

050: Fire and Brimstone
(based on Ch. 8 in *The Savior of All Men*)

What is the lake of fire?

- And why is fire and brimstone associated with it?
- If you figure it out, would you please let me know?
- I don't say that to be flippant or irreverent.
- I sincerely want to know what God means by using this phrase.
- Is it to be taken literally, or as a metaphor?
- My default hermeneutic is to interpret the Bible literally, except where rhetorical devices — such as symbols, similes, metaphors, analogies, allegories, or parables — are deliberately employed in the text.
- Sometimes, determining whether a rhetorical device is being used in a passage is quite easy, because the writer makes it clear.
- For example, Jesus letting us know He is using a parable.
- But that doesn't always happen.

Sometimes the devices are only implied, so that Bible students must make a determination according to context.

- Complicating one's understanding of the term lake of fire is that it is used only in the book of Revelation (ch. 19-20), an eschatological book that uses numerous metaphors and symbols, most of the time without warning.
- There are literally dozens in the book, and many of them provide no interpretation help.
- For example, what do the hideous locusts represent in Rev. 9?
- Rev. 9:7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of

something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.

Are these merely stinging insects?

- If so, then why are they described in this unusual manner?
- Bugs don't wear crowns.
- Perhaps they are supernatural beings.
- Then why do they look like war horses and have faces like men?
- Some commentators say these creatures could be the armies of the Russian confederation as described in Ezek. 38.
- Others think they could be symbolic of helicopters or some other form of modern weaponry.
- Puzzling indeed!
- Revelation has many of these interpretive conundrums.

That being the case, can we be certain that the lake of fire is to be taken literally, as an actual pool or basin that is filled with some kind of lava-like fiery substance?

- How can traditionalists be so sure, seeing that so little is said about it?
- Maybe it is intended as a rhetorical device, referring to some type of "hellish" experience.
- We should not be so quick to rule it out.
- But let me be clear. I am not denying the existence of the lake of fire, simply questioning the nature of the place or experience.
- What is it? And what is its purpose?
- The Holman Bible Dictionary expresses the opinion of some Bible scholars that "if the words used to describe hell are not to be taken literally, then it is difficult to

imagine that the same words used to describe heaven should be taken in a different way.”

- That is not a valid argument, and here’s why.

The description in the last two chapters of Revelation, that is typically attributed to Heaven, is actually a description of New Jerusalem.

- This city of reward is described in great detail, whereas virtually nothing is said about the identity of the lake of fire.
- Not to mention, New Jerusalem is mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament outside of the book of Revelation (e.g., Heb. 12:22), where it is assumed to be a real place.
- Many commentators also equate the term “kingdom of heaven” with New Jerusalem.
- The same level of detail is NOT given for the lake of fire, which makes its exclusive appearance in Rev. 19-20, without any description.

In this episode I will propose some ideas for consideration as to the identity and purpose of the lake of fire.

- In the interest of full disclosure, let me say up front that I am only speculating, since the Bible doesn’t tell us.
- However, I will speculate based on other Scripture passages, so this is not a “shot in the dark.”
- What I am proposing is a valid theory for consideration.
- After all, if theology is the “queen of the sciences” — as the Medievalist Thomas Aquinas claimed — then, as theologians, should we not propose theories as to the meaning of certain Scriptural ideas that may seem unclear?
- Is not that studying (being diligent) for the purpose of presenting ourselves approved to God, with the intent of rightly dividing the Word of God (2 Tim. 2:15)?

Unfortunately, traditionalists typically don’t want to consider any theories.

- If it is not “thus saith the Lord” — which (in their way of thinking) actually means “thus saith my pastors and teachers and commentaries” — then they don’t even want to think about it.
- That’s what keeps people living in their little traditional boxes.
- Of course, when considering theories, we must be humble and open to other theories and not be dogmatic in our conclusions if the Bible doesn’t specify.
- The Bible does provide two key details about the lake of fire.
- On those two details I will base my theory.
- First, the lake of fire “burns with fire and brimstone” (Rev. 19:20; 20:10; 21:8)
- and, second, it is specifically called “the second death” (Rev. 20:14; 21:8).

Seeing that the book of Revelation alludes to the Old Testament extensively, we should not be surprised if the term lake of fire has an Old Testament precedent.

- Indeed, what does the phrase “burns with fire and brimstone” bring to mind?
- For most, it is the fire and brimstone that rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah.
- The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says:
- “The Scriptural source for the conception of “the lake of fire” lies in Gen 19:24, where already the fire and the brimstone occur together, while the locality of the catastrophe described is the neighborhood of the Dead Sea. The association of the Dead Sea with this fearful judgment of God, together with the desolate appearance

of the place, rendered it a striking figure for the scene of eschatological retribution.”

