

# Unlimited Atonement

## Some of the Key Bible Passages Showing Ultimate Reconciliation for All People

### Prolegomenon

I John 2:2 briefly states the theme of this book: “**He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world**” (NIV). The letter “L” in John Calvin's theological “TULIP” stands for the opposite, a view in which atonement is “Limited,” being available only to the “elect,” and all others are forever excluded. With all due respect to this great Christian and his esteemed ideological predecessor, Bishop Augustine, there is a need nowadays for correction regarding the scope of Christ's atonement. Many Bible texts such as Psalm 65:2-3 show that atonement has no limits. The symbol “ULA” will be used hereafter to represent the title of this book.

ULA is an attempt to gather and discuss many of the Bible portions that demonstrate unlimited atonement. In its approach, it is explanatory, not polemic. “The ultimate restoration of all” is a Bible-based concept which can be given the name *apokatastasis*, a Greek word appearing in Acts 3:21. Speaking about Christ, it has been translated “restoration”: “...whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration [*apokatastasis*] of all [things] about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient times” (Acts 3:21, NASB).

There are several points of view nowadays among Bible-believing Christians concerning what God wills to do with those who die outside the faith of Christ. The two most prevalent opinions are 1. permanent punitive incarceration and 2. reconciliation to God, through Christ, after judgment. ULA is aimed at both groups of people and at non-Christians as well. Hopefully it will enable “eternal torment” believers to see that their evangelical brethren who accept total reconciliation do so because of the great number of

Bible passages they see as supporting it. ULA will also show that the ultimate reconciliation interpretation, whether accepted or rejected, deserves to be handled as an alternate biblical opinion and not as a “dangerous heresy.”

Whether properly translated or systematically mis-translated, there are two opposing groups of texts in the English versions of the Bible. One whole cluster of references implies that death is the end of redemptive opportunity for people and that those who die outside of Christ are forever separated from God. Another equally weighty cluster of Bible sections shows support for the idea that after death and judgment, God will redeem all people through the work of Christ. One of the objects of ULA is to show that all those English verses which proclaim the ultimate salvation for all people are accurate and fully inspired in their direct sense. Other books are available in which the authors have demonstrated the mistranslations of passages in the opposing cadre.

It is hoped that ULA will serve to strengthen Christians who support reconciliation in their own understanding of Bible passages which demonstrate God's unfailing love. It will help them meditate on those verses, putting their minds and hearts at rest while they let God do His work through them. May the book likewise enable such reconciliation people to live at peace with the many other Christians who hold to the eternal torment view. May reconciliation-minded believers recognize that God uses brethren holding numerous different persuasions to accomplish His multifaceted work. Often the fear of God's stern judgment is an important factor used by the Lord to reach certain people .

Finally, to our non-believing friends, may Christ draw you to Himself and personally prove the significance of His work on the cross, as He promised to do for every individual (John 12:32.) May you see Love and patience practiced even between advocates of the “two sides” of this reconciliation issue, such that you too will be moved to trust Christ as personal Savior here and now, thereby avoiding God's stern but corrective judgment later.

In my short span as a Christian (71 years), I have seen evangelical believers learn to respect divergent opinions on several other tenets, certain “sides” of which were at first treated as “heresy.” These are teachings which are not part of the central core of Gospel truth as outlined by Paul in I Corinthians 15:3-6 and Acts 13:16-41. They include questions like what mode of water baptism should be practiced, should we even baptize with water nowadays, will Christ rapture believers, when will the rapture take place, will there be a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth after the tribulation, are the charismatic sign gifts intended for believers in this dispensation, and many other topics..

God evidently desires that differences prevail on various minor Biblical matters. If He did not want any differences, I think He would have inspired the Bible writers and the hearts of Bible readers in such a way that alternate opinions would have been impossible. Perhaps He allowed diversity so that His children would learn to tolerate and respect born-again colleagues who see in the Bible different views on sundry minor themes. When tolerance and love prevail in the Body of Christ, the world begins to see that it is the gospel of Christ which is foremost and not the debates over secondary details. Yet it is important that discussion of differences continue because there is obviously one true position in each of these minor matters. Not all contrasting interpretations can be right.

There are numerous supporting Bible passages that have not been included in this book. Many of them emphasize the boundless love of God the Father. A few hint at God's improving people after they die. Then too, a large number of verses convey God's stern judgment of mankind. All the texts dealing with such posthumous judgment ought to be listed and discussed. I think that individually and collectively they do not negate God's plan to save all people; they do not teach that judgment is everlasting. Another book on this topic would be helpful.

