

The Narrow Gate

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All scripture quotes are from NKJ

Introduction

I write this message to people of all religious persuasions and beliefs, and to those of you who are lukewarm in your belief in salvation that is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is hoped that all who read this will give it careful thought, and read the scriptures that I quote; to ascertain that what I say is according to God's word and not my personal views and deductions. It is my hope that through reading the scriptures, that God, in accordance with his will, may open your eyes to the truth, and grant you the faith to believe in His Son Jesus Christ.

The pursuit of pleasure

"Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." and "Life is short and should be lived to the full" are well known expressions, and have many adherents. Life is indeed short and is described in God's word, the Holy Bible as **"a vapour that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away."** (James 4:14) There are those who endeavour to live their life according to this philosophy, often at the expense of others. Their only goal is to cram as much fun and pleasure into their lives as is humanly possible, and totally ignore the way this affects their fellow man, having little concern for their eternal future. There are others who pursue this philosophy, but who do show consideration and compassion to other persons, some even acknowledging the existence of God. Living their lives in this manner however, is fraught with danger, many not realising the consequences until it is too late. The word of God states that **"It is appointed unto men to die once, and after this the judgement."** (Hebrews 9:27) Also: **"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."** (Hebrews 10:31). There is no second chance as some religions teach. We all have but one life upon this earth, each one dying at our appointed time. The few years that most spend in this life is less than a nanosecond of time compared to eternity, for eternity lasts forever. The manner in which we live our lives determines our eternal future, and is the subject of this study.

The two gates

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ said in Matthew 7:13-14 **"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life, and there are few who find it."** What is this NARROW GATE and how can we find it?

Picture in your mind two roads (ways). The broad Road which has a slight downward slope making it easy to walk; as the name implies the road is wide and capable of taking many people walking abreast. The narrow Road; which is uphill and twisting, making it difficult to walk, and quite probably, only permitting one abreast.

Let us now examine the roads and those we would find on them.

THE BROAD ROAD

This road is capable of carrying an innumerable number of people. It is easy to find because the gate or entrance to it is large. We see men and women of all nationalities, religions and beliefs travelling this road. We see Atheists, Agnostics, Humanists, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Masons, Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists and the many other Christian denominations. There are also the various Christian Scientist cults, new age religions, Satanists etc.

All are sinners

On this road we view Idolaters, the sexually immoral, murderers, rapists, cheats, liars, thieves, fraudsters. People who are proud, boastful, arrogant, mean, selfish, violent, unthankful, lovers of money and covetous. We see the uncompassionate, the inconsiderate, people who are crude, uncouth, cruel, unloving, unforgiving and ungodly. We see clairvoyants, fortune tellers, false prophets, monthly prognosticators, deceivers, diviners, sorcerers. The list of human evils, depravity, and sins, can be summed up as rebellion against God, and transgression of His law. All sin is ultimately against an awesomely holy, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God whom as the prophet **Isaiah at 57:15** states is **"The lofty one who inhabits eternity."** God has always existed and will always exist. God is not part of His creation and neither is He subject to the laws that He set in place, that maintain order in His universe. God exists by His own power: meaning that He requires absolutely nothing at all! Hear what our creator says about Himself at **Isaiah 40:21-22** **"Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundation of the earth? It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are as grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in."** And again at **Isaiah 44:24-25** **"Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb: I am the Lord, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself; Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, and drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge Foolishness."**

Glory in themselves and not in God

What are the people like on the broad road and where are they travelling to? They all have one thing in common; they love the world and all that it offers; it's culture, entertainment, loose morals, racial pride, religious pride, politics, religions etc; they seek the praise of their peers rather than the praise of God. They refuse to humble themselves before God, but exalt themselves and others of like mind, with the belief that they are in full control of their own destiny, and because of their love of self and worldly values, are ignorant that their very lifestyles betray their true natures; natures that are in opposition to the Eternal God, who views them all as rebels and sinners. Some do not believe in God; there are those who worship false gods, and those who imagine that they will receive eternal life simply because they attend a

“church” each Sunday. Most accept the “evolution” of the universe and life, and worship the creation rather than the creator God. Still others believe that they have eternal life because they were baptized as a child; others denigrate our Saviour through denying His Deity and His bodily resurrection and endeavour to combine Judaic/Christian traditions into religions that are embraced by gullible people.

