

7 THE "BOOK" OF LIFE AND THE "BOOKS" OF DEEDS Revelation 20:12 **OR WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH THOSE WHO DID NOT BELIEVE IN JESUS?** **SOLID FOOD FOR PASTORS**

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Challenge: Larry King, one of the best known and respected US television journalists, interviewed an Evangelical preacher who is also very well-known and respected. The topic was about salvation in Christ. The preacher explained the plan of salvation very clearly. At the end, Larry, who is a Jew, said something like this: "I think I'm not a bad person, if I do not believe in Jesus Christ like you say, will I end up in hell?" The preacher replied firmly: "**Yes**"; she was blunt but honest, she said: "**because no other name is given among men in whom we must be saved**". This is what we all evangelicals believe. Since that day, I started thinking more seriously about the number of people who will end in an eternal hell, and they are many. All Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and many other religions, atheists, etc. etc. I began to worry about the number of people who will go to hell! Almost all humanity will be going to hell to suffer a horrible torture without end? our point of view is that only the chosen, predestined and called who believed in Jesus, were baptized, attend church, read the Bible and belong to congregations that have sound doctrine have eternal life.

INTRODUCTION

1. Although I thought our beloved sister was honest and correct, I worried that she was so harsh with one of the kindest TV interviewers. I would have said, to save face, "only God knows who goes to heaven and who goes to hell" but she was more honest to our beliefs. However, from then on, my concern became stronger; are we right? is our point of view correct that only the chosen, predestined, called, those who believed in Jesus, were baptize, go to church, read the Bible and belong to an Evangelical congregation that have sound doctrine have eternal life? So, I decided to start to pray for this theme because it seemed to me that those who will go to hell are too many and seems unfair. I know that God is both sovereign and a God of grace, at least for us believers, but I know that He is **also righteous** Psalms 11:7, etc.

2. I know very good and decent people in the world who are not believers, some are relatives of mine, others are wonderful neighbors who we testify and some believed, but most do not, and I can hardly imagine them in the eternal hell. Also, decided to go to the Scriptures as I do whenever I have a tough question: **How come that most of the world, but a small group will burn in hell forever?** Suddenly, I began to see biblical texts which, although they are quite clear, **I never had taken them seriously!** because they were inconsistent with my theological traditions and from this concern..., this **thesis** was born.

3. I always included hell in my teachings, but I never stopped to think about the quantity of people that would go to there, and worst, an eternal hell! The whole world except the **little flock** will be tortured in hell forever? Then I decided to search the Scriptures as I do whenever I have a difficult question. Suddenly I began to meditate in prayer and avalanche of Scriptures came to my mind, Bible verses that though they are very clear, and I knew and remember them, I had never seriously meditated on them because they did not fit with my theological traditions; the result, is this thesis. Remember, this is a thesis, a searching, I would not preach this from the pulpit... this is to help pastors think out of the box, this is solid food, not for children. Members of the church could not do this research in the Scriptures, it takes a pastor who read the Bible from childhood and has the luck of getting interested in texts that never call their attention before. I just want to share my findings with you. This would be a great solution and be a present in the study of apologetics or answers to nonbelievers in God.

A. NO BY WORKS, AND YES BY WORKS.

Judged not by works

Ephesians 2:8-9 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and ^[a]that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ **not as a result of works**, so that no one may boast.

Titus 3:5 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
⁵ He saved us, **not on the basis of deeds** which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

2 Timothy 1:9 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
⁹ who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Romans 4:4-8 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
⁴ Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. ⁵ But to the one who **does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness**. ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom **God credits righteousness apart from works**:

⁷ "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE **LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN**, AND WHOSE SINS **HAVE BEEN COVERED**. ⁸ "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD **WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT**."

Plus many more verses...

1. We all know a lot of people, families, colleagues, neighbors, etc. who are not believers like us, but they are very decent people, good parents, good morals, good neighbors, helping the poor, doing voluntary work in hospitals, paying their taxes, etc. Evidently, they have a conscience and obey it. While traveling, I have met families from other religions, and have found many non-Christian religious people who are honest, wonderful people. Many of them are better than some believers I know, including me, **but they do not believe like us**. When we count them, they are the majority. I have Buddhist relatives who are of very good morals and because

Judged yes by works

Romans 2:6 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
⁶ who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON **ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS**

2 Corinthians 11:15 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
¹⁵ Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be **according to their deeds**.

Revelation 2:23 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
²³ And I will kill her children with ^[a]pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the ^[b]minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you **according to your deeds**.

Revelation 20:12-13 New American Standard Bible (NASB)
¹² And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and ^[a]books were opened; and another ^[b]book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the ^[c]books, according to their deeds. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them **according to their deeds**.

of their beliefs they help the poor to gain an upgrade in their reincarnation. When you count the non-believers, they are the majority of humanity and we believers are a small minority. Jesus Christ said it: "*Because **straight** is the gate and **narrow** the road that leads to life, and **few** are those who find it*" Matthew 7:14. "*Fear not **little** flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*" Luke 12:32.

The saved by God's election and grace are a minority and the "non-saved" a majority, but this is not all; this minority becomes even smaller when we ask each other, which are the saved ones? The **Roman Catholics** say that outside their Church there is no salvation, because the Church ^(Catholic) is the column of truth ^{1Timothy 3:15}, and they are The Church because they are the one, catholic ^(universal) and apostolic Church and can trace their church history without interruption to the primitive apostles. **Fundamentalist Evangelicals** believe that only the Evangelicals with the sound doctrine will be saved ^{1 Timothy 6:3-5}, and that sound doctrine is having the correct theology. **More open Evangelicals** generally believe that all who believe in Christ are saved ^{John 3:16}, no matter what denomination they belong as long as they believe in Christ. There are even some **Pentecostals** who believe that if you do not speak in tongues then you do not have the Holy Spirit and therefore you are not saved ^{Romans 8:9}. Well... the narrow gate becomes increasingly narrower and the little flock becomes increasingly smaller!

There are other Evangelicals who believe in **double predestination**, that is: God preordained a very small group to enter eternity, dwell in the New Jerusalem and be the Bride of the Lamb, and all others will go to hell. **Wow!** Others do not believe in **double predestination**, but in **simple** predestination of the few entering eternity, inhabiting the New Jerusalem and being the Bride of the Lamb. But then, automatically, all others, the rest of humanity are going to hell ... predestined, because the Scriptures also say: "*And all who dwell on the earth... **whose names have not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life** of the Lamb who was slain*" Revelation 13:8, which would imply that automatically even the lost were predestined for that. It is very interesting that all of us have the same Bible but believe so differently!

2. From the same Bible I've been looking for answers to this question: Are there other options of eternal life for those who never heard about Jesus, who are atheists or belong to other religions and did not trust in Christ for their salvation? As I believe that "*all Scripture is **inspired**,*" then all Scriptures are **true** even those we never paid attention to. ¿What do we usually do if some Scriptures seems to contradict others? we choose the ones we agree with and ignore the others we don't agree with. However, the Scriptures cannot contradict each other. They always complement each other because both are true. We believe that "*there is no condemnation to those which are in Christ Jesus*" Romans 8:1 and that "*salvation is not by works*" Ephesians 2:8-9. But Scripture also says that though the **chosen by grace will not be judged by their**

works, the rest of humankind **yes**, will “**be judged according to their works**” Revelation 20:11-13, Matthew 25:41-46, **Romans 2:6, 12-16**, 2 Corinthians 11:15. Even Paul who in Romans 4:2-8 says that salvation is not by works, **but** in Romans 2:6:11 says that some people **will be judged by their works**:

Not by works: Romans 4:2-8 *New International Version* **2** *If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God.* **3** *What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”* **4** *Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.* **5** *However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.* **6** *David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one **to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:*** **7** *“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. **8** Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”* Read also Ephesians 2:8-9.

Salvation for the Chosen ones is **not by works but by grace** but the no chosen by grace, Paul says they **will be judged by their works**:

Yes by works Romans 2:6-11 *New American Standard Bible* **6** *who will render to each person according to his deeds:* **7** *to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;* **8** *but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. **9** *There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, **10** but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **11** *For there is no partiality with God.***

Here, Paul says that the larger group of people, that were not elected by grace, **will be judged according to their works**. Those who **behaved well** with their neighbors will be part of the “*Saved Nations*” Revelation 21:24 (King James version). Also Jesus said that on Judgment Day **the nations** will be separated into **two groups**: to those who behaved well and did good **works**, Jesus calls them “**sheep**” and will have “*eternal life*”, and to those who misbehaved and did bad **works** Jesus calls them “**goats**” and “*will go away into eternal punishment*” Matthew 25:46. Both will be judged “**according to their works**”, that is, for what they did or didn’t **do**. Matthew 25:31-32, 46. (Compare this with Revelation 21:24.) Note also that Paul, the master of grace says in Ephesians 2:8-9. “*By grace you are saved... not by works*”, but it is also very clear that there is another group who God *will pay to each according to his works which he deserves.*” Romans 2:6 This is not a contradiction because **both things are Sacred Scriptures and are said by the same apostle**.

Paul defines these two groups: **one group that behaved well**, doing good works though did not believe in Christ during their lives, will have immortality though **they are not be part of the chosen** to be the bride of Cristo:

Romans 2:6-7, 10-11 New International Version **6** God “will repay **each person according to what they have done.**” **7** To those who by persistence in **doing good** seek glory, honor and immortality, **he will give eternal life...** **10 but glory, honor and peace** for everyone **who does good**: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. **11** For God does not show favoritism.

The **other group, the depraves** who misbehaved, doing bad works, will go into hell.

Romans 2:8-9, 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and **follow evil**, there will be **wrath and anger.** **9** There will be **trouble and distress** for every human being **who does evil**: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Paul, the teacher of grace, is very clear that there is another group of people that is not the Church, who **will be judged according to their works.** God “will repay each person **according to what they have done.**” And continues to say: “To those who by persistence in **doing good** seek glory, honor and immortality, **He will give eternal life... glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good**”. **Paul is not contradicting himself**, because both things are true, and he is referring to **two groups of people: one group** the saved by grace, not by works, and those who will be saved from hell by their good works. ***They are not the same group!*** Otherwise there would be a contradiction.

Note that Paul says here, “*Each person will be repaid according to what they have done*” and whoever persists in “*doing good... He will give eternal life*”. **In this Scripture**, he does not say, “those who believe in Christ elected by grace not by works will have eternal life”, but it says: those who “**doing good seek glory, honor and immortality**” though they are not the elected by grace, “**He will give eternal life**”, because of their good works.

Evidently what Paul, the Master of Grace, says is that apart from the small group of **elected by Grace, predestined** to believe in Christ, be the Church, Bride of Christ, selected **not by works**, there is **another group** who **will be “judged according to their works”** and because they behaved well and helped their neighbors **will have “eternal life”** but **not** the kind of eternal life that the elected will have. This other large group will not be saved by grace but will have eternal life for their **good works**. However, they will **not** be the Bride of Christ or rule with Him. They will **just have eternal life** and will not die the second death in hell. We will see this very detailed later in this thesis, because it is very clearly detailed in the Scriptures.

Paul say to the elected: **Ephesians 2:8-9** New International Version. **8** For it is **by grace** you have been saved, **through faith—and this is not from yourselves**, it is the **gift of God— 9 not by works**, so that no one can boast.

When Paul says: “For it is **by grace** you have been saved” he is differentiating us from the larger group that will have eternal life not by grace but “**according to their behavior**”.

Paul continues in Romans 2:6-11 speaking now to the depraves, those who **will not** have eternal life but will be sent to hell because of their evil works:

Romans 2:6, 8-9 New International Version (NIV) **6** God "will repay each person **according to what they have done**..." **8** But for those who are **self-seeking** and who **reject the truth** and **follow evil**, there will be **wrath and anger**. **9** There will be **trouble and distress** for every human being **who does evil**.

As you see, these two different Scriptures, "**not by works**" and "**according to their works**", are opposite, but **both are true** and complement each other because Paul is talking to **two different groups of people**. Who are these two groups? One, the small group, the "**no by works**" is the Church of the elected to be the Bride of Christ and rule with Him and live in the New Jerusalem. The other group the "**yes by works**" are the rest of humanity, is the group of the not elected by grace to be the Bride of Christ. These two phrases: "**not by works**" and "**by works**" are both Sacred Scripture and therefore **both are true**. The "**not by works**" is the Church and the "**yes by works**" are the non-believers.

This is why I kept searching the Scriptures to find the solution for this apparent paradox and, of course, I found all the material for this thesis. This thesis is food for thinking for those who love to **meditate** and get deeper into the Scriptures and are hungry for knowing more of God's character and purpose. I am reconsidering the good doctrines we have and at the same time trying to answer the relevant question Larry King asked of our Evangelical sister-preacher. A question that we have asked ourselves many times: **Are all the billions who do not believe as we evangelicals do really going to be tortured in hell forever even if they are honest and good behaving people?**

The Scriptures are not contradictory because they are both holy and inspired and both are true. Also, this is why I find the material for this thesis in the Scriptures and force to think those who love to study the Scriptures like I do and are hungry to know more God, his attributes and his way of acting. We must revise the good doctrines that we have and add what is missing. This thesis tries to answer the question that made Larry King to our sister evangelical preacher and answer the question, **what happens to those who for any cause did not hear or did not believe in Jesus? Many times, I asked myself this question: all those who do not believe like us evangelicals, will they burn in hell forever, even if they were honest and of good morals in his life? We will examine many more texts of the Bible, texts that surely, we know, but we have not stopped to ponder.**

B. THE BOOK AND THE BOOKS

1. The first Scriptures that came to my mind were not the ones that I just quoted. It was one I read many times but never saw what I saw this time when it came to my mind. Because I couldn't get over the question that Larry King asked our beloved

Evangelist sister and it was continually in my mind, the following Scripture was the one that sprang up first (meditating on the words I'll underline, brought light to my mind). Please meditate on the words "**book**" in singular and "**books**" in plural, "**Book of Life**" in singular and "**books according to their works**" in plural. Why, **one** book with the names of the **elected who will not be judged according to their works**, and **more than one book**, in plural, at least two books, with the names of those who were not elected by grace and will be judged "**according to their works**"? The fact that there are "books" in plural, that is to say: more than one book: one book will be for the names of those who did good works and the other with the names of those who misbehaved and are doomed to hell.

Revelation 20:12 New American Standard Bible And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and **books** (plural) were opened; and another **book** (singular) was opened, which is **the book of life** (singular); and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the **books** (plural), **according to their deeds.**"

"This text was that forced me to reexamine the other writings on the subject. This happens to me whenever I have a challenge ahead. After this text in Revelation 20:21, other writings on the subject search was easy, because I had a clear challenge, I faced it with the rest of the New Testament. **Why "the book" and "the books"?** "the book" is the book of life where the names of those "chosen by grace" were written before the Foundation of the world. Those who are written in the book of life, will not be judge because we were forgiven and we are already married with the Lamb, because our sins were not imputed ^{2 Corinth 5:19}. And "**books**" in plural are the books that will have the names of those judged **according to their works**, those that Jesus separated into two groups, those who did **good deeds** called the "sheep" and those that **did not** behave well called "goats" ^{Matthew 25:31-46}, which also will be judged according to their works.

If you only just read this Scripture, **Revelation 20:12**, perhaps it will tell you nothing. But meditating word by word with the great question in mind: "**will all the non-believers go to hell, even the good people?**" ask yourself: Why "**the book**"? (singular) and "**the books**"? (plural). The first think that called my attention is that in judgment day there will be three books: the one book is "**The book of life**" where the names of the chosen by grace since before the foundation of the world are written. Those of us who are registered in that book **will not be judged** because "*there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*" and we were **forgiven** by grace. "**The books**" (plural) are the **books** where the names of those **judged by their works** will be written; one book for those who **behaved well** doing good works: the **Book of Good Works** will be the names of all those who behaved well according to their consciences, called the "*sheep*" ^{Matthew 25:32, Romans 2:6-7, 10, 14-16}, and in the other **Book of Bad Works** will be the names of the evil people, the depraved ^{Romans 2:6, 8-9}, called the "*goats*" ^{Matthew 25:32}. This is the meaning of "the Book" and "The Books".

2. Believers in Christ **will not** be judged on the day of judgment, because we don't have any debt, Christ paid them all, God forgave us all sins and we are saved by grace Ephesians 2:8-9, were chosen according to the "purpose and the grace of God" 2Timothy 1:9, all our sins have been forgiven Colossians 2:13 - 15, 2 Corinthians 5:19, there is no condemnation for us because we are in Christ Jesus Romans 8:1, and our names are written in "**the book of life**" from all eternity. This text, of the "book and Books" is the one that forced me to search the Scriptures and find the rest of easily find Scriptures in the New Testament over this theme. This happens to me continually. Many Scriptures we read and are in the files of our brains will not come to mind if we do not have a challenge before us and if we do not take time to meditate on them.

What I noticed in these verses is that on Judgment Day there will be **three books**: **The Book of Life** (*singular, one book*), where the names of all of us, the elected saved by grace, have been recorded before the beginning of the world. **The book of good works** with the names of those who had a good moral according to their consciences, help the neighbor etc. and the **book of bad works** with the names of the depraves. The believers in Christ will not be judged at the Day of Judgment, Romans 8:1 because we do not have any debts, Jesus paid it all. All our transgressions are forgiven Colossians 2:13-15 and our sins are not counted Romans 4:7-8. We are saved by His grace Ephesians 2:8-9. We are chosen according to God's purpose and grace 2 Timothy 2:9, all our sins are forgiven Colossians 2:13-14, 2 Corinthians 5:19, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus Romans 8:1, and our names are written in "**The Book of Life**" from eternity. The other books (*plural*) are **The Books of Works**.

