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Revelation 20

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the Bible at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Revelation 20.

Topics.

- An angel binds the dragon, serpent, devil and Satan for a thousand years.
 - Those who had not received the mark of the beast reign with Christ.
 - The second death has no power over those in the first resurrection.
 - Satan deceives the nations, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle.
 - The devil is thrown into the lake of fire with the beast and false prophet.
 - John sees a great white throne and earth fleeing from the One seated on it.
 - The Dead Before God are Judged According to what They Had Done.
 - Death and hades are thrown into the lake of fire, this is the second death.
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A personal note: though I have always loved reading and studying the Scriptures and have now walked with Christ and in God's grace for around fifty years the following studies should not be taken to be dogmatic, inflexible or the final word on the matter since I am fully aware that my mind is limited by mortality and that greater understanding of God's revelation is continually becoming clearer before our eyes as we move closer to the time of Christ's glorious return in glory.

The previous chapter: began with John hearing a great multitude in heaven, crying, "Hallelujah, for God has judged the great prostitute woman; the marriage of the Lamb has come; the Bride is ready and those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are blessed." Then he saw the King of kings and Lord of lords who will rule the nations with a rod of iron, coming on a white horse to tread out the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God. The chapter ended with the man of sin and lawlessness and the false prophet being thrown into the lake of fire and the birds gathering for the great supper of God and gorging themselves on the flesh of those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.

REVELATION 20:1-3

The Dragon, Serpent, Devil and Satan Bound for a Thousand Years.

- **Revelation 20:1-3:** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. ²And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, ³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

The bottomless pit: is also called the Abyss which comes from the Greek word, (*abussos*) and (*buthos*) Abussos means depthless, (i.e. a deep bottomless pit), while buthos, means depth and by implication the deep of the sea.

The angel seized the dragon and bound him a thousand years: (v2) this dragon embraces the serpent, the devil and Satan, and symbolises pride, arrogance conceit, self-importance, superiority, greed, ego, selfish-ambition, war, murder, theft, every sort of crime, rape, abuse violence self-

indulgence covetousness materialism, which all stem from sin that dwells in the human heart, which means that the expression, "The dragon, the serpent, the devil and Satan." will be bound carries the idea that sin will be bound, this is because during Christ's millennial reign he will rule with a rod of iron and with righteous justice so that all forms of evil and crime will be restrained. Since everything in this verse is symbolic nothing can be taken literally, Scripturally the bottomless pit is personified as a massive endless hole that goes deep into the earth and is so large that it can contain all the evil powers of the world. The dragon being locked up in this pit for a thousand years is biblical lofty language used to highlight the fact that:

- All the enormous evil of the world will be totally restrained during Christ's millennial reign.
- The enormous power the dragon wielded over the entire world is no match for an angel descending from heaven with God's power.
- Good comes down from heaven and evil comes up from the earth so the symbolism is of Good overcoming evil.

When a person is bound in chains and thrown into a dark deep bottomless pit all the power, strength and might they may have had is of no benefit to them. Likewise, Satan being cast into the bottomless pit carries the idea that all the power that he had over the world will be kept in check and under control, so that it cannot flourish, at least not until he is loosed again at the appointed time.

The key to the bottomless pit and a great chain: (v1) the angel coming down from heaven is acting on God's behalf, the chain in his hand symbolises his superior power over the great red dragon and all it symbolizes. It carries the idea that the one with the key and the chain is greater in strength than the one being chained up. When we look at all the sorrow, destruction, violence, murders, wars and corrupt governments and the oppression of the poor it, is clear that Satan has great power in this world, but when confronted with the power of heaven, he is like a little child before a great warrior.

The dragon: (v2) After the destruction of the man of lawlessness and all antichristian hostile nations and their armies the dragon himself remains. He is an entity that signifies the embodiment of:

- The ancient serpent that symbolise deceitful charm, subtlety and cunning since he deceived the first parents of mankind and by his evil sly and artful skill brought sin and death into the world (Gen. 3:1-7).
- The devil who primarily signifies all the sin and evil within the human heart.
- Satan who chiefly signifies violence and hostility.

These three, the serpent, the devil and Satan are all arch enemies of God, of Christ and of the entire human race, and the adversary and enemy of all righteousness. The entity titled the dragon, embraces all these three evil characters. The dragon is a very fitting creature to depict the trinity of evil since mythology considers it to be the most powerful and destructive of all creatures having the ability to throw flames of fire out of its mouth and destroy everything in its path. Jesus, when talking to his disciples about overcoming an enemy taught the following universal principal:

- How can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. (Matt. 12:29).

This is exactly what this angel with the key to the bottomless pit is now doing. He is about to bind the strong man, the fierce and fiery dragon which is a most appropriate beast to symbolise the serpent, the devil and Satan and to symbolise the evil destructive works they do in their various forms and under their different names. When this one great enemy that has ruled the fallen world is seized and imprisoned, all forms of evil and sin will be greatly restrained.

The thousand years: (v2) this is the period designated as the millennium for the word. The word millennium means a thousand years, it is upon this chapter and the many promises elsewhere in the Scriptures that the Gospel and God's Kingdom will ultimately spread over the world, and that the resurrected would reign with Christ when he returns to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth that the doctrine of the millennium has been established. The thousand years are only mentioned the following four times in the book of Revelation:

1. An angel seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:2).
2. The faithful came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:2).
3. They (those who share in the first resurrection) will reign with Christ for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:6).
4. When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison (Revelation 20:7).

These verses show that the beginning of this period begins with the binding of Satan in the bottomless pit and the reign of the resurrected redeemed with Christ during the entire period and ends with the loosing of Satan. Later in the chapter it is revealed, that Satan and his hostile antichristian hordes are destroyed, the final universal judgment takes place and the false prophet and Satan are thrown into the lake of fire, after which eternity begins in all its perfect glorious beauty and fulness of perfections wonder and splendour. It is upon this theme and the many other Scriptures that speak about this unique age of time on earth and the many verses in Scripture that promise that all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD (Num. 14:21) (Psalm 72:19), and that nothing will hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain (Isaiah 11:9), and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Hab. 2:14) that the doctrine of the millennium has been established. Added to this we are told, Abraham went out by faith not knowing where he was going to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. (Heb. 11:8-9). Neither Abraham, Jacob, Isaac nor any of the faithful have received this promise, neither will they until the day of the resurrection and the beginning of this millennial age.