Saved by grace not works

Another common belief is that one can attain to a “life after death” (Salvation), through their own good works and by endeavouring to keep the Ten Commandments. This is a fallacy, as the bible teaches quite the opposite. The bible teaches that a person is saved by Grace alone, through faith, apart from works. Grace can be described as “undeserved kindness extended to helpless sinners.” The apostle Paul says at **Ephesians 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.**” It matters not what a person believes; if they reject God’s provision for the forgiveness of sins they will find themselves on this broad road!

Salvation in Christ only

Salvation is from God only. He has provided the way that we can receive a full pardon for our sins; past, present and future. God is not a God of compromise, He does not change but is the same from eternity past to eternity future. God is a God of love, but he is also a just God who - although longsuffering – will one day judge all sinners without partiality. God Himself is our Saviour. Hear what the prophet Isaiah says.

Isaiah 43:3 “**For I am The Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour”**

Isaiah 43:11 “**I even I am The Lord, and besides Me there is no Saviour”**

Isaiah 44:6 “**Thus says The Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer The Lord of Hosts; I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no God.**” God is saying that He is our Saviour and our God. In Old Testament times, people were commanded by God to sacrifice a lamb as an offering to God to atone for their sins through the shedding of its blood. This had to continue year after year because it only covered their sins, but it looked ahead to the time that the Son of God would be offered once for the forgiveness of all sins to those who would believe in Him. At **Hebrews 9:28** we read “**So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.**” **Hebrews 10:12** “**But this Man, (Christ) after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.**” **Romans 6:10** “**For the death that He (Christ) died, He died to sin once for all, but the life He lives, He lives to God.**” **1 Peter 3:18** “**For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.**” God has provided us a perfect “Lamb” His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, who during His time on this Earth, fulfilled the Law; died for the forgiveness of sins, was buried, and the third day rose from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of the Father. Through the shedding of His blood and His death on the cross we have forgiveness of sins. And through His resurrection we have an assurance of everlasting life. The Apostle Paul says at **Romans 6:23** “**For**

the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Eternal life on God’s terms only

Those on the broad road are endeavouring to obtain eternal life their way and not on God’s terms. Many on this road believe that they are righteous enough to get there without Christ. Our Lord said at **Matthew 5:20** **“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”** God says at **Isaiah 64:6** **“But we are all like an unclean thing and all our righteousness are like filthy rags.”**

At **Romans 3:19-24** we read **“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”** Paul further writes at **2 Corinthians 5:21** **“For He made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the Righteousness of God in Him.”** What powerful words! Salvation is truly mind boggling to say the least; to think that our creator, the Sovereign Lord, would humble himself and become one of us in order that we might be saved and have fellowship with Him is truly wondrous. I can only echo what Paul penned at **Romans 11:33-36** **“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His Judgements and His ways past finding out! “For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?” For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”**

God’s word does not change

Many people believe that the Bible is God’s word but do not accept all that it teaches. Some would add that much of the Bible is not relevant in today’s modern world. I suggest to you that the Bible is as relevant today as it was in the past. Just because man chooses to accept and pass laws that condone sexual immorality, sexual deviation, and laws that undermine the family unit, under the umbrella of Secular Humanism, does not make it acceptable! Those who promote these views and encourage others to accept as normal this type of immoral behaviour will at the judgement be repaid accordingly.

