throne judgment” described in Revelation 20:11-12, and what actually happens during it?** Is it a moment of final condemnation—or a period of guidance, learning, and restoration for resurrected humanity? Scripture itself provides the answer.

## 12. What is the “great white throne judgment” described in Revelation?

*Is the great white throne judgment a moment of final condemnation, or a time of guidance and restoration? This section clarifies its meaning and purpose.*

The great white throne judgment is a period during which resurrected humanity is evaluated and guided toward righteousness, with Christ and his followers serving as judges and mentors.

How do we reconcile the great white throne judgment scene of **Revelation 20:11-12** with the judgment authority given to the apostles and glorified Christian body members of Christ to judge Israel, the world and angels? (See prior subhead “What will be their titles and responsibilities?”)

**1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Matthew 19:28; Daniel 7:27**

**Revelation 20:11:** *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth (old social order) and the heaven (Interpretation: old government, economic and religious authorities) fled away (Interpretation: destroyed in 2 Peter 3:10 NAS. The old systems of oppression, deception, and corruption simply cannot exist in the presence of such absolute purity and truth. They 'flee' because they are fundamentally incompatible with God's righteous government.). And there was found no place for them. (When the "Great White" throne is established, the darkness of the past world is not merely pushed aside—it is fundamentally incompatible with the new light.)*

**Revelation 20:12:** *And I saw the dead (Interpretation: mankind raised from the dead initially in a morally and spiritually dead condition), small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another*

*book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged* (Interpretation: during the thousand-year period of God setting up his kingdom on earth) *according to their works, by the things which were written in the books* (Interpretation: the books of the Old and New Testaments.)

While the *books* (Scriptures) provide the curriculum for the kingdom, the *Book of Life* records the student's progress and their ultimate heart-response to that education.

The meaning of *dead* is found in **Matthew 8:21-22**: *Then another of his disciples said to him, Lord, let me first go and bury my father. But Jesus said to him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.*

Standing before the throne, they are physically alive but spiritually *dead*—meaning they are still in their sinful, imperfect state. The judgment process is the journey from that spiritual death to spiritual life.

Those awakened from the dead in the kingdom are not fully alive—fully resurrected—until they progress to moral, spiritual and physical perfection, and are judged as loyal and obedient to God. The *Great White Throne* is for rehabilitation. These people are physically awake but still *dead* in their old habits and character.

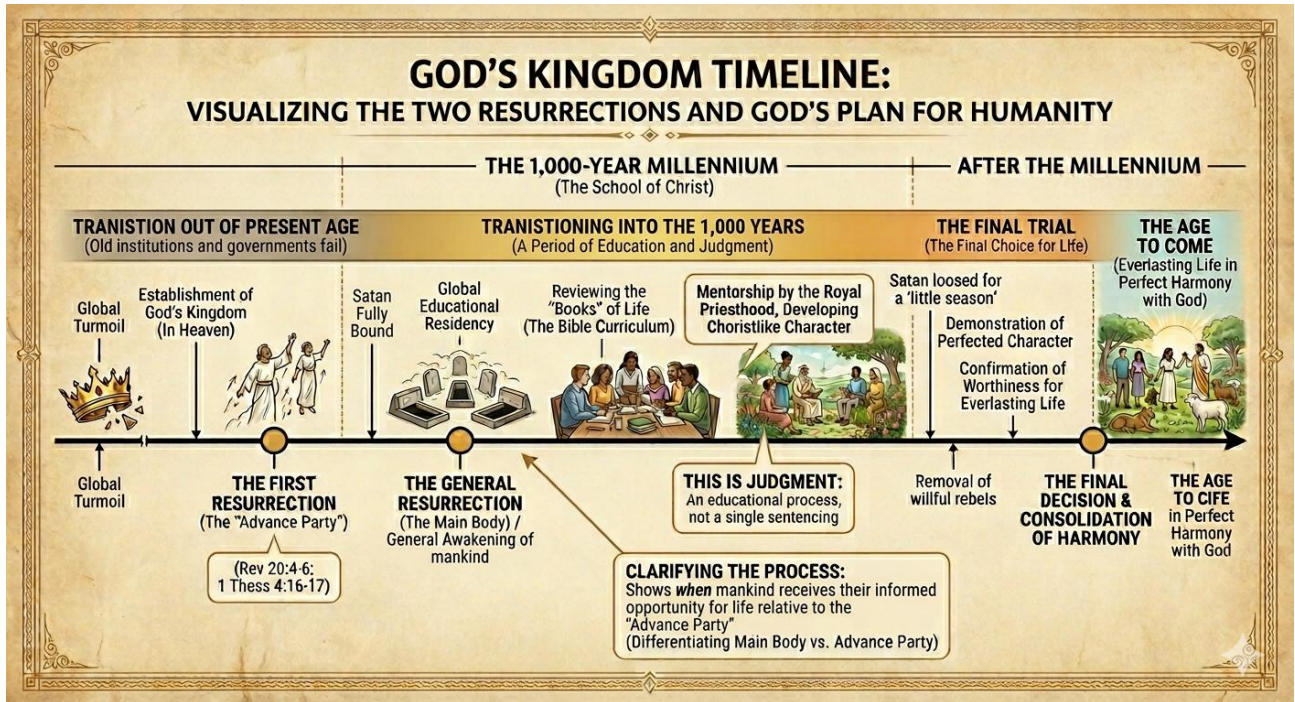
The 1,000 years is the time they spend *coming to life* spiritually. They will be judged *by the things which were written in the books*—the moral and spiritual standards of the books of the Bible in the Old and New Testament. Corrections and discipline will help bring people to repentance, righteousness, and ultimately everlasting life. Under God's authority, the apostles—together with the glorified members of Christ's body—will take part in mentoring, teaching, guiding, and correcting humanity. Their work will help restore all people to full harmony with God, their Creator.

This understanding is consistent with the broader scriptural pattern of God's judgment and priesthood. Throughout Scripture, those appointed to judge and shepherd others are first shown to be acquainted with human weakness, suffering, and temptation. Jesus himself was perfected through suffering and became a merciful and sympathetic High Priest (**Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15**). In the same way, those who reign with him as kings, priests, and judges have also endured trial, loss, injustice, and hardship in their earthly lives. As a result, resurrected humanity will stand before a heavenly government that understands human frailty—not by theory, but by experience. This prepares Christ and his glorified followers to judge righteously, patiently, and compassionately, guiding mankind toward repentance, healing, and restoration rather than condemning them without understanding.

The unrepentant, irredeemable wicked who refuse to come back to life morally and spiritually will be eternally destroyed (**Revelation 3:21; 20:14-15; Matthew 25:41; 1 John 5:12; Psalm 149:9; Jeremiah 31:29-30**). We will elaborate more on the concepts in this section in Part 5, Section 28.

### Key Takeaways

- The “great white throne judgment” is not a moment of instant condemnation, but a **period of evaluation, instruction, and restoration** during God's kingdom on earth.
- Resurrected humanity is judged **according to the things written in the books of Scripture**, with Christ and his faithful followers serving as compassionate judges, priests, and mentors.
- God's judgment reflects **justice informed by mercy and understanding**, providing correction and guidance while holding individuals accountable for their response to truth.



If the great white throne judgment is a process of guidance and restoration rather than a single verdict, then an important question naturally follows: **How will individuals actually be evaluated during this time?** Will judgment be based only on what people did before they died—or also on the choices they make after resurrection, when God’s ways are fully known? Scripture gives a clear and reassuring answer.

### 13. How will people be evaluated in God’s future kingdom?

*Will judgment be based only on past actions, or also on choices made after resurrection? This section explores the criteria for judgment in God’s kingdom.*

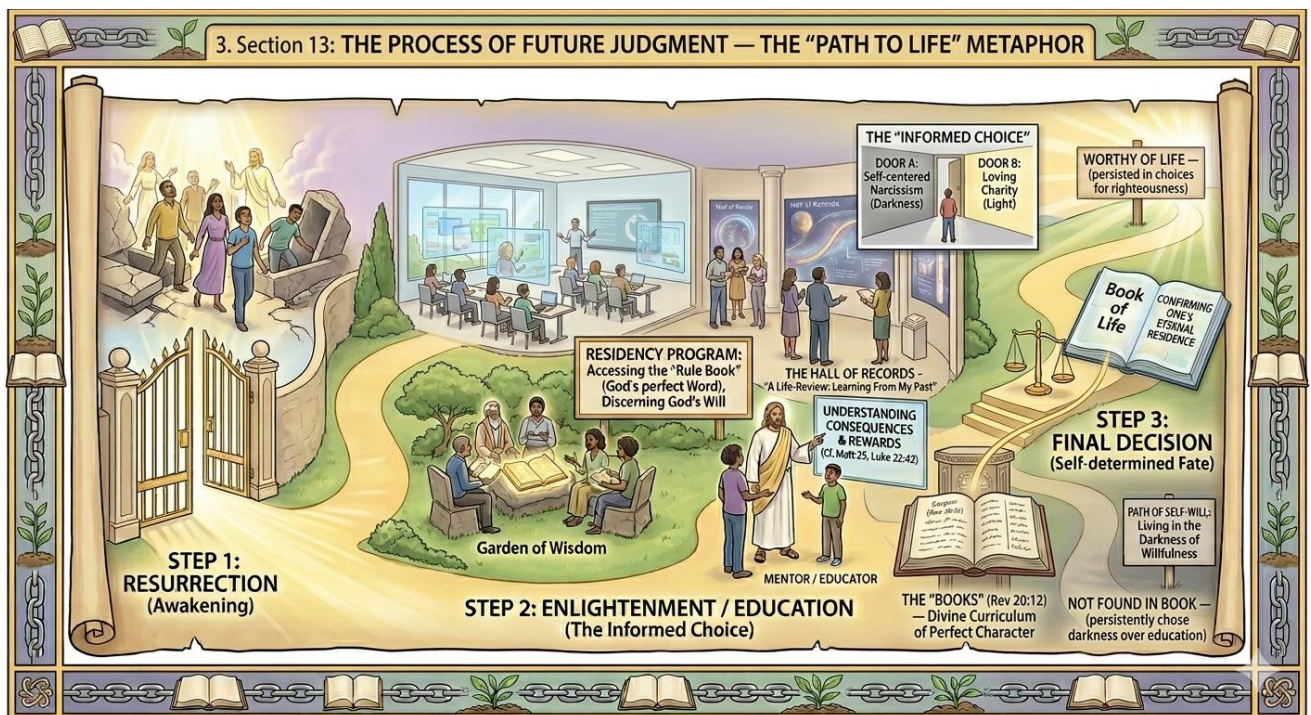
In the future kingdom, people will be judged by their actions and choices after resurrection, according to the moral and spiritual standards of the Bible. Educating them on these standards will help them to distinguish between Informed Choice (post-resurrection) and Ignorant Stumbling (pre-resurrection). The opening of *the books* (Scripture) is what marks the boundary between Ignorant Stumbling and Informed Choice. Once the *textbook* of God’s law is clear and available to all, *stumbling* is no longer an accident of ignorance but a matter of choice.

Many Christians believe that people are judged based on whether they accepted Jesus “by faith” before they died. As we have seen, the Bible actually teaches that non-Christian people will be judged *according to their works, by the things which were written in the books* (**Revelation 20:12; Matthew 25:31-46**), based on their behavior, progress and decisions after they are resurrected during the Millennium (1,000 years). At this future time, based on their personal observations, experiences and learned information, they will develop a deep understanding of the disparity between good and evil.

**John 12:47-48:** *And if anyone hears my words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects me, and does not receive my words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.*

This aligns perfectly with the vision in Revelation 20:12. In both passages, the *books*—the revealed words of God—serve as the objective standard by which a person’s progress and heart-intent are measured. In God’s kingdom on earth, mankind will be judged by the moral and spiritual standards written in the *books* of the Bible, especially those things Jesus spoke. Today, Christians are not able to perform perfect works (**Romans 3:11-12,20; 8:3; Hebrews 7:19**). However, in the future kingdom people will be brought back to the human perfection lost by Adam, and they will be able to perform perfect works (see Part II).

Judgment, therefore, is not a sudden sentencing based on past ignorance, but a long-term residency where the 'books' of divine curriculum are opened to the student, and their progress is recorded in the “Book of Life”.



**Matthew 12:32:** *Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the holy spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.*

Personal judgment occurs in two ages and with two classes, first on Christians who have received the holy spirit since Pentecost, then later all mankind on earth after God pours His spirit on ALL flesh (**Acts 2:17**). Who are those who will speak against the holy spirit in the next age? Certainly not faithful Christians who are in heaven. Hence, some of mankind, after being raised from the dead will choose to be wicked rather than righteous. For something to be *forgiven* or *not forgiven* in the next age, there must be a process of repentance and accountability occurring there. It proves the next age isn't just a static reward period, but a dynamic judgment period.

**Revelation 22:14-15:** *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.*

We know this prophecy refers to a future time because no one is eating from the tree of life now. The fruit of this tree (Rev 20:2) is the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). Outside the city (kingdom on earth) are sinners who reject God's righteous standards. At that time, people can make the choice to follow God's commandments and live.

These passages together show that judgment in God's kingdom is both fair and purposeful—rooted in knowledge, choice, and personal response.

**Isaiah 26:9:** *...For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*

Here we have the earth's population learning righteousness during the judgment period in God's future kingdom on earth. This supports judgment as governance, not merely sentencing.

**Psalms 96:10-13:** *Say among the nations, The LORD reigns; the world also is firmly established, it shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously. 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and all its fullness; let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.*

Clearly the time of God judging the world is a time of joy and gladness for the people of earth, not a time of fear and dread. See also **Psalms 9:8**.