Of course, Paul says that after Judgment Day, there will be **for us, who are saved**, what is called the Judgment Seat of Christ 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10; but this has nothing to do with the **Last Day of Judgment**. This is to give us rewards for the good works we had done during our Christian life when we were: "*created in Christ Jesus for good works that He prepared before for us to be done*" Ephesians 2:10. It has to do, perhaps with the **first day** of eternity, because it is a private court for believers, those of us who are already saved. In this court of Christ, we will be rewarded for the good works that we, **the believers, did**. God, on top of salvation by grace, will give us **rewards** for our good works during our human life; this process is explained in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. You can see in this Scripture that the Judgment Seat of Christ is for believers, **not** for non-believers, because elected believers, even if they did no good works still do not lose their salvation 1Corinthians 3:15. **They only lose the rewards**, which proves again that salvation is not by works but by **election** and **grace**; this is why we can never lose it. If we would run the risk of losing it for

something that we did, then it would not be by grace, but by works. The good works that God expects us believers to do are the opportunities that he puts ahead us Ephesians 2:10, to help others in our lifetime of salvation. It is not our salvation to what is at stake in the Court of Christ, but the distribution of rewards for the good works that God expects from us from opportunities He puts before us in our lives to help those in need Ephesians 2:10, Revelation 14:13 and surely there will be rewards for **martyrs**, for all who **suffered** for following Christ and for those who **preached the Gospel, for missionaries** who left the comforts of their countries to start ne churches. I believe the “**rewards**” will be privileges, responsibilities and positions in the government and administration of God’s Kingdom Luke 19:17, 19.

3. In Revelation 20:12, It is clearly stated that in the Last Day, the Judgment to those who are not written in the Book of Life will be **according to their works**: “*and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books (plural), according to their deeds.*” This is why I named this lesson: **THE “BOOK” OF LIFE AND THE “BOOKS” OF WORKS**: two different kinds of books on the Day of Judgment. I could have just named it “The **Book** and the **Books**” because this is what caught my attention. Why are there **two different** kinds of books? And why are there only one Book for the redeemed by Christ and two books to judge the non-elected by their deeds? This is because in the Book of Life are the names of all those chosen to become family of God before the ages and saved by grace only. Why are the **Books of Deeds more than one**? Because one is the book with the names of those who, though they were not believers, **lived a life of good works and lived according to their consciences** and religions that demanded good works Romans 2:6-7, 10, 14-16. The other book is the book with the names of those with cauterized consciences who **did bad works, the Book of the Depraves** Romans 2:6, 8-9. Later I found **many** Scriptures that said the non-believers will be **judged according to their deeds** and not according to if they believed in Jesus or not. The believers **will not be judged because we have already been judged at the cross, we are forgiven!** “*there is no more condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*” Romans 8:1. But, **yes**, the non-believers **will be judged according to their deeds** because God is **Righteous!** This is what we will try to discern in this thesis. Actually we do not appear at all in the day of judgment, we had already being married to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. The final judgment **is for the non-believers** and is a judgment on works. This is what we are trying to discern in this thesis.

A. THE GREAT QUESTION

1. “**Many are called, but few are chosen**” Matthew 22:14. It is true that those chosen to be the Bride of Christ are very few and sometimes the most unworthy Matthew 20:16, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, because God wants to show through us, his exceptional attribute of **grace** Ephesians 1:6, 12. The evidence that we are predestined is that we were chosen for

salvation and called by God ^{2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, Romans 8:30} and God created the opportunity for us to believe in Jesus and gave us the faith to believe ^{Ephesians 2:8}; actually God Himself who brought us to Jesus! ^{John 6:44}. To us, the fact that all the rest of humanity goes to hell does not seem to be a big problem because we have been fortunate to be elected to believe and belong to the “little flock” ^{Luke 12:32}. The challenge is to answer the question: ¿what about the non-elected? **If according to the Evangelicals, billions of unbelievers of good behavior who had good morals following their religion of birth or their consciences ^{Romans 2:14-16}, and all the many who never heard of Christ and do not believe like we do because they were born under another religion, will they burn in hell for eternity? Is that fair?**

Many un-believers have asked me: If God is just then why will He send to hell so many good people because they do not have the same religion that you have? Actually they are the **vast majority of humanity!** This thesis seeks to answer this question because I think the answer is very clear in the Scriptures. **It is wrong not to feel compassion** for the lost and **to not scrutinize the Scriptures** for an answer to this question and ignore the Scriptures that we will meditate upon in this thesis. Paul also urges us not to get arrogant with our good fortune and not to get jealous if God also has a plan for the decent unbelievers ^{Romans 11:17-24}. Our attitude, even if we do not agree with this view, should be: I wish God had another plan for these billions of people who do not know Christ! But I believe God has a plan for them and this is very clear in the Scriptures. It would seem that doesn't matter to us so much this situation because we **don't take time to examine texts that affirm how they will be judged**, simply we are satisfied with what we think and I am sure that some of my readers will feel uncomfortable because I am praying and thinking about those who did not believe as we do, that are majority. I found out that they will have the opportunity to also enter into eternal life, although not like us, but in another category: as the “saved nations”.

2. Without realizing it we have clung and even dazzled or blinded by the truth that salvation is **not by works**; This is true **for the elect**, for which we will be the bride of Christ and reign with him; but that is not the **whole** truth. **God also has a plan for the non-elected because He is righteous!** ^{Psalms 9:8}; **eternal hell is not the only option for them! This would be terrible and shameful for God!** Scripture does not say anywhere that the not elected, though decent, honest, do charity, are good husbands and fathers, help others and do good deeds, will all end in the eternal hell because salvation *“is not by works”*. **Read this carefully: If salvation not by works applies to everyone, then everyone would be saved, no sinner would be lost, because salvation is not by works.** But it is not so. Salvation by grace is not for everyone but only for those chosen by God from before the foundation of the World ^{Romans 8:29-30}, *“those who were ordained to eternal life”* ^{Acts 13:48}. Good works do not count

to be chosen because then it would not be grace Romans 11:6 the **elect** are not saved by works, but **to do** good works Ephesians 2:10 and these good works **are not** to be saved but are **the fruit of salvation** and produced by the same **grace** Philippians 2:13.

So whenever you read in Scripture "*they will be judged according to their works*" of course, refers to the **non-saved by grace**; works **yes** count for the rest of humanity is just. Most non-believers believe that good people will be rewarded, and bad people will be punished. This shows God's justice. It is an error saying that works do not count for anyone when the Scriptures clearly teach that **yes, they do**. The Holy Scriptures say to the elect: "**for by grace you are saved... it is a gift from God, not by works...**" This means that those elected, were selected because Dios proposed it thus and by pure grace without taking into account our bad deeds or sins 2 Timothy 1:9, to be the bride of Christ and reign with him **over the non-elected** who were judged according to their works and **were approved**, because those not elected according to "the purpose and God's grace" which is the rest of humanity, must win eternity by their good works Revelation 20:12. They will be "the saved nations" of Revelation 21:24 (version King James)

This thesis is to answer the question the non-believers ask us and also the believers who think: "**If according to you, evangelicals, the billions of people of good behavior that live a good moral religion of birth or obey their conscience** Romans 2:14-16 **but have not heard of Jesus and who do not believe as you do, though being good people, do they have to burn in hell for eternity? These are the majority of the human race, is that fair?** Many non-believers ask: If God is just and is love, as you say, why will He send to hell so many good people just because they have not your religion? Those are the vast majority of humanity! Did He create them only to slowly torture them forever in hell? Was that his purpose in creating them? To behave properly was good for nothing? Are then to blame for having been born in Buddhism, or Hinduism, etc. and not having believed in Jesus? We had always answered this question, **yes, who did not believe in Jesus goes to hell irremissibly.**

This thesis seeks to answer this question with the Holy Scriptures, texts that we have ignored, although they are quite clear, and we will see it clearer when the veil that covers our brain when we read the Scriptures, be drawn. It is incorrect to emphasize a series of verses and ignore the other series of verses. The two sides are Sacred Scripture therefore both are true. Had you never feel compassion for the lost to the point of carefully seeking the Scriptures looking for an answer to this question? In addition, Paul urges us not to be arrogant with our luck and don't get jealous that God has a plan for non-believers Roman 11:17-24. Our attitude, even if we do not agree with this thesis, should be: I hope that God has another plan for these billions of good and honest people who have not known Christ and have compassion

on them! I believe that God **yes** has a plan for them, and that is this thesis, because He is also **Just!**. Please, keep on reading for love to the non-believers.

When we try to evangelize agnostics, atheists and people of other religions and say that outside Christ there is no eternal life, that He is the only Way, and that salvation is the way of the few, which is true; they answer: If only a “little flock” will enter into eternal life and the rest of the world will end up burning in hell, why **has God created those billions of people in their mother’s wombs** Psalms 139:13 **just to fill hell for eternity with them, even the good, well behaved people?** Unbelievers do not accept this and say that if it is so, God is **unjust!** And for the believers who preach that God is love, it is very difficult to explain why God created billions of people to send them to an eternal hell and saving just a few for eternal life. Non-believers believe that if God exists, it surely has to be righteous, and we must know that God is so Psalms 9:8. When we witness that God is just and is love, it is very difficult to explain to people why God created so many billions to send them to eternal hell even good people.

3. And what about those who have never heard of Christ? Or if they have heard of Christ, they have the same attitude toward Christ that we have toward Mohammed or Buddha? We can hear about them and read their sacred books, but we do not care what they say and we do not stop to carefully study their religion because **for us, every other religion is wrong and their holy books are** not the Word of God. But the same thing happens to people of other religions with us Christians and our Bible; they honestly believe that **we are wrong and our Bible is not the Word of God**. The Bible is to them like the Buddha book or the Koran is for us. Do they have to go to an **eternal hell** for that? This is what most of us evangelicals believe. I believe that in order to honor **God’s reputation and justice** it is essential and wise **to revise our beliefs with the Scriptures that address this issue**: the destiny of the good people who were not chosen to be the Bride of Christ.

Therefore, the challenge for us is to answer this question: what about the billions of **honest people, who are good citizens, good husbands, pay their bills on time, pay their taxes, are good neighbors, donate to charities, etc. etc., but do not think like us Evangelicals?** Those who honestly worked for the benefit of humankind creating vaccines saving millions from premature death, medicines, machinery to make manufacturing easier, those who gave their life for justice, equality, freedom, etc. etc. This is what we will discuss in this essay. Unpretentiously, I’ll try to answer this question with Scriptures that are clear but that in general we don’t stop to meditate on them. I will put this thesis into your hands and then leave it up to you to consider it. Even more, I would love to receive your comments or input (jcoministries@gmail.com).

Our widespread belief is that only those who accept Christ as their Savior will have eternal life and all the rest of humanity will go to hell forever regardless of their behavior. Is this right? Is it the only truth in the Bible? Doesn't the Bible give an opportunity to non-believers of good morals? If you are an Evangelical, does this question make you uncomfortable? Are you tempted to stop reading this? Then you are the one who needs to read it the most!

3. I love to dig into the Scriptures that **I have never meditated on before because they did not fit in my theology.** I thought, why waste my time meditating on the Scriptures that contradict what my denomination and I believe? As I was an Evangelist and Pastor for more than 60 years and was continually too busy preparing my next sermon, **there was no time left to dig, meditate and discover answers in the inexhaustible treasure of the Scriptures, because I only had time to meditate on the familiar** Scriptures because I thought I had already touched the ceiling. It is one thing to read the Scriptures and another to meditate on God's sacred written Word Psalms 1:2.

Now I have the time to look for answers to my questions I have had all my life, and the questions of others, especially unbelievers. Is it not unjust God punishing with an eternal hell good and decent people just because they don't believe like we do? This ask us non-believers and believers desiring to grow in the knowledge of the true character of God. My methodology is to bring those questions to the Lord in prayer and meditation, and as I read the Scriptures from a childhood, the verses that have to do with my questions jump in my mind. I never stopped to consider the meaning of the many scriptures that say: 'God will judge each one according to his works' who are those "everyone" who "will be judged according to their works"? certainly are not the chosen by grace, because our salvation is not by works, then who are they? I firmly believe that salvation through Jesus is by grace, it is not by works. So, thought I, why waste my time to meditate on the verses which speak of works if that does not apply to my situation? But I never asked myself... and *what about the others?* the vast majority of human beings who for different reasons did not believe in Jesus? Do they have to be tortured for eternity in hell? even the good and decent people?

4. It is a bit selfish to think: as I already *"entered by faith into this grace in which I'm firm"* Romans 5:2, then why to cared about others! if they didn't believe like we do let them go all to hell...! But then, when I meditate that those that were destined to hell according to me, are the vast majority of human beings, many of them been my companions at school, work, neighbors who, despite having testified to

them, for one reason or another did not become Christians. I finally discovered that surely did not become Christians because they were not predestined Acts 13:48, then I started to meditate on those that Paul says that **"God will judge each one according to his work"** Romans 2:6 and thence this thesis.

I also **do believe** that **"there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"** Acts 4:12, but this is not all the truth, grace is for the chosen ones who are elected to be the bride of Christ, but what do the Scriptures say about unbelievers? The non-elected is because their names were not written in the book of life **"since before the foundation of the world"** Revelation 13:8, 17:8 But those of us who believed in Jesus, is because our names **yes** were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. ⁴ *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before ^[a]Him. Ephesians 1:4. Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, ^[a]for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, ²in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised^[b]long ages ago, Titus 1:1-2* Works do not count to be chosen by grace, it is God's prerogative only: *"who has saved us and called us with a Holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Jesus Christ from all eternity" 2 Timothy 1:9.* Election is a Divine prerogative. I can do nothing to be chosen, I can't ask God to choose me to be member of his Divine family.

Then I started to be concerned for those who were not predestined to be God's family, I found very clearly that **yes**, works **do not** count **to receive grace**; grace is something that God decided before the world began for those **predestined to be the Bride of His Son** and dwell in the New Jerusalem City of God. The fact that the Scriptures have the exact size of the foursquare city demonstrate that the numbers of the members to be the bride of Christ were known in advance. This affirms **Romans 8:29-31**. Also, we were chosen to rule with Him. This decision of God does not depend on anything we do or don't do but on being chosen by Him. **But good works do count for no predestined. They will be judged according to their works!** Romans 2:14, Revelation 20:12. Therefore, I decided to meditate on those ignored verses of Scripture that say: **"judged by their works"** and find what they mean.

But what happens to those who never heard or for other reasons are not Christians? **What do the Scriptures say** about the non-believers who were not chosen by grace? As a pastor, teacher of Scripture and preacher I feel guilty that never meditated in the meaning of those verses that say that the non-elected by grace **"will be judged according to their works"** because I always believed that the works did not count for anyone. Now I am aware that of course, **works do not count to be chosen by grace**, because to choose is prerogative of God only *"who has saved us and called us with a Holy calling, not according to our works, but*

according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Jesus Christ from all eternity"
2 Timothy 1:9. There is nothing I can do to be chosen, I cannot ask God to choose me to be part of the bride of Christ and join his family, **but it counts for the non-chosen.**

Then I started to take time to meditate the Scriptures about those who were not predestined to enter the intimacy of the family of God, by pure election to be His Son's wife. I believed for many years that the many Scriptures that said that people were going to be judged according to their works was a contradiction to the Scriptures that said "not by works", that's why I never paid attention to them. As I begun to study this "contradiction", I started to see more clearly that **to receive grace works do not count at all**; Grace is something that God has decided, "*He knew us in advance, predestined us, called us, justified us, glorified us and sat us in the Heavenly places with Christ*" Romans 8:29-31, Ephesians 2:6 all of this before the centuries and does not depend on anything we did or we didn't or we do or we don't, we will do or will not; **but** non-elected will be judged according to their works, because God is just Psalm 98:9 so, for them, yes, works count.

B. THOSE SAVED BY GRACE

1. Before I enter on the theme "**by works**" I want to make sure that you know first that I believe that we, followers of Christ, were chosen by grace, **not by works** Ephesians 1:4-5, Acts 13:48, 18:27, the texts "**not** by works" are for those who are believers by grace. The "**being saved by grace**" is a small group of elected before the beginning of the world and "**being judged by works**" is the larger group that was not elected by grace. I want to make clear the difference between "yes by works" and "not by works". I believe that we believers are chosen by grace, so in the next paragraphs I will explain clearer the meaning of 2 Timothy 1:9 (NASB) ⁹ *who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.*

John 6:44 New American Standard Bible (NASB) **No one** can come to me **unless the Father who sent me draws him**; and I will raise him up at the last day.

It is **not us** who choose God, it is **God who** choose us and introduced us to Jesus.

John 15:16 New American Standard Bible (NASB) You **did not choose Me** but **I chose you**, and **appointed you** that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain.

Acts 13:48 New American Standard Bible (NASB) When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as **had been appointed to eternal life** believed.

Whoever believes in Christ is because he has been appointed by God to salvation. We were death. He had first to give us life, so we could believe; a dead cannot believe nor see the Kingdom of God John 3:3. God Himself gave us the faith to believe Ephesians 2:8.

1 Peter 1:3 New American Standard Bible (NASB) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy **has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

God caused our new birth John 1:13. We were dead, we could do nothing for ourselves, we were totally incapacitated. He gave us life so we could see His Kingdom and gave us the faith to believe Ephesians 2:8-9.

Romans 11:6 New King James Version (NKJV) **6** And **if by grace**, then **it is no longer of works**; otherwise **grace is no longer grace**. But if *it is* of works, **it is no longer grace**; otherwise **work is no longer work**.