The thousand years may symbolise any of the following:

- A literal thousand years or an indefinite space of time.
- Using the prophetic term, of a day standing for a year, the thousand years would be three hundred and sixty thousand years.
- It refers to a long and perfect divine space of time.
- One thousand is ten times ten and the number ten symbolises completeness and therefore signifies the entire world under the divine rule of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since much of the chapter is written in the language of symbolism the thousand years most likely refers to a long and perfect divine space of time. It will certainly be a much longer space of time than any other age of time spoken of prior to this.

Seven-day theory: some apply the following age old seven-day theory with the first six days of creation taken to symbolise the first 6000 years of the world passing, while the seventh day of creation, is taken to symbolise the 1000 years of Christ's reign on earth, signifying six days of work and one day of rest. The problem with this idea is that if the 6000 years are counted from the beginning of the world and more than this number of

years has passed and nothing even looking like the millennium has appeared. What does seem to be clear is that the great battle of Armageddon, will bring about the beginning of the thousand years of great peace under the reign of Christ, and that at the end of this period Satan will again come out to gather Gog and Magog to destroy Christ and his Kingdom (Rev. 20:8). They will be supernaturally destroyed by God. Then the final judgment (also called the second death) will take place, after which the glory of eternity will begin in all its perfect fulness and majestic eternal splendour and perfections of wonder. This view is still the most accepted amongst commentator and theologian alike, since no one has been able to present a more sensible interpretation that explains what these thousand years mean, other than that they denote a long period of continual calm and peace for the church of God before the day of the Great White Throne Judgment.

The appearance of the millennium: those reigning with Christ during this large space of time will be appointed to places of power and positions of authority according to their ability ruling and governing throughout the world. Jesus told a parable of a nobleman going into a far country and leaving his servants to look after his business. When the nobleman returned, he gave to a servant who had been faithful ten cities to rule over and another servant five cities, because they had been faithful with what they were given and did what they could according to their ability. To these he said, "Well done, good servant!" (Luke 19:11-18). We are not all called to be in the ministry, or gifted with great oratory skills, or to be the head of great churches, but we are all called to be faithful with what we have. Jesus said to these two servants, "because you have been faithful in a very little, I will reward you." Likewise, at the resurrection all who have been faithful will be rewarded. During the millennium all forms of sin and hostility toward Christ and religions contrary to the Gospel of Christ will be bound and those who worship Christ in spirit and truth, will under his reign live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. The LORD will judge the poor with righteousness and subdue the wicked with the rod of his mouth, meaning the authority of his word. (Isaiah 11:4). Concerning the animal kingdom Isaiah tells us that:

- The wolf will dwell with the lamb; the leopard will lie down with the young goat and the calf and the lion will feed together and a little child will lead them. (Isaiah 11:6).
- The cow and the bear shall graze together and their young will lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (Isaiah 11:7).
- The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the adder's den. (Isaiah 11:8).
- No one will hurt or destroy in all of God's holy mountain and the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

The lesson we can learn here, is that it is only a power from heaven that can destroy the world-wide empire of Satan; and that it is only the return of Christ that can bring peace to earth.

REVELATION 20:4

Those who do Not Received the Mark of the Beast Reign with Christ.

- **Revelation 20:4:** Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed (judgment was given to them in KJV). Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

The thrones are not necessarily literal thrones, but more likely mentioned to signify the exalted state of the resurrected redeemed and their authority to judge as an earthly king has the power to judge those under his rule. Sitting on the thrones are all the true and faithful servants of God, which appear in the following two great classes:

1. Martyrs who have been faithful unto death (i.e., the souls of those who have been beheaded) this is to be taken as embracing all those who have been martyred because of the testimony of Jesus, regardless of whether they were beheaded or killed in some other way. Beheading is most likely mentioned because it was one of the most common ways to put someone to death.
2. Secondly, those who have been redeemed and faithful to Christ prior to the latter days period of the man of sin and lawlessness the son of destruction and ten-horned beast, and the hostile antichristian era.

Those seated on the thrones signify the triumph and sovereignty shared by all the resurrected redeemed of every generation.

Those who had authority to judge: (v4) what kind of judgment will the redeemed have? The following verse in Daniel may help us find an answer to this question:

- The Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom. (Dan. 7:22).

The expression, "judgment was given to those possessing the thrones," means that the chief power in governing was given to them.

- Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. 19:28).
- Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? ³Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! (1 Cor. 6:2-3).

The expressions, "judgment was given to them, they will judge the twelve tribes and the saints (i.e., the faithful) will judge in the world, all carry the same idea which is that they will reign with Christ in the New World as his government with supreme authority over all others. This is the sovereign honour of the faithful in the New World to come. Righteousness will reign supreme; wickedness and sin will be restrained, and the administration of justice and judgment will be given to the faithful of the Most High.

- The Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom. (Dan. 7:22)

I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus: (v4) many use the word souls here to deny the literal resurrection of the body, claiming that it is a spiritual resurrection of the souls of believers being raised in this life here and now from the death of sin by faith. The word soul comes from the Greek word (*psuche and chayah*) the word psuche means breath, and by implication spirit, while the word chayah means to live, to revive, to make alive, to give the promise of life, to restore to life and to be whole. The word soul as used in this verse signifies the life of those who have been martyred for Christs sake. It does not mean that those who have been martyred are now in heaven as some vapour or ghost like spirit waiting for their bodies as many believe, but that John in this prophetic vision of the future sees them there, because that is their eternal destination after the great resurrection of all the faithful. Concerning the body and the resurrection of the dead Paul wrote:

- What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (1 Cor. 15:42-43)
- We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

Since John is seeing a vision of future things, he uses the word soul (or spirit), because those who he is seeing have been martyred, which means they are dead. The scriptural terminology is, "sleeping in Christ," since their death is only temporary, for they are awaiting as we all are for the sound of the seventh trumpet. It does not mean that he was seeing some kind of spiritual vapour or ghost like spirit without a body, as this is totally contrary to Paul's teaching on the resurrection. For further information concerning sleeping in Christ click or tap [Death](#) and select the title: Sleeping in the Grave and Sleeping in Christ.

Beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God: (v4) this literally means beheaded with an axe, which was a Roman punishment, though crucifixion, casting to beasts, and burning, were more common forms of execution. In revolutionary France, the guillotine was a revival of the mode of capital punishment of pagan imperial Rome. The testimony of Jesus is that he is:

- The true Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world
- The lawgiver, the way to eternal life and to God and the final judge of the world
- He died and rose again to the right-hand side of his heavenly Father and will return-again in glory

It embraces all that is written concerning him and his word; all teachings concerning the ministry and character; the purpose and work; the grace and salvation; the death and resurrection and the love and glory of Jesus and all the visions John in the book of Revelation saw of him.

Not worshiped the beast or its image: (v4) this does not necessarily refer to worship as Christians worship God at a church service, nor is it a one-time act of worship, but implies an ongoing heart attitude of idolisation deeply seated in the inner most being and of exalting and esteeming the beast in the same way a person exalts and esteems an idol in their heart and mind. The meaning here is that they had not worshipped the the great prostitute woman spoken of in chapter seventeen that had written on her forehead the name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." Nor had they made any acknowledgment of acceptance of the blasphemous scarlet coloured beast with seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 17:3-6) or yielded to the widespread deceptive corruptions of it.

- For further information concerning: the great prostitute woman, click or tap [Topics in Revelation](#), and select the title: "The Great Prostitute Woman and Mystery Babylon.
- For further information concerning the ten-horned beast click or tap [Topics in Revelation](#) and select the title: Ten-Horned Beast and the Man of Sin.

Not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands: (v4) this mark was linked to the ten-horned beast nations that united together to form the final world empire that controlled the global financial banking system of which the mark was linked to. It allowed the inhabitants of the global world to trade buy and sell much like our bank cards today and was identified with the number 666 (Rev. 13:16-18) and placed on or in the body. It not only allowed a person to use the global world financial banking system, but was also linked in some way with the worship of the image of the ten-horned beast.

- For further information concerning this mark click or tap [Topics in Revelation](#) and select the title: Mark of the Beast.

They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years: (Rev. 20:4) meaning they were gathered together to be with Christ and reign with him a thousand years during which time Satan is bound, and righteousness, justice, joy and peace prevail over the earth. All who attain to this first resurrection share a great honour and privilege above the rest

of mankind as they will govern with Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords over the new millennial world. Prior to Christ's millennial reign the redeemed church has only known Jesus by faith as her Groom and Christ has only spiritually known his Bride. The beginning of the glorious millennium reign of Christ on earth may be taken to be the celebration of his literal engagement and courtship to his Bride and taking her to his heart on earth and the end of the millennium reign as bringing about the marriage of Christ to his Bride on earth. Unlike the great prostitute woman that appeared arrayed in worldly robes of purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls (Rev. 17:4), the church of Christ, will appear clothed in fine clean white linen, which is the robes of Christ's righteousness, imputed to her for justification and redemption. The promise of the Gospel is the marriage of the Bride (the faithful church) to her Groom their Saviour and King.

This Gospel promise and marriage is eternally sealed by the Spirit of God. The following verses show that during the new millennial world, there will be a happy period on earth totally different to any other period that has been:

- All the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the Most High; for an everlasting kingdom, and all nation will serve them. (Daniel 7:27).
- Wild animals will be harmless. (Isaiah 11:6) (Isaiah 11:7) (Isaiah 11:8).
- There will be nothing that will hurt or destroy on all God's holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9) (Isaiah 65:25).
- The LORD will create Jerusalem to be a joy and her people to be a gladness. (Isaiah 65:18)
- The inhabitants of the earth will build houses and inhabit them and plant vineyards and eat their fruit. (Isaiah 65:21) and no one will take it from them. (Isaiah 65:22)
- Woman will not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for all their offspring will be the blessed of the LORD. (Isaiah 65:23)

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Jesus told us to pray, "Thy kingdom come." (Matt. 6:10) (Luke 11:2), it is true that this prayer contains the idea that the love, kindness, goodness and compassion of Christ would come to this earth here and now, but the ultimate fulfilment is the literal return of Christ in glory and the establishment of his millennial Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace that he will establish on earth.

They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years: (v4) this resurrection is not limited to the martyrs and those who never receive the mark of the beast or even all the faithful of their time, but embraces all the faithful of all generations. We know this for the Scriptures teach that:

- We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

It is very likely that the focus of John in this vision is focused is upon the martyrs and those with the mark of the beast, because this is the space of time the vision is focused upon.

REVELATION 20:5-6

Second Death has No Power Over those in the First Resurrection.

- **Revelation 20:5-6:** The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

The rest of the dead: (v5) the rest of the dead refers to all those who never attained to the first resurrection, but will be raised at the end of the thousand years when God appears on a great white throne and the sea, death and Hades (the grave) deliver up the dead and they stand before God. The Book of Life is opened and some other books and everyone standing before God is judged according to what is written in these books, according to their works. At this judgment death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, and whosoever's name is not found written in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15), a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total and utter extinction).

Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection: (v6) blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The word holy here literally means holy since those who are resurrected will be changed and put on immortality. In the book of Corinthians, the apostle Paul lays down the order of events:

- Christ will rise.
- Those who belong to Christ will be resurrected when he returns in glory.

At the end of the millennial reign after Jesus has destroyed every rule and authority, he will deliver the Kingdom to God his heavenly Father, for the Scriptures state he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet, until the last enemy death is destroyed. (1 Cor. 15:23-26).