**Psalms 67:1-4:** *God be merciful to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us, Selah. That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, And govern the nations on earth.*

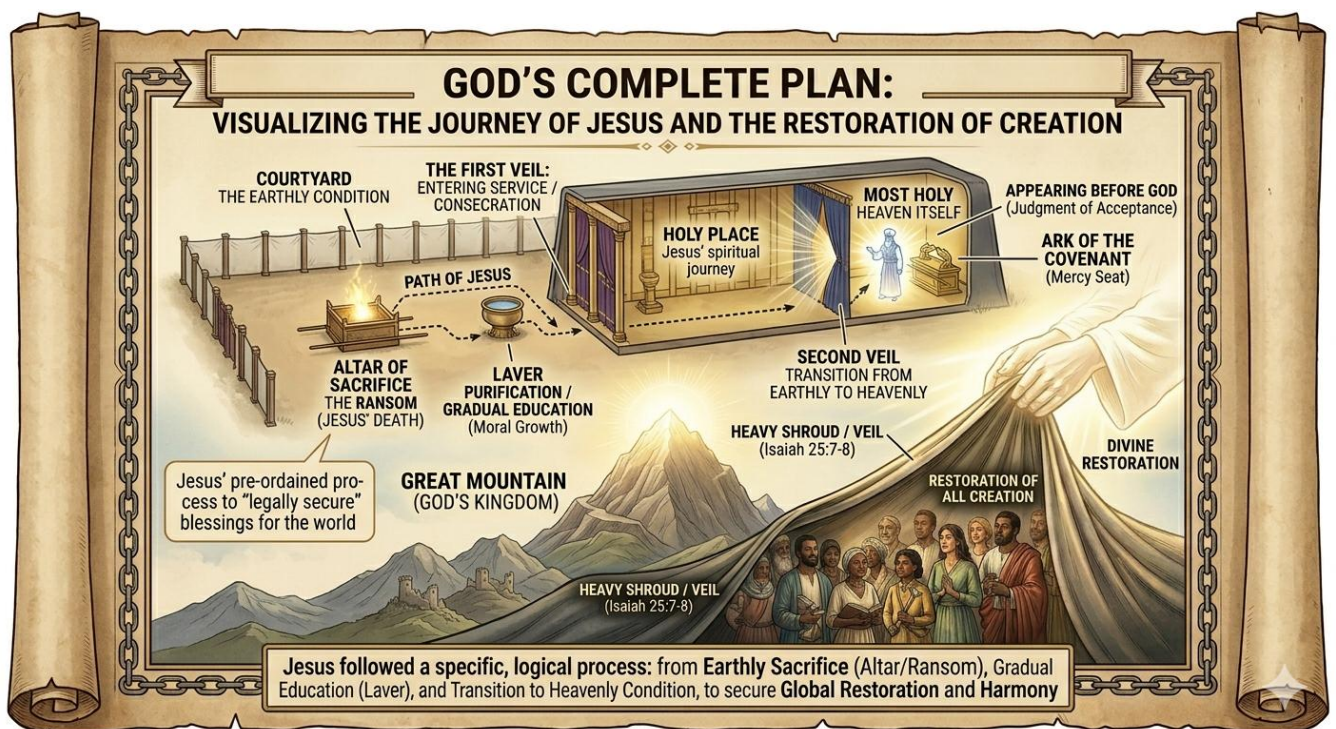
Again, the time of God's judging and governing the people is not a time of fear and dread; but rather, a time of joy, praise and gladness. To the modern ear, *judgment* sounds like a prison sentence. But to the biblical writers, it sounded like the arrival of a fair judge in a corrupt land. It meant the end of the *old systems of oppression* we identified in Section 12.

A common hurdle for many is **Hebrews 9:27**, which states, *'it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.'* Because this verse is so deeply ingrained in traditional thought, it is helpful to look at it through a **tiered approach** that considers both a simple application for the individual and the deeper insights of God's plan.

**The First Tier: A Message for All Humanity** On its most direct level, the '**one death**' mentioned here is the universal sentence of death that passed upon the entire human race through Adam's original disobedience (Romans 5:12, 18). The '**judgment**' that follows is not a sentence of immediate condemnation at the moment of death, but the world's **individual trial for life** during the 1,000-year 'Day of Judgment' (2 Peter 3:8; John 5:28-29; Isaiah 26:9). In this light, death is the result of Adam's

failure, but the subsequent judgment is a merciful period of education and restoration under the leadership of Christ.

**The Second Tier: A Deeper Insight for the Church** For those seeking a **deeper insight**, the Bible provides a secondary application of this verse found in the **symbolism of the ancient Tabernacle**. In this prophetic picture, the 'men' represent the **typical High Priests** of Israel. Their 'one death' was pictured when they passed under the second veil into the 'Most Holy'—a symbolic death to the earthly condition to enter the presence of God. The 'judgment' followed as God decided if their sacrifice was accepted. This was ultimately fulfilled by Jesus, our Great High Priest, who entered 'heaven itself' to appear before God for us. His 'judgment' was the Father's acceptance of His ransom sacrifice, which legally secured the **blessing of life for the entire human race**.



### Key Takeaways

- In God's future kingdom, people will be evaluated according to their actions and choices after resurrection, when God's truth and righteous standards are fully known.
- Judgment is based on the moral and spiritual principles written in the books of Scripture, especially the teachings of Jesus, and is applied with fairness and clarity.
- God's judgment is joyful, restorative and purposeful, designed to teach righteousness, encourage repentance, and guide willing individuals toward everlasting life.

If people are evaluated fairly, with full knowledge and real opportunity to choose righteousness, then another important question naturally follows: **What happens to those who lived wicked lives?** Will they be given a genuine chance to repent and change—or are they condemned without hope? Scripture addresses this concern directly and offers a clear answer rooted in both justice and mercy.

## 14. What happens to those who lived wicked lives? Will they be given a fair chance to repent, or are they doomed forever?

*Will the wicked be given a fair chance to repent, or are they doomed forever? This section examines the Bible's message of justice, mercy, and hope.*

Even the wicked will be resurrected and given a fair opportunity to repent and choose righteousness; only those who persistently reject God will face eternal destruction.

**Matthew 11:20-24:** *Then he began to rebuke the cities in which most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.*

**Luke 11:32:** *The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.*

According to **Matthew 11:20-24** and **Luke 11:32**, if Jesus had gone to the people of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom they would have repented, and Sodom would never have been destroyed. Is it fair that God never even sent a prophet to Sodom? He sent the prophet Jonah to Nineveh and they repented. How can hell (Greek: *hades*, the grave) be more tolerable for Sodom than for the sinners in Israel? These are hard questions, but we must remember two things: First, like all of humanity, the residents of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom were already condemned to death because of Adam's sin--their trial for eternal life will be in the kingdom; second, all people are responsible for the level of knowledge they have about God. Jesus was telling the Jews that because they had the advantage of the Law and the prophets and a relationship with God, they had a greater responsibility to recognize him as God's son and the Messiah.

**Ezekiel 16:55,61,62:** *When your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters return to their former state, then you (Jerusalem) and your daughters will return to your former state. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed...And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.*

Verse 55 is one of the most remarkable promises in the Bible. It explicitly states that Sodom—a city synonymous with wickedness—will *return to their former state*. This isn't just a hopeful thought; it is a promise from the LORD. Yes, even wicked people will be raised from the dead, *return to their former state* and have an opportunity to choose between obedience to God and everlasting life or disobedience and death.

**Isaiah 60:14:** (AMPC) *The sons of those who afflicted you (Jerusalem) shall come bending low to you, and all those who despised you shall bow down at your feet, and they shall call you the City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.*

Clearly this verse has a future kingdom application after the nation of Israel recognizes and accepts Christ as the Messiah (**Zechariah 12:10**).

**Revelation 3:9:** *Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.*

*Worshipping at the feet* is an act of acknowledging God's authority through His representatives, not a replacement for worshiping God Himself. Those who had been wicked in this life will come to honor those in authority in God's future kingdom on earth. Those faithful Christians who have been glorified to heaven will be earth's judges, priests and kings under their head and master Jesus. In this future kingdom, those here on earth—the people who did not follow Jesus during this present life, including the wicked and non-Christians—will have the opportunity at that time to repent from their former evil to choose to serve and obey God and Jesus.

Revelation 21:8: *But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

The Second Death is the 'security system' of the Kingdom. It ensures that while the door to life is wide open, the peace of the world will never again be threatened by those who love 'the lie' more than the truth. Finality is necessary to preserve the peace, stability, and righteousness of God's Kingdom. After resurrection, education, and full opportunity to choose God's ways, continued rebellion would no longer stem from ignorance or deception but from informed rejection. In such cases, God's respect for human freedom requires that persistent opposition not be allowed to disrupt the well-being of others or undermine the lasting harmony of His Kingdom.

### **Key Takeaways**

- God's plan includes real accountability, even after resurrection, education, and full opportunity to choose righteousness.
- The "second death" represents a final and just outcome for those who knowingly and persistently reject God's ways after full understanding.
- This finality does not contradict God's love or mercy but confirms His respect for human choice and ensures lasting peace and righteousness in His kingdom.

## **15. Answering Common Objections About Hell and Eternal Punishment**

### **The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)**

Many skeptics point to the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus as literal proof of conscious suffering in death, but the Bible's internal harmony reveals this is a parable. Jesus frequently spoke in parables and symbolic language to veil deep truths from those not yet called to understand. If this account were literal, it would contradict the plain testimony of the Old and New Testaments, which define "hell" (Sheol and Hades) not as a place of fire, but as the grave—a state of sleep and oblivion where both the good and the bad go at death.

The Rich Man does not represent a specific individual, but rather the Jewish nation, which had "fared sumptuously" on God's exclusive favor and Law, while the beggar Lazarus represents those formerly outside that covenant favor. The "deaths" of the Rich Man and Lazarus describe a dispensational change: the Jewish nation lost its favored status and entered a period of "torment" or national distress, while the

formerly excluded were brought into the "bosom" of God's favor through faith in Christ. Understanding this as a parable ensures the character of God remains one of love and justice, rather than one of vindictive cruelty.

### **The Nature of Eternal Punishment (Matthew 25:46)**

Regarding Matthew 25:46, skeptics often equate "eternal punishment" with eternal torment, but a careful examination of scriptural symbols proves otherwise. In the Bible, "fire" is a symbol used to represent either destruction or purification, but never literal torture. The punishment described for the "goats" who willfully reject God's principles in the Kingdom is the "second death" (Revelation 20:14)—a permanent cutting off from life.

This death is "eternal" in its duration, meaning there is no further resurrection or hope of return, which satisfies Divine Justice without requiring the useless, eternal torture of God's creation. If eternal torment were the actual penalty, Jesus' comparison that some judgments would be "more tolerable" than others (**Matthew 11:22**) would be impossible, as there are no degrees of "tolerable" in an eternity of static agony. Therefore, Divine Justice requires a "corresponding price" for sin—which Jesus paid—and the final penalty for the willfully wicked is a merciful destruction rather than a sadistic preservation in pain.

### **The Unbeliever Is Already Judged**

John 3:18 states that the unbeliever is "condemned already." This verse is in perfect harmony with the message of hope and actually strengthens the logic of the ransom.











The "condemnation" mentioned here is the Adamic sentence of death that passed upon the entire human race through one man's disobedience. Because all are born into a dying condition, humanity does not need a future trial to be sentenced to the grave; they are "already" under that penalty from birth.

While the faithful followers of Jesus are "not condemned" because they are justified by faith today, the rest of the world remains in its inherited state of death. However, this is precisely why Jesus came. John 3:17 (the verse immediately preceding the challenge) clarifies that God did not send His Son to condemn the world further, but so that "the world through him might be saved."

Jesus paid the anti-lutron—the "corresponding price"—to legally purchase the life-rights for those who were already condemned. In God's "due time," these individuals will be released from the inherited Adamic condemnation and brought forth from the grave for their own individual trial for life in the kingdom. Thus, being "already condemned" describes the world's current legal standing under Adam, but it does not limit God's power to restore them through the ransom.

# HELL AND ETERNAL PUNISHMENT: TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS

Which view is most consistent with God's character and the whole counsel of Scripture?

	TRADITIONAL VIEW ETERNAL PUNISHMENT	VS.	RESTORATIVE JUDGMENT VIEW GOD'S JUSTICE WITH HOPE
 FINAL DESTINY OF THE UNSAVED	The wicked are sent to Hell after death to be punished forever.		The wicked are resurrected, judged, and given opportunity to learn and change. Most will ultimately receive eternal life in God's kingdom.
 DURATION OF PUNISHMENT	Eternal – forever and ever with no end.		Temporary – lasting only as long as needed for justice, correction, and the choice to change.
 GOD'S JUSTICE	Justice is satisfied by endless punishment.		Justice is satisfied by truth, restitution, and transformation. Punishment fits the wrong and the need for change.
 GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY	God's love is shown to the saved; His justice requires endless punishment for the rest.		God's love and mercy extend to all. He desires that everyone be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:4)
 SCRIPTURE EMPHASIS	Selected texts about eternal punishment (Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43–48; Rev. 14:11) taken literally, often apart from context.		The whole counsel of Scripture: God's justice, mercy, and plan to give everyone a fair opportunity (John 5:28–29; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:22).
 OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE	No opportunity after death. The decision is final at death.		Everyone is raised, taught the truth they never knew, and given the opportunity to choose God.
 GOD'S ULTIMATE PURPOSE	God saves some; others are punished forever.		God will be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). He will reconcile everyone willing to Himself.
<b>COMMON OBJECTIONS</b>			
 OBJECTION: "What about verses that say 'eternal punishment?'" RESPONSE: "Eternal" describes the result, not the duration. The punishment brings eternal consequences, not endless suffering.	 OBJECTION: "Won't this make people take sin lightly?" RESPONSE: Few people will desire sin after experiencing its pain and seeing God's love and truth.	 OBJECTION: "Isn't this universalism?" RESPONSE: No. People still have to choose. God does not force anyone—He provides truth, opportunity, and time to decide.	



"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

1 Corinthians 15:22

## PART I SUMMARY

### What the Bible Reveals About the Fate of the Unsaved

Part I has examined one central question: *Is there hope for those who die without knowing Christ?* By following the biblical record carefully and allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture, several clear conclusions emerge.

First, God's desire to save humanity is universal in scope. The Bible consistently affirms that Christ's sacrifice was provided for all people, not merely for a select few, and that God's plan of salvation extends beyond the limits of time, geography, culture, and circumstance. No one is excluded from God's concern because of when or where they lived.

Second, resurrection is essential to the fulfillment of God's promises. Scripture teaches that both the righteous and the unrighteous will be raised from the dead. Without resurrection, God's stated purpose to bless all families of the earth could not be accomplished. Resurrection ensures that those who lived and died without understanding God's truth are not forgotten or permanently disadvantaged.

Third, judgment in the Bible is presented as a process rather than a single, instantaneous verdict. Resurrection precedes judgment, and education precedes accountability. God's judgments are shown to

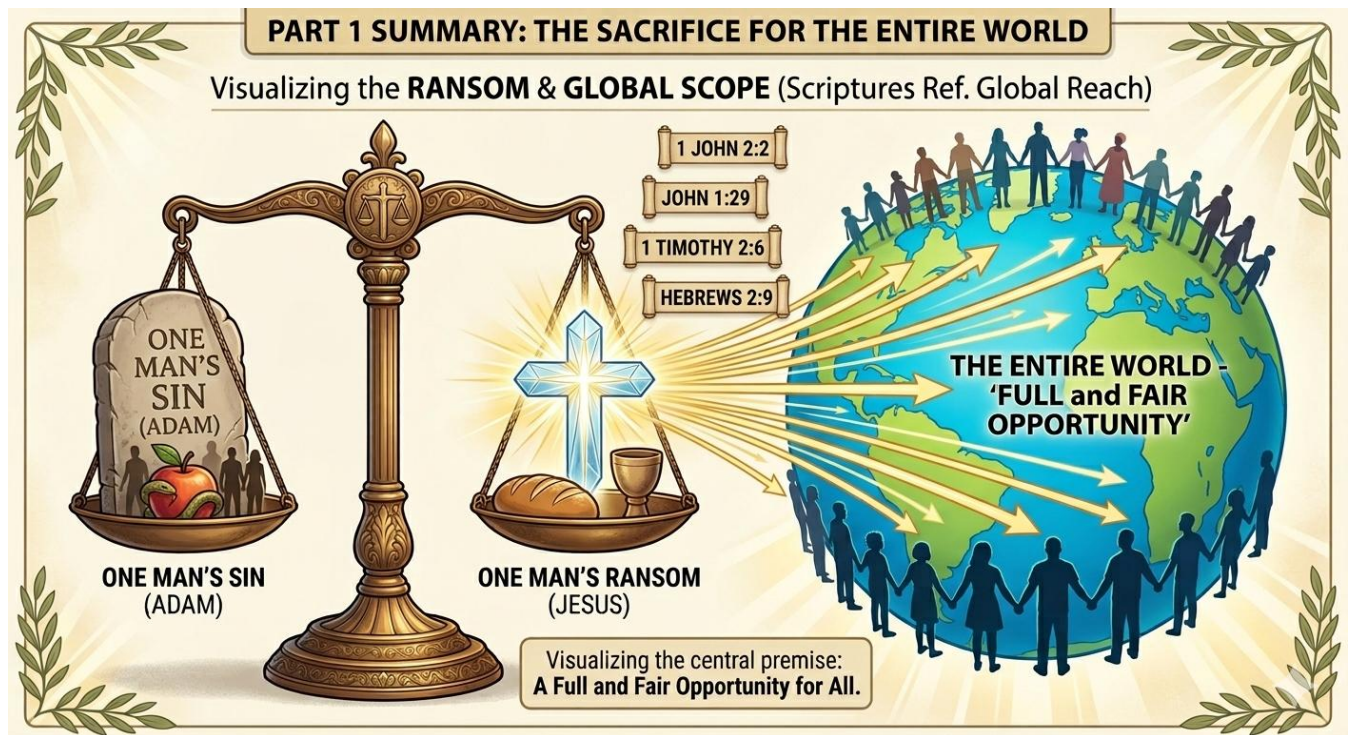
occur in a future Kingdom setting, where truth is fully known, spiritual blindness is removed, and people are given a genuine opportunity to learn righteousness.