What does “**work is no longer work**” means? Paul explains it:

Romans 4:4 New American Standard Bible (NASB) Now to the one who **works**, his wage is not credited **as a favor**, but **as what is due**.

2. This means if we believe that we have to “work” to receive salvation, God has to pay us by giving us his salvation in exchange for **our work**. **Then salvation would not be by grace**. Grace is received without money and without cost Isaiah 55:1 Whoever wants to “**do something**” to get chosen by grace is like trying to **bribe** God to get it, which **disgraces grace** by making it **non-grace**, being instead something that you earned and deserved, and this is an insult to God, the giver of grace Ephesians 2:9. To imply that you have to pay with your works for what He gives you as a gift is a great sin. So much so that in the early Church converted Pharisees who believed in justification by keeping the Law had to “**repent from doing those dead works**” Hebrews 6:1, 9:14, works have not value. Grace is so **immense, eternal and infinite** that offering to pay for it is an insult to God; and this is the only unpardonable sin Galatians 5:4. **Grace makes us part of the divinity** 2 Peter 1:4, John 17:21-13 **uniting us with Christ as His Bride** Revelation 19:7 and then **reigning with Him over the nations, or Universe?** Colossians 1:15-17. In short, to try to pay God for all this and eternal life **is not only unnecessary, it is an insult** to the greatness of Grace. If you want to get grace with your works then you do not understand at all what grace is... How much is the cost of grace? God's grace is priceless. How much does a new birth, eternal life, to become the sons of God by marrying His Son, which makes us to belong to God's family and reign with Christ over all Nations, how much all of these costs? If you believe that you must do something to receive the grace of God, that makes God a debtor, and it would give room for us to boast about it 1Corinthians 1:29-30. Ephesians 2:9.

This was the religion of the Pharisees: 10 'two men went up into the temple to pray: one was a tax-gatherer and the other Pharisee. " 11. the Pharisee, standing, prayed thus with himself: ' God, I thank you that I am not like other men: thieves, unjust, Adulterers, or even like this tax collector; " 12 I fast twice a week, give you tithes of all that I get." 13 but the publican, being away, didn't want to or even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying: "God, be propitious to me, sinner." 14. I say unto you, that **this went down to his house justified before the other**, because whoever exalts will be humbled but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. Luke 18:10-14.

If we are saved by what we do, then we are our own saviors. This is an offence to God. Trying to buy His immense grace with our poor works, is nonsense. This is why the Pharisees who believed in justifying themselves by good works, had to "*repent from dead works*", works without value, to become part of the early Church Hebrews 6:1, 9:14. Grace is priceless, is immense, eternal, infinite; makes us part of Gods family by our union with His Son. In short, trying to pay to God for this, not only is unnecessary, but is an insult. How does he begin the story of the salvation of the elect? "You were dead!" Ephesians 2:1 what can do a dead by itself? The dead has to be born again first to see the Kingdom of God after John 3:3 and only God can make it to one born again John 1:13.

The story of our salvation starts with "**You were dead**" Ephesians 2:1-10. What can a dead person do for himself? A dead person **needs to be resurrected or born again** in order to discover the Kingdom of God John 3:3 and God is the only one who can raise you from the dead and make you born again John 1:13, Ephesians 2:5, 1 Peter 1:3. Of course, this is simple: whoever believes he can pay for grace doesn't know what grace is at all. I do not understand the grace of God in its fullness, but at least I understand that the mere attempt to want to do something to get it is to tell God that if I'm good **He owes me His grace**, and this is wrong because "*to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.*" God does not owe us anything. He gives us eternity and even gives us the faith to believe after he raises us from the dead Ephesians 2:8, and even gives us the **desire** to do His will and the **capacity** to do it! Philippians 2:13, Ezekiel 36:27, all by grace. How much would you have to pay for all this? Isaiah 53:4-6, 55:1.

God takes the initiative:

Romans 8:28-31 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁸ And we know that [a]God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; ³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

The offer to pay from a full bankruptcy is not only unnecessary, **it is an insult** and mockery to Go. Of course, this is simple; who believes that we can pay with works to obtain grace, do not understand anything of what grace is about: we

were dead. I do not think that I fully understand what grace of God means, but I've at least come to the place where I understand that the mere attempt of wanting to do something to get it, is to tell God that if I behave well He has to pay me with grace, *"to those who work, you do not count wages as grace but as debt"* God owes us nothing and He gives us everything including his son and eternity. This is grace! and even gives us the faith to be able to believe and a new birth! Ephesians 2:8 and even gives us the desire to do His will and ability to do it! Philippians 2: 13, Ezekiel 36:26-27. God puts his spirit in us and He *"makes us walk in His ways and fulfill his commandments"* and decided from eternity every good thing for me 2 Timothy 1:9, Ephesians 1:4, Titus 1:2.

Why God does not grant His grace to all humankind instead of only a small group of chosen people who will believe His Son Jesus Acts 13:48? Our problem is that we almost never meditated or announced the countless factors and responsibilities that contains the large package of grace! We have preached and taught only that the choice and salvation is to receive "eternal life" and not go to 'hell', but this is not all! There are many more reasons why God had to choose only a group and not all. He had every right to choose or not choose whom He wants because he is sovereign; but he chose only a limited number for something much more important than just going to heaven, have eternal life and escape from hell; He chose a limited group to be the wife of his son, who would be the King and Lord of the universe Colossians 1: 15-20, Ephesians 1:10, and those elected should be the consorts or rulers with him. This choice is a high calling for posts and functions in the infinite and eternal spiritual realm of God and great responsibilities as rulers of our planet or the Universe! Colossians 1:15-20 that is "reign with Him". If others cannot accept Christ because they were not chosen, is that just? It is! because God is sovereign, and He does it with a purpose Romans 9:14-23. He has a special purpose for the chosen ones for their elevated vocation which is: to be the **Bride of His Son adopt. us as His children** Ephesians 1:5-6, becoming partakers of his divine nature 2 Peter 1:4.

Also our wedding with His Son makes us members of the family of God, whether we understand it or not, we will be an integral part of the divinity, we will be "one" with the Father and the Son John 17: 22-23 and the Cherubim and Seraphim will be our brothers, and the angels will be our servants. We will also be officials of God, members of his Cabinet of his infinite and eternal Kingdom; Consequently, for a special function is very logical and necessary that God himself chose us. As we see, we have been ignoring many elements of the contents of the large package of grace, we have emphasized only the "eternal life" and escape from "hell" in our sermons, invitation, songs or blessings, but have not emphasized the responsibilities the chosen ones by God's grace; it is much, much more than having eternal life! It is a highly specialized people called to such a high rank and

responsibility that God himself has not only the right but also the obligation to exercise His sovereignty for choosing the type of people for his own divine family and his Cabinet, predestining them by grace and calling them "according to his purpose" Romans 8: 28-30 and give them the faith to believe His Son Ephesians 2 : 8, Acts 13:48.

We are not volunteers, but recruited for a high office. All this, and who knows how much more is the package of privileges and responsibilities of those chosen by God's unfathomable grace given only to this group selected to be part of his heavenly family, headed by the Holy Trinity. This is why it was God who had to choose us and not us choosing Him. He said: "*you did not chose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit...*" John 15:16. But get ready all the elect saved by grace! because "*to everyone who has given much, shall much be required*" Luke 12:48, We will be very busy in our new eternal occupation, but what a great privilege! If I had been able to choose the spouses for my children I would have done it; although we are very pleased with their choice. If I would be chosen the president of my country, I would have chosen my cabinet! This is why Jesus prepared for us the luxurious mansions in the New Jerusalem. Predestination is confirmed by the fact we are given the measure of the city; evidently to make such a building, means that He knew the numbers of homes. This is Grace, and who knows how much more! Do you imagine what it mean to be heirs of God and join-heirs with Jesus? I would be tremendously happy If I would inherit a millionaire, but what does involve to be **heirs of God** and **co-heirs with Jesus? How much is their wealth? It starts with the super-luxurious New Jerusalem** Revelation 21:10-27 **as mansions built for kings! Yes,** the offer to pay for the infinite grace from our present full bankruptcy is not only unnecessary, it is an insult and mockery.

It is also clear that this group is a limited number decided before the ages, because the number of mansions that Christ went to prepare John 14:2-3 are also limited. How do I know that the mansions are limited? Because we already have the measurements of the New Jerusalem city in the Scriptures Revelation 21:9:27 where we are going to live. (The City is an immense cube of 1500 miles wide, 1500 miles long and 1500 miles high) though it is large, is still limited. The number of those we are going to reign over, the saved Nations, will be enormously much higher. Most people will not be chosen for the high responsibility of ruling the **rest of the World or Universe** with Christ, and all celestial creatures Colossians 1:15-20, **Ephesians 1:10, 2:6-7, 3:10.**

23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. **24** And **the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.** **25** Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). **26** And **they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.** Revelation 21:23-26 New King James Version (NKJV)

Who are the nations, those over which we will reign?

C. THE GREAT MULTITUDE NOT CHOSEN BY GRACE

Revelation 21:24 21st Century King James Version (KJ21) ²⁴ *And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.*

Revelation 21:24 Amplified Bible (AMP) ²⁴ *The nations [the redeemed people from the earth] will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring into it their glory.*

Revelation 21:24 Modern English Version (MEV) ²⁴ *And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it.*

Many Bibles do not have the word **saved nations**, **but** it is evident that, if they are there, alive, it means that they, though not belonging in the New Jerusalem, will be saved from the eternal hell. This people will have eternal life but will not have celestial bodies. The whole earth becomes like the original Garden of Eden, but without the curse Romans 8:19-25. They will be **humans with eternal life like Adam and Eve had before they failed**. They will have governments, with kings their cabinets and surely some constitution made by Jesus and us Revelation 21:24. They will have many trees of life as in the Garden of Eden, whose fruit will maintain them healthy and young forever, and if they get some infection or any other illness, the leaves of the trees will be their antibiotic and general medicine Revelation 22:1-2. It is also evident that they will grow all kinds of plants, and maybe they will also have the technical advances of today. They will provide us with food, specially wine for communion, Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:23, Also there will be other foods in heaven Luke 22:30. I imagine them with bodies like on earth, but with eternal life. Surely looking as the best days of their life on earth. They will supply the New Jerusalem with the fruit of their labor. Their labor will be not exhausting as told to Adam, because in the New Earth there will be no curse Revelation 22:3, Genesis 3:17-19. And they will have the best or our inventions of tools for working. They will be more advance than the best on earth. They will have more new ideas, so the working will be very light.

These “*nations of those who are saved*” are those who will enter eternal life because their names were written in the **Book of Good Works!** These are the rests of humankind who was not chosen to be the Bride of Christ, but still make it into eternal life and escape hell if they behaved properly in this life by obeying their consciences or the rules of their religion, which are generally good works, because not all religions are like the extremist Muslims. They are part of those over which we are going to rule, the “*save nations*” judged per their good works and who passed. **My thesis is that those who are not chosen to be part of the Divine Family to rule with Christ, who are great multitudes, will have the option to have eternal life but in a different classification, not by grace but according to their deeds.** They will continue to exist eternally as celestial beings as us, but as humans in a Kingdom

of Justice and peace that they longed for so much on this earth during their human life and did not experience Luke 18:7-8. They will be ruled by Christ and His Bride when *“the kingdom of the **world** has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever”* Revelation 11:15. Good behavior has been printed in every conscience. Since Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit we were all born knowing what is good and what is evil. We all know the difference between right and wrong, and all know what it is to behave well and what it is to misbehave Genesis 3:22. All those who following their God-given conscience and behave better on earth **Romans 2:6-7, 10-11** will live eternally in a Kingdom ruled by the Divinity and the chosen ones Revelation 21:24, Matthew 25:31-33, 46. They will experience the answer to the Lord’s Prayer **“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”**. They will say: **“the Kingdom has come and His will is been done”**. **Life will be very easy and happy because Satan, the accuser of the brethren, the arch enemy of humankind, will not exist any longer!**

d. **About the chosen ones:** No one can enter a state of grace except by the **initiative and invitation** of the giver of the gift. Paul says: He saved us **“according to his purpose and grace”** 2 Timothy 1:9. Those who would receive *“the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ”* Romans 5:17 are **“chosen and predestined”** by Him Titus 1:1-2. God took the initiative before we were born Romans 9: 11-13. Grace is so much grace that there is nothing we could do to get it, and we will get it!. We didn’t even know it existed and still to this day do not understand it that well. **IT IS A GIFT born in the heart of God!** Even Paul, the Doctor of Grace, could not understand it Romans 11:33-36. One cannot do anything to be worthy of receiving a gift Romans 4:4, the giver decides **who, when and how great** the gift will be. Grace is a gift that God decided *“motus proprio”* given to a limited group of people that He chose. The Scriptures do not say that works count for nothing, but that they do not count to get elected, forgiven, justified and glorified by grace, otherwise grace would not be grace Romans 11:5. **But works do count for the rest of people who were not predestined to be saved by grace.**

Grace is a **gift**, a surprise from God to *“those He foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified”* chosen by grace. **If it is not by God’s choice, then it is not by grace; only a sovereign God can decree Grace.** God chooses to whom He will give His gift. Furthermore, the gift is giving us His Beloved Son to join us at the Wedding of the Lamb and making us **members of the Divine Family** Ephesians 2:19. It was therefore logical that it was God who had to plan, execute and elect the protagonists because it has to do **with His Son, His Family and the rulers of His Kingdom!** The grace to which we were called is among other things to be the **Bride** of His Son and thus get into the **Divine Family** of Jesus, God, the Holy Spirit and all the angels. Therefore it was God who **had** to decide, choose, predestine, save, call, justify, glorify and seat us in the heavenliest places with Jesus Christ. **WE**

COULD NEVER HAVE DECIDED NOR EXECUTED ALL THESE OURSELVES!

Only God Himself and **no one else** could have decided all this! We do not even have merit in having believed in Him because it is God who gave us the faith to believe Ephesians 2:8, Acts 13:48.

I will forever meditate on the full meaning of the following Scripture, which is so full of grace:

Ephesians 1:3-12, 18-23-2:1 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

*3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with **every spiritual blessing** in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He **chose us** in Him **before the foundation of the world**, that we would be **holy and blameless** before Him. In love 5 He **predestined us to adoption** as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He **freely bestowed on us** in the Beloved. 7 In Him **we have redemption** through His blood, the **forgiveness** of our trespasses, according to the riches of **His grace 8 which He lavished on us**. In all **wisdom and insight 9** He made known to us the **mystery of His will**, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 **with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times**, that is, the **summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth**. In Him 11 also we have **obtained an inheritance**, having been **predestined** according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that **we** who were the first to **hope in Christ** would be to the **praise of His glory**. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you **will know what is the hope of His calling**, what are the riches of the **glory of His inheritance in the saints**, 19 and what is the **surpassing greatness of His power toward us** who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the **strength of His might 20** which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, **and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body**, the fullness of Him who **fills all in all**. 1 And you **were dead** in your trespasses and sins.*

Here are some elements to meditate upon on in these short Scriptures:

What is “**every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places**”? The amount is “**every spiritual blessing**”. We are used to material blessings: house, money, health, etc., things that make us temporarily happy. What will “**spiritual blessings**” or happiness “**in the heavenly places**” be in an infinite, eternal and non-material place? What is “**the mystery of His will... with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times**”? Mystery is a surprise, something totally unknown to us because the tasks that are waiting for us in our future are not like earthly tasks. What is awaiting us up there? Evidently, they will be tasks or responsibilities of administration appropriate to an infinite and eternal new environment, what He planned and expects us to do in our new state as the Bride of the King of Kings and

Lord of Lords, the tasks of a monarch as administrators in the next stage of His Kingdom, a spiritual and eternal one. **Can you imagine it? “We have obtained an inheritance”** and are **“heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ”** Romans 8:17. What could be the inheritance of an eternal, infinite, Almighty Creator and Owner of the Universe? Our estate and situation and performance must be such that **“we would be to the praise of His glory”**; we, you and me, being **“praise to the Glory of Jesus Christ”**? In what way? We, the Bride, will be to the glory of our husband in front of the rest of the Universe Ephesians 3:9-10. What a mystery and we are **in the core** of it! My dear friends, what a challenge for us! We were just taught in our church that salvation only involved going to heaven and not going to hell. How little we were being taught and how little we are teaching today of this wonderful Grace of Jesus. This is why Paul prays that our eyes and heart would be opened so that we **“will know what is the hope of His calling...”**, what God expects from us, and what is **“the glory of His inheritance in the saints”**, that is, what God will inherit from us after the investment He made in us! And **“the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe”**. It is amazing what God had done for us and will do with us. All these I try to imagine in my mind, meditating on them and making them the theme of my prayers and my writings to know and seek more of the **“things from above”** Colossians 3:1-3 and knowing more of the character of God.

d. I felt very uncomfortable when non-believers objected to the fact that God would send even very good people to hell because they were not Evangelicals. If that is true then God is not fair, they would say. Is not God the Creator of all, not only the Evangelicals? Of course, they would say, as Father He has the prerogative to punish the wicked, but to send good people to the **eternal hell** because they are not Protestants? **That is not fair!**

I know many unbelievers who behave better than some Christians, including some pastors. I have even said this person lives as a believer, the only thing missing is believing in Jesus! But then I reacted saying, “If he lacks Jesus, he lacks everything”. As I believed all my life that for us believers good works do not count toward receiving grace, I also thought that this applied to non-believers and had to say that though these people are good people, they must go to hell for not believing in Jesus, or for having the wrong religion, or simply because they do not believe as I believe. When good and decent people ask me this question, “Why do good people go to hell?” I always answered: **“because salvation is not by works”** and **their good deeds are worthless!** I now believe I was wrong. It is true that salvation of the elect who believe in Jesus is not by works, because it is by grace, but **this is only part of the truth!** The Scriptures **say much more than this. The Scriptures do not ignore the honest people who have never heard of Christ!** Or if they heard it from a wrong preacher.