Notice what the Bible says about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah:

- Gen. 19:24-25 Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.
- Luke 17:29 On the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.
- These passages are quite familiar to most Christians.
- But what many do not know is that fire and brimstone are used by God as instruments of His judgment in other places also.

God warns Israel what will happen if the nation stops obeying Him and pursues idolatry:

- Deut. 29:23-26
- 23 The whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah ... which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.
- 24 All nations would say, “Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?”
- 25-26 Then people would say: “Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt; for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them.”

God also forewarns that He will use fire and brimstone to judge Israel’s Gentile enemies:

- Ezek. 38:22 I will bring him (Gog, who heads the Russian confederation) to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. (See also God’s judgment of Edom in Isa. 34:5-9).
- Indeed, fire and brimstone will be God’s instruments of judgment brought upon all the wicked, not merely Sodom or Israel or Israel’s enemies:
- Ps. 11:6 Upon the wicked He will rain coals; fire and brimstone and a burning wind shall be the portion of their cup.

It seems to me that the Old Testament instances of fire-and-brimstone-judgment are a type of the lake of fire, which is the antitype.

- At least three points of parallel can be seen.
- First, the Old Testament fire and brimstone judgments, in every case, were poured out on the wicked, that is, those who continued in unrepentant sinfulness.
- It seems the same will be true at the Great White Throne, as God’s record books are opened and the resurrected dead will be judged according to their works (i.e., their deeds, either sinful or righteous).
- Those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.
- Presumably (as will be explained more fully below) these are the ones who have chosen to live wickedly instead of righteously.

Second, the Old Testament type resulted in sudden, violent, physical death.

- The lake of fire and brimstone will apparently result in a sudden, violent, spiritual death — which is a second death (the antitype).
- Keep in mind that death is essentially separation.
- When we die physically, we become separated from family and friends (and vice versa).
- Spiritual death, I would think, is much more terrifying, for it is separation from God, at least for a time.
- That, in itself, is Hell.
- But we must remember that Jesus paid the penalty for man's sin nature inherited from Adam, which means that death cannot be never-ending separation from God, but only for a period of time and, presumably, for a purpose — like a parent's temporal punishment of their children, as we shall see.

Third, the fire and brimstone raining down on Sodom and Gomorrah left a hot body of water behind in the crater.

- We know it as the Dead Sea, which is actually a lake, the lowest point on the face of the earth.
- The heat in that region is stifling in the summer months.
- The water temperature offers little relief, since it is typically like bath water.
- Some historians record that the water temperature was so intensely hot in past centuries, even well into the nineteenth century, that no one could touch the water, much less swim in it, as so many do today.
- This could be a type of the spiritual judgment that will continue for a period of time following the second death.

Some may protest that the book of Jude says the fire is eternal.

- Jude 6-7 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting (age-lasting) chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal (age-lasting) fire. (parentheses and emphasis mine)
- Keep in mind, in a previous episode, we demonstrated that the word *eternal* is a mistranslation of the Greek word *aionias*, and should have been translated age-lasting.
- Thus, this passage from Jude refers to two classes of beings that are judged for a period of time.
- First, the angels who sinned before the Flood of Noah's day — which are locked up temporarily, awaiting future judgment.

Second, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah suffered the vengeance of age-lasting fire. How so?

- While the Sodomites died instantly — as pictured by the second death in the antitype — the stigma of the age-lasting fire represented by the intensely hot Dead Sea — lasted for centuries.
- This could be a type for age-lasting spiritual judgment that will be poured out upon those who live wickedly in this life (the antitype).
- They will die spiritually (the second death) just as the Sodomites died physically — and they will suffer the vengeance of age-lasting fire — just as Sodom and Gomorrah experienced the residual effect of the Dead Sea.

- It seems the death is punitive, whereas the age-lasting fire is remedial, designed to bring men to the point of repentance.

In the type, did the Sodomites suffer unending torment?

- No! In fact, the word *torment* is not used in connection with Sodom and Gomorrah anywhere in the Scriptures.
- In hindsight we know that God used the fire and brimstone judgment to purge and purify the nation — for a time.
- In fact, Sodom will be returning in the future!
- When rebuking the people of Judah, who were in Babylonian captivity, God said to them:
- Ezek. 16:48, 55 “As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done ... When your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, return to their former state ... then you and your daughters will return to your former state.”