Fourth, the great white throne judgment is not a moment of immediate condemnation but a period in which individuals are evaluated according to their response to God's revealed standards. Christ and his faithful followers serve as compassionate judges, teachers, and guides, administering justice informed by mercy, understanding, and experience.

Fifth, human choice remains meaningful. While God's plan is generous and patient, it does not remove moral responsibility. Those who knowingly and persistently reject righteousness after full knowledge and opportunity face a final outcome that respects their choice and preserves the peace and integrity of God's kingdom.

Together, these conclusions reveal a plan that is coherent, just, and consistent with God's character. Salvation is not arbitrary, judgment is not cruel, and ignorance is not treated as guilt. God's purpose unfolds in an orderly way—resurrection, instruction, accountability, and, ultimately, restoration for those who respond to truth.

With this foundation established, we are now prepared to explore how these principles are further revealed and illustrated throughout Scripture. **Part II builds on what has been settled here**, expanding the discussion to show how God's plan unfolds across history, prophecy, and the wider biblical narrative.



## PART II: WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE TO SAVE THE WORLD?

### 16. Why did Jesus have to die to save the world?

*This section asks why Jesus' sacrifice was necessary, exploring whether God could have chosen another way and the deeper reasons behind the cross.*

Why couldn't God have simply decided to save mankind without Jesus' sacrifice? God is certainly powerful enough to do anything He wants. The Bible clearly shows God is ALL POWERFUL!

**Luke 1:37:** (ESV) *For nothing will be impossible with God.*

**Isaiah 14:27:** (NASB) *For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?*

**Jeremiah 32:27:** (NASB) *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?*

**Job 42:1-2:** (ESV) *Then Job answered the LORD and said: I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.*

While God is all-powerful, He is also a God of perfect justice. To simply ignore sin would be to violate His own laws. As we will see, Jesus' death wasn't just a choice; it was a legal requirement to keep the world's moral scales in balance.

**Not only do we want to understand why Jesus had to suffer and die, but we also ask, why has mankind continued to suffer and die ever since Jesus' victorious resurrection from his death on the cross nearly 2,000 years ago?** So many people have lost loved ones or experienced terrible illnesses. When will God fulfill His promise of *no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying* (**Revelation 21:4**)? Hasn't mankind suffered enough? How much longer do we have to wait?

Yes, we wait...and God waits too.

#### WHAT IS GOD WAITING FOR?

God's power is not just seen in His ability to act, but in His capacity to restrain His hand until the absolute best moment for the greatest number of people.

**Isaiah 30:18:** *Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him.*

**2 Peter 3:8-9:** (ESV) *...with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

God waits because He is patient, *not wishing that any should perish*. To understand how God's waiting and patience will prevent people from perishing, we first need more background information.

**John 3:17:** *For God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.*

Jesus' purpose was not to condemn the world, but to save it.

As we previously considered, the Apostle Paul taught in **1 Timothy 2:4** that God...*will have ALL men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* Yet simple observation might make one wonder if the opposite is true; that God is trying to hide from the people the gospel, the knowledge of the truth.

As we explained in a previous section, at this time it is not God's purpose to convert the world. The Bible teaches that the truth has generally been hidden from mankind. Once again, **Isaiah 60:2** (ESV) reveals *...darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the people...*

Why allow this blindness? Because God is allowing humanity to fully experience the results of independence from Him—a lesson that will serve as a **permanent moral compass**. Having seen where the path of independence leads, the human heart will never again lose its way once the kingdom begins.

**The Logic of the Delay** On the surface, it might seem that God's patience isn't making a difference, or even that He wants to save as few people as possible. Why has mankind continued to suffer and die in the nearly 2,000 years since Jesus' victorious resurrection? If God is all-powerful, what is He waiting for?

**The Likelihood of a Better Solution** The answer lies in the depth of His wisdom.

**Psalms 147:5:** (KJV) *Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; His understanding is beyond measure.*

Since the Bible tells us God *will* have all men to be saved, and that His understanding is "beyond measure," isn't it likely that He has designed a solution better than we can even imagine?

God's plan is designed to save the greatest number of people without ever violating their free will. This requires patient waiting—on His part and ours—for the completion of each stage in a carefully laid-out plan. This plan is designed to persuade the heart through experience and knowledge, rather than forcing obedience through overwhelming power. All will become clearer as we proceed through the remaining sections of this book.

### Key Takeaways

- **Necessity Over Option:** While God is all-powerful, Jesus' death was necessary to legally address the consequences of sin and death rather than simply overlooking them.
- **Divine Patience:** God's "waiting" is not a sign of weakness or delay; it is an act of mercy. He is allowing the full "darkness" of independence from Him to be experienced so that the lesson of sin's consequences is learned once and for all.
- **A Multi-Stage Plan:** The current "darkness" over the earth is a temporary learning environment. Jesus' sacrifice is the first essential step in a larger, unfolding plan for ultimate global restoration.

Having considered why Jesus' death was necessary, the next question is how this necessity is commonly explained. **Most Christian churches offer familiar answers to why Jesus had to suffer and die**, often emphasizing particular themes or theological traditions. Examining these explanations helps clarify how the cross is typically understood before comparing them with the broader biblical testimony.

## 17. How do most Christian churches explain why Jesus had to suffer and die?

*This section reviews common beliefs about Jesus' death and compares them with scriptural teachings.*

Attempting to answer the question, *Why did Jesus have to suffer and die?* much of the Western Christian world has adopted the “Substitution” or “Paying a Debt” theory. This theory teaches that God became angry and was deeply offended at Adam’s disobedience. To atone for sin, an angry God required a payment—a lot of suffering—the agony of the crucifixion. The theory teaches that this was more than any human being could endure. Only God Himself could suffer enough to pay the debt. This explanation reflects the way the cross is commonly taught in Christian theology.

To support this theory, **Mark 10:45** is quoted which says that *the Son of Man came...to give his life a ransom*. While the Bible does support the idea of a 'ransom' (a price paid) and a 'substitution' (one life for another), the motive behind it is the key difference. It wasn't about God needing to vent His anger on someone; it was about God needing to satisfy His own law of Justice so He could legally show mercy.

Doesn't the idea of God becoming offended and requiring suffering to appease His anger sound more like the behavior of the gods of Roman and Greek mythology? It certainly does not sound like the loving, just and merciful God found in the Bible.

**John 3:16:** (KJV) *For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten son...*

**Titus 3:4-5:** *...the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared...according to His mercy He saved us...*

These verses affirm that the reason God sacrificed His son was His love and mercy for the world, not His anger which needed to be appeased!

- Jesus said in **John 15:9:** *As the Father loved me, I also have loved you...*
- Consider also **1 John 4:8,10,19:** *...God is love...In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation (satisfaction / the sacrifice which atoned) for our sins. We love Him because He first loved us.*

Love motivated both God and Jesus! We cannot agree that Jesus had to suffer and die to appease God’s anger. As we will see in the following sections, God’s justice didn't require an 'infinite' suffering that only a God could endure—it required a 'corresponding' price that only a perfect human could provide.

### Key Takeaways

- **Critique of the "Debt" Theory:** While Jesus did stand in our place (substitution), the idea that he died to appease an angry God aligns more with ancient mythology than with the biblical character of a merciful Creator.
- **Love as the Primary Motive:** Scripture emphasizes that the sacrifice was rooted in divine love and kindness (John 3:16, Titus 3:4-5) rather than a requirement to satisfy divine offense or anger.

- **A Unified Mission:** The crucifixion was not a punishment inflicted by the Father upon the Son, but a collaborative act of love from both God and Jesus to provide a "propitiation" (atonement) for humanity's sin.

Having outlined how most Christian churches explain why Jesus had to suffer and die, an important question remains: **Do these explanations fully address the problem they are meant to solve?** While familiar and widely taught, these views raise further questions about forgiveness, justice, and the persistence of death. Examining those questions more closely helps clarify what may still be unresolved.

## 18. What was the real purpose behind Jesus' death?

*Was Jesus' death simply to pay a debt, or is there a greater meaning? This section explores the scriptural explanation for the cross.*

Forgiveness addresses guilt, but it does not, by itself, remove death or restore life. If a man is on death row and the Governor pardons his "guilt," the man is still mortal and will eventually die. Jesus didn't just provide a pardon; he provided a reversal of the death sentence itself—a sentence that began with the very first man. Let's proceed to the New Testament, where the Apostle Paul explains the reason Jesus had to die:

**Romans 5:12:** *Therefore, just as through one man (Adam) sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.*

The problem the Apostle Paul presents here is that because Adam sinned by disobeying God, ALL of Adam's children (all of mankind) inherited sin and death from him. What solution does God provide?

**Romans 5:16:** *...For the judgment which came from one (Adam's) offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift (from Jesus) which came from many offenses resulted in justification.*

God's solution was for Jesus to die to provide the *free gift of justification*, which Jesus' followers have enjoyed since Pentecost. Justification is a special relationship with God where our sins are covered and forgiven (**Romans 4:5-8**). However, what about the people who are not yet saved by Jesus? Those who have not followed him?

Remember at Jesus' birth what the angel said to the shepherds:

**Luke 2:10,11:** (NASB) *And so the angel said to them, Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for **all the people**; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a **Savior**, who is Christ the Lord.*

Later, John the Baptist would say of Jesus:

**John 1:29:** *...Behold! The Lamb of God who **takes away the sin of the world!***

We therefore clearly see that Jesus came into the world to take away the sin that Adam had passed down to the human race. Jesus did not just die only for faithful Christians but for all Adam's posterity, eventually giving mankind the opportunity to accept Jesus as Lord in the future kingdom of God on earth. Yet, why was Jesus' death required to accomplish this?

In the Old Testament, under the Law of Moses, we find a divine principle that reveals God's perfect standard of divine justice:

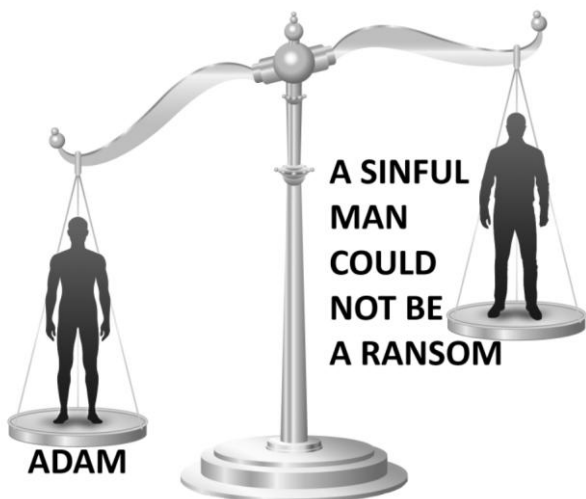
**Leviticus 24:20-21:** (KJV) *Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again. And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.*

Yes, God's justice requires *an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*. If a man murdered someone, he must pay with his own life: a life for a life (also see **Exodus 21:23-25**; **Deuteronomy 19:21**).

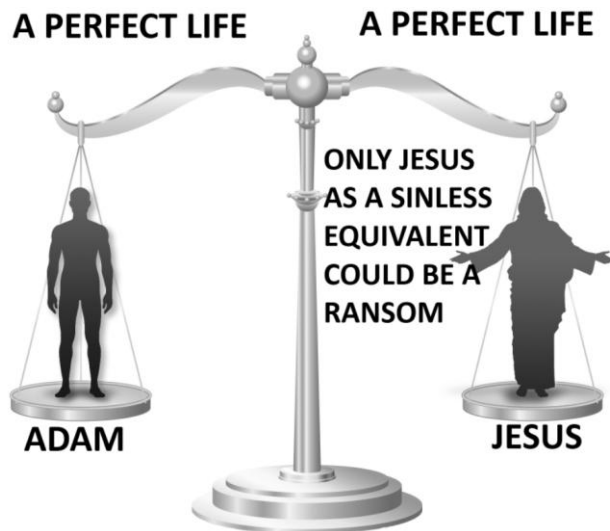
We must realize that Divine Justice is not about overpaying; it is about **equal paying**. Many have been taught that because Jesus was God, his suffering was 'infinite'—as if an infinite price was required to satisfy an infinite offense. But the Bible's standard is 'a life for a life.' If a man owes one hundred dollars, the law is not satisfied by a payment of a million dollars; that would be an injustice in the other direction. To perfectly balance the scales of Justice, the price had to be a **corresponding price**—nothing less than a perfect human life, and nothing more.

Consider this: **Psalm 49:7-9:** (ESV) *Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice, that he should live on forever and never see the pit.*

Adam was perfect before he sinned. As can be illustrated by a set of balance scales that are out of balance, a sinful man could not be a ransom for Adam. With Adam on one side of the scale and any sinful man on the other side of the scale, the scales of justice would be out of balance. Because Adam was a 100% perfect human, the price to buy him back had to be exactly 100% perfect human. Not more (God), and not less (sinful man). Justice is not about overpaying; it is about equal paying. Jesus was a 100% perfect man by God's miraculous provision. If God the Father had died on the cross, the scales would be out of balance in the other direction—the price would be infinitely higher than what was lost. To satisfy "an eye for an eye," the weights must be identical.



To atone for the sin of the perfect man Adam, an equal price or weight was required in payment. A perfect human life for a perfect human life would bring the scales back into balance— *life for life* (**Exodus 21:23**). However, no one on earth was perfect and therefore no one on earth could be an equal price or weight to atone for Adam's perfect life that he lost through sin (**Psalm 49:7-9**).



Therefore, God sent His son into the world, the perfect man Jesus, to give his life as the ransom price in place of the fallen—formerly perfect man—Adam. He thereby redeemed Adam and his children--the entire world of mankind. This brings the scales of justice back into balance with equal weights on each side of the scale. Only the perfect man Jesus could balance the scales against the once perfect Adam; a perfect 100 percent human life (Jesus) for a perfect 100 percent human life (Adam).

The Apostle Paul explains it this way:

**Romans 5:18:** *Therefore, as through one man's (Adam's) offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man's (Jesus) righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.*

So, the reasons Jesus had to die were:

- to give his life in place of Adam
- to satisfy God's divine law of justice
- to fulfil the principle of "a life for a life"
- in this case, a perfect life for a perfect life

These things had to be accomplished to save mankind from the sin and death inherited from Adam—and to provide them with justification to life, which for the world of mankind is the legal foundation for their future opportunity for eternal life. As Paul states, the *free gift came to all men*. This isn't a potential gift that might happen; it is a legal reality. Jesus has already *purchased* the life-rights of every person who ever lived.