I never stopped before to consider the meaning of the many Scriptures that say: God will “**judge people according to their deeds**” because I strongly believed that **our salvation is not by works, but by grace**. Of course, **our brand of salvation is not by works** but for **the rest of the world**, the non-predestined for salvation, yes, there is eternal life, **but only eternal life** without all the privileges and responsibilities of the **Elected**. We, the elected by grace, will be part of the government with Christ and they will be those who will get governed by Christ and US Revelation 21:24-27. I believe that “*there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*” Romans 8:1, and those **who are not** in Christ Jesus will be judged **by their works** and per their behavior will be condemned to hell, or not. And I believe that “*there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved*” Acts 4:12. So in the past, I’d say: why bother about studying what it means to be judged “**according to their works**” if **works don’t count**? But I was very embarrassed when people objected that God would send moral people to hell because they are not fundamentalist Evangelicals. Are not **all** creatures created by God? Is He not the Father of all? Of course, a Father has the prerogative of rewarding and punishing his children according to their behavior, and as sovereign, He has also the prerogative of electing some to be the Bride of His Son and make them part of His Family. **But what about the good people who do not happen to be Christians?**

B. FACING THE CHALLENGE

1. I have in my mind many other Scriptures that pop up continually as I meditate, Scriptures that I know very well, even by heart, but unconsciously I never stopped to meditate on them. But now I have time to meditate and I believe that it is God who makes me meditate on those verses that I ignored before to answer some questions that I have always had. These verses were always there but now I make time to meditate on them. These verses, which are many and are those that say God will judge people “**according to their deeds**”. As salvation for us is “**not by works**”, which is the strong foundation of our protestant faith and gives us assurance of salvation, I thought, **who cares what happens to the rest of humankind who do not believe in Christ?** We don’t care even if good people go to hell because our theology says that **salvation is not by works**; therefore, their good works **are useless**. To be saved, they must believe **as we do!** We are eternally safe because we have been predestined, God gave us the faith to believe in Christ and we had the good fortune of being born into a Christian family or country, so **why even study the Scriptures about works?** Friends: **God does not hate good works!** Even when we preach the Gospel, we do not preach with

the desperation we should know that the listeners are going to burn eternally in hell if they don't believe what we preach! **And... there are so many of them.**

Of course I know that there are many good theologians who know much more than I do, and there is nothing new under the sun. But though I am a simple Evangelical-Pentecostal-Reformed pastor with more experience than academy, I have never heard in my environment that God would judge the non-Christians by their deeds, although it is so clear in the Scriptures. So for me these are great discoveries. **It is not a conclusion or a new doctrine**, it is a refreshing, a revision, a desire to answer logical questions that others and we have had and to **get deeper** in the Scriptures, but **never dared to consider for fear of being treated as heretics**. Let us get out of the box for a while.

2. I respect the traditions of my denomination. I do not bring controversial issues like these to the pulpit, though the motto of our denomination is "Reformed Church Always Reforming". I respect our traditions but I also believe that we should continue to grow and desire more solid food and get deeper in our beliefs. This lesson is part of my private spiritual search. I only share it with friends who know me and ask me to share my findings. They know that they will hear something different than usual from me. It has always been like this since I was young. I am part of a small group of ministers who meet regularly. They have known me very well for many years, we accept each other as we are and I share all my ideas with them. It does not mean that they agree with all of them but they like to listen to them and be challenged by me and I by them. Usually some of them as well as pastors from around the world ask me for more. As I cannot travel anymore my board, family and friends counseled me to write my discoveries on my website under a warning: "**Solid Food**" for pastors and guide them to read it.

As I now have more time to pray and meditate, I have the luxury of digging, starting with the Scriptures that though I know them well, I had never meditated on them before, and then ask God my questions and make time for silence, meditation, contemplation, visualization and waiting **with no hurry** until I start to see some light. I believe that Scriptures do not contradict each other but complement each other and are all true and important. Therefore I read them with the same interest that I read the others approved by my traditions. The discussion on this theme may be controversial for the milieu in which I was spiritually formed but it is worth the experience. Actually, I am excited with what I am doing! Please read all the Scriptures I quote because they are the best and most important part of my thesis!

3. **Read them with honesty!** When I say with honesty I mean **not twisting them**, accepting them as they are **and not spinning them around**, even if you **disagree with them**, be honest. If necessary, say you understand them but just do not agree with them. When two different Scriptures disagree, like **“Salvation is by grace, not by works”** and **“They will be judged according to their works”** we do not have to take sides, because both are true. We cannot choose some Scriptures and ignore the others. Both are Sacred Scriptures, both are inspired, therefore **both are true**. So we will see how these Scriptures complement each other. What is the meaning of **“they will be judged according to their works?”** Saved by grace, not by works, means that we believers will **not** be judged according to our works because we have being elected by grace, but **yes**, the rest of humankind **will be judged according to their behavior** because **they were not chosen by grace!** For those not saved by grace **good works will count!** We know the meaning of the many verses on salvation by grace without works and have them underlined in our Bibles. But I have never heard about the verses that tell us non-believers will be judged **according to their works**. Now you will hear!

4. In this lesson, I am not talking about the good works of the believers in Christ who are already saved. These are the good works we do by grace Ephesians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, (see Lesson 3, “Good Works Under Grace”). This present lesson deals with the **good works of non-believers**, people not saved by grace like we are. We are talking about the honest people of the world who are not followers of Christ but behave honorably. **Do the good works of the unbelievers have some value?** As we will see, good works have value for both, believers 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 and non-believers.

In order to understand **the difference** between believers being saved by grace Romans 4:3-8 and unbelievers being judged by works, let us **first consider our wonderful salvation by Grace without works**. I want to make sure that you see that I understand like any Reformed believer that we, the elected by God, are saved by grace into major responsibilities in the next life as the Bride of the King Jesus and therefore members of the Family of God, so later we can compare our privileges by grace with the other Scriptures that explain the importance of the **good works for those who are not elected by grace**, **the unbelievers** who are good people Read Romans 2, the whole chapter.

C. OUR PRIVILEGE AS CHOSEN BELIEVERS

1. The next two wonderful Scriptures, plus many others, inform us about the great privileges of those of us who have made peace with God through His Son

and have experienced His grace (For more on Grace, see Lesson 1 “The Eternal Covenant and the Temporary Covenants” and Lesson 2 “The Law of Moses and the Believers”).

Romans 8:28-39 New American Standard Bible

28 God causes **all things to work together for good** to **those who love God**, to those who **are called according to His purpose**. **29** For **those whom He foreknew**, He also **predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; **30** and these whom He predestined, **He also called**; and these whom He called, **He also justified**; and these whom He justified, **He also glorified**. **31** What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who is against us?** **32** He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him **freely give us all things?** **33 Who will bring a charge against God’s elect?** God is the one who **justifies**; **34** who is the one **who condemns?** Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, and who is at the right hand of God, who also **intercedes for us**. **35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ?** Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **36** Just as it is written, “For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; □We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” **37** But in all these things **we overwhelmingly conquer through Him** who loved us. **38** For I am convinced that **neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God**, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Let us see according to Paul what happened to us who have been chosen by God, believed in Him, and have “obtained introduction by faith **into** this Grace”

Romans 5:1-2.

Vs. 28 “All that happens to us **works together for good.**”

Vs. 28 “We **are called according to His purpose.**”

Vs. 29-30 “We are **foreknown, predestined, called, justified** and **glorified.**”

Vs. 31 “**If God is for us**, who shall be against us?”

Vs. 32 “He freely gave us **all things.**”

Vs. 33 “Nobody can bring a charge **against** us... He **justifies** us”

Vs. 34 “Nobody can **condemn us**”

Vs. 34 “Jesus is at the right hand of God **interceding** for us.”

Vs. 35 “Nothing **will separate** us from the **love of Christ.**”

Vs. 37 “We overwhelmingly **conquer through Him.**”

Vs. 38-39 “Nothing can **separate** us from the love of God.”

Wow! Isn’t it great? I believe all these wholeheartedly. Let us consider now the meaning of this other Scripture for the chosen people who believe in Christ. Note the privileges we have:

Ephesians 1:3-11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**, **4** just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. **In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself**, according to the **kind intention of His will**, **6** to the praise of the glory of **His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved**. **7** In Him **we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace 8** which He lavished on us. In **all wisdom and insight 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will**, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him **10** with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times,

that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. **In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after **the counsel of His will**.**

This Scripture says:

- Vs. 3 "We are **blest** with all Spiritual blessings in the heavenly places."
- Vs. 4 "**God chose us in Christ** before the foundation of the world."
- Vs. 5 "**In love He predestined us** to adoption through Christ."
- Vs. 6 "He freely bestowed on us his **Grace**."
- Vs. 7 "We have **redemption, forgiveness** of trespasses by His blood."
- Vs. 8 "He lavished on us all **wisdom and insight**."
- Vs. 9 "He made known to us the **mystery of His will**."
- Vs. 11a "He gave us an **inheritance**."
- Vs. 11b "We have been **predestined** according to his purpose."

Wow! I also believe all these wholeheartedly! Let us continue with our privileges:

2. **Our union with Christ**. Before He created us God choose us to be the **Bride of His Son** Jesus Christ. This union with Christ made us members of God's Family. **Wow!** I believe this also wholeheartedly. I am focusing my future not on my death but in this glorious Wedding with Jesus Christ and what follows.

Revelation 19:7, 9 New American Standard Bible

*7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, **for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.** 9 Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are **invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.**'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."*

For our **union with Christ** we, the little flock, those of us who entered by the "**small gate**" and followed the "**narrow way**" by the Grace of God, became **heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ** by becoming His Bride and becoming **one** with Him John 17:21. Now we belong to the **household of God**. To put it more humanly, God will be our Father-in-Law, the Blessed Virgin Mary our Mother-in-Law and the angels "*sons of God*" Job 1:6, 2:1 will be our brothers! **Wow! What a family we are entering!**

Ephesians 2:19 New American Standard Bible

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are **fellow citizens** with the saints, and are of **God's household**, (to see our relationship with the Divinity, read also John 17:21).*

Romans 8:17 New American Standard Bible

*17 And if **children, heirs** also, **heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ**, if indeed we **suffer with Him** so that we may also be **glorified with Him**.*

For this privilege of election, God has "*forgiven us all our transgressions*".

Colossians 2:13 New American Standard Bible

*When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having **forgiven us all** our transgressions.*

He saved us by grace, not because of anything good or different in us, **even the faith to believe** was granted to us by God as a gift:

Ephesians 2:8 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

8 For by **grace** you have been saved **through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.**

God decided all these blessings for us **before the beginning of time**. Our eternal salvation was part of his eternal **purpose** and obtained by **grace, not by works.**

2 Timothy 1:9-10 Good News Translation (GNT)

9 He **saved us and called us to be his own people, not because of what we have done, but because of his own purpose and grace.** He gave us this grace by means of Christ Jesus **before the beginning of time,** **10** but now it has been revealed to us through the coming of our Savior, Christ Jesus. He has ended the power of death and through the gospel has revealed **immortal life.**

Titus 1:1-2 New International Version (NIV)

1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the faith of **God's elect** and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness, **2** in the hope of **eternal life**, which God, who does not lie, **promised before the beginning of time,**

3. We will live eternally in mansions that He, as a good Bridegroom, went to prepare for us:

John 14:1-3 New King James Version (NKJV)

14 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** In My Father's house are **many mansions**; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; **that where I am, there you may be also.**

Those mansions are **luxurious!** Imagine it as you read the next Scripture:

Revelation 21:9-11, 18-27

9 Then one of the seven angels.... came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, **I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**" **10** And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me **the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,** **11** having the glory of God. **Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.**

18 The material of the wall was **jasper**; and the city was **pure gold**, like clear glass. **19** The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with **every kind of precious stone**. The first foundation stone was **jasper**; the second, **sapphire**; the third, **chalcedony**; the fourth, **emerald**; **20** the fifth, **sardonyx**; the sixth, **sardius**; the seventh, **chrysolite**; the eighth, **beryl**; the ninth, **topaz**; the tenth, **chrysoptase**; the eleventh, **jasper**; the twelfth, **amethyst**. **21** And the twelve gates were twelve **pearls**; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was **pure gold**, like transparent glass.

22 I saw **no temple** in it, for the **Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple**. **23** And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for **the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.** **24** **The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.** **25** In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates

will never be closed; **26** and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; **27** and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but **only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

The size of the New Jerusalem City is about 1500 cubic miles Revelation 21:16-17, which is a very large area: 1500 miles wide, 1500 miles long and 1500 miles high. It seems that this city is made at another planet and brought floating Revelation 21:10 I imagine the New Jerusalem as a huge flying saucer in the air capable of going fast to any planet after the earth is **burnt up and made new again,** 2 Peter 3:10-13. It will be like the Garden of Eden before the disobedience of Eve and Adam with no thorns and thistles Genesis 3:18, nor curses Revelation 22:3, nor wild beasts. It seems that even the animals spoke in that garden and will speak again. Though this city is large, it is still limited to a number according to its purpose: to host the Bride of the Lamb. Those who were predestined, **believed** in Christ, entered the **small gate** and walked by the **narrow way,** the **little flock** Luke 12:32. God gives us the exact dimensions of the city in advance to show us that we are "*predestined according to the pre-knowledge of God*" 1 Peter 1:1-2, otherwise why would He give us the size of the city in detail? He **knows** from before the ages **how many of us are going to live there.** Jesus went before us to prepare those mansions so he knew how many to provide. This large city is a special heavenly development prepared by Jesus Christ for **his Bride only,** the **elected believers** and **the Divinity, the Royal family** Revelation 21:27.

4. But **apart from us, there will be other people who are not the Bride of Christ but who will enter into eternity.** They are **not the chosen ones, the Bride of the Lamb nor will they inhabit the New Jerusalem.** They are called "**the nations of those who are saved**".

Revelation 21:24 New King James Version (NKJV)

And **the nations** of those who are **saved** shall walk in its light, and the **kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.**

These "**nations of those who are saved**" will live for eternity on the new earth 2 Peter 3:6-13, Revelation 21:1-2. Their land will be the **restored Garden of Eden** as it was in the beginning before Adam and Eve disobeyed, covering the whole New Earth 2 Peter 3:10-14, Revelation 22:1-3. They **will not** live in the Holy City which **is reserved for the Church, those saved by grace who are the Bride** of the Lamb Revelation 21:27. These other people, called the "saved nations," will live **around the City in its light** and bring their glory, honor and wealth to the city Revelation 21:24-26 New King James Version.

D. WHO ARE THESE NATIONS THAT WILL LIVE AROUND OUR CITY?

1. Nations who live around the city?

Revelation 21:24 New King James Version

24 And the **nations of those who are saved** shall walk in its light, and the **kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.** **25** Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). **26** And **they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.**

Who are these people who will live outside for eternity around and in the light of the city, but **will not be able to enter** into it because they **do not belong to the Bride of Christ** and **their names are not written in the Book of Life** from the beginning of the world? They are the ones who were **not chosen** to be part of the Bride of Christ and **did not believe** in Christ. **Why will they enter eternity?**

2. If **only the limited number** of those who were predestined and are written in the Lamb's Book of Life since before the foundation of the world will enter into the beautiful New Jerusalem, it is evident that **all these nations around the city are other people who have entered into eternity under a different category, because they are not part of the Bride of Christ.** Therefore they will not enter into the New Jerusalem, the Capital of the New Earth. The Holy City is filled with the mansions that Jesus went to prepare **only for us the believers** John 14:2-3. We, the Bride, will reign from this city with our Bridegroom Jesus Christ. No wonder this city is so luxurious, it is the Mansion of the King!

But as we read of **these other people** called "***the nations who are saved***", outside the City, the nation we are going to rule over with King Jesus, we ask ourselves, **if only the Church has eternal life, who are these nations?** Well, this tells us **that we are not the only ones who enter into eternal life. We are the only ones who are the Bride of Christ and will rule with Him over these "saved" nations.** I would think that the numbers of these nations from all ages will fill the whole earth; but who are they? **If we, the Bride, will reign with Christ, who are these over whom we will reign?** If **all the rest of humankind** except the believers **will be burning in hell** and we are the only ones who enter into eternity, **then who are these other many nations** that will **also** enter eternity but **were not saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?** If only those who are **written in the Book of Life** will live forever, who are these nations over whom we will reign, who will bring to us the **glory, honor and wealth of their nations?** The Scriptures state clearly that Jesus Christ the King and we, His Bride, will reign with Him over these **eternal nations, but then again who are they?**

Revelation 5:10 New American Standard Bible

*You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and **they will reign upon the earth.***

If we are going to reign over the earth there must be other people besides us over which we are going to reign.