The blessing for those who attain to the first resurrection is that:

- They will inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34) and the second death has no power over them.
- They will be received into Christ Kingdom of eternal peace, security and happiness and will reign with Christ as priests and kings.
- Jesus Christ the faithful witness, made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (Rev. 1:5-6).
- You (the Lamb of God) have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10).

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There is no doubt this blessing would support and encourage those who, in the time of John were suffering brutal and cruel persecution under the hostile antichristian Roman emperors, and of course all who afterward suffer persecution, sorrow, troubles and hardships for Christ sake, especially those who are alive during the reign of the man of sin and lawlessness and the ten horned beast nations.

Over these the second death has no power: (v6) this means that the redeemed of the first resurrection, will not die again, but continue to live in eternal happiness with Christ as priests and kings of God and reign with him a thousand years (symbolising a long duration of time), after the end of this space of time God descends on a great white throne, the sea, death, hades give up the dead and they stand before God. The Book of Life is opened and whosoever's name is not found written in it, will be immediately cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15), a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total and utter extinction) with death and Hades. The remainder are judged according to what is written in some other heavenly books (v11-14), according to their works. Those counted unworthy are cast into the lake of fire this is the second death. Then eternity begins in all its awesome splendour, glory and perfect fulness and perfections of wonder.

For further information concerning the Book of Life and the Second Death click or tap: [Resurrection](#) and select the title: "The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

They will reign with him for a thousand years: (v6) the following verses show that those who have overcome the world-powers and endured in faith will reign with Christ:

- Jesus Christ the faithful witness, made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (Rev. 1:5-6).
- You (the Lamb of God) have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10).

Following are seven of the main points concerning this unique space of time:

1. Christ will descend from heaven to reign upon the earth during the millennial age.
2. From Jerusalem Christ will have the central place of power and authority.
3. The redeemed dead will be raised, in immortal bodies.
4. The raised faithful will rule with Christ in the government of the world.
5. This space of time will continue for a long period of time.
6. By the power of Christ, the world will be mostly subdued during the age of this new world.

At the close of this period all the remaining dead will be raised, the Great White Throne judgment will take place, earthly affairs will be ended and eternity will begin in all its perfection of wonder and splendour, and its perfect fullness of beauty, and bring to earth the visible glory of God and all the heavenly host for all the universe to see. While this new world lasts, Satan's power in it will not be wholly destroyed, though it will be limited and greatly lessened, until the latter end of this space of time when the restraints are removed and he is let loose and again stirs up the nations and deceives them into making war against Christ and his government. However, there will be no war since God will supernaturally destroy these nations that come up against Christ. When this takes place the victory of Christ's Kingdom over man's kingdom and God's Kingdom over Satan's kingdom will be complete.

REVELATION 20:7-9

Satan Deceives Nations, Gog and Magog, to Gather them for Battle.

- **Revelation 20:7-9:** And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them.

The very first verses state, "I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand; and he laid hold on the dragon and bound him, which clearly shows that the writer is using the language of symbolism since no one believes there is a literal angel with a literal key and chain or even a literal dragon. Therefore, the number one thousand should also to be taken symbolically to mean a long age of time and not an exact number of years.

At the four corners of the earth: (v8) as if the earth were one extended square plain. The earth is usually spoken of as being divided into four parts or quarters, the eastern, the western, the northern, and the southern. This implies that the spread of Gog and Magogs deception and apostasy will not be confined to one spot or one portion of the world, but will extend across many parts of the earth. The idea seems to be, that though there would be a general prevalence of the Gospel, and a general acceptance of Christ's rule and blessings throughout the earth, during the millennial period, not all the inhabitants of the earth will be entirely under the influence of Christ and his government, since the sinful nature of the human heart has not been extinguished, but only subdued by the reign of Christ.

Satan will be released (loosed in KJV) from his prison: (v7) meaning that Satan's chains (restraints) would for a time be removed and in some way he would again delude the nations once more, we are not told in what way this would be done. However, when it is considered that though sin will be greatly limited during this time, because weapons of war will be destroyed, and Christ will be ruling with a rod of iron and with justice, which means wars, the drug trade and human trafficking will have no chance of even starting and crimes in general will be quickly dealt with so that wickedness and all that is contrary to God's laws and ways will not thrive, but sin is not fully destroyed. At the beginning of Christ's reign, it is easy to understand that the inhabitants of the earth who survive the final terror and tyranny of the beast empire and the wrath of God, will accept the Lord as their King, since he will create a better world and bring peace.

But Adam and Eve lived in a perfect paradise and yet the serpent was still able to deceive them with the promise of better things. This catastrophic tragedy will again happen since the new generations raised during the millennial period will still have sin dwelling within them and those born later into this new world will have no recollection of the corruptions and tyranny of the old world. Near the end of this space of time, Satan is let loose to stir the nations up to make war against Christ and his Kingdom. It is possible the expression, "Satan is let loose," carries the idea that the population of the earth has grown so large over the thousand years that it has become difficult to restrain man's sinful ego, pride and selfish ambition. Understanding this makes it easy to see how the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan (Rev. 20:2) when released will again be able to raise-up great men of authority and skillful oratory as he did in the old world that will speak deceitful messages that will appeal to pride, ego and selfishness and by lies, deceit and false promises that stir up an exciting sinful hope in the nations that they could overthrow the Kingdom of God on the earth and be gods themselves (i.e., live as they please).

NOTE: it should be mentioned here that this scenario is only a speculation, since we are given very little information concerning this space of time.

Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle: (v7) in Ezekiel chapter thirty-eight God says: the LORD says, "He is against Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal and in the latter days will bring him and his mighty armies from the uttermost parts of the north against Israel the land whose people are gathered from many nations and dwell securely." Ezekiel goes on to prophecy, "On the day Gog and his hordes come against the land of Israel, GOD'S wrath will be roused and a great earthquake will cover the land of Israel and the LORD will enter-into judgment with Gog, and rain upon him and his hordes hailstones of fire and sulfur."

In Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine God says: "He will bring Gog, Meshech and Tubal from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead them against Israel and give them to the birds of prey on the mountains of Israel and all nations will know that He is the LORD." (Ezek. 39:2-8). Ezekiel goes on to prophecy, that Israel will turn weapons of war into farm equipment (Ezek. 39:9-10) and God will set his glory among the nations and they will know that God sent Israel into captivity for their iniquity (Ezek. 39:22-23) and brought them back from their exile into their own land, after which He will pour out His Spirit upon all the house of Israel and not hide His face from them. (Ezek. 39:26-29).

Since this prophecy refers to Israel's seventy-year captivity in Babylon it appears the name Gog and Magog are symbolic names that can be applied to any mighty and vast hostile nation that comes up against God's people to destroy them, especially to the vast army that will come against Christ and his armies at the battle of Armageddon and the hostile invasion against Christ and his kingdom near the end of the millennial age. Other than Ezekiel chapter thirty-eight and thirty-nine and the book of Revelation, the only other place Gog is mentioned is in (1 Chron. 5:4) and the only other place that Magog is mentioned is in (Gen 10:2) (1 Chron. 1:5) and in these they are in a list of genealogy. Other than Ezekiel chapter thirty-eight, thirty-nine and Revelation, there is no mention of Gog leading a vast army

against Israel or against the Kingdom of Christ. In the book of Revelation Gog is a great and powerful ruler who will invade the Holy Land and the people with him called Magog in Ezekiel are spoken of as dwelling in the extreme recesses of the north.

- You (Gog) will come from your place out of the uttermost parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great host, a mighty army. (Ezekiel 38:15).
- I will turn you (Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal) about and drive you forward, and bring you up from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel. (Ezekiel 39:2).
- When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. (Revelation 20:7-8).

This means that the name Gog can be taken to be a symbol of a chief leader of a vast and mighty army that when Christ's millennial reign comes to its end leads an enormously hostile army (symbolized by the name Magog) against Christ and his Kingdom. The name Gog and Magog seem to carry the idea that this is not just a secular ruler going to war with his army for his own worldly purposes (i.e., riches, power land etc.), but is solely influenced by Satan to destroy Christ and his Kingdom. This event will bring an end to all things concerning the history of the world. Since God will supernaturally destroy these nations it will be a short period, especially compared to the long period of prosperity and peace that preceded it and eternity that follows it. This, no-doubt is the reason it is said that, "Satan must be loosed a little season," (Rev. 20:3), assuring us that it will not be long. There will not be a literal bloody war, waged against the Kingdom of Christ fought with weapons of warfare as we know them today. The language is figurative and symbolical, it is not necessary to suppose that there will be a literal invasion of the land of Palestine against the capital of the Redeemer's visible empire. There is no hint of this to justify such an interpretation, especially since Christ will have destroyed all forms of weapons of war during the thousand years.

- He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and 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. (Isaiah 2:4).

All that is necessary to suppose is that there will literally be a gathering of hostile nations that will arise up against the empire of Christ (symbolised by the titles God and Magog) that will be destroyed by God, before they are able to bring harm and hurt upon Christ and those in his global empire.

Jerusalem the mother of the faithful: (v9) the beloved city is Jerusalem and Jerusalem is spoken of in Scripture as being the mother of all the faithful (Gal. 4:26), which also carries the idea that she is the head of all the faithful. As the mother and head of the faithful she also symbolizes the faithful church and therefore can carry the idea of Gog and Magog coming not just against the literal beloved city of Jerusalem, but against all Christ's churches and governments wherever they maybe in the world.

The character of the Millennium: during this time Christ will be the head ruler and all types of sin will be greatly limited. Peace, happiness and prosperity, and the true faith of Christ's Gospel and his commandment, "Love your neighbour as yourselves," (meaning do good to others and not harm and treat people with respect and kindness) will be the dominate character of the world throughout earth during this long period of time. Over such a long period of time and with Christ ruling as a benevolent ruler over a fallen race, and setting up a global Kingdom of righteousness in the earth the numbers that that will humbly submit to him and be redeemed and saved and accepted into his Kingdom cannot be estimated, but what is certain is that the human-race will reach its highest point of goodness, justice, joy and peace on earth. Nevertheless, during this space of time there is a separation between those who are redeemed and resurrected, immortal and holy dwelling with Christ in the Holy City Jerusalem and who

belong to the Kingdom of Christ and those who are mortal and not yet born again, whose inward being has not been changed and whose end is still death, for sin is not completely-destroyed This, is why near the end of this age it will be possible that a great apostasy will take place. When the millennial era of grace ends, Christ's work will be finished for no other sin filled age will succeed it. God's judgment will fall upon the final apostasy and the world will be transformed as it was renewed at the beginning of the millennial Kingdom. God will descend on a Great White Throne and the sea, the grave and death will give up their dead to stand before Him. They are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books (Rev. 20:12), and those counted unworthy are thrown into the lake of fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., utter annihilation and total extinction. This universal judgment will bring forth the beginning of eternity in all its perfection of wonder and splendour, and its perfect fullness of beauty, and bring to earth the visible glory of God and all the heavenly host for all the universe to see.

Fire came down from heaven and consumed them: (v9) the allusion here is the fire that came from heaven and utterly-destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. (Gen. 19:24). Fire also consumed two of the kings' captains and their hundred men proving Elijah was a man of God (2 Kings 1:9-14), and consumed two hundred and fifty sinful men who offered incense (Num. 16:35), it also came down from heaven and consumed Nadab and Abihu who offered unauthorized fire before the LORD. (Lev. 10:1-2). In the book of Hebrews, it is written, "Our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12:29), these verses highlight the fact that fire from heaven is a symbol of God's absolute disdain and wrath falling upon the ungodly. It maybe that literal fire from heaven falls upon Gog, Magog and their hordes, but it is not necessary to understand it as literal fire, any more than it is necessary to understand the angel with a key locking up a dragon in chains is a literal key, chain, dragon and pit. It is more likely that what is meant is that the destruction, however it may come of the final enemy of the Kingdom of Christ will be sudden, certain, and complete, since fire is used as a symbol of utter and complete destruction, for it destroys everything in its path. In the book of Hebrews, it is written:

- If we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. (Heb. 10:26-27).