Remarkably, God makes very clear in the context of Ezek. 16 that Judah’s sins were greater than Sodom’s sins!

- He says, “you became more corrupt than they in all your ways” (Ezek. 16:47).
- Consequently, God states that Judah’s punishment was greater than Sodom’s:
- Lam. 4:6 (HCSB) The punishment of my dear people is greater than that of Sodom, which was overthrown in an instant without a hand laid on it.
- If it were not for God sparing a remnant (in order to preserve the lineage of David, as promised in 2 Sam. 7), Israel and Judah would have been as Sodom and Gomorrah, completely wiped out (see Isa. 1:9).

In spite of this, God gloriously predicts that Sodom and her daughters (i.e., Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim — see Deut. 29:23) will one day return when Israel returns!

- Presumably, this is referring to the Millennium, for neither Sodom nor the combined house of Israel have been restored yet historically.
- God’s purging work in Sodom throughout the centuries (as pictured by the Dead Sea) will apparently result in her repentance and restoration as a nation.
- The same applies to Israel.
- As in the type, so in the antitype.
- I believe those cast into the lake of fire will be brought to the point of repentance through the means of God’s age-lasting spiritual fires.
- The nature of these spiritual fires is unknown to us, as the Bible doesn’t specify, but they are apparently for remedial purposes, i.e., correction.
- This is consistent with the Old Testament types and also with the numerous passages of Scripture shared in a previous episode, demonstrating that all will be reconciled to God “every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”

Through the process of age-lasting spiritual fires — which will probably be customized to the needs of each individual as only God sovereignly knows how to do without violating the person’s will — He will bring every individual to the point of repentance regarding sin, and confession regarding the person of Jesus Christ.

- In other words, all will be reconciled to God through Jesus by the end of the ages.
- The lake of fire is only mentioned in Rev. 19-20, at the very end of the Bible, in the following passages:

- Rev. 19:20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.
- Rev. 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
- Rev. 20:14-15 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
- In Matt. 25:41 Jesus said that everlasting fire was prepared for the devil and his angels.
- Can we assume this is referring to the lake of fire?
- Based on the passages in Revelation, quoted above, it seems so.
- But notice that Jesus referred to it as “everlasting,” which means “age-lasting,” as we saw in a previous episode.

This leads to a theory I would like to propose regarding the nature of the lake of fire.

- This is speculative, of course, but something to think about further.
- Notice in Rev. 19:20, quoted earlier, that the beast and false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire.
- Then Rev. 20:10 adds that the devil later joins them, where they are tormented day and night forever and ever, literally for the ages of ages.
- Only one other group of individuals is said to be tormented in the lake of fire, those who worship the beast and take his mark (see Rev. 14:10-11).

- Presumably, they are also cast alive in the lake of fire, along with Satan, his angels, the beast, and the false prophet.

Interestingly, there is no mention of torment in the Scriptures for those who are cast into the lake of fire at the Great White Throne Judgment (see Rev. 20:11-15).

- Nor are they said to be cast in alive.
- Could this be because the lake of fire was made for the devil and his angels and, presumably, those who choose to be his allies during the Tribulation?
- What, then, is the purpose of the lake of fire for the masses of humanity who are resurrected to stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne, found to be sinful, and consigned to the lake of fire?
- Seeing there is no mention of torment for them — on the assumption that their judgment is remedial — could it be that they die instantly upon being cast into the lake of fire and that is why it is called the “second death?”
- If that is correct, then perhaps the lake of fire is not a literal, fiery place of torment for them, as it is for Satan, the beast, the false prophet, and followers of the beast.
- Rather, could their remedial judgment be something akin to a horrible age-lasting nightmare of sorts that God uses in a purgative, spiritual sense, so that when they are awakened, they are motivated to instantly bow the knee to Jesus?

Taking this one step further, if death is separation, then the second death could be separation plus absence.

- In other words, those who are resurrected to stand in judgment at the Great White Throne have already been absent from the Millennium — seeing they remain in the grave during that age — and they are absent from yet

another age when they experience the judgment of the second death.

- Seemingly, that is also a form of punishment.
- What will those enduring the age-lasting spiritual fires be doing during that age of the second death?
- Again, the Bible does not explicitly say, but getting back to the “horrible nightmare” suggested above, following is a possible scenario.
- Perhaps for an entire age (or however long He deems necessary), God will allow those under the judgment of the second death to continually replay from their previous life, a) what might have been, had they believed God and lived righteously, b) what actually was, based on their life choices, and c) how horrible their future will be if they choose not to repent and reconcile with God.