Religions will not save you

You probably wonder why I have included members of Christian “churches” as those who are travelling the broad road to destruction. I certainly do not believe that all of

those who attend “mainstream churches” are on this road but that many within these “organisations” are in love with the world and its values and know little of the responsibilities of being a “believer” in Christ. Even Muslims, Hindus and several “Christian cults” acknowledge Christ as a prophet but do not have the God-given faith to accept Christ’s deity, and neither have the faith to accept Him as their saviour. Many of these “Christian” organisations even alter the bible to suit their own peculiar ideas; others either disagree with it or disregard much of its content, and there are those who rely heavily on the teachings of their human founders and leaders, many placing their teachings on an equal footing with scripture and always giving these “teachings” precedence over God’s word. They appear not to have regard for the truth that is only in God’s word, but blindly follow false teachings and prophecies that satisfy their gullible minds; they can be compared with those who, as our Saviour stated **“strain at a gnat, yet swallow a camel.”** These false prophets and teachers prophesy of Christ’s second coming, or the end of the world, and set dates; and when these do not come to pass, they revise the dates, or else spiritualise their false prophecies, never admitting their deceits and lies, never acknowledging to their “brainwashed” followers that they are in gross error. But do the multitudes of “blind” followers leave these organisations as a result of these false prophets and their pathetic babblings? NO! Most continue with them hoping for further “revelations,” believing that they are the chosen people, little realising they are being deceived by smart businessmen, who live very comfortably at the expense of these very gullible people!! Each person is responsible for what they believe in this life; ultimately Christianity is a personal belief and on-going personal relationship between you and Christ! It most definitely is not between you and the “church” or organisation that you happen to belong to. If a church preaches that through your belonging to their organisation, and through your observance of their customs and acceptance of their particular beliefs that you will inherit eternal life and that they only hold the key to this life; my advice is to flee from them, for they do not speak the truth! Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ said at **Revelation 3:20 “Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me”** This was written to the church of the Laodiceans, of whom Christ had nothing good to say, and is typical of the state of many churches and their congregations today. The message of Christ standing at the door and knocking is directed not to the church, **but to the Individual.**

A weak message.

Most “churches” require its congregations to tithe or donate funds; much of these funds go towards investing in land, the building of bigger and greater church buildings, hospitals, schools etc. They build extravagant churches and cathedrals, some denominations furnish them with statues; the sheer opulence of these structures are for their own glory and certainly not God’s. Individual members need to question the doctrine of their church to determine the following. Do they preach a gospel of repentance for the forgiveness of sins? Do they preach the death and resurrection of Christ? Do they preach that a person must be born of the Spirit to enter into life? Do they preach that the sexually immoral, diviners, fortune tellers, liars and all who continue in sin are excluded from the Kingdom of God? Do they preach a judgement of hell for the lost? Or do they in fact preach a watered down message in the hope that

it will not harm a person's "self esteem," and drive them away from "their" church? There are however many pastors who do preach the true gospel, and it is the responsibility of each person to search the scriptures in order to ascertain if he speaks scriptural truth, and to take the appropriate action if his, or the "churches" general beliefs and teachings are in error.

Carnal clergy

The apostle Paul gave the required attributes for a man who would lead the local believers. Bare in mind that the early "church" was the "Household" with the man being the head, and required to bring up his family and all those in his household in the observance of all those things preached by the apostles with regards to salvation in Jesus Christ alone. These small households of believers met in larger groups and elected a suitably qualified man to be the overseer of the flock, see **Titus 1:6-9**. Briefly this person had to be a man, the husband of one wife, and with godly attributes and morals, well versed in the knowledge of Christ etc. This basically ruled out homosexuals, people of poor character, and also women. Today we find within these various denominations, leaders who are, sexually immoral, persons of poor character, women priests, persons who do not accept the resurrection of Christ and some who do not think the cross was necessary! Others believe that His death did not fully save, and that we ourselves must suffer to pay for our sins! What utter heresy! Those who lead people astray with false doctrines and false prophecies, and those of the "flock" who blindly embrace their false utterings, will find that they are on the broad road and will, at the judgement, stand accused before God.