This verse clearly shows that fire is a symbol of God's judgment, which can come in any form, (i.e., famine, earthquakes, hail or any other natural disaster) or God may even create something new as he did when the earth swallowed up Korah and his company. (Num. 16:30).

Overview of the millennium: Christ's reign is not a period in which his rule is universally and sincerely accepted. There are powers at work (mostly nearer the end) which compete for human affections and power, but the gracious rule, wisdom and strength of Christ and the general acceptance of Christian principles keeps the power of sin and the archenemy and his evil forces in abeyance, until these restraints are removed at the end of Christ's millennial reign. When, at the appointed time these restraints are removed, the long-suppressed evil of the rebellious forces competing for human affections and power gather together to make war against Christ and his government. Satan is loosed, Gog, Magog and their hordes are gathered they go forth and the last stage of the long war between good and evil, between Christ and man, is entered-into.

REVELATION 20:10

Devil Thrown in the Lake of Fire with the Beast and False Prophet.

- **Revelation 20:10:** and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The devil who had deceived them refers to Satan who after being released from his prison deceived the nations spoken of as Gog and Magog whose number was as the sand of the sea spoken of in (v7-8), to come up against Christ and his Kingdom.

NOTICE: the chapter begins with the arch enemy of all that is good and of God, Christ and his people called the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan. From then on, throughout this chapter the names Satan and the devil are interchangeable, this is because they are of the same evil spirit.

Where the beast and the false prophet where: (v10) we find these two being thrown into the lake of fire in (Rev. 19:20), which is the first mention of the lake of fire. The beast refers to the man of sin and lawlessness the son of destruction (2 Thess. 2:3), the head of the ten horned beast nations and the false prophet refers to the head of the corrupt religious world (symbolised by the great prostitute woman full of abominations) (Rev. 17:1-6) prior to the millennium.

The devil was thrown into the lake of fire: (v10), the devil here embraces the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, who was bound prior to the thousand years (Rev. 20:2), and then released from his prison (Rev. 20:7) near the end of the thousand years. These entities of evil were all manifested in the fiercely hostile antichristian leader called Gog and his vast and mighty army called Magog that with fierce aggression passionately desired to wipe the Kingdom of God from the face of the earth. This means that the devil spoken of here as being cast into the lake of fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., utter annihilation and total extinction) most likely embraces the dragon, the serpent, Satan and Gog and Magog and their hordes all being thrown into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire and sulphur: (v10) Revelation chapter twenty tells us that the lake of fire that burns with fire and sulfur is the second death. (Rev. 21:8). Sulphur totally dissolves to nothing anything placed in it, many modern Bible simply say fire, when the word sulphur is added to the word fire it magnifies God's utter disdain for those in focus and their utter annihilation and destruction. Burning with sulphur and brimstone gives off a nauseous stench, that aggravates the nose, it is used here to highlight the extreme disdain God has toward the man of sin and lawlessness, the false prophet, Gog and Magog and all their company. Biblical sacrifice offered up by fire to God are spoken of as being a sweet-smelling fragrance to the LORD, in total contrast to this sweet-smelling fragrance is the nauseous stench of these enemies of Christ rising-up to heaven as a disgusting smell before the LORD.

They will be tormented day and night forever and ever: (10) this and (Rev. 14:10) are the only two Scriptures in the entire Bible that could be taken to imply eternal torment. The severe punishment of the man of sin and lawlessness and the false prophet is expressed as being cast into a lake of fire, this is not a literal lake of fire, but the wrath of God, which will be poured out like fire, in that it consumes all things. The allusion is to the place where Sodom and Gomorrah stood, which after God's wrath fell upon the cities, has become a sulphurous lake, and an emblem of eternal fire (Jude 1:7), which carries the idea of eternal death, meaning utter annihilation and total extinction (i.e., Sodom and Gomorrah were utterly-destroyed). Being tormented here in the Lake of fire is in the context of John seeing an angel descending from heaven holding a key and a great chain and seizing a dragon and binding him up in prison for a thousand years, obviously angels do not need literal keys and chains to lock a dragon up in a bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-3). The entire chapter is full of very symbolic language which means that the verse cannot be used to establish a biblical doctrine, especially when the only two verse that speak of being tormented in such a manner are this verse and the following verse which states that those who worship the beast and its image and receives a mark:

- Will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. (Rev. 14:10).

Obviously, God does not have a literal wine cup full of wrath, again this is very lofty language. The only two verse that imply eternal torment are surrounded with very lofty symbolic and figurative language. The proper principal for good Bible study is to never build biblical doctrines off verses that are surrounded by symbolic and figurative language, especially when they do not harmonize with the character of God. The Bible says: God is love and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:8) (1 John 4:16). These verses shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that God is not a God of torture (especially eternal torture), but that He is a God of love and being a God of love, He is also a God of justice and for this reason He has given mankind the following two choices: -

1. Choose God and receive eternal life and everlasting glory.
2. Deny God and eternal death waits (i.e., total and utter annihilation and extinction).

The establishment of eternal torment: in the 325 A.D. when the Roman papal church had power over the state and certain bishops at the Council of Nicaea determined what the official doctrines of the Christian faith should be they then set about aggressively enforcing them onto society by torturing, imprisoning and burning at the stake those who held a different view to the doctrines they had officially stamped to be the only true doctrines of the Christian faith. One of these doctrines is the traditional teaching of hell that many believe today (i.e., eternal torture in hell for all eternity). This sadistic teaching of hell, that proclaims all who die outside of Christ will in some form of conscious spirit state suffer the utmost cruel and brutal torture, pain and extreme agony in a place full demons and fiery flames every day for all eternity may have been introduced to scare people into the church. It is almost certain that this is one of the reasons it has continued throughout history and very rarely been questioned by ministers and leaders of certain churches. Those who formed this inhuman brutally cruel sadistic and extremely violent teaching of eternal agony in flaming fire not only had a total lack of the meaning of the Greek word Hades (i.e., the grave), but also had a total lack of understanding the nature and character of God. When the bishops of the Roman Papal Church established the doctrine of eternal torment, they were influenced by the teachings of pagan religions that existed amongst them at that time. Whatever the reason and there are no-doubt many other possible scenarios the reality is that the Greek word Hades refers to mortal death in the grave, not eternal torment. For further information click or tap [Death](#) and select the title: "Torment and Tormented."