Revelation 22:5 New American Standard Bible

*And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and **they will reign forever and ever.***

2 Timothy 2:12 New American Standard Bible

*If we endure, we will also **reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

3. Generally we usually say that only those who believe in Christ **as we do** are entering eternity and **all** the rest will be lost and burn in hell forever and ever. This is what the famous preacher said to the TV interviewer, “**Yes, if you do not believe in Christ you will be going into hell**” and that was the idea I also had because we are both Evangelical preachers. But in eternity it is not just Christ and His Bride who will exist but many others, a large group, so large that they are **called nations**. Imagine, all the non-believers with morals, since Adam and Eve until the end of time.. Those nations **will not** live in the New Jerusalem City which was prepared by the Bridegroom for the Bride John 14:2-3, that is His Church and the Divinity Revelation 21:22-23. The New Jerusalem cannot contain all the nations because though it is a large city it still wouldn't be large enough for all the nations Revelation 21.16-17, (a 1500 miles long, wide and high cube). All those nations will cover the whole earth. We are going to rule over those nations of the world who have entered into eternity. These “*saved nations*” will live **outside** the city and will be illuminated by the splendor of the city Revelation 21:24a. These saved **nations** will bring their honor, praise and glory to us. **Who are they?**

E. THESE NATIONS ARE THOSE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF GOOD WORKS

1. I would like you to notice how many times the phrase “**judged according to their deeds**” is in the Scriptures. Those chosen to be Jesus Christ's Bride are saved “**not by works**”. We will **not be judged by our works** Romans 8:1. We are **forgiven of all our bad works or sins** Colossians 2:13-14 and are saved by **grace** Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Corinthians 5:19, Romans 4:8. **But there are others, the rest of humankind, who will be judged by their works, not by grace.** Grace was a gift just for the Bride-to-be of His Son Jesus Christ. But the rest will be judged not according to **grace** but **according to justice**, that is by their works.

Revelation 20:11-15 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

11 Then I saw a **great white throne** and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw **the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne**, and **books** were opened; and **another book** was opened, which is **the book of life**; and **the dead were judged from the things which were written in**

the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and **they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And **if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.****

I want to call your attention to **vs. 12**: There are two kinds of books, **one Book of Life** (singular) and **Books** (plural), which may be **two** or more books of deeds or works. Those who are written in the Book of Life are the chosen before the foundation of the world who **will not be judged**; but those who are written in the Books of Works **will** be judged **by their deeds.**

If **only** those who are written in the Book of Life enter eternity, and “salvation” is **not** by works but by grace for **all**, **why have other books on the judgment pulpit to judge people according to their deeds, if deeds don't count on Judgment Day?** If works don't count towards being saved from the punishment of hell, **why are there books with the names and records of their works?** Surely there is a purpose for having **one** Book of Life for the “little flock” and **two** Books of Deeds for the rest of humankind on the great Day of Judgment. It is very **suggestive** that the “**Book of Life** of the Lamb” is **one** and the other “**Books of Deeds**” is in plural, that is, more than one **Book of Deeds**. I believe there are at least **two** books of works. If the only ones who will have eternal life are those written in the Book of Life and **all** others are lost forever Revelation 20:15, why have “**Books**” also for the lost if they are **all** lost, and why **two** books for the nonelected instead of only **one if they are all lost?** We all know that **salvation is not by works but by faith alone**, then why is there a judgment at all **according to deeds** if deeds don't count? Revelation 20:13. If the lost are lost for the only reason of not believing in Christ, shouldn't the rest of humans be judged by **if they had believed in Jesus Christ or not? Isn't not believing in Christ enough to condemn them?** Why a judgment **according to their deeds?** And why do the Scriptures **repeat time after time**, as we will see, that all the dead **will be judged “according to their deeds”** and not according to Grace like us?

My idea is that those registered in the **Book of Life** are all those **chosen by God** to be the Bride of His Son, **the Church**, made up of only those elected and predestined to believe in Christ Acts 13:48 and therefore they belong to Jesus' Bride. Those of us who are the Bride of Christ, saved by grace, will **not** be **judged according to our works** because our salvation is **not by works**, but by election. *Our sins are not taken into account* and our salvation was based in “**God's purpose and Grace in Christ Jesus since eternity**” 2 Timothy 1:9. **Not so the rest of humankind.**

Rewards for the good works of the believers is not part of the final Judgment Day, but the initial ceremony for us, the chosen ones, after the marriage of the Lamb. Yes, there are going to be rewards for those believers who did the works that “*God prepared beforehand for them to be done*” Ephesians 2:10 but those are works that we have done within grace after our new birth and the rewards has **nothing to do with our already obtained salvation. Those rewards are for us, the good works of the people already elected, who added and built good works upon our salvation, which is by Christ alone. God prepared those works for us beforehand Ephesians 2:10 and He puts those works in our way to be done. Those of us who upon our salvations by Christ built “**Gold, Silver and Precious Stones**”, that is good works, will have rewards (see 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 and Lesson 3 “Good Works By Grace”).**

Those believers who did not do the works God prepare for us beforehand are those who built with “**wood, hay and straw**”. They will **not** have rewards but will **not lose** their salvation 1 Corinthians 3:15, because our salvation is by grace not by works. But the rest of humankind, those whose names **are not** written in the Book of Life, which are the majority of humanity, will be written in one or the other of the two **Books of Deeds**, in the Book of Good works or in the Book of Bad works. As you can see **good works always count for both believers and non-believers**. The difference is that those who are predestined for salvation are saved whether they do good works or not, because salvation is **not** by works. But the non-believers will enter the eternal life as nations **only if they did good works**.

2. I believe that one of these books will be the book with the name of those who did **bad works** the non-believers who were **depraved**, whose works were all bad as in the following description:

1 Timothy 1:9-10 New American Standard Bible

9 realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers 10 and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching.

In the other of the Books of Works, the Book of **Good Works**, will be the names of those who for various reasons did not believe in Christ but lived **moral lives** and did **good works** like Jesus said Matthew 25:31-46, those who obeyed the requirements of their **moral religion** of good morals and/or obeyed their **consciences** Romans 2:14-16. This is why God even gave unbelievers a conscience. These people **do not belong** to the group that God elected to be the Bride of His Son, saved by grace. These **people of good works** did **not** invoke the Name of Jesus, but St. Paul explains that God will judge each one of them according to the reality in their hearts and their obedience to their consciences.

Romans 2:12-16 New American Standard Bible

12 For all who have **sinned without** the Law will also **perish** without the Law, and all who have **sinned under the Law** will be **judged** by the Law; **13** for it is **not the hearers** of the Law who are just before God, but the **doers of the Law** will be justified. **14** For when Gentiles **who do not have** the Law **do instinctively the things of the Law**, these, not having the Law, **are a law to themselves**, **15** in that they **show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them**, **16** on the day when, according to my gospel, God will **judge the secrets of men** through Christ Jesus.

Romans 2:12-16 The Message

12-13 If you sin without knowing what you're doing, God takes that into account. But if you sin knowing full well what you're doing, that's a different story entirely. Merely hearing God's law is a waste of your time if you don't do what he commands. Doing, not hearing, is what makes the difference with God. **14-16** When **outsiders who have never heard of God's law follow it more or less by instinct**, they confirm its truth **by their obedience**. They show that God's law is not something alien, imposed on us from without, but **woven into the very fabric of our creation**. There is **something deep within them that echoes God's yes and no, right and wrong**. Their **response to God's yes and no will become public knowledge on the day God makes his final decision about every man and woman**. The Message from God that I proclaim through Jesus Christ **takes into account all these differences**.

3. Let us see what the basis is for the judgment of the nations who didn't know Christ during their lives: According to Christ, they will be judged **according to their works**.

Matthew 25:31-46, Revelation

The judgment of nations is a judgment of works. Matthew 25:31-46, Revelation 20:12-12 y 21:24.

31 But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. **32** All the nations will be gathered before Him (compare this with Revelation 20:11-13); and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; **33** and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. **34** Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **35** For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' **37** Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to You?' **40** The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**'

41 Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; 42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' **44** Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' **45** Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**' **46** **These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.**"

*Note the verses: "**All the nations will be gathered before Him** (compare this with Revelation 20:11-13); and **He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats** (this is why I think that the books of works are two); **the book of goats and the book of sheep He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.**"*

F. THE SAVED NATIONS

1. In the Scriptures we just read our Lord gives us a wonderful lesson. Jesus explains clearly what the judgment of the nations will be when the Books of works are opened. Jesus divides these nations into two groups of people, **sheep** and **goats**, those who **do good deeds** and those **who don't**. This will decide in **which book their names will be written**. This is the judgment of nations Matthew 25: 31-32, that is, people who for one reason or another **were not followers of Christ** because they **were not elected** as such. These are the nations mentioned in Revelation 20:11-13, where these people will be judged according to their behavior Revelation 20:12-13 KJ, Matthew 25:41-46. This shows the **righteousness of God** in giving credit to the works of people who did not believe in Christ but practiced good morals, or obeyed their consciences, people who helped others; and **punishing** those who had bad morals didn't obeyed their consciences and didn't help their neighbors. Actually, this is the belief of most humans and most religions of works: the wicked called "goats" will die the second death, that is, they will lose eternal life and will be casted into the lake of fire. Those who behaved well by living a moral life and helping others called "sheep" will be **reinstated** to a kind of life like Adam and Eve **before they disobeyed**, having access to the Tree of Life and its healing leaves and, therefore, will never die Revelation 22:1-2

2. Believer will live in the New Jerusalem city. The saved nations, will live in our renewed earth 2 Peter 3:10-13 The land will return to its original state, as it would have been if Adam and Eve had obeyed God's command Revelation 22:1-3. The other group, the goats, the ones inscribed in the Book of **Evil Works**, will experience the **second death, that is, hell**. The New Jerusalem will rule over the **sheep nations** because *"the kings of these nations will live around and bring their glory and honor into the city."* The sheep will not dwell in the New Jerusalem but have **eternal life**.

Revelation 21: 24-26 Reina-Valera 1995

24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. **25** Its gates will never be shut by day: for there shall be no night. **26** And **they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations** into it.

3. These nations **did not belong to the chosen** ones, did not believe in Christ during their lives on earth, but some of them **obeyed their consciences by being honest and having a good morality. But others didn't**. What decides if they will enter into eternity or be condemned into hell will be **according to their deeds**. In this wonderful Scripture Jesus explains clearly how the judgment of these nations will be when the **Books of Works** are opened. Jesus divides these nations of people

in two groups, the “**goats**” and the “**sheep**”. Their good works or the lack of them will be used to **judge them**. **Their behavior decides in which of the two books their names are written** Matthew 25:46. The **goats** and the **sheep** will be judged **by their deeds**. This is the Judgment of the Nations; people that for one reason or another were not followers of Christ.

These nations are mentioned in **Matthew 25:31-36** and **Revelation 21:24-26** in which the wicked are called “**the goats**” and the righteous “**the sheep**”. These people will be **judged for their behavior rather than for being or not being followers of Christ**. In this way the judgment will be **just**. Nobody can complain saying that there is no justice in God. Actually this is what most people on earth already believe: the **perverse** people whom experienced physical death should experience also the second death, which is to be thrown **into the lake of fire**. The **good people** will not experience the second death but will experience the human life that Adam and Eve were supposed to have had if they would have obeyed. These people, the sheep, will have access to the Trees of Life and its leaves for healing and will live eternally Revelation 22:1-2, even though they were not elected to be part of the Bride of Christ and rule with him, they will be the subjects of Christ and His bride. I believe that it will be in this moment when they realize the authority of Christ, all of them, the saved nations, will “**kneel and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**.” Philippians 2:10-11

Evidently the **goats** are those who are written in the Book of **Bad Works**, and the **sheep** are those who are written in the Book of **Good Works**. The New Jerusalem will be the world capital and rule over these **nations of “sheep”**, because “**their kings will bring their glory into the city**”. Those written in the Book of Bad Works will experience the “**second death**” (the first death is the physical death, the second is the spiritual death) that is, their spirits will go into hell Matthew 25:46.

Revelation 21:24-26 NASB

24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; **26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.**

Revelation 21:24-25 New King James Version (NKJV)

24 And the nations **of those who are saved shall walk in its light**, and **the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25** Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

4. The King James Version and some others, calls them “**The nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light**”. Notice, that according to the King James Version these nations **are saved** but **are not the Church that inhabits the New Jerusalem, the Bride of the Lamb**. Though some others versions do not use the word “**saved**” nations, it is evident that **they are saved from hell** and have eternal life, but a

different category of eternal life. King James uses the word “saved” because these people have eluded the punishment of hell, and have entered eternity under the government of the New Jerusalem and will have access to the New Garden of Eden. They are saved from the **second death** and will live eternally. Their good works saved them from hell but **they are not the Church** of the chosen ones, the **rulers**, but the **ruled**, the citizenries. According to the common beliefs of us Evangelicals, the non-church people will go into hell for eternity, but **these nations are not the Church and are not the Bride of the Lamb and they will not be in hell. They will be alive walking in the light of the city, and “will bring the glory, the honor and wealth of the nations to our city, the New Jerusalem”**, in other words, they will visit the luxurious New Jerusalem.

I believe that God will move the ancient Jerusalem city and the whole of Canaan and place it in the new earth as a gift to the nation of Israel that will be among the saved nations, God gave that land to Abraham and his descendants “forever” Genesis 13:14-18, 15:18, for “everlasting possession” Genesis 17:8, 2 Chronicles 20:7, etc. may be under king David Ezekiel 37:24-25. These nations enter eternity with us **not as rulers like us, but as the ruled.**

The Bride of Christ is part of the governing Family; we will live **in** the New Jerusalem City and **be their rulers**. The difference is that the saved nations will live **outside** the City and be the **ruled**.

5. The **earth**, after the purification by fire 2 Peter 10:13 **will return to its original state**, as it would have been if Adam and Eve had been obedient to God’s commandment. The only difference is that a small group of people, the Church, chosen to believe in Christ and become His Bride, will rule over them.

The marriage of the Lamb with the Church is a **great mystery** Ephesians 5:32 but it’s what the Bible says. I believe that the marriage of the Lamb with the Church is a mystery because we cannot imagine what a spiritual marriage is. We are used to marriage being between a man and a woman with the purpose of having children and forming a family. We do not know about the intimate relationship between **spiritual beings**, but we know that we became **the Family of God**. We know it is not a carnal relationship Mathew 22:30, but a spiritual one. It is similar to a human relationship in the sense that we will be one with Jesus Mark 10:8. This was His desire and He said it to the Father:

20 "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for **those also who believe in Me through their word**; 21 that **they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us**, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 **The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one**; 23 **I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity**, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. 24 Father, **I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am**, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for **You loved Me before the foundation of the world**.

If you read carefully the **whole** prayer of Jesus in John 17 you will find that Jesus seems to be asking the Father to allow Him to marry us becoming one with us, so that Jesus, the Father and we become **ONE family**. His 12 disciples and **all who were going to believe in Him through them** are the people that Jesus loved so much that **He gave His life for them**. What a love, what a passion! He wants us to **live with Him forever** and see His glory. **This is why He built the luxurious New Jerusalem for us!** (as I am writing these things, I am overwhelmed by the love of Jesus for us and had to stop writing). I feel that this mystery of our union with Jesus is revealed in His prayer to the Father
John 17. All He is asking is to accept us into the Divine Family, welcome us in the New Jerusalem and accept us as one with the **Divine Family** (SELAH).

6. From The New Jerusalem City will flow a river of living waters Revelation 22:1 and around the river there will be **trees of life** whose **leaves** will provide medicine for the diseases of the peoples of the nations Revelation 22:2, and these **saved nations will have access** to the Tree of Life which will keep them young Revelation 22:2. This is the **restoration of the Garden of Eden**, but without any curse Revelation 22:3, no more thorns and thistles Genesis 3:17-19, no more aggressive animals nor Satan Revelation 20:10..I believe that animals will be delivered from the curse and start to talk Romans 8:19-23. Remember: the people of the nations that are saved **are not** the Church nor the Bride of the Lamb, **they have entered into eternity because of their good works and will not die the second death, Hell**. They have eternal life because they good morals. It seems that the whole Earth will be like the Garden of Eden in the New purified Earth and at last there will be justice on this Earth 2 Peter 3:11-13.

The "*nations of those who are saved*" and who will "*walk in the light of the city*" **are not** part of the Holy City. They are the people who are written in the "**Book of Good Deeds**", a **different category of "saved" people**. They are the nations of "**sheep**" people that though they didn't know Jesus, they have loved their neighbors, fed the hungry, satisfied the thirsty, invited the strangers into their homes, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and those in prison, which is **mostly what all religious teach**. These are the ones **we will reign over** and they will bring the "*glory, the honor and the wealth of the nations*". With citizens like these

and no Satan to lead them astray we will not need police or jails in these nations. For the first time in History, Justice will rule the New Earth.

7. In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus does not say, “because you believed in me you will have eternal life”, because the nations do not belong to the group saved by grace. He said eternal life was granted because of their **good works toward their neighbors: “If you did it to them you did it to me.”**

Romans 13:8

For He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

Interesting, isn't it? If you compare that verse with this one:

Romans 2:13-16 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

13 For it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, **but the doers of the Law will be justified.** **14** For when Gentiles who do not have the Law **do instinctively the things of the Law,** these, **not having the Law, are a law to themselves,** **15** in that **they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness** and their thoughts **alternately accusing or else defending them,** **16** on **the day when,** according to my gospel, **God will judge the secrets of men** through **Christ Jesus.**

Now, check this considering Matthew 25:31-46, where Jesus says that He will judge the nations according to how they behaved with their neighbors! Those who were not able to believe in Christ for whatever reasons will be judged per their deeds, and that is fair. But they will not be part of those elected to become part of the ruling Family of God. They will not have celestial bodies because **they will need to eat of the Tree of Life and get medicines from its leaves.** They will not have celestial bodies like ours, like Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the angels. I think their bodies will be human like Adam and Eve were before their disobedience, bodies that will not age. So, all those who do not belong to the Bride of Christ **will be judged according to their deeds** and if their deeds were good they will live eternally as Adam and Eve would have, had they not disobeyed. Surely these nations at the end of judgment will bow down and proclaim that **Jesus Christ is Lord** Philippians 2:10. This will be the largest mass conversion, the conversion of Nations!