It is important to distinguish between the two ways the Bible speaks of justification. There is **justification by faith**, which faithful Christians enjoy now (Romans 3:28; 5:1). This is a personal relationship where one's faith is "counted" as righteousness. However, there is also the **legal**

**justification** of the whole world. This does not mean everyone is currently “saved” or living in harmony with God. Rather, it means that the legal death sentence has been paid for everyone. While the Church receives the *spiritual benefits* of justification today, the world has been granted the *legal right* to a future trial for life. The Ransom didn't just provide a possibility of life; it purchased the actual “life-rights” for every member of the human race.

### Key Takeaways

- **The Math of Redemption:** Following the law of “a life for a life” (Leviticus 24:20), justice required a perfect human life to balance the perfect human life Adam lost.
- **Equal, Not Infinite:** Justice is satisfied by an equal payment. If Jesus were more than a perfect man or less than one, the scales would remain unbalanced. Jesus was the exact 100% human equivalent to Adam.
- **A Purchased Race:** Jesus’ sacrifice didn't just provide a “chance” at life; it was a “righteous act” that resulted in a “free gift” of justification for *all* men (Romans 5:18).

While it is now clear that Jesus’ death was necessary to address the demands of divine justice—providing a true remedy for sin and death—an essential question still remains: **How could one man’s sacrifice accomplish this for all humanity?** Scripture answers this question by introducing a single, powerful biblical concept that explains the mechanics of redemption. To understand how Jesus’ death satisfies justice and opens the way to life, we must examine the specific scriptural meaning of a *ransom*—a price paid to meet justice’s exact requirement and restore what was lost through Adam.

## 19. How does the idea of a “ransom” explain Jesus’ sacrifice?

*This section clarifies the meaning of “ransom” and its significance for understanding God’s justice and love.*

The Apostle Paul uses the word *ransom* in **1 Timothy 2:5-6** ...*the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

The word ransom is a translation of the Greek word **anti-lutron**, which means “corresponding price.” When father Adam, who was perfect, sinned, death passed upon him and the prospective human race yet to be born from him. Adam lost the right to life—and everyone who came from him lost the right to life as well. Under our laws today, if a man owns a property, becomes delinquent on his payments and loses the right to that property, his children have no right to that property either. Adam lost “life-rights” for himself and all of his progeny. They were all condemned to death. By providing this ransom, Jesus essentially **bought the mortgage** on the human race. When Adam defaulted on his perfection, he and all his children were ‘evicted’ from life. However, because Jesus paid the full corresponding price, he has legally become the **new Owner** of every member of Adam’s family. They no longer belong to the condemnation of the grave; they belong to him. This explains why Jesus has the legal right to awaken them from the sleep of death and the authority to act as their Judge and Teacher in the Kingdom. He isn't intruding on their lives—he is coming to claim what he has already purchased with his own blood.

Deliverance from death required the payment of a “corresponding price,” the death of a perfect man. No member of the sinful, imperfect, human race could pay this price. Once again, **Psalm 49:7** (ESV) states, *Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life.* While we can't pay the debt, we can choose to accept the gift (see section 13 where *informed choice* is discussed).

Only Jesus, who was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners* (**Hebrews 7:26**) could provide a ransom, a corresponding price—a perfect human life for a perfect human life—Jesus for Adam—to bring the scales of justice back into balance.

This is why Jesus had to die. This was the only possible solution to save mankind.

### Key Takeaways

- **The Anti-Lutron:** The Bible uses a specific Greek word, *anti-lutron*, meaning a "corresponding price." This signifies an exact equivalent—like a \$20 bill for a \$20 debt.
- **Foreclosed Life-Rights:** We did not lose life because of our own sins initially; we lost it because our "father" Adam defaulted on his life-rights. We were born into a "foreclosed" family.
- **The Great Exchange:** Jesus, being "undefiled and separate from sinners," was the only human being in history who possessed his own life-rights. By dying, he traded those rights to buy back the rights Adam lost.

If Jesus has legally purchased the human race and the price has been fully paid, a massive question remains: **Why is the "foreclosure" still in effect? Why does God still allow Satan to hold sway over a world that Jesus has already bought?**

## Part 2 Summary

### Why Did Jesus Have to Die to Save The World?

The necessity of Jesus' death is not found in the appeasement of an angry deity, but in the beautiful and perfect harmony of **Divine Justice**. When the perfect man Adam willfully disobeyed God, he forfeited his "life-rights," effectively foreclosing on the future of his entire progeny. Because the Divine Law requires a "**life for a life**" (Leviticus 24:20), no imperfect, sinful human could ever pay the debt required to release the race from the prison-house of death.

The real purpose of the cross was to provide a **Ransom**—or more accurately, an *anti-lutron*—which signifies a "**corresponding price**." This was a legal satisfaction where the perfect human life of Jesus served as the exact counterweight to the perfect human life lost by Adam. By this "legal substitution," the scales of justice were brought back into perfect balance. The Ransom preserves God's justice without portraying Him as requiring appeasement or retaliation.

### Key Pillars of Part 2:

- **Love as the Engine:** The plan was fueled by God's love (John 3:16), not a need to vent anger on a victim.
- **Legal Ownership:** Jesus now "owns" the human race by right of purchase. This is the legal guarantee that he can—and will—raise the "unjust" for their period of trial.
- **Future Restoration:** The Ransom is the "foundation stone." Because the price is paid, the restoration of the world is no longer a "hope"—it is a legal certainty to be "testified in due time."

Ultimately, Jesus' death was the only legal mechanism capable of satisfying justice while simultaneously opening the door of mercy to a groaning creation.

## PART 2: Why Jesus Had to Die - The Ransom

**A: The Offense**  
(Inherited judgment)

- Adam (perfect man) sinned
- Sin brought death (legal requirement)

**B: The Remedy**  
(Free gift offered)

- Jesus (perfect God-man) sacrifice
- Sacrifice covers death (legal provision)

**THE LEGAL RANSOM  
BALANCE: ANTI-LUTRON**

**A: PERFECT LIFE LOST - Adam, a Perfect Man's Sin**

**PERFECT LIFE LOST: Adam**  
"One man's offense (Rom 5:18),  
mankind inherited judgment...  
sin entered... and  
death through sin..."

**Mankind**  
(Condemned and  
Under Death's Power)

**B: PERFECT LIFE GIVEN - Jesus, a God-Man's Sacrifice**

**THE DIVINE PROVISION:  
Jesus Christ**

**Jesus Christ**  
(1 Tim 2:6, Weymouth)

**A: PERFECT LIFE LOST (1 Cor 15:21)**

**PERFECT LIFE LOST: Adam**  
"One man's offense  
mankind inherited  
judgment... sin entered...  
and death through sin..."

(Condemned and Under Death's Power)

**B: Mankind (Justified to Life Opportunity)**

**PERFECT LIFE GIVEN: Jesus**  
(1 Tim 2:6, Weymouth)  
"One man's righteous act  
(Rom 5:18)... free gift given...  
justification of life opportunity...  
he tasted death for everyone..."

Mankind (Justified to Life Opportunity)

The Legal Ransom is complete. To offset the perfect human life lost by Adam's sin, only a perfect human life can be accepted. The term "**Anti-lutron**" (a corresponding price) requires this perfect balance. Jesus, as a perfect human man (Heb 4:15), provided that exact price. His single, perfect act (**Sacrifice**) is powerful enough to cover the legal requirement of Adam's sin (Death) for all. This explains why a perfect man was necessary to satisfy justice. **He gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim 2:6).** All are covered; all have opportunity.

## PART III: WHY DOESN'T GOD STOP SATAN?

### 20. Did God know in advance that Adam would sin?

*This section explores God's foreknowledge and its implications for the plan of salvation.*

God did know in advance, before the foundation of the world, that Adam would sin by disobeying His command. He knew that Adam and his progeny, the entire human race, would need a redeemer from His just sentence of death. (**Revelation 13:8; John 1:29**) It is important to note that God's ability to foresee Adam's choice did not mean He forced that choice. Just as a meteorologist can predict a storm without causing the rain, God's infinite wisdom allowed Him to see the choice Adam would make while still leaving Adam fully responsible for his own free will.

**1 John 3:20:** ... God... knows all things. (See also **Hebrews 4:13**)

**Psalm 139:4:** (NASB) ...O LORD, You know it all.

**Psalm 139:6:** (Amplified Bible) Your [infinite] knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high above me, I cannot reach it.

**Isaiah 46:9-10:** (NASB) ... I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning. And from ancient times things which have not yet been done, saying, My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure.

God is omniscient. He knows everything; even the future before it happens. He knew in advance Adam would sin by disobeying Him.

#### Key Takeaways

- **Divine Omniscience:** Scripture confirms that God "declares the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:10). He was not surprised by the fall of man; rather, He possessed the infinite knowledge and ability to foresee it before the foundation of the world.
- **The Prepared Remedy:** Because God knew Adam would sin, He did not have to react with a "Plan B." The role of Jesus as the redeemer was established in advance to meet the just sentence of death that God knew would fall upon the human race.
- **Wisdom in Foreknowledge:** God's ability to foresee the outcome allowed Him to design a plan that would ultimately lead to a greater good, ensuring that His "pleasure" and purpose for humanity would eventually be established despite the entry of sin.

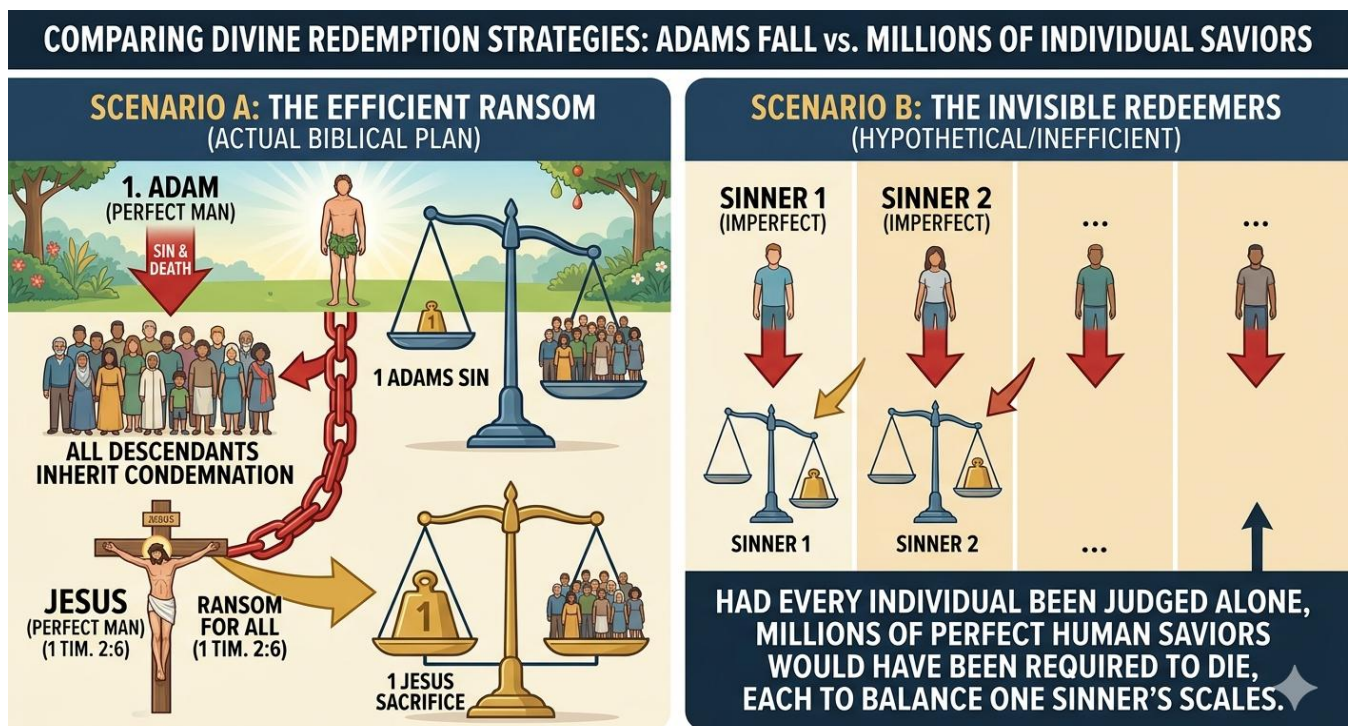
If an all-knowing God foresaw the tragedy of the fall, the question inevitably shifts from His knowledge to His intervention. **Why would a loving Creator, knowing the pain that would follow, allow the Adversary to enter the Garden and succeed in his temptation?** Understanding this requires looking at the profound strategic efficiency of God's "Permission of Evil."

### 21. Why didn't God stop Satan in the Garden of Eden?

*Why did God allow evil to enter the world? This section examines the purpose behind permitting Satan's influence.*

Why didn't God prevent Satan from tempting Adam and Eve to sin? Adam's disobedience is what plunged mankind into sin, death and human suffering, so why didn't God prevent it from happening in the first place?

God created man with free will and free choice. If Adam had not sinned, eventually some of his descendants would have made the same mistake of disobeying God's laws. If each of these individuals had sinned, been judged by God and condemned to death separately--as opposed to the blanket condemnation of the whole race under Adam—each person would have needed an individual savior. A perfect man like Jesus, willing to die to redeem a sinful man, would have had to be found for each individual sinner. Rather than having to find millions of perfect people willing to atone for millions of sinners, God allowed Adam to sin from the very beginning. This efficiently allowed the sacrifice of only one perfect man, Jesus, to be the ransom-price for all who had inherited sin through Adam.



Since the fall of Adam, mankind has had the experience of sin, suffering and death for over six thousand years. When they are awakened from the dead into God's righteous kingdom on earth, they will have had enough experience with evil and suffering to make the wise choice of following righteousness and obeying God. They will have learned that the sting of sin was painful in its effects. Of that future time, we learned previously:

**Isaiah 11:9:** *...the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*

**Isaiah 26:9:** *...For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*

At that time when mankind is being educated in God's ways of righteousness, Satan will not be permitted to interfere by deceiving the people as he did when he was the god of this world.

**Revelation 20:2-3:** (ESV) *...Satan...(is) bound...for a thousand years...so that he might not deceive the nations any longer...*

If God had prevented Satan from tempting Adam and Eve to sin in the Garden of Eden, a worse outcome might have resulted later with millions of sinners needing millions of redeemers.

However, could God have decided not to condemn sinners to death in the first place? Could He have come up with a different plan to recover each sinner back to perfection and harmony with their Creator? By faith, we trust in God's wisdom that any other possible plan would not have come as close to achieving His desire to save everyone.

**1 Timothy 2:4** (KJV): *who (God) would have ALL men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Preserving Free Will:** God created humanity with the capacity for choice. If God had forcibly prevented the first sin, He would have essentially turned humans into robots, removing the possibility of genuine, voluntary love and obedience.
- **The "One for All" Efficiency:** By allowing the entire race to fall through one man (Adam), God enabled a legal framework where only one perfect sacrifice (Jesus) was required to redeem everyone. Had God stopped Adam, individual sins later in history would have required millions of separate redeemers.
- **The Value of Experience:** Six thousand years of suffering serve as a permanent "educational laboratory." When humanity is awakened in the kingdom, their firsthand knowledge of the bitterness of sin will empower them to make a firm, lifelong choice for righteousness.