Meditation on scriptures is spiritual exercise important to God in worship and valuable for us in keeping God's truths in mind as a foundation for our own Godly behavior. Commendable as Bible meditation is, in general, it needs to be extended to cover key reconciliation verses as well, like John 12:32. Such scripture sections enhance peace and supply patience in our dealings with annoying believers and communicating the “good news” to people on the “outside” as well. User-friendly modern translations may be employed in the memory program by simply modifying any serious translation errors where needed. Little songs can be used to enhance the memory of children and adults, as illustrated in this web site: [www.reconciliationbiblesongs.org](http://www.reconciliationbiblesongs.org).

### **Personal Bible Translations**

Interlinear Hebrew and Greek texts with corresponding English words below each line are excellent Bible study tools. They allow word sequences to be seen in the original language as a basis for producing coherent English sentences. Zondervan (Grand Rapids, MI) has published Professor Alfred Marshall's interlinear Greek-English text, an extremely helpful volume. Some other excellent interlinear texts for the whole Bible are also available on-line and free of charge, such as [www.scripture4all.org](http://www.scripture4all.org).

Of additional assistance are the very literal Bible translations, like the two produced by those talented English scholars, Young and Rotherham: “Young's Literal Translation of the Bible” (Greater Truth Publishers, P.O. Box 4322, Lafayette, IN 47903—also available free on-line) and “Rotherham's Emphasized Bible” (Kregel, Grand Rapids, MI 49501). Dr. Young is the individual who wrote “Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible: King James Version,” which is still in print.

A concordance for the particular English Bible being used will also be a significant aid. Concordances list every English word used by the translators, designating each scripture reference which contains that word. By means of numbers, it then directs

the reader to the original word in the Hebrew or Greek dictionaries found in the back of the book. These dictionaries list all the English words that were utilized to translate any original word and the number of times each English word was used. Of course, the dictionaries also contain definitions of all Greek and Hebrew words. A good concordance of this type, with its language dictionaries, is not to be confused with a “commentary.” A Bible commentary contains notes written by particular people about what they think various Bible passages mean.

There are several advantages to producing and using personal translations along with the regular versions and the literal texts. In the personal translation, English words not present in the original but added to the manuscript, can be removed. The English term “things,” for example, as in “He has put all **things** under His feet,” is absent from the Greek text. “Things” is a very popular word among English speakers and has been routinely inserted numerous times into most English Bible translations. The word “things,” however, is almost never present in either the Hebrew or the Greek. Unfortunately, “things” can automatically convey the misleading impression that only material objects are being discussed, like hills, sunsets, and rocks, to the exclusion of people. But in fact the simple original word **ALL** in the expression “**all** things” entails totally all, including people (both living and dead). “All” is certainly not limited to inanimate “things” or even to non-human creatures.

Using personal translations also enables one to shed any false respect we have for punctuation marks present in established English translations; neither Greek nor Hebrew manuscripts have any such punctuation. All punctuation has been inserted based on the translators' judgments and theological predispositions.

English words, like the loaded term “hell,” have undergone adverse changes in meaning over the years and should be replaced. The transliterated original words such as hades, sheol, or geenah ought to be employed in place of “hell.” These are terms for which the one word “hell” was used. Fortunately, translators of most modern versions

have made these replacements for “hell” in the Old Testament, but the New Testament books still need this linguistic surgery.

The best possible preparation for working out ones own translations would be the mastery of Biblical Greek and Hebrew, a task for which the majority of us are not prepared! Nonetheless, producing personal translations is a “do-able” undertaking for an average Bible reader, a chore that will require little more than patient work with the many resources available. It can instill a deep appreciation for the Bible and can help us hide God's words in our hearts. Yet, it is possible that some readers will be annoyed by the personal translations found here in ULA. Let those people consult their own favorite established translations for each of the passages included, keeping their minds on the fact that “hell,” “eternal,” “everlasting,” and a few other terms need to be understood in a different manner. Almost always in the Bible the words translated “forever,” “eternal,” and everlasting actually speak of topics that are “age-lasting” or “related to an age.”

Studying all these passages may seem a bit repetitive but a perusal of the whole list will show that unlimited atonement is an on-going theme present throughout the Bible. It is not some topic that has been cleverly exegeted from one or two obscure texts but is boldly proclaimed as part of the prophetic writings and Christ's teaching.

### **Answers for Ten Questions Frequently Asked Questions**

There are ten questions and comments offered by sincere people who examine the reconciliation-of-all idea. Additional ones can be answered by checking information available on-line at [www.reconciliationbiblesongs.org](http://www.reconciliationbiblesongs.org) or by direct e-mail to: [georgehowe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:georgehowe@sbcglobal.net).