At Judgment Day the non-believers who behaved very **badly will experience the second death — hell.** Those who had a life of **good** behavior will enter into eternity in a **different category** than us and perhaps in different bodies than our celestial bodies 1 Corinthians 15:40, 44-49. **They will not be part of the Bride of Christ nor have entrance into the New Jerusalem City** but will enter into eternity under another classification. They will have eternal life with **peace and justice without Satan**, just as in the beginning in the Garden of Eden before Satan appeared, because the trouble started when Satan showed up.

8. Those who **are not** part of the Bride of Christ will not be able to live in the New Jerusalem but will enter eternity as **“the saved nations”** Revelation 21:24. They are the “honest” people who will live around the New Jerusalem because of their good behavior during their lives.

The bodies of the **elected** will be like these:

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 Living Bible (TLB)

42 In the same way, our earthly bodies which die and decay are different from the bodies we shall have when we come back to life again, for **they will never die.** **43** The bodies we have now embarrass us, for they become sick and die; but they will be **full of glory** when we come back to life again. Yes, they are weak, dying bodies now, but when we live again they will be **full of strength.** **44** They are just human bodies at death, but when they come back to life they will be **superhuman bodies.** For just as there are natural, human bodies, there are also supernatural, **spiritual** bodies.

Because through our marriage with God’s Son we became part of God’s spiritual family, the Family of God, we will therefore need to have spiritual bodies John 4:24, but the bodies of the nations “*saved by works*” may be like the **bodies of Adam and Eve before Satan came into the garden.** They will need to have access to the restored **“Tree of Life”** that would have made **Adam and Eve immortal** and to the **leaves of the trees for healing.** The Tree of Life was a single tree, because at the beginning there were few people. But on the New Earth, as there are going to be billions of people, the long river will have trees of life on each side. Perhaps they will also eat natural foods as Adam and Eve in Eden and be vegetarians. As the Earth, will be new and there will be no curse the production of food will be plentiful, the animals will not be wild Isaiah 11:6-9, and there will be no more thorns and thistles. The bodies of the elected will be celestial bodies and the bodies of the Nations will be a kind of physical ones as the bodies of Adam and Eve before their disobedience, with access to the Tree of Life and its leaves for healing.

2 Peter 3:13 New American Standard Bible

But **according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.**

Revelation 22:2

*In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was **the tree of life**, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

9. The Church will live in the New Jerusalem and have celestial bodies. We will never get sick nor grow old. The River of the Water of Life starts inside of the city and seems to flow into the Nations. These nations will live around the New Jerusalem City where the Divinity will have its center. These nations will expand throughout the whole Earth. Some believe that all this will happen for only a thousand years, called “the millennium” Revelation 20:2-7, but Jesus said that these nations will be judged by their works Revelation 20:12 and will enter into **eternal** life Matthew 25:46.

Maybe the Israelites who don't believe in Christ, Israel, might also be part of these nations saved by their **Romans 11:26**. God said to Abraham:

Genesis 17:8 New American Standard Bible

*I will give to you and to your descendants after you, **the land** of your sojourning, all the **land of Canaan**, for an **everlasting possession**; and I will be their God.*

For them, their nation will be the restored Kingdom of David in what is now Israel but expanded to its original size **Joshua 1:4, Jeremiah 23:5-8, Ezekiel 34:23-31**, and as it was in their best times when David and Solomon reigned from the city of Jerusalem. It is interesting and may be *significant* that all the promises made to Abraham and Israel in the Old Testament are entirely **for this earth**. There is never an offer of eternal spiritual life, although this statement implies eternal life **Genesis 17:8**, perhaps like the "saved nations" on earth. In the New Testament, for those who believe in Christ, **all** the promises are **spiritual and eternal** like **Ephesians 1:3-14**. We don't know if when Paul says that "*all Israel will be saved*" **Romans 11:26, 29**, the salvation of the Jews could be by grace like ours or could also be according to their deeds as they were under a law **Romans 2:12**. The kind of salvation that these *nations* will have **on earth** **Revelation 21:24** **will be beautiful** like in the Garden of Eden and with **David, the most respected and loved Kin, as their king again** **Jeremiah 23:5,8**. I say this because the promise to Abraham was that Canaan would be given to his descendants **forever** **Genesis 17:8** and that David would be their king again and they would "**live in their own land**" **Jeremiah 23:5, 8**.

Romans 11:25-26 New American Standard Bible

*25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel **until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in**; 26 and so **all Israel will be saved**; just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion.*

Jeremiah 23:5,8 New American Standard Bible

*5 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord, "When **I will raise up for David a righteous Branch**; □And He will reign as king and act wisely □and do justice and righteousness in the land. 8 but, 'As the Lord lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.' **Then they will live on their own soil.**"*

This group of nations in **Revelation 21:24** may include **all of Israel** from **all their history** and from **all over the world** since they are still the carnal descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and carnal brethren of Jesus. Also, some of those nations will enter into eternity as Gentile nations because they defended and treated the Jews well, Jesus' brothers in the flesh.

Matthew 25:31-32, 40

31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him... 40 The King will answer and say to

them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did it to one of these brothers of Mine even the least of them, you did it to Me**'.

Many believe that when Jesus said to the nations "because you helped these *brothers of mine you did it to me*", He was referring to the Jewish people, His brothers in the flesh. Which is very interesting because Jesus was talking to the Gentile nations, some of which, like England, the US and some European nations, have defended the Jews. Also, we should remember that God said to Abraham "*and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse*" Genesis 12:3 and "*I will make nations from you*" Genesis 17:6.

10. This is my thesis: we, the chosen people since before the ages, are a privileged people predestined for salvation and called by God 1 Timothy 1:9, Romans 8:30 not for anything good that we did but by pure grace. He caused us **to get to know His son here on earth** John 6:44, **establish a relationship with Him from here and now, get engaged with Him in baptism** Romans 6:3, **start to enjoy Him here with the pledge of our future wonderful life when we received the Holy Spirit** Ephesians 1:13-14, **to desire to see Him face to face** Revelation 22:20, **and at the beginning of our new eternal life, the marriage!** Revelation 19:7-9. This marriage is a **mystery** Ephesians 5:31-32, John 17. **We are blessed!** Psalms 32:1, Romans 4:7-8. We are part of God's **purpose and Grace** 2 Timothy 1:9. All this happens because God decided to choose us and not count our sins against us 2 Corinthians 5:19. Our faith is counted for us as righteousness and He even gave us the faith to believe! Ephesians 2:8. Our names were written in **the Book of Life** since before the beginning of the world Revelation 13:8 and we were chosen to rule the nations with Christ. The **saved nations** are the sincere people who were not Christians but will be judged **according to their deeds** including their treatment to Israel, but they **missed the joy of this glorious courtship and hope during their time on this earth**, and the privilege of being the Bride of the King, Jesus. But anyway, they will be glad to have eternal life and be governed by Jesus and His Bride. As they will be our people it will surely be a relationship of love, joy, peace, justice and mutual respect. *17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.* Romans 14:17. **We will get along very well with the nations!**

G. THE LAMB SLAIN — OUR NAMES WRITTEN BEFORE THE WORLD'S CREATION

1. Compare these two versions of the same Scripture:

Revelation 13:8 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Everyone whose **name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life** of the Lamb who has been slain.

Revelation 13:8 New King James Version

Those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**.

This verse has two interpretations: the NASB says: "*whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life*" And the KJV says: "*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*". One says that some names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb since the foundation of the world, other versions say that "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world". I believe that the two translations **put together are right**. Our names are written or not, and the Lamb was considered slain since the foundation of the world ^{1 Peter 1:18-20}. Because for God, who has no future or past, all things happened before the foundation of the world, which is very difficult for us to understand. "*God who gives life to dead people and calls into existence things that don't even exist*" ^{Romans 4:17}. In other words, things that did not exist for us, yet for Him are as if they already existed. Of course, the Bible is full of this language ^{Ephesians 1:3-12}. Paul says that we are already "seated in the heavenly places" ^{Ephesians 2:6}. For God there is neither past nor future, His name is an eternal **I AM** and He lives in a continual present. In one sighting, He sees the whole history of humankind.

2. We will **not be judged by our works** because our salvation is by grace not by works ^{Romans 4:4-5, Ephesians 2:8-9}. God placed our names in the Book of the Lamb before the world existed and didn't write the names of other people before the foundation of the world. I was told that some theologians, based in ^{Revelation 3:5} said that it is possible that God did put the names of all creation in his book before time begun, but erase the names who didn't make it (i!¿?). I believe that Jesus committed himself to die for us at the same time the Trinity made the Eternal Covenant or grace. So, our salvation was **purposed** and **completed** before the ages.

Ephesians 2:1-10 New American Standard Bible **1** And **you were dead in your trespasses and sins**, **2** in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. **3** Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. **4 But God, being rich in mercy**, because of His great love with which He loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (**by grace you have been saved**), **6** and **raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**, **7** so that **in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus**. **8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.** **10** For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand** so that we would walk in them.

3. The rest of humankind, those not saved by grace, will have their names **in one of the other two books**, not in the Book of Life of the Lamb. The **sheep** will be registered in the "Book of Good Works"; the **goats** will be registered in the "Book of Evil Works" and every one will be judged according to their deeds.

Revelation 20:12-13

12 And the dead **were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.** “**13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and **they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.**”

H. AFTER DEATH

1. Note that in this Scripture it is clearly stated that all the dead who are not the Bride of Christ, the Church, will be **judged according to their deeds** or behavior. My belief is that all those who have **never heard of Christ**, like people of other religions, will be judged according to their works or behavior; which would be more just than sending them to hell. **I believe also the possibility that Christ will make himself known to them after they die.** Those who receive Christ after they die, will be the judged per their works? Or will be by grace? Who knows!

1 Peter 4:5-6 New American Standard Bible

5 But **they will give account to Him** who is ready to **judge the living and the dead.** **6** For **the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead**, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may **live in the spirit according to the will of God**

1 Peter 4:5-6 Phillips Translation

Don't worry: they are the ones who will have to **explain their behavior** before the one who is prepared to judge all men, **whether living or dead.** (For that is why **the dead also had the Gospel preached to them**—that it might judge the lives they lived as men and give them also the opportunity to share the eternal life of God in the spirit.)

1 Peter 4:5-6 Living Bible

5 But just remember that they must face the Judge of all, living **and dead**; **they will be punished for the way they have lived.** **6** That is why **the Good News was preached even to those who were dead**—killed by the flood 1 Peter 3:19-20 — so that although **their bodies were punished with death**, they could **still live in their spirits as God lives.**

For those of us who are saved because we were elected to trust Christ, if we do something wrong, we may be disciplined by God while we are alive on Earth Hebrews 12:5-11, even with illnesses and premature death! 1 Corinthians 11:27-32, 1 Corinthians 5:15. **But we never lose our eternal salvation** 1 Corinthians 5:1, 5, 11:32 **because we were elected to believe in Christ** not because of our behavior. But those who did not believe in Christ will be judged by their works at the great Judgment of the Nations' day of judgment Matthew 25:31-46. The perverse will be punished with hell after their physical death; this is also called the **“second death”** Revelation 20:14, 21:8. The well-behaved non-believers will be judged according to their good works and will become part of the saved nations. I believe that God is **merciful** and **also just**.

See what happened with **Noah's generation**. They were punished for their bad behavior with physical death and were massacred in a universal flood. But because there wasn't any law in the days before the flood, and justice says: **“sin is not imputed when there is no law”** Romans 5:13, **Christ later went to preach the Gospel to that perverse generation after they died** 1 Peter 3:19-20. This demonstrates God's

justice. **God is Just.** Because God is Just, I think that He will not send to hell those who have never heard about Jesus, and many that were born under another religion, as we were born in a Christian family. They don't care about Christianity just as we don't care about their religion; others have only heard bad things about Christians. We are a Christian nation and yet our country sends the most violent and dirtiest movies to the whole world from Hollywood! Many others have heard very bad testimonies about some pastors and priests who have lived in horrible sins. Others have heard bad preachers, etc. etc. So as God was merciful and righteous with the Noah generation, I believe He will be just with everybody. According to Paul, He will never send to hell people who follow their conscience and live rightly according to their beliefs Romans 2:14-16. God is not only Sovereign, He is also **Righteous** and Merciful.

He reveals his **sovereignty** by choosing a group by grace, and reveals his **righteousness and equity** by treating the rest of humankind according to their behavior:

Psalm 9:8 New American Standard Bible

8 And He will **judge the world in righteousness**; He will **execute judgment for the peoples with equity**.

And remember that for God there is no time, He lives in a continual present. It is no problem for Him if people receive Christ while they are alive or after death because the spirit of the person does not die, only the body dies, so those "dead" people **are not dead**. Their physical body died but not their inner spirit and God **"is not the God of the dead, but of the living"** Mark 12:27. This is why Jesus **"went to preach to the spirits now in prison"** 1 Peter 3:19, because they are alive! and preached the Gospel to those who never heard it 1 Peter 4:6, because those spirits are alive, otherwise they couldn't hear Him. **GOD IS JUST!**

2. Most of us Evangelicals believe that the "second death" is to live in Hell eternally; and that whoever lives a perverse life 1 Timothy 1:9-10 will burn eternally, forever and ever in a never-ending fire that is, an eternal torture Mathew 3:12, Marc 9:47-48. Some evangelical denominations believe that the punishment in hell or "**second death**" is not eternal agony but extinction. They believe that the first death is when our physical body ceases to exist; the "**second**" death is the when our spirit ceases to exist. For them the difference between the saved and the lost is that the saved will only die one death, the physical one, but their spirits will live forever; and the evildoers will die two times, the first is their physical death and the second will be their spiritual death. Now the word dead means ceasing to exist. As the physical death ends the body, their spiritual death will end or annihilate forever their spirit or personality. They **will not** have eternal life. Their punishment is that they will not live eternally, they will disappear. These denominations believe that eternal punishment

is neither loving or merciful nor a punishment according to justice, because it is not proportional to the length of our life of sin. To be tortured eternally, forever and ever for a life of only 80 to 100 or our years is not just, and our God is Just!. They say it would be fair to punish them with the same amount of years but not forever and ever. So, because God is Just and merciful, the punishment cannot be in disproportion to the length or amount of sins. If they live a life of 80 or 100 years of sin, the punishment should be at most 80 to 100 years of suffering. But I think, if after 80 or 100 years they will be extinguishing, why to punish with torture? That is disproportional and unjust, but God is Just. Also, if it would be so, those who go into hell also shall have eternal life... but in the lake of fire! But **most of us Evangelicals believe that hell is eternal.**

I think that **Catholics** try to answer this question with the doctrine of “Purgatory”. Purgatory is not eternal and the sufferings there are less than in hell, but would punish a person with so many years after his death according to the non-confessed sins that they committed. They believe that if we confess our sins, we are forgiven and if we die right after confession and have the last rites, we go directly to heaven. But if we die having sins not confessed, we have to “pay” for them in Purgatory for a time according to the amount of them. After those sins are paid for those sins we will be released from the purgatory and go to heaven with the rest of us. The idea of purgatory is to bridge the verses of judgment **by grace** and **by works** in the Bible. Of course, purgatory would be a solution, but we don't see it in the Scriptures. Of course, this doctrine was abused, allowed for some practices that are very difficult for Protestants to accept. One practice is that the relatives of the deceased person could shorten the time of their loved ones in the purgatory by paying Masses on his behalf, or even just making donations to the Church. Father Tetzal was a seller of these dispensations of pardon and said, “as soon as your coins entered the coffer, the soul would jump out of purgatory.” Nowadays this Catholic Doctrine exists but is not emphasized as in the XVI Century. This practice divided the Church and cost the Lutheran Reformation in the XVI Century. My humble belief is: I'll be very uncomfortable with and eternal Hell. I would be not happy in heaven if I know that some of my relatives, friend and so many others, are torched forever there. Well, let's continue with our theme.

I. THOUGH SALVATION IS NOT BY WORKS, GOD IS NOT AGAINST WORKS

1. God is not against works.

Revelation 20:12-13

*And the dead were judged from the things which were written in the **books, according to their deeds...** and they were judged, **every one of them according to their deeds**”.*

Romans 2:6, 12-16 New American Standard Bible

6 (God) will render to each person according to his deeds... **12** For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; **13** for *it is* not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God, but the **doers of the Law will be justified**. **14** For when Gentiles who do **not have the Law** do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, **are a law to themselves**, **15** in that they show **the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them**, **16** on the day when, according to my gospel, God will **judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus**.

Romans 2:12-16 Living Bible

12-16 He will punish sin wherever it is found. He will punish the heathen when they sin, even though they never had God's written laws, for down in their hearts they know right from wrong. God's laws are written within them; their own conscience accuses them, or sometimes excuses them. And God will punish the Jews for sinning because they have his written laws but don't obey them. They know what is right but don't do it. After all, salvation is not given to those who know what to do, unless they do it. **16** The day will surely come when at God's command Jesus Christ will judge the secret lives of everyone, their inmost thoughts and motives; this is all part of God's great plan, which I proclaim.

So, do not totally rule out good works in God's plan. This idea would answer many questions about the privilege of God's **sovereignty** in choosing some to be the Bride of His Son by grace, and God's **Justice** restoring eternal life to the descendants of Adam and Eve **who behaved well** as God expected Adam and Eve to behave. Remember that we were **declare sinners without cause in ourselves but because of Adam** Romans 5:12, 17-21. This is why **without cause in ourselves we were declared righteous** because of Christ Romans 5:17, 21. The two phrases: **"elected by grace"**, and **"judged according to their works"** are repeated many times in the Scriptures, both **are right, not just one. They do not contradict each other but apply to different groups of people, complementing each other**. We cannot choose one and despise the other. **"Elected by grace without works"**, and **"judged according to their works"** are both **true and right and complement each other. Neither is true without the other**. One without the other is incomplete. To choose only one of these Scriptures **is to have only part of the truth**. We believers are foreknown, predestined, elected and called by God to show the **sovereignty of God and His love to His Son providing a Bride for Him** Romans 8:29-30. All others will be judge according to their deeds to show the **justice of God**; because God is **sovereign** and God is **Just**.