This high-level strategy of allowing evil for a greater future good is logically sound, but it places a heavy burden of trust on the believer. **How can we be certain that God's long-term plan is reliable?** Can we truly rest our hopes on the decisions of a Creator who allows such prolonged suffering?

## **22. Can we truly trust God's decisions and promises?**

*This section addresses the reliability of God's character and the assurance of His promises.*

Can we trust God's reasoning and His plans for mankind? Yes, because God's justice makes Him reliable and trustworthy.

**Malachi 3:6:** (NASB) *for I, the LORD, do not change...*

**Romans 11:29:** *For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*

**James 1:17:** (KJV) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

God is consistent. He is stable. He has a fixed purpose. He does not deviate. If He had reneged on His penalty for Adam and all of his progeny, how could we ever trust Him not to renege on His promises of blessing?

God's **Divine Integrity** is the anchor of the universe. If He were to simply 'overlook' His own sentence of death, He would be acting against His own nature. By adhering strictly to the ransom requirement, God proves that His word is an unbreakable bond. We can trust the promise of 'No more death' specifically because we see that He was unwilling to break His word regarding 'Thou shalt surely die.'

### Key Takeaways

- **Immutable Character:** God's reliability stems from His unchangeableness (Malachi 3:6). Unlike human leaders who may shift their policies or feelings, God has a fixed purpose and "irrevocable" callings.
- **Consistency as a Foundation:** If God had simply "waived" the penalty for sin without a ransom, it would prove Him inconsistent. His adherence to His own law—even at great cost—is exactly what makes His future promises of blessing legally and morally certain.
- **The Anchor of Hope:** Because God is stable and "without shadow of turning," the Christian can hold fast to their hope without wavering, knowing that the One who promised is faithful to perform it (Hebrews 10:23).

Trust is built on the bedrock of fairness. While we often think of "justice" as something cold or punishing, the Bible presents it as the very foundation of God's throne. We must examine why this standard of justice was so unyielding that it required the death of Jesus rather than a simple act of divine "forgetting."

## 23. Why is God's justice so important?

*Couldn't God have simply forgiven sin without a price? This section explores the necessity of justice in God's plan.*

Why did God demand that justice would need to be satisfied by the death of the perfect man Jesus in place of the perfect man Adam? Why couldn't God have simply ignored or modified His standard of justice to save mankind without the need for Jesus to die?

This justice, which underlies all our Father's actions, is the basis of our strong confidence in His promises. All solid and lasting relationships are built on consistent respect, love and justice—treating the other person "fairly." Because God is consistently fair and loving, we can have both respect for and complete confidence in Him and His plans for mankind.

Imagine if God were NOT always reliable and consistent. If God were so changeable as to condemn to death the human race in Adam and 6,000 years later revoke His decision, what assurance would we have that He would not change His mind in the future and once more condemn humanity to death?

Christians rely daily on the promises we read in the Bible. For example, God promises:

**Hebrews 13:5:** *...I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

**Romans 8:28:** *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

**Matthew 6:31-33:** *Therefore do not worry, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or What shall we wear? For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Imagine if we could no longer rely on those promises. Imagine if God were so inconsistent as to revoke His promises to us at any time. Thankfully, God's unchangeableness makes Him safe, reliable and trustworthy. Hence, we can embrace the words of the Apostle Paul:

**Hebrews 10:23:** (RVIC) *let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for He is faithful that promised.*

In summary, we can now understand why Jesus died. God's justice demanded a "ransom" or "corresponding price." The perfect man Jesus had to die in place of the perfect man Adam. The ransom price of exchange being provided, Jesus has now legally secured the right *in due time* (**1 Tim 2:6**) to raise ALL mankind from the dead. Jesus has become *the last Adam* or father of the human race (**1 Corinthians 15:45**).

By paying the debt Adam owed, Jesus legally 'adopted' the human race. In the eyes of Divine Justice, the family of man has been transferred from the bankrupt estate of Adam into the wealthy, life-filled estate of Christ. This is why His justice is so vital: it provided the legal bill of sale that makes our future resurrection a right, not just a wish.

**1 Corinthians 15:22:** (KJV) *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

In Part III we have answered the question, *Why didn't God stop Satan in the Garden of Eden?* We found that had God stopped Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve and prevented that sin, it would not have prevented future sins from Adam's descendants. Also, the efficiency of one perfect life in exchange for one perfect life would have been lost. So God, in His infinite wisdom, in His ability to foresee the future, prepared the salvation of all of mankind before the world had even begun! (**1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8; Ephesians 1:4; Titus 1:2**)

### Key Takeaways

- **The Bedrock of Relationships:** True confidence in any relationship is built on consistent fairness. God's commitment to justice ensures that He will always treat His creation according to a reliable and righteous standard (Psalm 89:14).
- **A Guarantee Against Future Chaos:** If God were "changeable" and simply revoked His death sentence without a price being paid, there would be no guarantee He wouldn't change His mind again in the future. The ransom provides a permanent legal settlement that can never be questioned.
- **Justification for All:** Through the "corresponding price" of Jesus for Adam, God has legally secured the right for Jesus to raise **all** mankind from the dead. This is not a legal loophole, but a full satisfaction of the law that allows 1 Corinthians 15:22 to be realized: "even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Having seen that God's justice is the unwavering foundation of His plan, we must now ask how that plan is practically applied. **Why did the execution of this plan require not just a death, but a life of intense suffering for the Redeemer?** We move now to the role of experience in the development of a sympathetic Savior.

## **Part III Summary: Why Doesn't God Stop Satan?**

In this study, we have discerned that the entry of sin and the influence of the Adversary (Satan) were not unforeseen accidents but were permitted by an all-wise Creator who "knows the end from the beginning." God's decision not to forcibly stop the fall in Eden was a masterstroke of **Divine Strategy** and **Efficiency**. By allowing the entire human family to be sentenced in one man (Adam), He made it legally possible to redeem the entire family through the sacrifice of one man (Jesus), avoiding the necessity of millions of individual redeemers.

Furthermore, we see that God's **unswerving justice** is the very guarantee of our future joy. Because He refused to "ignore" the penalty of sin—insisting instead on a full **Ransom price**—we can be absolutely certain that He will never ignore or revoke His future promises of blessing. The "Permission of Evil" is, in reality, a global classroom; by experiencing the "exceeding sinfulness of sin" for 6,000 years, humanity is being prepared to make an eternal, free-will choice for righteousness when they are awakened in the kingdom. This long duration is not a delay, but a thorough education. When the billions of the "unjust" return, they will not return to a blank slate, but to a world that has finally seen the end-result of every form of human misrule and selfishness.

### **Key Pillars of God's Sovereign Plan:**

- **The Power of Experience:** Humanity is learning by contrast. The "sting of sin" today will be the "teacher of righteousness" tomorrow.
- **The Integrity of the Law:** God's consistency makes Him the only reliable foundation for faith. His Law is the "anchor of the soul."
- **The Triumph of Wisdom:** What the world views as a failure of God's power is actually a demonstration of His patience, ensuring that "all men" eventually come to a knowledge of the truth.

# WHY GOD PERMITTED SATAN AND EVIL TEMPORARILY

— A PERFECT GOD ALLOWS A REAL CHOICE SO LOVE AND OBEDIENCE CAN BE REAL —

## WHY NOT STOP SATAN?



**LOVE CANNOT BE FORCED**  
Love must be freely given or it is not love. (Deut. 30:19)



**JUSTICE REQUIRES A FAIR TEST**  
Every being must see sin's results for themselves. (Ecc. 8:11)



**SIN MUST BE EXPOSED**  
Its true nature and consequences must be fully revealed. (Rom. 3:4)



**A UNIVERSE OF WITNESSES**  
All heavenly beings see the evidence. (1 Tim. 3:16)



**GOD'S KINGDOM WILL BE ETERNAL**  
Only when all is settled will rebellion end forever. (Rev. 20:10)

## SATAN'S CHALLENGE

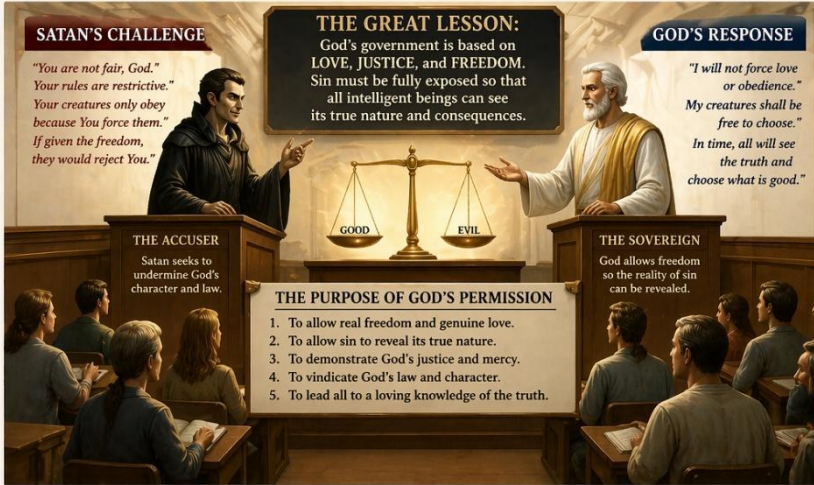
*"You are not fair, God."  
Your rules are restrictive."  
Your creatures only obey because You force them."  
If given the freedom,  
they would reject You."*

## THE GREAT LESSON:

God's government is based on **LOVE, JUSTICE, and FREEDOM**. Sin must be fully exposed so that all intelligent beings can see its true nature and consequences.

## GOD'S RESPONSE

*"I will not force love or obedience."  
My creatures shall be free to choose."  
In time, all will see the truth and choose what is good."*



**THE ACCUSER**

Satan seeks to undermine God's character and law.

**THE SOVEREIGN**

God allows freedom so the reality of sin can be revealed.

## THE PURPOSE OF GOD'S PERMISSION

1. To allow real freedom and genuine love.
2. To allow sin to reveal its true nature.
3. To demonstrate God's justice and mercy.
4. To vindicate God's law and character.
5. To lead all to a loving knowledge of the truth.

## THE OUTCOME WILL BE GLORIOUS



**SATAN AND EVIL WILL BE DESTROYED**  
Sin and sinners will be no more forever. (Rev. 20:10, 14)



**GOD'S CHARACTER WILL SHINE**  
All will see that God is perfectly just, wise, and loving. (Ps. 145:17)



**ALL WILL CHOOSE WHAT IS GOOD**  
Every knee will bow in sincere worship. (Phil. 2:10-11)



**PERFECT PEACE FOREVER**  
Righteousness will dwell in a restored earth. (Isa. 11:9)



**GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL**  
A universe united in love and truth. (1 Cor. 15:28)

## THE TEMPORARY PLAN – A LESSON WITH A PURPOSE



*"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"*

Romans 11:33

## PART IV: WHY DOES GOD PERMIT EVIL AND SUFFERING?

### 24. Why did Jesus have to experience suffering and hardship?

*This section examines the role of suffering in Jesus' life and its purpose in God's plan.*

It has been truly said that experience is the best teacher. Jesus' trials and sufferings during his 3½ years ministry and his crucifixion developed in him a perfected character. This would prepare him for his future roles. As judge, priest and king, he will rule over mankind with love, mercy and justice in order to help them ultimately arrive at moral, spiritual and physical perfection. Jesus could not have developed these character attributes merely through observation. He had to suffer to fully understand the suffering of mankind. This will enable him to dispense justice to them with love, compassion and mercy.

It is vital to understand that when the Bible says Jesus was “made perfect,” it does not mean he was ever sinful. Rather, it means he became **perfectly equipped**. He transitioned from a perfect man who *knew* about human pain to a perfect man who had *felt* it. This 'experiential perfection' is what transforms a cold judge into a “sympathetic High Priest” (Hebrews 4:15).

Let's consider some scriptures upon which this conclusion is based.

**Hebrews 2:10:** *For it was fitting for Him (God)...in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation (Jesus) perfect through sufferings.*

**Hebrews 5:8-10:** *though he was a son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. And having been perfected, he became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him, called by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.*

Jesus had to “*learn obedience*” and prove loyal to God's will in every respect to be rewarded with the divine nature and office. He was *highly exalted* by God because of his obedience. **Philippians 2:8-9.**

**Hebrews 4:15:** (ESV) *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

As we have already seen in prior scriptures, Jesus died to save all mankind, not only his followers. Some Christians might object to the idea that non-Christians would be saved. After all, why should Christians have to go through the effort and sacrifice of being a Christian if unbelievers are going to eventually be saved, too?

Mankind certainly will have an opportunity for eternal earthly life when awakened from the dead on a perfect earth. However, only faithful Christians will receive a reward beyond imagination in the heavenly realms with direct fellowship with the Father (**Luke 19:17; Daniel 7:27; Revelation 2:10; 20:6**). This is a MUCH greater reward for faithfulness.

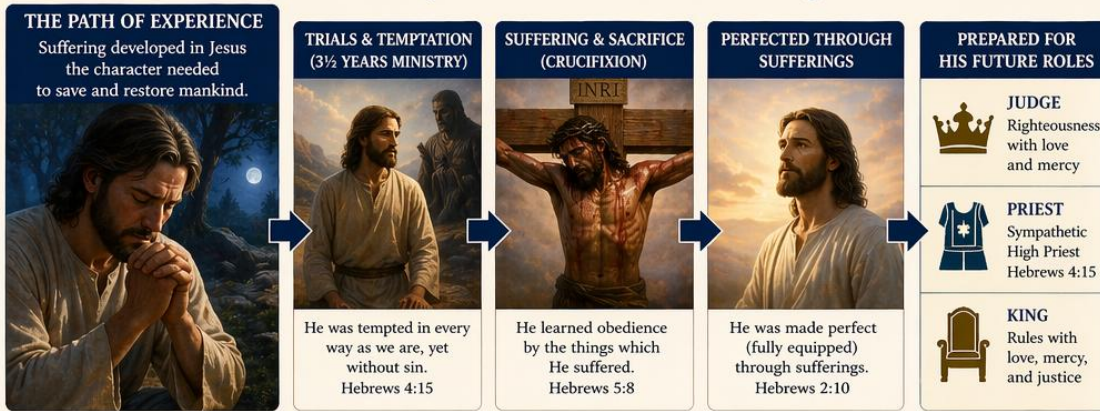
#### Key Takeaways

- **Developing Sympathy:** Experience is the ultimate teacher. Jesus suffered so that he could "sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:15). To be a merciful King and Priest, he had to feel the weight of human temptation and pain firsthand.
- **Perfecting the Captain:** While Jesus was always sinless, he was "made perfect" (spiritually mature) through suffering (Hebrews 2:10). These trials developed in him the specific character attributes of patience and mercy required to lead a fallen race back to perfection.
- **Obedience Under Trial:** Jesus "learned obedience" not by merely following instructions, but by remaining loyal to God's will even when it was agonizing (Hebrews 5:8). This proven loyalty qualified him for his high-priestly office and his exaltation to the divine nature.

If the "Captain of our salvation" was perfected through trials, it stands to reason that his "body members"—his faithful followers—must undergo a similar transformation. **Why does God allow Christians to face hardship, often in greater measure than the world around them?** The answer lies in their future career as healers of the human race.