REVELATION 20:11

John sees a Great White Throne and Earth Fleeing from the One Seated on It.

- **Revelation 20:11:** Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky (heaven in KJV) fled away, and no place was found for them.

When interpreting this verse various commentators have mistakenly used Scriptures that apply to Christs return in glory (Rev. 20:5-6) which is the first resurrection one thousand years prior to this verse. For this reason, it should be kept in mind that it does not refer to the following verse and others like it that relate to Christ's glorious return:

- The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. ¹¹Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness. (2 Peter 3:10-11).

The verse we are looking at here in Revelation chapter twenty brings us to the last great and final judgment, when the whole scene and mystery of God's eternal plan for mankind and earth will be completed and the great

truth that runs through the whole of these visions of John will be fully completed. The throne is described as white, which symbolises the glory of God, His Holiness and the purity of the judgment that is to follow. The start of the description of the final judgment begins at this verse and continues to the end of the chapter.

From his presence earth and sky (heaven in KJV) fled away: (v11) some suppose this signifies:

- The dissolving of all of creation that has been corrupted by sin.
- The earth and the starry heaven will be wholly dissolved and disappear.
- The earth and the starry heaven will not be dissolved, but cease to exist in their present state.

It is possible that there will be a literal catastrophe of the entire universe crumbling, however, since the language of this chapter is mostly poetical in form and very symbolical is far more likely that some type of majestic renovation of the heavens and the earth will take place, especially since this is the final universal judgment that immediately brings forth the beginning of eternity in all its perfection of wonder and splendour, and its perfect fullness of beauty, and brings to earth the visible glory of God and all the heavenly host for all the universe to see. The following chapter begins with the words:

- I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Rev. 21:1-2).

REVELATION 20:12-13

The Dead Before God are Judged According to what They Had Done.

15

- **Revelation 20:12-13:** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

NOTE: some suppose that only the wicked are raised in this final judgement, but if that were the case there would be no need for a judgment since all would be automatically counted to be unworthy and cast into the lake of fire, yet John sees a book that has recorded their life and they are judged worthy or unworthy according to what is written in these books. The dead of every age, rank and degree, the rich and poor, kings and subjects, who perished at sea, and who died on land, and those buried in graves are raised to stand before the judgment-seat of God in one grand assembly, waiting to hear if they had been counted worthy or unworthy, accepted or rejected, received into the Kingdom or cast into the lake of fire. The dead that had not been raised in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5-6) at the beginning of the millennium are now raised to stand before God. This vast company includes all who had died from the time of Adam to the time of this judgment including those who had died during the millennium.

Books were opened: (v12) referring to the books containing the record of human deeds. The representation is, that all that people have done is recorded, and that it will be exhibited on the final judgment. The imagery is derived from the judgment of the accused before human courts of justice.

Books were opened: (v12) the following verses show that God's has many different books:

A book the LORD has written: Moses prayed, "LORD if you will forgive their sin, but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." The LORD said, "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book." (Exod. 32:32-33).

A book of the Living: David prayed, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living; let them not be enrolled among the righteous." (Psalm 69:28).

Books opened in a heavenly court: Daniel in a vision saw, thrones being placed and the Ancient of days taking his seat on a throne of fiery flames, with fire coming out from before Him and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before His throne and the court sitting in judgment, and books being opened. (Dan. 7:9-10).

A book of recorded names: a man with a face like lightning and flaming eyes (Dan. 10:5-6) told Daniel, there will be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation until that time, but at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. (Daniel 12:1).

A book of remembrance: those who feared the LORD spoke with one another and the LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name. (Malachi 3:16).

A book of life: Paul asked his companion to help certain women, who have laboured side by side with him in the Gospel with the rest of his fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. (Philip. 4:3), and the book of Revelation says, the one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and God will never blot his name out of the book of life. (Rev. 3:5).

The Lamb's book of life: everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain will worship the beast that spoke blasphemous words. (Rev. 13:8) and chapter twenty-one states, nothing unclean will ever enter the holy city, new Jerusalem, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 21:27). Though it is possible that there are real books in heaven, it is more likely that they are a symbol of God's eternal memory, especially since David states, even before a word is on his tongue, the LORD knows it. (Psalm 139:4), and Jesus said: "God has the hairs of our head all numbered." (Luke 12:7) (Matt. 10:30). Added to these, God is omniscient (i.e., all-knowing and all-seeing) and omnipresent (i.e., forever-present). Some may still find it somewhat difficult to comprehend God keeping our lives in His eternal mind, but consider the following, today we have:

- People who have invented computers that can remember trillions of different bits of information and at the touch of a key, bring any selected piece into the light in a fraction of a second
- People who have photographic memories, that not only remember every detail of every day of their life from birth, but also remember everything they see and read and can recall it in exact detail anytime they are asked.

When it is considered that it was God who created mankind, it is easy to understand that His far superior mind is easily able to keep us all recorded in his eternal memory.

I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne: (v12) nor is it likely that there will be millions of people standing in mile long queues before God's throne waiting to be judged. This is poetical symbolical language to simplify eternal truths to our limited mortal minds. God is eternal and has eternal foreknowledge, which not only means He knows the beginning and the end, but also means that we are judged and counted worthy or unworthy the day we die. The Scriptures teach that:

- It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment. (Heb. 9:27).