**1. If everyone will get saved “bye-and-bye,” why did Jesus die on the cross? Wouldn't this make his crucifixion unnecessary?** Answer: If Jesus had not died on the

cross, no one would have ever gotten saved, now or later. He died to become the one and only means of salvation for all people, some in this life and all others ultimately.

2. **Is it true that the Greek word *aiOnion*, which actually means “related to an age,” must be taken to mean “forever” because the Greeks had no other way to express endless time?** No, this is incorrect. Greek has several words meaning “everlasting.” The word *aiōnion* usually means a long period of time in both classical and biblical Greek, but it does not mean not “forever.” A whole book was written on this subject by Hansen in the 1800's.

3. **What if the reconciliation people were wrong and God's punitive judgment will actually last forever? Wouldn't the idea that they might get saved after death cause some people to neglect becoming Christians and end up in eternal punishment as a result of that tragic mistake?** Answer: reconciliation believers do teach that God's judgments are stern. Every word in the Bible describing God's wrath is true. God's strict treatment of evil and unbelief is still a negative “tool” which God can and does use to draw certain people to Himself. Even if the ultimate reconciliation view were wrong, God would save those He intends to save and He can likewise use a fear motive in the process. The well based fear of falling into the hands of the Living God is enough to inspire anyone to repent and believe, whether that judgment be temporary or everlasting. Consider turning this questions around to ask: **What if the eternal punishment people are wrong?** If so, there has been a terrible misunderstanding of God's nature and His plan by millions of Christians throughout long centuries of time from about 400 A.D. onward. They will have suffered their entire Christian lives without knowing the “whole gospel,” and without realizing that God has a purpose for every individual, saved or lost. Their view of lost individuals will have been warped.

4. **Won't promoting the reconciliation concept stifle missionary activity?** No, in fact history proves otherwise. Dedicated Christians will go out to “gospelize” others,

realizing that God wants us to do this and that God will use us to help win those people He intends to reach in this life. Some of the greatest missionaries have labored under the banner of Colossians 1:20: Peter Bohler and Count von Zinzendorf (two men who helped bring salvation to John Wesley), Hanna Whithall Smith, and G. Campbell Morgan, to mention just a few. I know one excellent, dedicated missionary who likewise believes in salvation-for-all. I shall not mention his name, however, because some missionaries have been expelled from mission agencies when their espousal of Romans 5:18-19 and I Corinthians 15:20-28 became known. And let us not forget the amazing Bible missionaries Paul, Peter, John, James, Matthew, and others, who taught the ultimate reconciliation idea, as seen in the Bible sections which follow. Much more than a “missionary,” our Lord Jesus Christ Himself expressed the salvation of all in John 12:32 and several other references studied here in ULA.

**5. Won't teaching ultimate reconciliation detract from the truth that Jesus is the only way of salvation?** No; reconciliation people acknowledge and teach that the ultimate salvation of individuals who die outside of Christ will be accomplished **only** on the basis of Christ's work. Reconciliationists do not believe or teach that “Different groups get to God different ways.” Everyone in false religions will ultimately be drawn to God after judgment, but only through Jesus Christ; there is no other Savior and no other “plan of salvation.”

**6. How is any ordinary Christian qualified to promote “reconciliation of all,” when many great theologians of the past such as Augustine, Calvin, etc., together with numerous scholars at Christian institutions of higher learning, and preachers in countless local gospel churches worldwide have concluded that God's judgment will last forever?** Truth is not determined in any field by “counting noses” or trying to decide which noses are the most significant ones. Even when it comes to “counting noses,” however, a high percentage of believers in the first 400 years of Christianity believed that God will ultimately save all people. Even after Augustine popularized the everlasting torment view, there have been Christian enclaves where the verses supporting

total salvation have been remembered and honored. After Calvin's doctrine of limited atonement was canonized by a major section of Christendom, "complete salvation" views still survived among the Anabaptists and several other denominations as well. Today the reconciliation view is experiencing a resurgence of interest, starting with significant advances in both England and America during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The key approach to Christian belief rests on individual study and evaluation of God's Word and not on submission to expert "authority." The Bereans were extolled for searching the scriptures themselves to determine whether or not the apostles' teachings were true. In this age of widely available information, personal Bible study is the joyfully "possible" task beckoning every believer, be they home-maker, Ph. D., store clerk, janitor, administrative assistant, or President. Many of the scholars in Bible translation and in orthodox theology have been trained by professors who held the eternal torment concept. This academic background has sometimes prevented them from translating the Bible for exactly what it says. Even if you disagree with the conclusions of this book, you are to be commended for evaluating Bible texts which have been ignored, mistranslated, or "revised" by otherwise well-meaning scholars who were intent on perpetuating the theory of everlasting punishment.