False prophets/teachers

These false leaders of today can be likened to the Pharisees, who were the religious leaders during New Testament times, of who Christ said at **Matthew 15:14** **"Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch"**. At **Matthew 15:7-9** Christ scathingly rebuked the religious leaders of those times: **"Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.' And in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."** At **Matthew 7:15** we read **"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves"**; and at **Matthew 7:21-23** Christ said **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' and then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"** At **Galatians 6:7** Paul writes **"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."** Those leaders who deceive people into accepting their false teachings, are responsible for robbing many of eternal life; and at the judgement, they themselves will receive the greater damnation!

Evolution

Those who believe in “evolution” be it Darwinian or Theistic evolution deserve special mention. The scriptures are quite clear that God created the universe from nothing, and created life on this earth that reproduces “after its kind.” The “simple” cell, far from being simple has proven to be extremely complex. Advances in molecular biology and scanning electron microscopes reveal a cell that contains thousands of molecular machines. Further advances in the study of DNA speak of DESIGN, not the random chance that over “ridiculously long” time spans, that life can evolve. Evolution is a theory only and lacks any form of concrete evidence. Man, with all his knowledge, has not been able to produce life from lifeless matter, yet he embraces a theory that believes that life originated by chance over billions of years! I personally do not possess the faith that is needed to believe the absurd! Believers in evolution place limitations on God’s ability, but do not place limitations on evolution! At **Romans 1:18-20** we read **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”** We as mere mortals with limited knowledge should observe the sheer variety, and complexity of all forms of life, and acknowledge that even if evolution were possible then surely we would observe a world of utter drabness. The universe and all life points to an awesome designer: The almighty God who has always existed, and to whom belongs all glory!

THE NARROW GATE

The Lord God said at **Isaiah 55:8-9** **“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts,”**

Compared to God we are as the dust of the earth. We endeavour to live our lives the way we think they should be lived in order that we may please our peers, and our families, and we struggle to set examples to friends and relatives, comparing our success or failure to our fellow man. We love and seek after the praises of others and covet the things that the world offers, and pursue them; blindly believing that we are better persons for having achieved our materialistic goals. We are ignorant of, or else choose to ignore that one day we will all have to give an account to God on the way we have lived our lives.

Repentant sinners

The people on the narrow road are - like those on the broad road – **sinners!** But there is one important difference: they are **forgiven sinners!** The way to life begins with us humbling ourselves before God, and acknowledging that we are utterly helpless

sinners incapable of saving ourselves. We need to repent to God of our sins and place our faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour. It doesn't end there, for we need to make Jesus the Lord of our lives, putting our trust in Him and believing the promises of eternal life that are in Him alone. Christianity is a **personal** relationship between you and Christ, and involves walking **daily** with Christ in **all** aspects of your life. The apostle Peter said at **2 Peter 3:9** **"The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."** Concerning our walk with Christ, Paul said at **Galatians 2:20** **"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."**

Faith and righteousness

The Bible teaches that **"The just shall live by faith"**: **Romans 1:17**; meaning we are to live our lives by **faith/trust** in Jesus. Faith in Christ as your Saviour is essential for salvation; for when a person repents and comes to Christ, Christ's righteousness – which is the righteousness of God – is **imputed** to them as a believer. Having the righteousness of God is a prerequisite for salvation, and through the indwelling of the **Holy Spirit** – which is promised to those who believe - we will be able to "bring forth good works." At **Ephesians 2:10** we read **"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."** After repentance to God for your sins, and acceptance of Jesus Christ as your personal saviour you should be baptized in the name of the **Father, Son and Holy Spirit**. Baptism for a believer in Christ, is a symbol of your being buried with Him in His death, and that if you are buried with Him in His death, that you will also be risen with Him in His resurrection. At **Romans 6:4-8** **"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."**