# 24. WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO EXPERIENCE SUFFERING AND HARDSHIP?

*Through suffering, Jesus was perfected for His future work as our compassionate Savior, Priest, and King.*



Jesus transitioned from a perfect man who knew about human pain to a perfect man who had felt it. This “experiential perfection” is what transforms a cold judge into a compassionate High Priest.

## WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES



**HEBREWS 2:10**  
For it was fitting for Him (God)... in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation (Jesus) perfect through sufferings.



**HEBREWS 5:8-10**  
Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.



**PHILIPPIANS 2:8-9**  
He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God highly exalted Him.



**HEBREWS 4:15 (ESV)**  
For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.



**A SACRIFICE FOR ALL**  
Jesus died to save all mankind, not only His followers. All will have an opportunity for eternal life on a perfect earth.  
(John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:4)

**GOD IS JUST AND LOVING— EVERYONE WILL BE RESTORED, AND FAITHFULNESS WILL BE REWARDED.**



**A GREATER REWARD FOR THE FAITHFUL**  
Faithful Christians will receive a reward beyond imagination in the heavenly realms with direct fellowship with the Father.  
(Luke 19:17; Daniel 7:27; Revelation 2:10; 20:6)  
**THIS IS A MUCH GREATER REWARD FOR FAITHFULNESS.**

## KEY TAKEAWAYS



**1. DEVELOPING SYMPATHY**  
Experience is the ultimate teacher. Jesus suffered so that he could “sympathize with our weaknesses” (Hebrews 4:15). To be a merciful King and Priest, he had to feel the weight of human temptation and pain firsthand.



**2. PERFECTING THE CAPTAIN**  
While Jesus was always sinless, He was “made perfect” (spiritually mature) through suffering (Hebrews 2:10). These trials developed in Him the character attributes of patience and mercy required to lead a fallen race back to perfection.



**3. OBEDIENCE UNDER TRIAL**  
Jesus “learned obedience” not by merely following instructions, but by remaining loyal to God’s will even when it was agonizing (Hebrews 5:8). This proven loyalty qualified Him for His high-priestly office and His exaltation to the divine nature.



**IF THE “CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION” WAS PERFECTED THROUGH TRIALS, IT STANDS TO REASON THAT HIS “BODY MEMBERS”—HIS FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS— MUST UNDERGO A SIMILAR TRANSFORMATION.**

*Why does God allow Christians to face hardship, often in greater measure than the world around them? The answer lies in their future career as healers of the human race.*



## 25. Why do Christians face trials and suffering, sometimes even more than others?

*Why do believers endure hardship? This section explains how suffering shapes character and prepares Christians for future service.*

We now know the Bible teaches that Jesus' body members are being prepared for a future subordinate role under their head, Jesus, as earth's future judges, priests and kings. The Lord's true followers will help guide resurrected mankind to overcome their sinful tendencies on their journey toward moral, spiritual and physical perfection—and therefore eternal life—in God's future kingdom on earth.

However, why do Jesus' followers suffer through difficult trials and experiences, sometimes even worse than what many non-Christians experience? Why doesn't God protect us from all this pain? The answer is that the difficult trials and experiences which Jesus' followers suffer are necessary to grow and improve their hearts and characters. Through these trials they develop, just as Jesus did, fruit of the spirit by learning obedience to God's will. This learning process prepares them for their future mission in aiding mankind during God's righteous kingdom on earth.

**Galatians 5:22-23:** (ESV) *...the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...*

The fruit of the spirit rarely grows in a Christian except through trial, testing, sacrifice and sometimes even suffering. Jesus' followers benefit from these difficult trials and experiences, under the guidance of the Bible and holy spirit (**2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Hebrews 12:5-13; 1 Peter 1:6-7; James 1:2-3; John 14:26**). If found to be faithful overcomers, they will have developed the full fruit of the holy spirit with the wisdom of a Christlike character.

With this spiritual maturity and practical wisdom, Jesus' followers will be equipped to assist him in helping mankind struggle past their evil tendencies and weaknesses in their journey to holiness in God's kingdom on earth. Jesus' faithful followers would not be equipped to do so unless they had grown morally and spiritually through life's experiences, having developed a beautiful Christlike character of sympathy, love, mercy, compassion and justice. What grand wisdom in God's arrangements and plans! Awakened mankind will be helped by Jesus' followers, human beings who were transformed at death to spirit beings, ready to help mankind. These spirit beings will understand human suffering because they experienced it in their lifetimes on earth. They have "walked in the same shoes."

Jesus' faithful followers will be equipped with spiritual maturity and practical wisdom.

In connection with Christian sacrifice, we find the fruitage of character transformation indicated in **Romans 12:1-2** (AMPC) *I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs,] but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your*

*mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude] so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, {even} the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].*

This character transformation which takes place in faithful Christians is modeled after the character of their master, Jesus Christ, who showed Christians the path of trial and suffering with the purpose of becoming a sympathetic and merciful priesthood.

**Hebrews 2:17-18:** (AMPC) *So it is evident that it was essential that he (Jesus) be made like his brethren in every respect, in order that he might become a merciful (sympathetic) and faithful High Priest in the things related to God, to make atonement and propitiation for the people's sins. For because he himself [in his humanity] has suffered in being tempted (tested and tried), he is able [immediately] to run to the cry of (assist, relieve) those who are being tempted and tested and tried [and who therefore are being exposed to suffering].*

**Hebrews 6:20:** (ESV) *...Jesus has gone as a **forerunner** on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*

As our forerunner and our spiritual high priest *...it was essential that he (Jesus) be made like his brethren...* Jesus developed the qualities of mercy and sympathy, through his experiences, to assist those who suffer. We, too, as under-priests, are to develop these same qualities of mercy and sympathy. This will enable us to assist suffering mankind after they are awakened on earth from the dead. If Jesus needed to learn by experiencing suffering, how much more is it necessary for us to learn from difficult experiences?

**Romans 8:17:** *...if indeed we suffer with him (Jesus), that we may also be glorified together.*

We see a deeper meaning and purpose, beyond mere self-improvement, to developing the **Fruit of the Spirit**. Like a pre-med student training to be a surgeon or a Special Forces soldier training for a mission, there is a vital and practical purpose why this education in developing **the Fruit of the Spirit** is needed. The process of growing in the fruit of the spirit is called "sanctification," meaning "to be made holy." It is the struggle, the suffering and the difficult experiences, when rightly applied, that sanctify us. They prepare us for the future mission of serving under Jesus to bless mankind.

**Hebrews 2:10-11:** *For it was fitting for Him (God), for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain (Jesus) of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

Think of a Christian's life as a 'Residency Program' for a future physician. A doctor does not study disease because they love sickness; they study it so they can recognize and cure it in others. Likewise, the Church is not suffering for no reason—they are in a spiritual residency, learning the 'anatomy' of human sorrow so they can expertly apply the healing balm of the kingdom to a broken world.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **The School of Priesthood:** Christians are not merely being saved for their own sake; they are "under-priests" in training. The hardships they endure are a necessary curriculum to develop the

deep sympathy, mercy, and compassion required to later assist a groaning humanity in the Kingdom.

- **Developing the Fruit of the Spirit:** Divine character—love, patience, and self-control—is rarely forged in ease. Like gold refined in a furnace, the "fruit of the spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23) grows through the pressure of testing and sacrifice, preparing the believer for future spiritual authority.
- **Walking in the Master's Shoes:** Just as the "Captain of our salvation" was perfected through suffering (Hebrews 2:10), his "body members" must follow the same path. This shared experience of suffering ensures that the future spirit-rulers will truly understand the human struggle, having "walked in the same shoes" as those they will eventually judge and heal.

While the suffering of the Church has a specific vocational purpose, the broader question remains: **What about the rest of the world?** Why has an all-powerful God allowed 6,000 years of "groaning and labor" for the entire human race? To see the full beauty of the Divine Plan, we must look at how universal suffering serves as a global educator.

## WHY DOES GOD PERMIT SUFFERING?

— God's love allows suffering—but never wastes it. —

Suffering is real.  
God sees it.  
God cares.

In His wisdom and love, God uses difficult seasons to shape us, strengthen us, and prepare us for a better future.

We may not understand now, but we can trust Him always.

GOD'S PURPOSES  
IN OUR SUFFERING

- DEVELOPS CHARACTER**  
Suffering builds patience, endurance, and godly character. (Romans 5:3-4)
- DRAWNS US CLOSER TO GOD**  
It deepens our trust, dependence, and relationship with Him. (James 4:8)
- REFINES US**  
God removes what is selfish, prideful, or unlike Christ. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)
- TEACHES AND CORRECTS**  
Suffering can reveal truth, convict, and guide us in the right way. (Hebrews 12:5-11)
- PREPARES US TO HELP OTHERS**  
Our experiences equip us to encourage and support others in their struggles. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)
- BUILDS ETERNAL HOPE**  
Suffering is temporary and leads to a glory beyond compare. (2 Corinthians 4:17)

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Jesus understands your pain.  
He suffered too.  
He promises to be with you every step of the way.  
One day, He will wipe away every tear.  
(Revelation 21:4)

“We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

## 26. Why does God allow evil and suffering in the world?

*Is there a purpose behind the pain and evil humanity experiences? This section explores how suffering fits into the story of redemption.*

**Romans 8:19,22:** *...the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

Why does God permit mankind to experience evil and human suffering with these *groans and labors with birth pangs*?

Based on what we have already learned, the answer is in God having *ALL people to be saved* (**1 Timothy 2:4**).

Following the lessons of this lifetime, they experience an awakening from the dead along with the education and healing effects of God's love, mercy and justice in His righteous and peaceful kingdom on earth. With the clear contrast experienced between good and evil, most of mankind will make the choice to follow God and Jesus forever. God thereby will succeed in coming as close as possible to having ALL people be saved.

**Why has God patiently waited all this time to implement His plan to save as many people as possible without violating their free will?**

We answer, for the purpose of education. God's plan will give opportunity for eternal life to everyone, but He will never force anyone to obey. He will not turn wicked, unrepentant people into robots, not able to choose evil and not capable of real love. True love cannot be programmed; it must be chosen. By allowing humanity to experience the "bitter," God is providing the necessary contrast for them to truly appreciate the "sweet." Once a person has seen the end-result of a world without God, their eventual choice to love Him will be an unshakeable, voluntary devotion that no robot could ever replicate. God endowed all of humanity with free will. He wants mankind to willingly, based on their experiences with evil in this life and good in the kingdom, make a free-will choice for good. In His wisdom, no one is forced to obey. After resurrection, given a thorough education guiding and encouraging them, most will make the choice of obedience to the Heavenly Father's righteous principles of love, mercy and justice.

Had God prevented mankind from experiencing the devastating consequences of sin and evil, a worse outcome would have resulted. Pride, self-will and curiosity would have eventually tempted many people to choose evil. This very disaster occurred in the angelic realm with the many angels who followed Satan's rebellion and became demons. In the case of mankind, millions of sinners would require millions of redeemers. We have already seen the impracticability of that. God would not choose such a plan.

Sadly, even though God plans for the best possible outcome of saving the greatest number of people, some will refuse to repent from evil and select a righteous path. They will reject the peace, love and joy the kingdom offers and decline to work at overcoming their evil characters, thus following Satan into eternal destruction.

In Revelation, God's righteous and peaceful kingdom is described as the city called the *new Jerusalem*.

**Revelation 22:14-15:** (ESV) *Blessed are those who wash their robes* (clean off the filth of sin), *so that they may...enter the city by the gates* (of God's kingdom). *Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*

From this verse we see that those who do not repent from evil will rebel against the righteous kingdom. God will give them every opportunity to choose righteousness, waiting with mercy and patience for evidence of repentance. If they do not make progress, they will be destroyed. It is important to note that the “outside” mentioned here represents Second Death—a permanent cessation of life. God’s justice is too pure to torture anyone eternally, but His wisdom is too great to allow the “incorrigible” to forever mar the peace of a perfect universe. Those who ultimately reject the way of life simply lose the gift of existence entirely (Psalm 37:10).

In summary, the suffering of Jesus, the suffering of his followers and the permission of evil all serve a unified purpose to prepare mankind for the permanent rehabilitation from sin and for eternal life in God's kingdom.

This is what God’s patience is waiting to accomplish.

This is why God has permitted evil and human suffering for over 6,000 years since Adam’s fall.

Before He can complete the plan, the full number of Jesus’ body members must first be selected and prepared to act as a rescue, healing and rehabilitation force in the kingdom.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **The Lesson of Contrast:** God permits evil so that humanity can learn through experience the "exceeding sinfulness of sin." By tasting the bitter results of disobedience now, people will be better equipped to appreciate and choose the "Way of Holiness" in the future Kingdom.
- **Preserving Free Will:** God refuses to create "holy robots." By allowing mankind to exhaust every effort at self-rule under Satan’s influence, He ensures that their eventual choice to obey Him springs from a willing and enlightened heart, not from forced compliance.
- **A Unified Recovery Plan:** The current reign of sin and death is a temporary stage. God is patiently waiting for the full number of Jesus' "body members" to be prepared so that a complete, empathetic rescue force is ready to rehabilitate the world when the kingdom is established.

This long and painful history of human suffering is not the end of the story, but the dark prelude to a glorious morning. **Having understood why evil was permitted, we can now look forward to the practical solution: the establishment of a literal, restorative government on earth that will finally wipe away every tear.**

## **Part IV Summary: Why Does God Permit Evil and Suffering?**

Our journey through this section has revealed that suffering and evil are not meaningless or arbitrary. Instead, they play a crucial role in God’s educational process for humanity. Like Jesus did, his followers develop through trials the character, empathy, and spiritual maturity needed to serve as compassionate judges, priests, and kings in the future kingdom. For all people, the experience of pain and hardship creates a longing for righteousness and prepares the heart to choose good over evil. God’s patience in allowing suffering is motivated by His desire to save as many as possible without violating free will. Ultimately, these experiences will lead to healing, restoration, and everlasting joy in God’s kingdom. In the next section, we will see how this kingdom will be established on earth and what it means for the future of humanity.

Part IV clarifies that suffering is never arbitrary in the eyes of the Creator; it is a profound **educational and preparatory tool**. For the **Christ follower**, trials are a "sanctifying" fire designed to develop a Christlike character. This spiritual maturity is essential for their future roles as judges, kings and priests, ensuring they can rule with a heart of "mercy and sympathy" (Hebrews 2:17-18) because they have personally experienced the trials of the flesh.

For **humanity at large**, the permission of evil serves as a "great school of experience." God's wisdom allows the world to see the devastating results of sin so that, when they are awakened in the kingdom, they will possess a firsthand knowledge of evil that will protect them from ever choosing it again.

**Key Pillars of Divine Permission:**

- **The Value of Experience:** Experience is the best teacher. Both the "Head" (Jesus) and the "Body" (the Church) are perfected through suffering to become a sympathetic priesthood.
- **The Goal of Character:** The "fruit of the spirit" is the only thing we take into the next life. Suffering provides the environment where these eternal qualities are forged.
- **The Preservation of Liberty:** God's patient waiting ensures that when the "whole creation" is eventually delivered, it will be because they have learned—by free will and through experience—that God's way is the only way to life and peace.

## THE PURPOSE OF PERMITTING EVIL AND SUFFERING

(THE BLUEPRINT FOUNDATION)

**TRADITIONAL MISCONCEPTION:**  
"SUFFERING IS THE END RESULT"  
(FALSE VIEW)

Wait, this house of suffering is the FINAL plan? God's masterpiece? This is terrible and unjust!