7. **Will the knowledge that God ultimately stops judging lost souls lead people to take sin lightly in this life, and conduct evil, self-centered lives?** No; Paul stated that the reverse is true. In his transition from Romans 11:36 to 12:1, Paul showed that it is God's great mercy which is the basis for our godly behavior: "We beseech you therefore brethren, **by the mercies of God**, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice..." Paul taught that it is God's mercy which inspires living a holy life and doing good works.

8. **Do some people turn to universal salvation when a friend or loved one dies without having believed in Christ as Savior?** Yes indeed, and in certain cases the

grieving person may adopt the total salvation view without realizing that it is a well-founded Bible teaching. Satan can then use their desperate situation to turn some sorrowing Christians away from faith in the infallibility of Scripture, convincing them that there must be other ways of salvation. Such unfortunate consequences can be avoided if the Biblical facts about unlimited atonement are widely understood.

9. **How can God bring an individual who dies as a willful sinner to repentance?** Repentance can be induced through judgment as seen many times in the Old Testament. Such judgment does not need to be “everlasting” to do its God-appointed work. Repentance often comes in this life through God's kindness; see Romans 2:4. There is no reason to doubt that such kindness in the next life may be one of God's tools in reconstructing “lost souls.” God may decide to use other people who are believers, just as He does right now: “...remember this, whoever converts a sinner from the error of his ways...will cover a multitude of sins” (James 5:20). Likely there are numerous other means God will use and He knows just which path to take with each person. Whose “will” is stronger: that of a dead lost sinner or the will of the omnipotent God, the One with Whom nothing is impossible and the One Who wills that “all should come into repentance?”

10. **If God is going to restore all people to Himself, why did He not put more information on this subject into the Bible?** By taking a look at all the direct passages reviewed here, it will be seen that God has put plenty in the scriptures about total reconciliation. One statement about saving all people in the whole book would have been enough, but God has given us much more. It is true that He has provided very little detail about the means He will use to effect salvation in the afterlife. But then, many important Bible doctrines that are widely accepted in evangelical Christianity receive very little extended discussion, for example: the rapture of believers, details on the last judgment of lost people, details concerning the environment and mind-state of dead people who are right now in heaven, the processes Christ used during the week of creation, and many others. In His great wisdom God has revealed just as much as He wished on every Bible

theme, leaving room for good-natured speculation on many topics. Now let us move to these approximately 140 Bible texts, realizing that there are more, some of which are repetitive of the ones chosen below. If after studying this list of Bible passages, the Lord directs you to believe in the ultimate reconciliation of all people, please let others know that you did so because of the Holy Bible and not because of any human author(s) or philosophies

### **Some Old Testament Passages Supporting the Reconciliation of All**

ULA will be a helpful book when used in several different ways. It can be read sequentially from beginning to end. This supplies the Old Testament basis on which the New Testament reconciliation verses flourish. But readers who wish to study the New Testament passages first, can go right to them, analyzing the Old Testament later. Some may even wish to explore the “flagship” scriptures first, turning directly to such New Testament texts as John 12:32, Romans 5:5-19, I Corinthians 15:20-28, Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 4:5-10, Philippians 2:10-11, Colossians 1:20, I Timothy 2:3-6, I Timothy 4:9-11, II Timothy 1:10-13, and I John 4:20 followed by I John 2:2. Whatever reading programme is chosen, the Word of God tells its own story to all who seek the truth.

**Genesis 12:3** “I shall bless those that bless you and the one disesteeming you I shall curse. In you all the families of the earth are blessed.” God made this pledge to Abraham, and in **Genesis 22:18** Abraham was further informed “...all the nations of the earth will bless themselves in thy seed.” The phrase “...in thy seed...” focused fulfillment of the covenant directly on Jesus Christ, Who is “the seed of Abraham.” The vow made to Abraham is repeated several times throughout the Bible, as in Galatians 3:8 and Acts 3:25. In Acts 3:25 it specifically states that all the “families” will be blessed, forging a firm pledge without any limitations of time or space. Since it concerns all families on

earth, it encompasses every individual such that each person will become blessed (happy.) It has all been fulfilled through Christ's crucifixion (John 12:32).

**Genesis 18:25b** "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do justice?" In Genesis 18:25b Abraham asked a rhetorical question and its implied answer ("yes!") shows that the Judge of all the earth [God] will in fact do "justice." The word "justice" is a full-orbed expression of God's balanced assessment and corrective program. It is a blend of divine chastening, righteousness, mercy, and love. The justice of God is salutary, remedial, and temporary as manifest in Isaiah 26:9b, Job 37:23, and elsewhere.