Children of God are led by the Spirit

When we, with our hearts believe in Christ, we are born of the Spirit and become children of God. The apostle John wrote at **John 1:12-13** **"But as many as received Him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God"**. Those who believe, **have** eternal life and will not come into the judgement. **John 3:18** reads **"He who believes in Him (Christ) is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."** And **John 5:24** **"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgement, but has passed from death into life."**

We are to walk in the Spirit and we are required to “bring forth the fruit of the Spirit”. At **Galatians 5:19-25** the Apostle Paul, speaking to believers, contrasts the works of the “flesh” with the fruit of the “Spirit”: **“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”**

Love fulfils God’s law

The Greek language that the New Testament is written in has four different words which mean “love.” The word used here and at other places where the Holy Spirit wishes to differentiate between God’s pure love and other types of love or affection, is “**Agape**” written in the Greek as “agaph” and pronounced “**ag-ah’-pay**”. This is the love that God has for us, and it is the love that Christ commanded his disciples to display for each other. This is the love that Christ displayed to all people during his sojourn on the earth and the love he showed towards us when he gave his life for a ransom on the cross. This “**agape**” love can be described as a “pure, unconditional, sacrificial” love.

Derek Prince an evangelist (now with Christ) once wrote:

Love-the primary form of fruit-is listed first. The others that follow may be understood as different ways in which the fruit of love manifests itself:

*Joy is love rejoicing.
Peace is love resting.
Longsuffering is love forbearing.
Kindness is love serving others.
Goodness is love seeking the best for others.
Faithfulness is love keeping its promises.
Gentleness is love ministering to the hurts of others.
Self control is love in control.*

The bible states that love covers a multitude of sins, and that love fulfils the law. It is easily concluded, that if we love our neighbour, we would not sin against him nor provoke him to do us evil to us. We would not covet his goods, and neither would we do any other evil to him. At **Romans 13:10** we read “**Love does no harm to a neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.**” And at **1 Peter 4:8** “**And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a**

multitude of sins.” Our Lord said to His disciples at **John 13:34-35** “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The resurrection

At **Acts 4:12** the apostle Luke wrote - under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit - concerning Jesus Christ, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Neither Buddha, or Mohammed nor any other man, except Jesus Christ, foretold their death, burial and RESURRECTION. Many have tried to discredit the bible and deny His resurrection, and have managed to convince some, with fanciful theories, ranging from “his disciples stole the body”; or “He revived after he was taken down from the cross”; or as the “Jesus Seminar” would have us believe that “His body was laid in a shallow grave, and was eaten by dogs”; to the heresy promoted by some cults that “God disposed of the body”; thus denying a central tenet of old and new testament teachings of the resurrection of the body! At **Job 19-26** we read “And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God.” And at **Daniel 12:2** “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Also **1 Corinthians 15:4** “and that He (Christ) was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” And at **John 2:19-22** “Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this to them.” And at **1 Thessalonians 5:23** we read “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This does not mean that the body does not decay, (for it will decay), but that it will be nonetheless resurrected and re-fashioned into a glorified body at His coming. **Philippians 3:20-21** reads as follows: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.”

Christ will come again

The Old Testament contains many prophesies of Christ’s first coming as the “suffering Messiah,” to give His life a ransom for our sins, and also of His coming as King of kings and Lord of lords, to judge the world. The old testament ends with none of these prophesies being fulfilled, but the new testament tells the story of the Messiah’s life, His sublime teachings, and His suffering and death at the hands of wicked men; and also of His resurrection on the third day! Further, the new testament contains prophesies of Christ’s second coming to set up His millennium reign on earth; the end of which shall witness the destruction of the present universe, and the subsequent judgement of unrighteous mankind, Satan, and his angels: after which, the

saved of all ages, shall witness the creation of the new heavens and a new earth and the Holy City New Jerusalem, “whose builder is God” coming down from heaven, and which will be the Glorious dwelling place for the redeemed of all ages!