This means that once we are dead there is no more, we can do to make ourselves more-worthy or less unworthy. The apostle Paul wrote, "the Gentiles show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or excuse them on that day when God judges their secrets according to the

Gospel of Christ Jesus. (Rom. 2:15-16). Jesus said, the one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge them on the last day. (John 12:48). These verses show that our conscience acts as a judge against us or for us. When living according Jesus command, love your neighbour as yourself," meaning do good to others and not harm, our conscience counts us worthy, but when acting contrary to this law of love our conscience condemns us. With all this in mind it is most likely when the sea, death and hades give up the dead and they are brought before the holy omniscient and omnipresent God and His Holiness the consciences of all will be awakened and act as a thousand voices accusing or excusing them.

They were judged according to what they had done: (v13) those who never attained to the first resurrection will be judged according to Christ's second commandment (the first being love God with all your heart, mind and strength) (Mark 12:30), which is, "love your neighbour as yourself." (Mark 12:31). This is this rule of life that those standing before God will be judged by and either counted worthy or unworthy accordingly. Those counted worthy will be accepted, and those counted unworthy will be cast into the lake of fire, a symbol of eternal death, also called the second death (i.e., utter and total extinction). The commandment to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves are not only the greatest commandments in the entire Bible but also the greatest commandments under sun, the moon, the stars and all the heavenly hosts. Before God and the Lord Jesus Christ there is no other commandment more important than these two commandments. After loving God with all our heart, mind and strength the thing that delights Him the most is when those who belong to Christ and those in the world are obeying Jesus command to, "love your neighbour as yourself," (Matt. 22:39). To, "Love your neighbour as yourself," means do not deliberately do harm to other humans. No sane person deliberately does things to inflict pain on themselves, loving others as you love yourself is not about feeling some warm and fuzzy emotion towards others, it is about not hurting others as you would not hurt yourself. James the brother of Jesus calls the command, "Love your neighbour as yourself," the royal law and says:

- If you really fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," you are doing well. (James 2:8).

Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote:

- Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10).

Paul shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that the spirit underpinning the law is love, because the spirit of the law is to protect the innocent from all types of harm and hurt, whoever keeps the law will do no wrong to a neighbour (neighbour embraces all mankind not just those in God's Kingdom). Those who belong to Christ aim to keep the law not to get saved, but because it honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith and because it is the right and loving thing to do. There will be a lot of people that have lived according to the law of love standing before the throne of God that have never had the privilege of hearing the Gospel but have had a heart toward the God of creation, and therefore will be judged by the natural law of human life, "love your neighbour as yourself." The conscience and motive of all will be made exactly known to all who stand before the Most-High Judge and everyone will know themselves with the utmost exactness and be judged accordingly (i.e., counted worthy or unworthy). Those whose name is found in the Book of Life; will have their eternal destiny determined by their own deeds (i.e., according to how they have lived under the law of love). The fact that the name of anyone is found in the Book of Life determines the certainty of their acceptance, at some level into God's eternal Kingdom, and that the amount of reward will be in direct proportion to how they have lived according to the law of love. The destiny of those whose names are not found in the Book of Life is the lake of fire (v15), a symbol of eternal death (i.e., utter extinction and total annihilation).

The sea, death and hades gave up the dead who were in it: (v13) this embraces all who have died, whether by shipwreck, natural disasters, sickness, war, fire, taken by wild animals or creatures of the sea etc., who were not raised in the first resurrection. These verses shine a spotlight upon the following two truths:

1. That no matter how a person dies and wherever their body maybe or whatever state it maybe in all will consciously appear before the judgment seat of God.
2. Every human life will appear in its true light, stripped of all deceptive outward adornments which have hidden the true nature and motive of the heart.

No one will be judged by rank, success, riches or achievement, but according to their works, as it is twice stated here (v12-13), and according how they have lived according to the law of love and according to whether they have any life towards God.

REVELATION 20:14-15

Death and Hades, Thrown into the Lake of Fire, the Second Death.

- **Revelation 20:14-15:** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire: (v15) maybe an allusion to the Dead Sea (now called lake Asphaltites), a sulphurous lake, where Sodom and Gomorrah once stood. The Jews call this the Salt Sea, or the bituminous lake; and is considered by them to be useless, rejected, and abominable, or accursed. To show their rejection and detestation of a thing, they used to say, "Let it be cast into the sea of salt" (or the bituminous lake), especially when they saw an object that had the image of the sun, the moon, or a dragon on it. In the book of Corinthians, it is written, "the last enemy of mankind to be destroyed is death," (1 Cor. 15:26), and now we read that Death and Hades (the grave) are thrown into the lake of fire meaning that death will be abolished forever, for after this judgment there will no longer be any death for eternity begins in all its perfect perfections and fulness. Death, with all its associated woes (i.e., sickness, mental ailments, disease, fatigue, depression, despair and all forms of grief death and its ailments bring), will exist no more. Those counted worthy will live forever free of all sin, sorrow, sickness and death, while those counted unworthy exist no longer. When the reign of Death and Hades come to an end, a new order of things will commence where death and Hades would be unknown and only eternal glory and everlasting happiness remain.

The lake of fire and hell: some believe that this judgment applies to those who in the days of their flesh did not turn to Christ in repentance and faith, and where therefore not accepted by God and as a result were cast into hell, (symbolised by the lake of fire) where they are punished throughout all eternity. Those who hold to this theory believe those standing before God's throne are judge to different levels of hell, meaning the most wicked (warmongers, murders, rapists and the violent will suffer greater torturous pain than thieves and those who have committed lessor crimes, while those who have given their lives to helping mankind and doing good will suffer even less torture and pain than the others. According to this theory of hell there is one level of fiery flaming pain for those who have lived a good, kind and compassionate life helping others, and a different level of fiery flaming pain for murders and rapist throughout eternity. The difficulty (better the absolute foolishness) of this doctrine is that pain is pain, it matters not if one arm is being burnt, or two arms, or if a foot is forced into burning coals or a finger, all will suffer extreme pain. Added to this, what happens to those who had a heart toward the God of creation, but never had the privilege of hearing Christ's Gospel of grace or even hearing of Jesus Himself, and had they done so would have gladly

embraced it, do they suffer the same as those whose heart was full of evil? For greater information concerning hell click or tap [Death](#) and select the title Hell or the Grave (Final Destination of Humans).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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