**THE PURPOSE OF SUFFERING** →

If you only see suffering, you see a flawed end-product, missing God's larger design.  
(Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18; Amos 9:11-15).

**BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING:**  
"SUFFERING IS THE PROCESS"  
(TRUE VIEW)

GLORIFIED SAINTS

Mankind learns the "exceeding sinfulness of sin" through experiencing it. Suffering is the necessary, temporary foundation for true righteousness.  
(Romans 7:13; Isaiah 14:24; 55:11; Acts 3:19-21).

## PART V: WHY DID GOD PLAN FOR A KINGDOM ON EARTH?

### 27. What is God's kingdom on earth really all about?

*This section describes the establishment and purpose of God's kingdom on earth and its impact on humanity.*

The Bible tells us what happens when God's kingdom is established on earth:

**Daniel 7:14, 27:** *Then to him (Christ)] was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that ALL peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him...His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.*

**Isaiah 2:2-4:** *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house (God's government) shall be established on the top of the mountains (earth's subordinate governments) and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. For out of Zion (heavenly government) shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (center of God's earthly government). He shall judge between the nations and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.*

When the Bible speaks of the "mountain of the LORD's house" being established above the hills, it is using a common biblical symbol for a **government**. Just as a mountain is solid, visible, and dominates the landscape, God's kingdom will be a literal, stable authority on earth. It will not be a suggestion or a philosophy; it will be the governing power that finally brings an end to the failed political and social experiments of men.

**Ephesians 1:9,10:** (Weymouth) *...he made known to us...God's merciful purpose for the government of the world when the times are ripe for it—the PURPOSE which He has cherished in His own mind of RESTORING THE WHOLE CREATION to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in heaven and things on earth, to find their one head in him.*

The purpose of God's future kingdom on earth is to restore the whole creation to harmony and fellowship with God. Under the rule and authority of Jesus and his body members—earth's future judges, priests and kings--mankind will be taught love, peace and righteousness. This will bring them back to a condition of service and obedience to God.

#### Key Takeaways

- **A Global Government of Peace:** The kingdom is not merely a state of mind, but a literal "mountain" (government) that will be established over all earthly nations (Isaiah 2:2-4). It will replace war with productivity, turning weapons of destruction into tools for life.

- **Restoration as the Central Theme:** The ultimate purpose of this divine government is the "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21). It is God's "merciful purpose" to bring the whole creation back into harmony under one Head—Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10).
- **Education over Coercion:** The Kingdom serves as a global classroom. Under the leadership of Jesus and his "body members," humanity will be taught the ways of righteousness, moving from a state of rebellion to voluntary obedience and fellowship with God.

While the promise of a global government sounds ideal, many find it difficult to reconcile such a future with the deep scars of their current lives. **Can the hope of a coming Kingdom actually heal the trauma of those who have lost everything?**

## 28. Do the Bible's answers bring us comfort and hope?

*This section addresses the emotional impact of suffering and the reassurance offered by scripture.*

Many people are angry at God for the pain, suffering, and loss they have personally experienced. In the depths of trauma, an explanation of a future "plan" can feel hollow because the pain is too loud to hear anything else. God does not minimize this pain, nor does He expect us to ignore it.

However, the Bible invites us to look through the telescope of eternity. To someone in the depths of grief, pain feels anything but "light." But when infinite years of perfect health and joy are placed on the scale against seventy years of hardship, the scale tips. God does not promise to erase the fact that we suffered, but to outweigh it so completely that the past becomes merely a brief "preface" to a never-ending story of peace.

**2 Corinthians 4:17:** (ESV) *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.*

Someday, when the start of God's kingdom is a distant memory, people will look back on this current life as that "momentary affliction." They will see these difficult times as the learning experiences that taught them to choose good, enabling them to live forever with joy and health, reunited with their loved ones. Looking back from the vantage point of glory, the wisdom of this plan that saved the greatest number of people will finally be clear.

**Romans 8:18:** (ESV) *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

### Key Takeaways

- **A Perspective of Eternity:** In the light of an eternal life filled with joy, the Bible describes current suffering as a "light momentary affliction" (2 Corinthians 4:17). From the vantage point of the kingdom, the pains of this life will be seen as a brief, though difficult, educational period.
- **The Promise of Reunion:** The kingdom offers the specific comfort of being reunited with loved ones. This restoration of relationships is a key component of God's plan to heal the "groaning creation."
- **Gratitude for Divine Wisdom:** Someday, the very experiences that cause anger and confusion today will be understood as the "learning experiences" that empowered humanity to forever choose good over evil.

**If God is so merciful as to restore humanity to their loved ones, does this mercy extend even to those who lived wickedly?** We must address the "fairness" of a plan that offers an opportunity to those who seemingly rejected God's laws.

## **29. Is it fair that even the wicked will be resurrected and given a chance to repent?**

*Does God's mercy overlook justice? This section explores how God deals with evil in His plan for restoration.*

Is it fair that the wicked will be resurrected from the dead with the opportunity for repentance and eternal life? Are they getting a free pass and thereby avoiding God's justice? In fact, NO.

The Bible indicates that individuals committing evil acts are held accountable and punished. There are consequences, discipline and retribution for all evil—the ultimate purpose being repentance and recovery of sinners back to the righteous and sinless condition that Adam had in perfect fellowship with God in the Garden of Eden. There is a basic principle that no one can avoid; we reap what we sow! (**Galatians 6:7-8**)

Part of this 'reaping' involves the moral weight of awakening in a world where truth is no longer hidden. Imagine a thief or an oppressor having to look into the eyes of those they harmed, finally grasping the full truth and the evil of their actions. This accountability is not meant to crush the spirit, but to melt the heart through a realization of the harm caused, which is the first step toward true repentance.

**1 Timothy 5:24:** *Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later.*

Some men's sins result in judgment in this life in the form of personal suffering or consequences. However, for others that judgment comes after the resurrection in the kingdom. That 'judgment' can be punishment and/or recompense made to those who were wronged, not eternal torment for the sinner. The consequence thereby becomes a learning experience.

**1 Corinthians 11:31-32:** (WE) *But if we took time to look into our hearts first, then we would not be punished. When we are punished, the Lord is **teaching us to do right**, so that we will not be punished with the rest of the people of the world.*

This verse clarifies that the purpose for punishment is for *teaching us to do right* and that the same will be true of *the rest of the people of the world* in the future kingdom on earth.

**Ecclesiastes 12:14:** (NASB) *...God will bring every act to Judgment...*

This fact is clarified:

**Revelation 20:12:** *the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*

During the 1,000-year judgment period, people will be held accountable for past damaging actions and those committed after the resurrection. This accountability will be based on the perfect moral and spiritual standards of the Bible. They will need to make amends for the harm they caused (**Isaiah 60:14; Revelation 3:9**). For many, the work will be considerable.

**Matthew 12:36:** (KJV) *But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

**Romans 2:5-10:** (NASB) *But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

Wrath, indignation, tribulation and distress are NOT eternal torment in hell. Yes, punishments and consequences are difficult; however, they are well worth it for the eternal lessons learned. Yes, we believe in the Bible hell (*hell* = Hebrew “sheol,” Greek “hades” = the death condition in the grave). We just disagree on the temperature!

**2 Thessalonians 1:6-8:** (NASB) *For after all it is only just for God to repay with **affliction** those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out **retribution** to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.*

Remember that Paul taught that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust (Acts 24:15). In that future day, the “unjust” who once afflicted Christians will themselves experience corrective affliction leading them toward repentance, while the persecuted “just” will finally receive relief under God’s kingdom. The *flaming fire* symbolizes the destruction of the evil systems that operated under Jesus’ second presence.

Compare **Hebrews 12:5-6:** *...My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*

The Lord's rebuking, chastening and scourging does not equate to eternal torment in a burning hell. When a parent disciplines their child in love, it is for the purpose of teaching the child a needed lesson. No loving parent would ever punish their child by inflicting torture. The thought of burning people in fire NEVER entered into God’s mind (**Jeremiah 19:5**). Clearly this idea of eternal torment came from the “god of this world”—Satan himself, known as Baal in the scripture referenced.

All these verses speaking of consequences and punishment must be considered in light of the full testimony of scriptures and how they fit into God’s plan for mankind. The ultimate purpose of the punishment of evil behavior is to bring about repentance, leading to a righteous transformation of character.

## Key Takeaways

- **Accountability, Not Indulgence:** God's mercy does not bypass His justice. Every individual will "reap what they sow" (Galatians 6:7-8), facing consequences and discipline for their deeds. The judgment is not a free pass, but a period of rigorous correction.
- **The Purpose of Punishment:** Divine "wrath" and "retribution" are not synonymous with torture; they are tools of education (Hebrews 12:5-6). The goal of judgment is to "teach us to do right," bringing about a heart change rather than inflicting eternal pain.
- **The Rejection of Eternal Torment:** The idea of a burning hell of torture is a tradition of men that "never entered the mind" of God (Jeremiah 19:5). True judgment in the Kingdom is a legal process of rehabilitation, ensuring that justice is satisfied through restoration.

**JUSTICE, DISCIPLINE & HOPE  
IN GOD'S PLAN**

*Truth leads to repentance.  
Repentance leads to restoration.*

**JUSTICE IS REAL** (Scales icon)

**REVELATION 20:12**  
"The dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."

**THE PRINCIPLE WE CANNOT ESCAPE** (Scales icon)

**GALATIANS 6:7-8**  
Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

**THE PURPOSE IS RESTORATION** (Heart icon)

**1 CORINTHIANS 11:32**  
"When we are judged, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world."

**ROMANS 2:6** (Gavel icon)  
"He will render to each one according to his deeds."

**HEBREWS 12:6** (Parent/child icon)  
"Whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."

**A GOD OF TRUTH AND LOVE** (Heart icon)

**JEREMIAH 19:5**  
"...which I did not command, nor did it come into My mind..."

Knowing that the wicked will be disciplined and held accountable, the question becomes: **How does this process actually work?** What practical steps will God use to transform a sinful heart into a righteous one during that thousand-year reign?

## 30. How will people change for the better in God's kingdom?

*What steps lead to true moral and spiritual transformation? This section describes the process of growth in the kingdom.*

In the future righteous and peaceful kingdom of God on earth, most people will seek to learn God's moral and spiritual standards of love, mercy, truth and justice:

**Isaiah 2:3:** *Many people shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths...*

What is true for natural Israel will be true for all mankind, that they will know God and His law:

**Jeremiah 31:33-34:** *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.*

In the kingdom on earth, God will expect the people to put into action the love and righteousness they will be learning by helping other people on their journey to moral and spiritual perfection. In this regard, the next passage can be understood to primarily mean that moral and spiritual food and clothing is needed for moral and spiritual sickness and nakedness. Of course, doing these acts literally brings blessings too. (**Isaiah 61:10; Psalm 132:9; Revelation 19:8**):

**Matthew 25:34-36,40:** *Then the King will say to those on his right hand...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. 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.*

The righteous path will be so clear and simple to understand that even fools will not go astray in God's kingdom on earth:

**Isaiah 35:8-10:** (ESV) *And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean [wicked] shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; **even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.** No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it (no evil governments, institutions or authorities); they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed [mankind raised from the dead] of the LORD shall return and come to Zion (God's kingdom on earth ruled from heaven) with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

In God's kingdom on earth, processes will be in place to guide people's growth toward moral and spiritual perfection. By understanding the symbolic meaning of ancient Israel's tabernacle, we get an idea of some of the general methods and practices to be used by Jesus and his body members to help mankind to overcome evil and become righteous. Under Israel's priesthood and tabernacle arrangement, the annual ceremonies pictured God's arrangements to atone for sin, both in the Christian age and in the time of God's future kingdom on earth (**Hebrews 8:5; 9:11; 10:1**).

The consecrating of the priesthood (**Leviticus 8**) and the atonement day sacrifices (**Leviticus 16**) were symbolic of Jesus and the Christian experience in the Christian age (Pentecost up to today). The Day of

Atonement sacrifices preceded all others and were a basis for general forgiveness and acceptance by God. During the Day of Atonement, all Israel was outside the tabernacle and therefore separated from the sacrifices being made inside. They were told to *afflict your souls and do no work* (**Leviticus 16:29,31**). On this one day, Israel had no relationship with God. This is a picture of mankind in general during the current Christian age. Most of them are not active at this time in sacrificing and becoming part of the body of Christ.

Only after the Day of Atonement sacrifices had been completed could the people of Israel approach God, and even then, only through the priesthood. Similarly, during the Millennial age (1,000-year judgment period), mankind will be able to have a relationship with God through Jesus and his faithful body members who completed their sacrifices during the Christian age. In the tabernacle picture, individuals were allowed to bring sacrifices to the priests for the purpose of praise, thanks and worship to God and to ask forgiveness for personal sins. This presents a beautiful picture of mankind's voluntary consecration to righteousness during the 1,000-year period of judgement, as they recover from evil and progress toward a sinless and righteous condition. Literal sacrifices of the ancient people of Israel symbolically pictured the future actions by repentant sinners of thankfulness, forgiveness, service, restoration, and making amends.

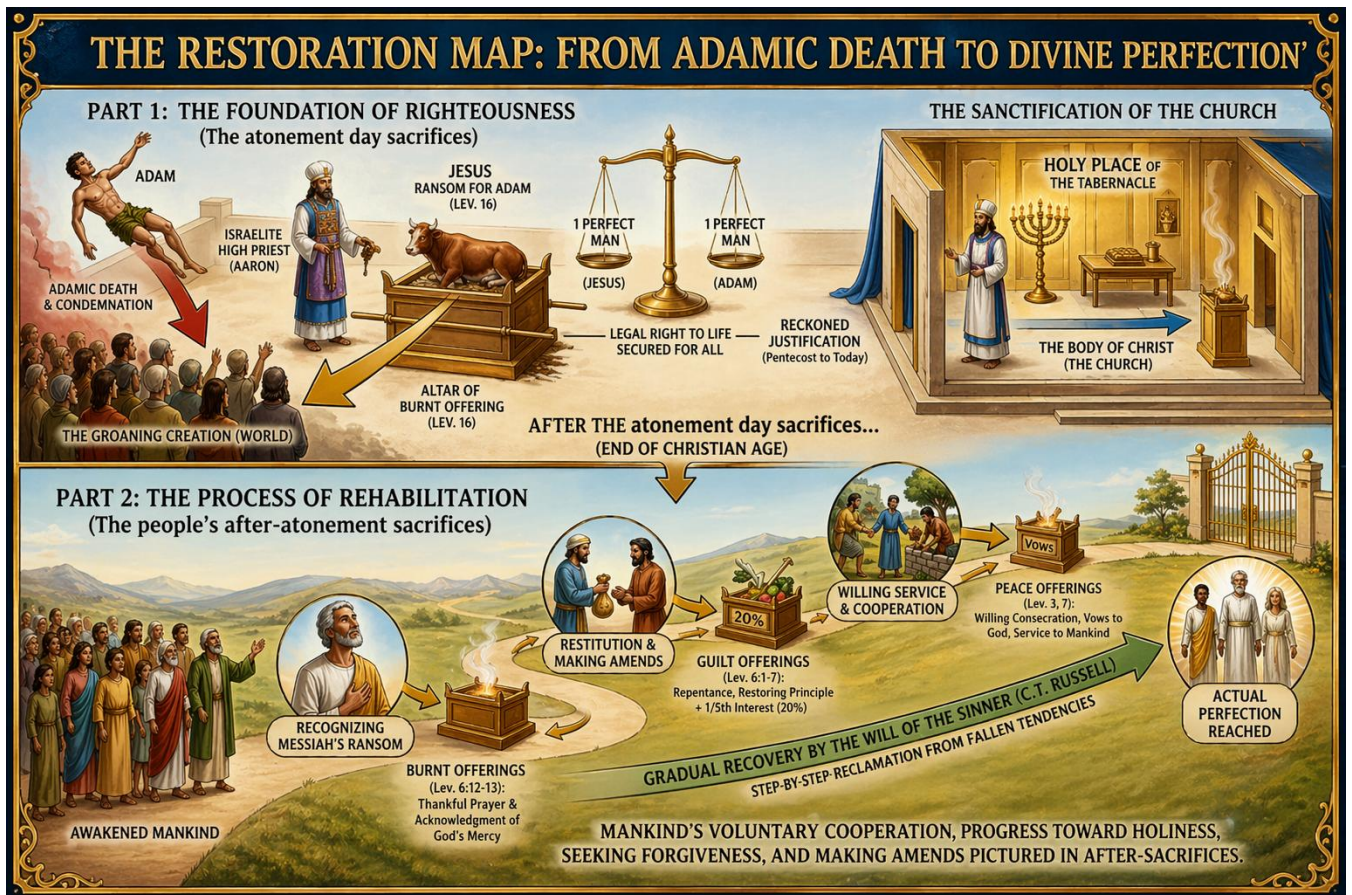
The Day of Atonement sacrifices (symbolic of the sacrifices of Jesus' faithful followers during the Christian age) were followed by other sacrifices made by the people: sin offerings, trespass offerings, peace offerings, and others (symbolic of the kingdom age for mankind). As living people transition into the kingdom on earth and also as people are raised from the dead, there will still be sins and trespasses committed which will require confession and reconciliation. These after-sacrifices will be necessary while the people are being gradually restored to moral and spiritual perfection and life and harmony with God. People will be responsible for the evils and harm committed in the past and the present, for which they must make amends, if possible, accompanied by repentance, before they can be again in harmony with God through Christ, their Mediator (**1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24**).