The road to life

The narrow way is a winding path, hard to travel; but we have a helper who is always with us. You will find that you will stumble and fall quite often, but if you lift up your eyes you will see a loving face and an outstretched hand, and if you give Him your hand He will gently lift you up, and place you on your feet so that you may continue on your journey to eternal life. On this road you meet few people, but some you meet will encourage you on your journey, and others you too, may also be able to encourage. At the end of this narrow way stands our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and if we have been faithful to Him and borne fruit according to our several abilities, we will hear Him say at His judgement seat **“Well done thou good and faithful servant, welcome into the joy of the Lord.”** Every believer should make it their aim to be well pleasing to Him, for the Lord is a rewarder of those who love Him.

THE JUDGEMENT

The scriptures speak of two judgements; the judgement of the saved and the judgement of the lost. The righteous will appear at the “judgement seat of Christ,” but the unrighteous and the ungodly will appear at the “great white throne judgement.” These two judgements are separated by a length of time called the millennium or approximately 1000 years. It is not my intention to go into the judgements in great depth but only to alert you to what scripture says will be the future of all people who have ever lived on this planet. **1 Peter 4:17-18** says **“For the time has come for judgement to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now “If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?”**

The judgement seat of Christ

All believers appear at this judgement. It is not a judgement of condemnation, because as already mentioned, if you are a true believer, and the Holy Spirit dwells within you, through your faith in Christ, you are declared righteous before God, and already have the gift of everlasting life. You are judged by Christ - for all judgement is done by Him - for the works done after accepting Him as your Saviour; your eternal life is not in question! You are judged for all works performed after coming to faith in Christ, whether they are “good” or “bad” works. The apostle Paul, speaking to “believers,” says at **Romans 14:10-12** **“For we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ. For it is written: ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”** and at **2 Corinthians 5: 10** **“For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”** The scriptures unfold to us the judgement seat in operation. Paul says at **1 Corinthians 3:10-15** **“According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master**

builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear: for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire: and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss: but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

Believers are judged by their walk with Christ

How a believer builds upon the foundation, is entirely his responsibility. He can live a life with the Lord always in his life, or with Him in the background. It is your individual "walk" with Christ that is being tested at the judgement seat, and the materials used to build upon the foundation will be according to your commitment to Christ. With total Commitment, you will slowly but surely build upon the foundation using precious metals and gems. Lack of commitment results in a "lazy" walk and the subsequent use of materials that will not survive fire. This brings us to the question of rewards; what are they, and what happens after receiving a reward? At **1 Corinthians 9: 24-27** Paul compares the Christian life as running in a race, and that those who run the race run to win a perishable crown, but only the one who wins the race receives the crown. He tells all believers to run the race in a way that they may win and receive an imperishable crown, for if you do not enter the race how can you expect to receive the prize or reward!? Paul at **1 Corinthians 9:27** says **"But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."** Not disqualified from salvation, but from the prize of the crown. The bible mentions several crowns, such as the crown of righteousness, the crown of rejoicing, the crown of life, and the crown of glory. The Lord told Paul, shortly before his martyrdom, that a crown of righteousness had been reserved for him, this we read at **2 Timothy 4:7- 8** **"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."** The reward that some receive at Christ's judgement seat, entitles them to rule with Him in His millennium kingdom on earth, and forevermore! **At Revelation 3:21** we read **"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."** And at **Revelation 20:6** **"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."**