2. This idea would defuse the accusation that God is unjust for sending good people to hell if they **do not have our religion, because they did not believe in Christ**. Also, this neutralizes the criticism that God is unjust with **predestination, predestining some to be saved and all the others to go into hell in spite of their good behavior**. People understand that a Sovereign God, out of love for His Son, can choose and predestine some to be His Son's Bride and so become part of His family. Actually, most of us would love to choose the spouse for our children. He chose us also to rule over the earth with His Son. That is also part of His sovereignty.

People will also understand that it's logical that very evil people would go to hell, but understand that good people should have some reward for their good behavior. That is the idea of most people and religions. My thesis, if proven correct, is one of the important answer in our apologetics: "If God is love, why will he punish people throwing them into eternal fire for eternity for only not having your religion?" Actually, this answers also our question and that matter. We were assaulted many times with this question by atheists.

3. The only thing they don't understand is sending good people to hell because God predestined them for that. Why would God create billions of people to be sent to hell when hell was originally prepared for Satan and his angels? ^{Matthew 25:41}. Or why send them to eternal fire for belonging to a religion other than fundamentalist Evangelicals; or sending to hell honest people who followed their conscience ^{Romans 2:14-15}? Of course, these "*saved nations*" judged according to their deeds enter into eternity in a different category than the "*elected*" are. They **are not** the Bride of the King of the Universe. They are not saved according to God's **Purpose and Grace** ^{2 Timothy 1:9}, but **according to their behavior**.

Romans 2:5-11 New American Standard Bible

5 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**, **6** who will render to **each person according to his deeds**: **7** to those who by perseverance in **doing good** seek for glory and honor and immortality, **eternal life**; **8** but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, **wrath and indignation**. **9** **There will be tribulation and distress** for every soul of man who **does evil**, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, **10** but glory and honor and peace to everyone who **does good**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **11** For there is **no partiality** with God.

If this text would refer to the elected believers whose names are written in the Book of Life since the beginning of the world, then Paul would be affirming **that people with good works** would have eternal life just like the elected. Paul, who is the clearest definer of salvation by **election and grace, not by works but by faith in God's love alone** ^{Romans 8:28-30, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 3:5-8}, also says that those who did not believe in Jesus **but obeyed their consciences will enter into eternal life in another category. Salvation by pure grace** is always about the predestined to be the Bride of the Lamb. So ^{Romans 2:5-11} and many other Scriptures that affirm salvation from hell **according to behavior do not** refer to the chosen ones by grace to be the Bride of the Lamb, but to the rest of humankind who will be "**judged according to their deeds**" ^{Romans 2:6-11, 2 Corinthians 11:15, Jude 15, Revelation 2:23, 3:15-16, 16:11, 20:12, 20:13, 22:12}. I believe that the Scriptures do not contradict each other but they complement each other and I do not find any other explanation for these apparent dichotomy, that salvation "**not by works**" refers to the salvation of some "**according to God's purpose and grace that was given to us in Christ Jesus**" **But**, judgment "**according to works**" refers to others called "*The Nations*" ^{Matthew}

25:31-33, Revelation 21:24-26, that is, the rest of the majority of humankind. Those who behaved well will enter eternal life as “saved nations”, not as the Bride of Christ. And, those who were perverse will go into hell. This affirms not only God’s grace for His chosen ones, but also His **justice** for those who were not saved by grace Psalms 9:8. The fact is that these two truths clearly exist in the Scriptures: “**not by works**” and “**by works**”, both are right. Some will be saved by **grace** and the rest judged by their **works**.

J. THE TWO BOOKS OF DEEDS

1. **Let us first see who will be in the Book of Evil Works**. I believe that one of the two books, **the Book of Bad Works**, will have the names of those whose behavior was **very evil, perverse**. The Bible speaks continually of these bad people. They are a very special kind of sinners and, of course, will not be part of either the Bride of Christ nor the “**saved nations**” Revelation 21:24, Matthew 25:31-46. They will not have eternal life and will experience the “**second death**” by being thrown into the **lake of fire**. They are not worthy to continue to live. I would like you to notice in the *next Scriptures* the fact that **some people are worse than others and will be judged according to their works**. Of course there is no person on earth that is without any sin, but the God who forgave all our sins, seems to have also a list of soft sins that ever the believers do (and are forgiven) but also a list of acts with are very vile, perverse. Let us see who are the perverts “goats” in the Scriptures and what the Scriptures say about them

1 Timothy 1:9-10 Good News Translation

9 It must be remembered, of course, that **laws are made, not for good people, but for lawbreakers and criminals**, for the **godless** and **sinful**, for those who are **not religious or spiritual**, for those who **kill their fathers or mothers**, for **murderers**, **10** for the ***immoral***, for **sexual perverts**, for **kidnappers**, for those who **lie** and give **false testimony** or who do **anything else contrary to sound doctrine**.

Wow! These are really a special kind of people! And what about the next Scriptures?

Romans 1:24-32 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

24 Therefore **God gave them over** in the **lusts** of their hearts to **impurity**, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. 25 For they **exchanged the truth of God for a lie**, and worshiped and served the **creature rather than the Creator**, who is blessed forever. Amen." 26 For this reason God gave them over to **degrading passions**; for their women exchanged the natural function for **that which is unnatural**, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and **burned in their desire toward one another, men with men** committing **indecent acts** and receiving in their own persons the due **penalty of their error**. 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a **depraved mind**, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all **unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32** and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they **not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them**.

Revelation 21:8 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

But for the **cowardly** and **unbelieving** and **abominable** and **murderers** and **immoral** persons and **sorcerers** and **idolaters** and all **liars**, **their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**

In the next verses, you will see that there are some who are better than others; both will be judged according to their behavior. Red letters are for the worse ones; blue letters are for the better ones. At judgment day, the not-chosen who did not believe Christ will be judged according to their deeds; those who behave better will enter into eternity under "*the saved nations*", those who behave worse will end up in hell.

Romans 2:5-15 New American Standard Bible

The Goats: 5 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**, 6 who will render to **each person according to his deeds**.

The Sheep: 7 to those who by perseverance in **doing good** seek for glory and honor and immortality, **eternal life**;

The Goats: 8 but to those who are **selfishly ambitious** and **do not obey** the truth, but **obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation**. 9 There will be **tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil**, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,

The Sheep: 10 but **glory and honor and peace to everyone who "does good"**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God."

Notice the phrases "**doing good**" and "**does good**" mean good works. Salvation to become part of the Family of God **is not by works**. But there is the reward of eternal life in **another category** for those who were not believers like us, but are "**doing good**" and for those who "**do good**". These people of verses 7 and 10 will be in the **Book of Good Works** and those of verses 5, 8 and 9 will be in the **Book of Evil Doers**.

Look what Paul says about the **people** in **verse 6**, "**God will render to each person according to his deeds**". It does not say: "According to **if they believed in Christ or not**."

In verse 7 Paul says that there are people whom “by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life”. It is possible that this refers to those who seek with sincerity immortality in other moral religions and keep their requirements. Note that it does not say, “by perseverance in following Christ seek for glory and honor and immortality” but “by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life” (note that these doers were “seeking for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life”). If those who are not the Bride of the Lamb seek immortality and get eternal life, it means they enter eternity not because they were Christians but as part of “**the nations who will live at the light of the New Jerusalem**” over whom we will reign with Christ. They are those who will bring their honor, glory and riches to us.

Then in verses 8-9, Paul turns again to the evildoers that “do not obey... but obey unrighteousness” and says that they will receive “wrath and indignation... tribulation and distress for every man who 'does evil'”. Note it does not say “**for every man who does not believe in Christ**” but for “**every man who does evil**”.

Then back to the good ones Paul says in verses 7 and 10, “but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good”. Notice that it does not say “**glory and honor and peace to everyone who is a Christian**” but for “**every one who does good**”.

This means that for some people good works count for entering “eternal life” though **in another category than the chosen believers**. They will not enter as the Bride of the Lamb nor live in the New Jerusalem City because this kind of special salvation is for those who are saved by **Grace, by election, and not by works**. But evidently others will be judged per their works and if they are good people they will enter eternity as the “*saved nations*”. This shows that God is **just!** Even if one is not of the elected he can get into eternity if he **obeys his conscience in doing good and avoiding doing bad**.

Let us continue to see more Scriptures about the **importance of good works for the non-believers:**

2 Corinthians 11:15 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, **whose end will be according to their deeds.**

Revelation 20:12-13 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things, which were written in **the books**, according to **their deeds**. **13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and **they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.**

Revelation 22:12 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man **according to what he has done.**

As you can see in all these Scriptures **many will be judged according to their works**, not by their belief or unbelief in Christ. These are the “goats” and the “sheep” of Matthew 25:31-46. Who are they? Surely they are **those who were not predestined according to Romans 8:29-30** because the predestined are saved by grace, not by their good works. This would confirm what the great Reformation theologian, John Calvin believed, that **Christ died only for the elected**, (the 3rd point of his 5 points of Calvinism) he was right, because **if Jesus would have died for the sins of all, then all should be saved by grace, all should be forgiven** like us! I repeat: If the blood of Christ was shed for all, all should be forgiven of their sins, because Jesus died for all. But if Jesus paid for the sins of all and the majority of the people for whom Jesus paid their debt at the cross **would not be forgiven** and would go to hell, then His death would have been a waste, which is unthinkable. Jesus cannot die in vain ^{1 Corinthians 1:17}. If He died for all, and pay for the sins of all, then all should be saved by grace in spite of their behavior. Evidently Jesus died only for **his beloved Bride to be**. According to Calvin, if Jesus died for all humankind and the large majority of humans would end up in hell, the sacrifice of Christ would have been wasted. Also, if Jesus died and **paid for the sins of all, then all sinners should be forgiven**. If Jesus died for all, and most people have to pay for their sins again in hell, then those sins are being **paid twice**, by Jesus and by the sinners.

If a small group of people *“known beforehand, predestined to become like Jesus, called, justified and glorified”* ^{Romans 8:29-30} can consider themselves *“seated in the heavenly places in Christ”* ^{Ephesians 2:6}, all this according to God’s purpose and grace and by the blood of Christ, because we could do nothing so save ourselves because we were dead ^{Ephesians 2:1} like the rest of humanity, and **“God made us alive in Christ by grace, not by our works”** ^{Ephesians 2:5-6, 9}; then evidently **Jesus did not die for all**, but only for his Bride to be, those who God foreknew, predestined, called, justified and glorified. If Christ **would have died for all** humankind and salvation is **not by works**, then, that would also apply for the perverse. If Jesus paid for the sins of all then **nobody should be judged according to their works**. By the way, many evangelical denominations are Calvinistic. When I became member of a Presbyterian church, one of the most difficult points in my exam of theology was the third point of Calvinism. Now I perfectly understand that point. The great Reformer was right.

So, my point is that because God is **sovereign**, He chose some to be the Bride of His Son by pure grace, which is understandable and **Jesus died for His love, the chosen to be His Bride**. The rest of humankind will be judged according to their deeds and because He is **righteous**, He will judge the rest of humankind according

to their behavior, which **is just**. Doesn't this seem more logical and easier to explain to believers and non-believers? Actually, most people would understand and agree with it. The good people will have eternal life though in a different category; the bad people will be punished with hell. So, our quest is to look for those who will believe because they are elected Acts 13:48 to become part of the Bride of Christ by grace; and disciple them to become like Christ, and teach a moral lifestyle with our example, being salt and light of the earth. But also, remember when you preach, **“many are called but few are chosen”** Matthew 22:14. The chosen will believe Acts 13:48.

2. Now let us see those who are written in the **Book of Good Works**.

Salvation for us the elected is **not by works but by grace**, not because of our behavior, but because we were forgiven by God. The **non-elected** who were honest with their conscience will be judged according to their **good deeds**; they are the **“sheep”** of Matthew 25:31-46. Evidently, they are the ones who did not believe in Christ for some reason, maybe because they were faithful in other religions or they were brought up in an atheist family, etc., but they **do not belong in the Book of Evil Doers** because they obeyed their consciences Romans 2:14-16. They followed **good morals, were good husbands and wives, good parents, good citizens, obedient to the laws, good neighbors**; these are the **“sheep”** Of Matthew 25:31-46.

The next is a very interesting Scripture because **Our Lord Himself said how the non-believers will be judged:**

All these are good works!

Matthew 25:31-40 New American Standard Bible

31 *“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then **He will sit on His glorious throne.** 32 **All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.** 34 *“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘**Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.** 35 **For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**”****

All these are bad works!

Matthew 25:41-46 New American Standard Bible

41 *“Then He will also say to those on His left, **‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; 42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger, and***

*you **did not invite Me in; naked, and you **did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.**' 44 Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' 45 Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**' 46 **These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.**"***

Note that Jesus did not say: "because you have believed in Me you have eternal life", but because "you **did good** to your neighbor **you did it to me**".

Compare [Matthew 25:31-33](#) with [Revelation 20:11-13](#). This is a judgment of works. The elected will not be judged because they are saved by grace.

According to this teaching:

- Jesus will **sit on "His glorious throne"**.
- The people before the throne are called "**all nations**".
- The people who will live around the New Jerusalem also are called "**the nations**".
- Those called the sheep will enter into **eternal life** because of their **good deeds**.
- Those **who didn't do good works**, the goats, will go into the **punishment of hell**.

This Scripture is used many times in our churches explaining that the sheep are those who believe in Christ and the goats are those who do not believe in Christ. Honestly **that is not what Jesus said**. If that would be the case, **this passage would be teaching salvation not by election of grace but by works**. And this would be contrary to what **Paul says** [Ephesians 2:8-9](#), and what **Jesus did** [John 1:14.17](#). Scriptures do not contradict each other; all are truth and right! There is a **small** group who enters eternity by grace, the Bride of Christ. And there is a **large** group, the silent majority – called the "saved nations" – who will be judged by their good works. There is also a **smaller** group who will be judged by their very bad works and go into hell. This text is clear: to those who did good works He says: "Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**" To those who did bad works He says: "Truly I say to you, to the extent that **you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**' 46 **These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life**"

Jesus does not say to the goats: "because you have **not believed in Me, you will go to eternal punishment**" and to the sheep, "**because you believed in Me, will enter into eternal life.**" Obviously, these "nations" are judged according to **their works, for things they did or did not**. Those who belonged to any religion of good

works and/or obeyed their consciences will enter into eternal life, **though** in a **different capacity or category** than us believers, because **they helped their neighbor** and **lived a moral life**, but are not part of the elect who are the Bride of Christ and they will **not live in the New Jerusalem**. They will live around the City in the light of the city and are the **“saved nations”** who enter eternity not in the category of Bride of the Lamb but of nations of honest people registered in the Book of Good Works over which we will reign with Jesus. This teaching of Jesus goes together with this statement:

Revelation 21:24-25 New King James Version (NKJV)

24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

I believe that God reveals His **sovereignty** by **electing and predestining** people beforehand according to His **purpose. He decrees it to be as He chooses** and then when the time comes **He calls us and gives us the faith** to believe in Him Acts 13:48. This is why Paul says: *“Who has saved us and called us...”* 2 Timothy 1:9. This would indicate that He first saved us and then called us, otherwise it should say, “called us and saved us”. He saved us before the time begun, then He called us. When we decide to follow Jesus, it is because God had already called us. Others believe that because God knows everything beforehand He chooses according to His foreknowledge those He knows will believe in Jesus 1 Peter 1:1-2. Of course, both sides have more than one verse. I tend to believe that if it is by grace and not by works, God does not have to know beforehand how we will behave to save us and call us because Paul says it very clearly: *“when you were dead... **He made you alive**”* Colossians 2:13, Ephesians 2:1-6. **What can a dead person do to come alive again?** We became alive first and then we heard his call. I could not have heard his call unless he would give me life first, because I couldn't even had desire it! Also, Jesus said: *“No one can come to Me, **unless the Father draws him**”* John 6:44. Also He said: **“unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”**. We do not have to see the Kingdom and believe in order to be to be born again but the other way around; **we need to be born again in order to see the Kingdom of God and believe!** A dead person cannot see or believe!

God shows his **sovereignty** by electing, predestining and calling those who are going to be the Bride of His Son Revelation 19:7. In Bible times, the parents chose the spouse for their children; even today some cultures do it. He also **could** use His Sovereignty to send to hell those who did not believe in His Son **if He wanted to, but God is not only Sovereign, He is also Just and Merciful**. Would He condemn honest people to eternal fire without taking into account their behavior, just because He is **sovereign**? Wouldn't it be **fairer** to judge the non-elected by their works? God can do either because **He is Sovereign!** *“There is only one Lawgiver and Judge,*

*the One who is able **to save and to destroy***" James 4:12. Because He is God He displays his **sovereignty** in many ways, one of which is by choosing who are to be the Bride of His Son. Also, he displays His **mercy** and love forgiving the wickedest people, even those who crucified Jesus Luke 23:34. Actually, I know many perverse people who were predestined by God and called, saved by grace and became members of our congregation. But He also shows His **justice** judging the non-elected according to their behavior. This would answer many questions about the character of God for which we previously had no answers; like that He is unjust sending honest people to hell because they are not fundamentalist born again Evangelicals. Also, this would alleviate the apparent **injustice** of "double predestination", some predestined to be saved and others **predestined for hell**. Nobody is predestined to hell, because all the non-elected will be judged by their behavior. This neutralizes the criticism that God is unjust.