Let's take a brief look at the **after-Atonement Day Sacrifices** of natural Israel to see how they picture mankind's recovery back into harmony with God's standards of love, justice, righteousness and holiness. This is a big topic, so rather than getting caught up in supporting detail, we will suggest a simple summary that is easier to digest.

The people's sacrifices were brought to the priests. According to the arrangement ordained by God, the priests were able to accept the individual sacrifices that were intended for praise, worship, thanks and reconciliation for sins. The tabernacle priests pictured or foreshadowed the support and aid that will be offered to mankind by the Melchizedek priesthood (Jesus and his faithful followers) during the judgment period (**Hebrews 5:1-10**).

To understand how a world of billions will be organized for rehabilitation, we can look at the **Tabernacle Map**. In the ancient type or picture, the Day of Atonement sacrifices (representing Jesus and the Church) were for the basis of reconciliation between God and the nation of Israel. But the 'After-Day'

sacrifices were for the progress of the people. In a similar way, during the Kingdom there will also be a specific, step-by-step process for making things right with God and neighbor.



**The People's Burnt Offerings (Leviticus 6:9, 12-13):** Represent mankind's thankful prayers to God, acknowledging His mercy, wisdom and love in providing Jesus as our Savior.

**The People's Peace Offerings (Leviticus 3, 7:11-21):** This offering was made either in fulfillment of a vow (covenant) or as a willing "thank offering." It represents mankind's future consecration and dedication to serve God and humanity in the kingdom. These efforts will continue until they come into a condition of full peace and harmony, reaching actual perfection and no longer needing a mediator to stand before God as they fulfill their consecration to do God's will for all eternity.

**The People's Guilt Offerings (Leviticus 5:15-19; 6:1-7; 7:1-7):** This taught that anyone who sinned against God or his neighbor must recognize his sin, seek forgiveness and make amends, especially by making restitution or restoration. If anyone sinned knowingly and damaged or defrauded his neighbor, not only must he restore the principal, but *he shall add the fifth part more thereto* (20 percent interest) and give it to the one who was wronged. In other words, for willful and intentional evils, restoration must exceed the actual loss.

This principle will be carried into the kingdom. Mankind will be brought into harmony with their Creator by their thanks, prayers, consecration to righteousness, praises, worship, repentance, asking for forgiveness and making restitution.

From the book *Tabernacle Shadows*, page 95, written by C.T. Russell, we read, "...perfection will come gradually, and it will require the cooperation of the sinner's WILL ever to reach it. He must do what he can to climb up again to perfection and will have all the assistance necessary. This is shown by these sacrifices in general: they were to be according to every man's ability....The dove or pigeon brought by the poorest in the type represented the justified all of the morally poor and degraded; the goat offered by others more able, represented the all of some less degraded; while the bullock represented the all of those who had attained perfection of human nature...David, speaking of this, says: "...they offer bullocks [perfect sacrifices] upon thine altar." (Psalm 51:19) ...The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." All these sacrifices must be of the free will and desire of the offerer. Leviticus 1:3"

### Key Takeaways

- **The "Highway of Holiness":** The path to restoration will be so clear that "even if they are fools, they shall not go astray" (Isaiah 35:8-10). The confusion and "lions" (evil systems) of this world will be removed, making righteousness the easiest path to follow.
- **Restitution and Making Amends:** Growth in the kingdom requires active participation. Just as the "Guilt Offerings" in the tabernacle required restoring what was lost plus interest, people will be taught to seek forgiveness and make practical amends for the harm they have caused to others.
- **Gradual Perfection:** Salvation is not an instantaneous "switch" but a gradual climb. With the help of the "Melchizedek Priesthood" (Jesus and his body members), individuals will slowly overcome their fallen tendencies until they can stand before God in actual perfection.

**If this plan is so beautifully balanced between justice and mercy and so clearly supported by Scripture, why is it so rarely taught?** Why does the vast majority of the world—and even the church—remain blind to such a hopeful message?

## Part V Summary: Why Did God Plan for a Kingdom on Earth?

This section has illuminated the purpose and promise of God's kingdom on earth—a time when peace, justice, and restoration will be the norm for all creation. The Bible's prophecies point to a future when every nation and person will have the opportunity to learn God's ways, experience true transformation and be reunited with loved ones. The kingdom is not just a distant hope but the fulfillment of God's ancient promises to bless all families of the earth. Under the leadership of Christ and his faithful followers, humanity will be guided toward moral and spiritual perfection and the wounds of the past will be healed. As we continue, we will address the challenges people face in believing this plan, and how tradition and misunderstanding can obscure the clarity of God's message.

Part V reveals that God's plan for the kingdom is not to take everyone to heaven, but to **bring heaven's will to earth**. This literal government is the "mountain of the Lord" that will establish universal peace and the "restitution of all things."

**Key Pillars of the Kingdom Plan:**

- **Healing the Trauma:** The kingdom provides a "weight of glory" that outweighs all current suffering. It is the time for reunions, health, and the removal of the sting of death.
- **Disciplined Mercy & Finality:** God's justice remains intact. The wicked are raised for a period of training and rehabilitation, rather than being abandoned to a myth of eternal torment. However, this is not "universalism"; those who willfully refuse to repent and insist on pursuing evil after being given every possible opportunity will face the scriptural penalty of eternal destruction (the Second Death). God's love provides the chance, but His justice ensures that evil will not be permitted to exist forever.
- **The Way of Holiness:** Using the symbolic lessons of the tabernacle sacrifices, we see that mankind will be guided through a process of confession, restitution, and gradual moral growth, eventually reaching the perfection Adam lost.



## PART VI: WHY DON'T PEOPLE BELIEVE GOD'S TRUE PLAN?

### 31. If God's plan is so clear, why doesn't everyone believe it?

*This section examines the obstacles—tradition, authority, and personal pain—that prevent many from accepting God's plan.*

We might ask the same question about the time Jesus was on earth about 2,000 years ago. Why didn't everyone accept him as their Savior? He healed the blind, deaf and lame and he raised the dead. Why did the people cry out for Rome to crucify him?

A big reason is because the religious leaders misled the people and turned them against Jesus (**John 7:45-52; Matthew 27:20; Mark 15:11**).

- Jesus had exposed many of the Pharisees as hypocrites (**Matthew 23:24-28**).
- Their livelihood and authority were at stake (**John 11:47-48**).
- He was a threat to them, and they were determined to kill him (**John 11:53**).
- After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the religious leaders were even more emboldened to kill Jesus and Lazarus as well (**John 12:10**).

Many people in Israel could not believe that nearly all their religious leaders were wrong. They put their trust in these human authorities over and above the miracles they heard of and saw with their own eyes. They did not think about how the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah described Jesus.

**Acts 5:34** speaks of Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people.

When the religious counsel was furious with the apostles and plotted to kill them, Gamaliel cautioned them:

**Acts 5:35-39:** *And he said to them: Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men...keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God.*

If Gamaliel had followed the apostles' teachings, he would have had to give up his position of honor, the respect of society, and his livelihood. There are some Christian leaders around today like Gamaliel, good men, teachers of God's Word who are held in great respect by the Christian community. They are in the same predicament as Gamaliel. They know that they cannot harmonize and make sense of the scriptures we have considered based on the stated beliefs of denominational churches. But they cannot admit this to themselves or others without devastating personal consequences to their careers and livelihood. Through willful ignorance (**2 Peter 3:5**) and closed ears (**Zechariah 7:11-12**), the truth remains hidden.

For many, the question is not 'What does the Bible say?' but rather 'What will it cost me to believe it?' Admitting that the traditional view of hell is wrong often means being labeled a heretic, losing a pulpit, or being ostracized by a lifetime of friends. This social pressure creates a 'willful blindness' where the mind protects the heart from the consequences of the truth.

The Apostle Paul (before his conversion) is a prime example of how human authorities can stubbornly resist the truth. He thought he could resolve his conflicted feelings by punishing, Christians. However,

Jesus appeared to him in a bright light saying, *Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? You are finding it painful to kick against the ox-goad.* (**Acts 26:14**, Weymouth).

An ox-goad was a sharp, pointed stick used to prod stubborn animals. When the ox kicked back against it, the point only dug deeper. Jesus was telling Paul that by fighting the truth, Paul was only engaged in a painful, futile battle against God's sovereign plan. Similarly today, many Christian leaders feel that same 'sharp prod' of truth against their traditions when they try to defend errors like eternal torment and they continue to 'kick' against the logic of the Ransom.

The Apostle Paul admits in **1 Timothy 1:13** *although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

In line with this, the Apostle Peter says in **Acts 3:17** *Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.*

The only way for Paul to overcome his willful ignorance and guilt and to resolve his conflicted feelings was to submit to God. Today, Christian leaders and Christian people can do this by casting aside the traditions of men and by embracing the clear teachings of Scripture. Each one of us has the opportunity personally to speak the truth in love (**Ephesians 4:15**) to any with an open ear, whenever we have the opportunity to do so. However, the truth will only prevail in the minds of open, honest and searching hearts.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **The Obstacle of Tradition:** Just as in Jesus' day, many are blinded by the "traditions of men." Religious leaders often prioritize their own authority and denominational creeds over the clear, harmonious testimony of the Bible.
- **The Risk of Truth:** Accepting the "restitution" message often requires a personal cost. For many leaders and believers, admitting the truth would mean losing social standing, livelihood, or the approval of their peers—a conflict Paul called "kicking against the ox-goad."
- **Ignorance and Indoctrination:** Much of the disbelief is not rooted in malice but in "willful ignorance" and centuries of indoctrination. The truth can only prevail in "open, honest, and searching hearts" that are willing to cast aside human authority for divine revelation.



Despite these obstacles of tradition and fear, the truth remains: God's character is not one of exclusion, but of exhaustive love. This leads us to our final conclusion: **What is the ultimate fate of those who die without ever hearing or believing this message?**

### 32. So, is there hope for those who die unsaved?

*This final section brings together the scriptural evidence to answer the central question of the book.*

From the massive weight of the Bible's testimony on the topics of salvation and restoration there can be no doubt to the honest student of Scripture that the judgment of unbelievers is yet future, at which time they will have the opportunity to accept Jesus as their Savior. The only stumbling block to accepting this clear teaching of Scripture is indoctrination through human authorities of denominational church organizations. God, in His love and mercy, will accomplish His desire to save everyone who is willing to exercise their free will to serve and worship Him. In His patience, God will give even the wicked every possible opportunity to repent. God will make certain they fully understand the consequences of disobedience and evil. In the future ages of eternity to come, no person will be able to accuse God of not giving everyone a full, fair, and informed opportunity for eternal salvation.

Most traditional teachings inadvertently present God as a partial failure—suggesting He wants to save everyone but loses the vast majority to Satan's influence. But the Bible presents a God who succeeds. His plan is so perfectly engineered that the only ones who will perish are those who knowingly and willfully choose death over life after being fully educated. This transforms the story of humanity from a tragedy of loss into a masterpiece of recovery.

**2 Peter 3:9:** (ESV) *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

### Key Takeaways

- **Judgment as an Opportunity:** The "judgment" of unbelievers is not sentencing to doom, but to a future period where they will finally have their eyes opened. God's patience ensures that every person receives a "full, fair, and informed opportunity" to accept Jesus.
- **God's Persistent Desire:** 2 Peter 3:9 confirms that God is "not wishing that any should perish." His plan is designed to be as efficient as possible, saving everyone who is willing to exercise their free will toward righteousness.
- **The End of Accusation:** In the ages to come, no one will be able to say God was unfair. By the end of the Kingdom, every person who has ever lived will have had a clear choice between life and death, based on perfect knowledge rather than blind faith or tradition.

## Part VI Summary: Why Don't People Believe God's True Plan?

The final part of this study explains the "blindness" that currently covers the earth. The "God of this world" (Satan) has used religious systems, peer pressure, and the fear of hell to obscure the "Massive Weight of Bible Testimony."

### Key Insights of the Conclusion:

- **The Cost of Belief:** We acknowledge that following the truth requires courage. Like the Apostle Paul we must choose between the "respect of society" and the "Work of God."
- **The Future Judgment:** We conclude with the absolute scriptural assurance that the "unsaved" are not lost forever. Their time for enlightenment is in the coming kingdom, where they will be judged by their *works* then, not their *ignorance* now.
- **The Triumph of Love:** God's plan is a success, not a partial failure. He will succeed in saving all who are willing, proving for all eternity that His wisdom, justice, and love are beyond expectation and comparison.

The 'veil' of misunderstanding that Satan has spread over the nations (Isaiah 25:7) is beginning to lift. While the majority remain blinded by tradition, the 'Massive Weight of Bible Testimony' is available to anyone willing to look past the creeds of men to the character of God.

In this final section, we have considered the obstacles that prevent many from embracing the full scope of God's plan—whether due to tradition, authority, or personal pain. The Bible acknowledges these struggles but reassures us that God's mercy and patience extend to all. Every person will be given a full, fair, and informed opportunity for salvation, regardless of their past or present circumstances. The message of hope is not reserved for a privileged few but is offered to all who are willing to seek and accept it. As we conclude, let us remember that God's love is persistent and His promises are trustworthy. The journey of faith may be challenging, but the destination is one of restoration, joy, and eternal fellowship with our Creator.

# THE MASTER TIMELINE OF GOD'S SOVEREIGN PLAN