When they eventually awaken from the second death (having been resurrected by God), they will be eager to repent and reconcile with God through His Son Jesus Christ, bowing the knee and confessing that He is Lord.

- They will go forward in joyfulness, thanking God that His Son Jesus Christ is the Savior of all men.
- Again, this is a speculative theory, but given the correlating Scriptural support above, it provides one possible explanation for the nature and purpose of the age-lasting lake of fire.
- My purpose in sharing this alternative view is to encourage you to understand that the traditional view of the lake of fire is also based on assumptions, yet it is commonly taught dogmatically.
- Perhaps tradition is wrong about the lake of fire, its nature and purpose.
- It seems there are other interpretive options.

Notice in Rev. 20:14 that Death and Hades (the grave) will be cast into the lake of fire. Why is that?

- Because Death and Hades will no longer serve a purpose after Christ resurrects everyone.
- In fact, the lake of fire will also be destroyed, according to 1 Cor. 15:26, “The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”
- Logically, since the lake of fire is the second death, then it will ultimately be destroyed.
- This does not mean its occupants will be annihilated, as many have concluded.
- Rather, they will all be resurrected upon their readiness to repent and confess Jesus Christ as Lord.
- The “horrible nightmare” of the age-lasting spiritual fires will accomplish its purpose, as intended by God.

We come now to one of the great mysteries of the Great White Throne Judgment.

- Why is there a Book of Life at this judgment if — as the traditional view teaches — this is a judgment of unbelievers?
- Why would anyone be written in this Book of Life?
- Would not all of the believers have been resurrected prior to the Millennium?
- To answer these questions, it is first necessary to understand the two primary resurrections and accompanying judgments.

The first is commonly called the rapture (catching up), as described by the apostle Paul in 1 Thess. 4:15-17:

- 1 Thess. 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

- 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
- 17 Then we (in Christ) who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (emphasis and parenthesis mine)
- Notice that only those who are *in Christ* will be raptured, starting with those who are asleep (deceased), and followed by those who are living.

To be *in Christ* is to have believed on Jesus for the gift of eternal life, by faith alone, not of works.

- Numerous passages in the New Testament emphasize the necessity of believing and not working to receive Christ's initial salvation (regeneration).
- For example, see John 3:16, 18; 5:24; 6:47; 11:25-26; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; 2 Tim. 1:9).
- When an individual comes to this point of belief, they are said to be saved and in Christ as we see in Eph. 2:4-10:
- Eph. 2:4-7 God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- Eph. 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.
- Eph. 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

To be in Christ, to be saved, and to possess eternal life, are terms describing different facets of the gift that God graciously bestows upon anyone who believes Him by faith, apart from works.

- These blessings are unique to the church age (the period of time following Christ's ascension up to the rapture of the church).
- In a previous episode, I defined eternal life as, "The provision of Jesus within believers as the means by which they can live righteously and thereby qualify for age-lasting (millennial) inheritance."
- The purpose for this glorious life is to live righteously — that is, experience abundant life now! (John 10:10) — and thereby earn the privilege of ruling with Jesus in His Messianic kingdom.
- Again, eternal life as a present possession is unique to our age, having been offered only since the time of Christ.

All church-age believers — that is, those who are in Christ will be raptured to meet Jesus at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

- Jesus will judge their life of works following salvation and will reward accordingly, either positive or negative.
- Depending on their verdict, they will either be designated as inheritors and granted the privilege of ruling in New Jerusalem — amongst numerous other potential rewards — or they will be disinherited and consigned to the darkness outside, to live on Earth in shame and nakedness (non-glorification).
- The inheritors are referred to in 1 John 5:4-5 and Rev. 2-3 and 21:7 as "overcomers," and their names will be found in the Book of Life (Rev. 3:5).

- That is how the term “Book of Life” is used with respect to church-age believers who are in Christ.
- Those named in the book are the ones who will be rewarded, as we shall see further below.

Incidentally — and this is very important — not everyone who goes by the religious label Christian will be raptured, for multitudes of so-called Christians are not *in Christ*, because they have not believed on Him for eternal life by faith alone, not of works.

- They may believe in Jesus, and even His virgin birth, and His death, burial, and resurrection.
- But if they teach some form of works as required for initial salvation (for example, baptism, or observing the sacraments, or doing good deeds, etc.), then they are not in Christ and therefore will not be raptured prior to the Millennium.
- The rapture is unique to those who are *in Christ*.
- All others — whether they call themselves “Christian” or not — will remain in the grave until after the Millennium, when they will be resurrected to face Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment.
- That is the second resurrection.