The fate of the lazy disciple

What is the end of him, whose works were completely devoured by fire? Firstly we view him standing on the foundation with his building made of wood, straw and hay: the fire starts to search his works, which, because of the materials used by him, are rapidly consumed and converted to ashes. We then view the believer, head bowed in utter shame, but still standing upon the foundation stone, left with nothing but that

which he had at the beginning of his conversion to Christ. He has nothing to give to Christ but his belief only; nothing to show for his life at all; but he is still standing on that precious and proven foundation, and as a result of this he still remains saved, but can have no part in ruling with Christ in His millennium kingdom. What other loss this **“wicked and slothful”** servant will suffer (see Matt 25:14-30) is not fully revealed in the scriptures, but he will not lose his salvation! His name still remains in the book of life! The future for all believers is truly phenomenal, hear what the Holy Spirit says at Romans 8:16-17 **“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”** Christ inherits all things, and because we are joint heirs with Christ, all things are ours also! At Revelation 21:7 we read **“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son.”** Having touched briefly on the judgement of believers, where it is readily seen that their future is glorious, we now look to the judgement of the ungodly and sinners.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT

The ungodly and wicked reserved for judgement

We read at 2 Peter 2:4, 5 and 9 **“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgement; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;”.....“then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgement.”** In the NKJ version, of which all scriptures in this study refer, the place where departed souls are held is called in the Greek language **“Hades.”** Prior to Christ’s resurrection there were two separate places referred to collectively as Hades; one was “Hades” the place where the ungodly and sinners were consigned to at their death, and the other was **“Paradise” or “Abraham’s bosom”** where Christ went, see Luke 16:19-31; and where the thief on the cross who was converted met Christ again that very day, see Luke 23:39-43. Some denominations believe that Jesus went to Hell for three days, others adding that he was tortured by Satan! Absolute heresy! Satan is not yet in Hell. Hell, the final place of Satan and his angels, and all of wicked mankind who wilfully reject the gospel of salvation; is referred to in the book of Revelation as “The lake of fire,” and at other places in the New Testament as “Ghenna.” Others have the belief that Satan will torture people in hell, or the equally unscriptural belief that hell is a place of gross sexual depravity and fun; Utter nonsense!

Righteousness of God is the benchmark of judgement

The judgement at The Great White Throne is described in **Revelation 20:11-15**. To the horror of all who stand at this judgement, is the discovery that the standard or benchmark of their judgement is **“The Righteousness of God,”** and sadly all fall short of this standard, some more than others. It could not be otherwise, for we have

already seen the very same standard being used, at the judgement seat of Christ; where all who stood at that judgement, stood un-condemned; not because of their own righteousness but because of the righteousness imputed to them through faith in Christ as their Saviour; and the righteousness of Christ is exactly the righteousness of God, for He is God. There is but one God and one standard of righteousness: and this very righteousness/holiness is the very nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The unrighteous judged by their works

Because all fail to meet the standard of God's righteousness, judgement is based on works, and as a result, is graded; that is graded according to the works performed in this life; and thus it is far better to have done good than to have done evil: better to have loved than to have hated, better to have given than to have taken, better to have been truthful than to have lied, better to have thought of the needs of others, rather than the selfish needs of self. God will judge all sin and hold each person responsible for the way that they have lived their lives. Mention is made of "books" being opened and also the book of life, the latter containing names only; and the dead are judged according to the things written in these books. At the final judgement there can be no defence, no debate, no casting blame on others, for they stand condemned before the all powerful, all-knowing God the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom all judgement belongs, and each one will be repaid accordingly, for God says in His Word that vengeance belongs to Him, and that He will repay! At **Revelation 21:8** we read **"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."**

As mentioned above, the "book of life" contains only the names of the saved, for as our study has shown, the saved are saved by a most remarkable salvation, which is not based on works but on grace alone through faith; and if your name is not in this particular book, you are cast into hell.

The Deity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit

There are many "Cults" and many religions that deny the deity of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. There are those who put Christ on the level of a prophet and others that put Him on the level of an angel, and the Holy Spirit they either deny His existence or consider Him to be nothing but a "force" from God. These religions and their followers, are in gross error, and do not understand what is written in the Holy Scriptures about the three members of the Godhead, for understanding of the scriptures can only be revealed by the Holy Spirit. It is not my intention to cover this topic in this study but list below a few of the many scriptures that prove the Deity of both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit which the reader is able to research themselves!