3. If God in His sovereignty wants to choose by grace the Bride for His Son, that seems OK to everybody. Still in many cultures today the parents choose the bride for their sons. But to condemn the rest of humankind to eternal fire without giving them the behavior option **seems unfair**. We, the elected, seem not to care about them because we have the good fortune of being elected. We have the security of our salvation and rejoice in that, but what about the rest who did not have the opportunity or capacity of believing in Christ because they are people of other religions or atheists or never heard about Christ? Not all the unbelievers are **"lawless and rebellious, ungodly and sinners, unholy and profane, who kill their fathers or mothers, murderers and immoral men and sexual perverts and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching"** 1 Timothy 1:9-10. Many unbelievers have a conscience and obey it. Actually, many of them behave better than many Christians!

Romans 2:13-16 New American Standard Bible

13 For *it is* not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be **justified**. **14** For when Gentiles who do not have the Law **do instinctively** the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, **are a law to themselves**, **15** in that they show the work of the Law **written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness** and **their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them**, **16** on the day when, according to my gospel, **God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus**.

E. GOD IS NOT ONLY SOVEREIGN; HE IS ALSO MERCIFUL AND JUST.

1. God is sovereign. If He wants to He can change everything just as He changed His mind with the pre-Noah generation that He punished with physical death 1 Peter 3:19-20, 4:5-6. But God is not only **Sovereign**, He is also **Merciful** and **Just**, so you must be ready for any change. He is not static as the letter, but dynamic as a living person. He has emotions, feelings, intelligence and wisdom. He has all the power and there is nobody above Him. He is not accountable to anyone, so we must be

ready for anything Romans 9:14-24, 11:32-36, Isaiah 55:8-9. According to our way of thinking He sometimes behaves in a way difficult for us to understand. But we should forget about judging Him according to our mind because He is so much higher! He is sovereign and severe but also **“merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth”** Psalm 86:15. Therefore He confuses us some times with His punishments and sometimes with His forgiveness, like in the case of the universal flood, killing everybody and then sending Christ after they were physically dead to preach the Gospel to those He condemned to die.

First, He got very angry with humankind:

Genesis 6:6-7 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

6 The Lord was **sorry** that He had made man on the earth, and **He was grieved** in His heart. **7** The Lord said, **“I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.”**

He killed everybody but one family of eight, Noah’s family. This was a very small group, just eight persons! Evidently later, he was sorry again and decided to be “merciful and gracious” with the same people He killed:

1 Peter 3:18-20 Good News Translation (GNT)

18 For Christ died for sins once and for all, a good man **on behalf of sinners**, in order to lead you to God. He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually, **19** and in his spiritual existence **he went and preached to the imprisoned spirits. 20 These were the spirits of those who had not obeyed God when he waited patiently during the days that Noah** was building his boat. The **few** people in the boat—eight in all—were saved by the water.

God demonstrated his mercy by sending His Son to **preach the good news to those who died during the flood**, those who did not believe Noah, those who God himself became so grieved with them than He decided to wipe them out. God also demonstrated His mercy by sending His son Jesus to preach to all those who died during the Old Testament time:

1 Peter 4:5-6 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

5 but **they will give account to Him** who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** For **the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead**, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may **live in the spirit according to the will of God**.

2. God also demonstrated his mercy by delivering them from Satan’s captivity:

Hebrews 2:14-15 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and might **free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives**.

God is righteous and severe but he is also merciful and compassionate. Why will He not have some mercy with the rest of well behaving non-believers or non-elected

who He also created? We have verses to prove that we are the only ones who enjoy God forgiveness and mercy but we do not own or have a monopoly over His mercy and justice; this is His prerogative and He does not have to ask us permission to use it.

I believe that we, the elect, needed to start knowing Christ during our life on earth being “the Church”. We needed to believe in Him and have a relationship with Him from down here, because we were elected with a purpose, to be His Bride; **therefore we needed a period of courtship**. To hear Him, believe Him, know Him, love Him, start having a relationship, desire Him and assume our engagement with Him here and now through baptism, preparing us for our marriage with Him. In this way, our meeting face to face with Him who we loved, followed and prayed to all our life will be **awesome and breathtaking** knowing that He loved us so much that He died for us. He died for us because he wanted to be sure that we, the elected, would be His **unconditionally** and His acceptance of us would not depend **on our works but on His love**. He did not want us **to win** His acceptance, He wanted **to win our acceptance of Him** like any suitor would. His love and grace overwhelmed us in such a way that we also **felled in love with Him as He fell in love with us**. This is the reason why we just said, “**yes**” to His love and started a relationship with Him **here on earth**. Can you imagine after this long engagement; what it will be for us to see **Him face to face**, to see our lover, the one who died for us, and then for us to enter our mansions in the luxurious New Jerusalem City that He went to prepare for us? All this is the meaning of Grace. **He captivated us with his love!** “We love Him because he first loved us” 1 John 4:19.

2. But all others, **those who did not have the good fortune we had through Jesus to become part of God’s family by God’s sovereignty and the love of Jesus, they will be judged by their deeds**. Those who behave better will enter into eternity in a different relationship than ours. This means that **behavior in this life will count for them**. We were elected and predestined with a special purpose and by grace to have a **courtship time** before our wedding. The non-believers must behave to have eternal life, in their case, by behavior, Justice and Mercy not by grace, and after death enjoy the privilege of being citizens of nations over which Christ and us would administrate.

We all know many people who are decent, who are not **irreverent** and **profane**, are not **parricides** or **matricides**, **murderers**, **fornicators** or **Sodomites** or **hijackers** etc., or do not belong to the list in Romans 1:24-32 but are **good people**, they have not known Christ as we do. Some are Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and other moral religions or moral families and many of them do good deeds and feel sorry **when they do something wrong**. Many **help their neighbor** and are **kind to the Jews**.

There are many good people in the world who even though they are not elected to be the Bride of the Lamb they behave as or **better than the chosen ones**, such as many of our misbehaved “saints” of the Bible like Jacob, David, Solomon, etc., etc., who did not behave that well but will be there in heaven in some way nonetheless. There are politicians that though they are not evangelicals have done a lot to improve the quality of life for the oppressed, slavery, women’s rights, etc. There were many used by God to create medicines to stop diseases like polio, leprosy, etc. Others to create machines, improve harvests, communications, travel, etc. etc. Many were servants of God without knowing it. Doctors and nurses, inventors, etc. etc. Good works will count for them.

F. ONE CHALLENGE

1. But my thesis has a challenge in one verse:

Revelation 20:15

And **if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

This one verse implies that only the predestined written in the book of life are the only ones to save their lives from hell. All the rest, will be “*thrown into the lake of fire*”, which is the great majority of humankind.

But in spite of this verse we also have other verses that say “***and the saved nations shall walk by its light, and the king of the earth shall bring their glory into it***” my thesis is still worth considered because if only the predestined, those who believed in Jesus Christ for their salvation, will be written in the Book of Life, **who are those “*saved nations*” who will enter into eternity based on their good deeds and who will bring the glory, honor and wealth to the King and His Bride who live in the New Jerusalem City? Over which nations will we — the chosen for salvation, the only ones not judged according to our works, but saved by faith only — reign, and who are those to be judged according to their works? Why are there two books to judge the nations according to their works apart from the one book with the names of those chosen by grace since before the foundation of the world?**

2. **Jesus said** in the teaching of the **judgment of the nations** that those who helped their neighbors, the sheep, who did good works will enter also “into eternal life and... inherit the kingdom” Matthew 25:46, evidently by being part of the “saved

nations". So, my argument is still on. I believed that in the light of what Jesus said in Matthew 25:46, should be read or interpret Revelation 20:15 like this:

"And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire, except those who belong to the saved Nations."

In this way, the words of John in Revelation would match the words of Jesus in Matthew 25.

And Paul said:

Romans 2:6-11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁶ who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: ⁷ to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; ⁸ but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. ⁹ There will be tribulation and distress ¹⁰ for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, ¹⁰ but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹¹ For there is no partiality with God.

According to Paul, those that sought immortality doing good works, will have eternal life. So, evidently, John should have said that some of those who were not written in the book of life, but lived a life of good works, will enter eternity as part of the saved nations.

Romans 2:14-16 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

14 For when Gentiles who do **not have the Law** do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, **are a law to themselves**, **15** in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, **their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them**, **16** on the day when, according to my gospel, God will **judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus**.

3. I believe that **the best answer to this challenge** could be that the Gospel is preached to **all** who are already dead and those who have never heard of Christ. This will give them the opportunity to hear about Him, Actually, Jesus did it for those who **died in the times on Noah's Flood** and the dead of whole Old Testament, why not for the dead of after the Old Testament?

1 Peter 3:18-20 Good News Translation (GNT)

18 For Christ died for sins once and for all, a good man **on behalf of sinners**, in order to lead you to God. He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually, **19** and in his spiritual existence **he went and preached to the imprisoned spirits**. **20 These were the spirits of those who had not obeyed God when he waited patiently during the days that Noah** was building his boat. The **few** people in the boat—eight in all—were saved by the water.

And went to Hades to preach the gospel to **all those who have already died until that day**.

1 Peter 4:5-6 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

5 but **they will give account to Him** who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** For **the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead**, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may **live in the spirit according to the will of God**.

Jesus **can go and preach to those who died until the end of history**. What is the difference for God to send a preacher today while people are alive on this earth or for God to send him after to preach to the spirits of those who died physically? ^{1 Peter 3:19-20, 4:6}. The inner person, who is the real person, does not die when our body dies. The real person just moves to another place but continues to be alive. Most evangelicals believe that the opportunity for salvation ends when we physically die based on ^{Hebrews 9:27}: *"It is appointed for men to die once and **after this** comes judgment"*. But how much time **"after this" will be the judgment?** Peter clarifies that in between the physical death and Judgment, God still can show his mercy and justice ^{1 Peter 3:19-20, 4:6} because the Scriptures in 1 Peter and Hebrews both are true and right. Who are we to forbid God to do something He wants to do? Will you be sad if God shows His mercy to some people after death as He did with Noah's generation? It also could be that the nations that will be saved and live around the New Jerusalem will be those who believed in Christ after they died. Who knows? Or the nations who treated the Jews well? Or that the Jews, because of the promise to Abraham, though born in different nations, will all be saved ^{Romans 11:26}?

4. If **only** those who are written in the **Book of Life** enter into eternity, and **"salvation" is not by works, why have other books to judge people according to their deeds if deeds don't count? If salvation is not by works, if works don't count, why have books with records of works? Surely there must be a purpose for having one Book of Life and two Books of Deeds on the great Day of Judgment. Why one, "Book of Life of the Lamb"? Because all **people saved in the same way do not need more than one book**. Why two **"Books of Deeds"**? Because Jesus will divide the unbelievers in two classes: the **"sheep"** who did good works and the **"goats"** who did bad works. Actually, it is very suggestive that the Book of Life **is one** book and the Books of Deeds are more than one, at least **two** books. If the only ones who will be the Bride of the Lamb are those written in the Book of Life, and **all** the others are lost ^{Revelation 20:15} **why have two different "Books" with their records?** To prove what? Why have two records of works if they are all lost when only **one book of the lost would have been enough?** If the book of the chosen ones is **one book**, why are the books of the lost **two books?** Evidently one must be the **Book of the Depraves** and the other the **Book of Good Works**. How do we know that salvation for the chosen is not by works but by grace only? **Because we shall not be judged!** Because we were predestined by grace because we believed in Christ and this is sufficient for salvation! But good works always count even for those who have trusted Christ and are saved by grace! If we believers do good works on top of our salvation **as believers**, we will receive rewards for them ^{1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10}. Therefore good works count for those saved by grace and for the non-believers.**

Why is there a judgment at all **according to their deeds if works don't count?** ^{Revelation 20:13}. Those who are not in the Book of Life shouldn't be judged **if they**

believed in Jesus or not? If the lost are lost for the only reason of **not believing** in Christ, **not believing in Christ should be enough cause to condemn them.** Why also have a judgment **according to their deeds** for the rest of humankind? And why does the Scripture repeat time after time that many people **will be judged “according to their deeds”**? Who are these people? Surely **not the believers!** Evidently, the people who will be judged by their works are the people who were **not** saved by **faith without works.**

SUMMARY:

1. We the elected have a great privilege: saved by Grace not by our works! The elected will become the Bride of the Son of God and will rule with Jesus over the nations. Our encounter of salvation with Christ was His proposition of marriage forever and to rule with Him over the nations. This is already a done deal since before we were created. We can consider us already *"seated in the heavenly places"*.

2. Some Scriptures seem to imply that all those who did not believe in Christ will end in hell regardless of their behavior John 3:36, Revelation 20:15. Most Evangelicals believe this. It is difficult to answer the question: "Is it just to send good people to hell because they were not fundamentalist Evangelicals"? How can a God who is love to send the large majority of humankind to hell, even the good people, if they don't believe **like you** do, and send only a very small group to heaven?

3. Others believe in double predestination: this means that God in His sovereignty has predestined some to be saved and some to go to hell. This makes it worse. According to this God created most of humans for the purpose of them burning in hell for eternity! Because *"many are called but few are chosen"*.

But God is not only Sovereign but also Righteous, Merciful and Compassionate. He condemned and killed Noah's generation but later, after they died, Jesus went to preach to them the Good News. Evidently, God was sorry that He made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart and decided to blot out everybody but Noah's family, the few chosen ones Genesis 6:5-7. But because He is also Merciful and Compassionate and their spirits could be saved, He decided to send Jesus to preach the Gospel to them. Their physical death was a punishment like the one pronounced by Paul against the immoral believer of Corinth who **was disciplined with death**, so that his spirit would be **"saved in the day of the Lord"** 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. This is the same as with the generation of Noah. They were **disciplined** with death but their spirits could be saved in the day of the Lord. God is not only sovereign, righteous and holy, He is also ***"compassionate and graceful, slow to anger, and abounding in loving-kindness and truth"*** Exodus 34:6. He has access not only to people living in physical bodies but also people whose body has died and are already in Hades, because they are alive! God is not a God of the dead but of the living.

4. But this is also true with us believers. We never lose our salvation if we were elected. If we sin God could punish us 1 Corinthians 11:28-32. God disciplines us believers and it usually is painful but the discipline proves that **we are His children** Hebrews 12:5-11. Of course, there is a way of avoiding discipline or punishment by being obedient, behaving properly, and if we do wrong, examine ourselves and confess our sin 1 Corinthians 11:28, 31, 1 John 1:9; 2:1-2. Remember that God is not a stone or a book or a written constitution that is **static**. He is a **sovereign dynamic person** with **feelings** and **emotions**. **He is loving and compassionate** but is **not tied to anything**. He can be **Sovereign, Righteous and Compassionate**. He can condemn and forgive as He wants. So never say: "God cannot do this or that". God can do whatever He wants!

5. The **Books of Works** are to judge the non-Christians by their works. The **honest people** who were not chosen to be the Bride of Christ nor enter into the New Jerusalem but who lived a moral life and helped others: they will enter into eternity in a different category: "**saved nations**". There are numerous Scriptures that say that many will be judged by their works. How can we ignore all of them? Even we, human's beings, are **glad when the murderers go to jail and the innocent goes free**. It seems that some Christians are jealous that others who do not belong to their denomination will get saved! Be careful! Romans 11:28, Matthew 9:38-39. We should be happy when God has mercy on others as He had mercy on us.

CONCLUSION

It would be much easier to explain to the world who believe that God is unjust by only saving the Evangelicals with the "right" doctrine and then sending to hell the huge remainder of humankind of all religions or no religions, even the well behaving people, if we tell them that some are saved by Grace and those who do not belong to this group would be judged by their behavior. That would sound logical to them. On the other hand, our evangelization would be centered on inviting the non-believers to receive Christ with the hope that those who are in God's purpose commence their relationship with their future Groom here and now and enjoy eternal assurance of salvation. It would be more understandable for non-believers if they were not in God's purpose to be Christ's Bride to accept that God has all His rights to choose the Bride for His Son, the Church, in a sovereign act of Grace. But He also will justly reward for those who follow their consciences of good manners taught by their religion, living in the way they considered good, ethical and charitable. God will judge the world by their deeds reminding them that two books will be opened on Judgment Day, one will have the names of those with did good deeds and will live eternally, and other with the names of those who were perverse who will be legally condemned. After all, it is the popular belief of most non-Christian religions that the good people go to heaven and the bad people to hell. Almost everybody believes that: if you are good you go to heaven and if you are bad you go to hell, because that seems just. God has chosen some of us to love Christ, follow Him with loyalty, and commit our lives to announce His Gospel and wait for Him with anticipation of that great encounter of love and rejoice in

Him. But we should not be arrogant or taking credit for our capacity to believe in Him and to follow Him because all of it is by Grace. Do not forget the rest of God's children who are not Christian. Because whatever we are or become it was not by our merits but because of His "purpose" or choice and "grace" or forgiveness. Even our "faith is not of ourselves but a gift from God." We should pay attention also to the Scriptures we studied in this lesson, not just the verses that affirm our own good fortune of grace, but also respect and acceptance of those who are good people, believing that God has a place for them in His plan. They will be part of the "saved nations" after being judged according to their deeds. What will happen after judgment?

I believe that all these nations at the end will bend their knees and declare that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Philippians 2:9-11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus **every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

1 Corinthians 15:24-26, 28 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. **25** For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. **26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.** **28** When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that **God may be all in all.**

In few words: Saved "not by works" and "judged by works" are both right. The chosen by God to be the Bride of His Son are saved by grace "not by works". The rest of the world will be judged "by works".