We will explore how the Book of Life relates to this group in a moment.

- But first, we must see how the term Book of Life is used in the Scriptures and how traditional theology has seemingly misinterpreted it.
- Many traditionalists assume those who are in the Book of Life go to Heaven; and those who are not in the Book of Life go to Hell.
- In their way of thinking, all humans are written in the Book of Life when they are born, but unbelievers are

blotted out of the Book of Life, which means they go to Hell, which cannot happen to believers, of course.

- We know that all believers are “eternally secure” — to use the traditional term — on the basis of 1 Cor. 15:53-54, which says that resurrected believers will put on immortality (deathlessness) and incorruption (unending existence).

Perhaps the traditional understanding of the Book of Life is too narrow.

- We are, therefore, compelled to ask: What does the word *life* mean in the term *Book of Life*?
- Let’s examine this term as used in the Scriptures.
- We find one passage in the Old Testament with all the rest in the New Testament.
- Exod. 32:31-33
- 31 Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold!
- 32 Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”
- 33 And the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.”

Keep in mind that the Israelites left Egypt as regenerated people, for they had applied the blood and believed God at the Passover.

- Not long on their wilderness journey, when Moses was up on Mt. Sinai, the people sinned grievously in making the golden calf.
- God was about to kill and thereby disinherit them, but Moses interceded and asked God to spare them, blotting his name, instead, out of God’s book, presumably the Book of Life.

- Moses asked that he experience an untimely death in place of the Israelites which, of course, meant he would forfeit his inheritance or reward in the promised land.
- He wasn't asking to go to Hell — both he and the Israelites were already believers.
- He was asking to die and become disinherited, so his countrymen might live.
- Notice God's response — v. 33, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book."
- This has to do with loss of reward and serves as a type for New Testament believers regarding the potential loss of inheritance.
- Let's look now at the New Testament passages.

Rev. 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

- This verse, which applies exclusively to those church-age believers who are in Christ, promises that overcomers will not be blotted out of the Book of Life (in the sense of inheritance), which implies that non-overcomers will be blotted out of the Book of Life (meaning forfeiture of inheritance).
- This is corroborated by at least two other passages of Scripture.
- Rev. 21:27 There shall by no means enter it [New Jerusalem] anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.
- Rev. 22:19 If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Here's the bottom line:

- Overcomers will inherit, for they are written in the Book of Life; non-overcomers will not inherit, for they are blotted out of the Book of Life.
- Non-overcomers do not lose salvation, for that is impossible.
- They have already received the gift of eternal life, which is irrevocable.
- But their names are blotted off the list of those qualified to receive inheritance, which is the reward of eternal life.
- It is important to remember that these passages have nothing to do with salvation (in the sense of regeneration).
- They are about millennial reward.

The same seems to apply in Phil. 4:3.

- Paul refers to his coworkers in ministry, "whose names are in the Book of Life."
- It seems Paul is not merely saying they are saved but, additionally, they are inheritors, for they are faithful servants of the Lord.
- But what about texts that refer to unbelievers (i.e., those who are not in Christ) and the Book of Life?
- Rev. 13:8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him (antichrist), whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (See also Rev. 17:8).

This verse refers to unbelievers during the Tribulation.

- Their names are not written in the Book of Life because they worship the antichrist.
- We know that multitudes of other unbelievers will become believers during the Tribulation.

- Presumably, they never worship the Beast.
- Thus, Rev. 13:8 is referring exclusively to those who believe Satan's lie.
- They are contrasted with the overcomers in Revelation who will refuse to believe Satan's lie or take the mark of the beast, and will likely be martyred.
- As overcomers, they will receive white robes of righteousness and will rule with Christ during the Millennium.
- So even in the Tribulation, the Book of Life is not about belief in Jesus for eternal life.
- It is about confessing Christ and overcoming.

Could it be there are those throughout history who never believed on Jesus for eternal life but whose names are, nevertheless, written in the Book of Life?

- Yes, I believe so.
- Notice the wording of the text about the Great White Throne Judgment:
- Rev. 20:11-15
- 11-12 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it ... And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.
- 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.
- 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
- 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Seeing that the Book of Life lists the names of overcomers, then why is it opened at the Great White Throne Judgment, which is for unbelievers (i.e., those who are not in Christ)?

- Dare we suggest there is such a thing as "overcoming" unbelievers?
- That will be the subject of the next episode.
- I challenge you to THINK ON THESE THINGS!