The Deity of Christ:

Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 43:3, Isaiah 43:11, Isaiah 44:6, Isaiah 44:24-25, Isaiah 47:4, Isaiah 48:16, Isaiah 63:16, Isaiah 54:8, Jeremiah 50:34 Zechariah 2:10, Zechariah 12:10, Micah 5:2, Psalm 78:35, John 1:1-3, John 8:58, Philippians 2:5-6, and at Revelation 1:8 we read "I am the Alpha and the Omega,

the Beginning and the End” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

The Deity of the Holy Spirit :

Isaiah 48:16, Matthew 12:31-32, Luke 12:12, Ephesians 4:30, Romans 8:26, John 14:26, John 16:13, Acts 8:29.

Body, soul and spirit?

These very same people emphatically deny that man is body, soul, and spirit. The bible however teaches that the physical body is merely the tent or dwelling place for the spirit and soul. At Hebrews 4:12 we read “**For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**” Also 1 Thessalonians 5:23 “**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” See also 2 Corinthians 5:8, Genesis 35:18, Revelation 6:9-11, Matthew 10:28.

The powers of darkness

Life on this earth is short indeed and many leave this life, unsure of what happens after death; some die with expectations of a life hereafter filled with joy, but without real proof or confidence of their continuing existence; others rely on dubious doctrines from various sources which always preach doctrines based on works rather than faith, and all without fail denying the Deity of Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection for the purpose of bringing us to God. All these doctrines are doctrines of demons and certainly are not of God. At 1 Timothy 4:1 we read “**Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.**” That Satan will appear as an angel of light, and that through this deception he is able to lead many on the road to destruction, read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 “**For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.**” At Ephesians 6:12 is written “**For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.**” Paul wrote this to the believers at Ephesus, and it is still very relevant today, and probably more so, as we draw ever closer to the great day of judgement of this earth. Time is fast running out for the powers of darkness; and we will continue to witness an erosion in morals and an escalation in violence together with an increase in

perverted practices, as these satanic powers work frantically through their false ministers, who pander their lies, deceit, and false doctrines, that bring many into bondage to them, and who unwittingly follow them to hell.

Believers to trust Christ for their deliverance

But the believers hope should always rest in our Saviour and His promise that He will always be with us and that although our fight is with spiritual wickedness that He, if we abide in Him, will keep us from all this evil. Listen to what is said at **Romans 8:38-39** “**For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

Never too late to find the narrow gate

I have reached the end of this study: a study which is written for the express purpose of making the reader aware of the importance of placing their trust in the truth that is revealed in the word of God, the Holy bible. The writer never fails to marvel and rejoice at the precious truth and the awesome gospel of salvation that unfolds itself in the bible. To those who would but humble themselves, and open their hearts to the gentle prompting of the Holy Spirit, this knowledge of the gospel of Christ will be revealed!

If after reading this you look at your life closely, and examine your current situation with all honesty, and as a result of this examination you come to the conclusion that you are travelling on the broad road, then I believe that it is not too late to turn around. It will not be possible to fight your way back through the crowds on your own, for they will just carry you along with them on their fateful journey to destruction; but it can, and will be done if you **humble** yourself before God, **repent** of all your sins to God, and place your **faith** in Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour; making Him Lord of your life, and completely forsaking all of your ways that are in opposition to Him, yielding your life completely to Him. If you do these things with all sincerity, then you can be confident that He will come into your life, and will perform a miracle in your life, taking you by the hand and supernaturally placing you at the narrow gate. You must realise however that the narrow road is not an easy road to travel, but with the help of our Lord you will make it, and at the end of this road stands our Lord and Saviour, and the gift of “ETERNAL LIFE.”

My earnest desire to those “not in Christ” is that God, through his great mercy may open your eyes to the truth, so that you too can stand before our Saviour and hear those most precious words “**Well done thou good and faithful servant, welcome into the joy of the Lord**” Amen.