**Leviticus 26:43-44** "...they will pay for their sins . . .and yet, I reject them not and [I] loath them not, so as to finish them off and make void my covenant with them." In Leviticus 26:43-44 the Bible dealt with Israel and her upcoming captivity. Yet it is a bellwether lesson on how God will handle other people later on. His dealings with Israel and with New Testament believers are a "first fruits" (James 1:18) of His treatment for all mankind, a prelude to the greater final "harvest." Paying for sin does not involve the sinner being abhorred. Putting a lost soul into everlasting torment, however, would violate God's words against hateful behavior, which He has flatly rejected. God avoided "...finishing them off..." because it would break a pledge that He had made specifically to Israel and more generally, to the whole human race (see John 4:42). God never breaks any promise.

**Numbers 16:22 and 27:16** "...O God, God of the spirits of all flesh..." "Jehovah, God of the spirits of all flesh..." Exclamatory references to the Lord in the book of Numbers reveal that the spirits of all humans are God's property. See also Ecclesiastes 12:7, Job 12:10, and Ephesians 4:5 in which He was shown to be the God and Father of every person.

**Numbers 23:19.** "The Lord is not a man that He should lie nor a son of man that he should feel regret. Does He speak and not do it, or [does He] speak and then not carry it

out?” The prophet Balam was reluctantly pronouncing a blessing upon the Israelites, even though King Balak had promised him a reward if he would curse them. Instead, Balam was required to say that God does not lie, change His mind, or repent. What God says, He does and what He promises, He performs. Such remarks have direct application to all the statements in the Bible guaranteeing the ultimate reconciliation of the whole human race. His being the hope of all the ends of the earth (Psalm 65:5) is not to be revised or ignored, even in the light of other Bible passages describing God's judgments.

**Joshua 23:14.** “...and you know in all your heart and in all your soul that not one word fell out from all the words, the good ones, that the Lord your God spoke concerning you; they all came to you. Not one word fell out.” God’s every last word to Israel has been secure and so are His words throughout all scripture to all people. All divine oaths will be authenticated. We can be very sure that each phrase spoken by Christ in John 12:32 will fully transpire and that Romans 16:25 will fully come to pass.

**II Samuel 14:14.** “...and He [God] devised means so as not to keep expelled the one who is expelled by Him.” Joab had called for a “wise woman” from Tekoa to enact a skit before King David in which she would pretend to be seeking David’s protection for her son who, she would say, had killed his brother in a fight. She then told David that the remaining son's life was being threatened for his action. Believing that the story was true, David promised safety for her living boy. The woman's account was a very clever and fictitious drama, somewhat parallel to a recent event in which David had banished his own son Absalom for killing his brother Amnon. The woman applied the story to David by asking him why he was banishing Absalom. In her final brief lecture to the king, she stated that even God creates devices by which people experiencing his discipline are not completely expelled. No criticism of her statement about God was made in this passage or elsewhere in the Bible. The account suggests that God is not interested in perpetual chastisement and that He would surely not use everlasting separation in hell as a punishment for lost souls.

**I Chronicles 29:11-12.** “O Lord you are exalted as head above all and in your hand are strength and power, and [it is] in your hand to exalt and repair all.” The Hebrew word I have translated “repair” has been rendered “strengthened” in many versions. But that same word was used 19 times in Nehemiah to designate the making of **repairs** on the broken walls of Jerusalem. Likewise it was employed in II Kings to describe Joash’s **repair** of the temple. In I Chronicles 29:12 Solomon was led to choose the word “repair” to show that God is capable of making **repairs** on all people and that He fully intends to do so, as shown also in Isaiah 29:34 and Psalm 64:9.

**Job 12:10.** “In God’s hand is the soul of all living beings, and the spirit of all mankind.” Whether living or dead, the spirits of all departed humans are in God’s hands (Numbers 16:22, Numbers 27:16, and Ecclesiastes 12:7). The souls of those who are lost, as well as those who are saved, are included. God the Father has put all into Christ’s hands (John 3:35 and Hebrews 1:2). Rather than entitle a book “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” as one famous early American preacher did, James Burson has given his book the title “Humanity in the Hands of a Loving Savior” ([www.reconciliationbiblesongs.org](http://www.reconciliationbiblesongs.org).) Since the spirits of all mankind are in God’s hands, as this verse clearly indicates, then there is no such thing as sinners being eternally separated from God or being punished forever (Psalm 138:7-8.)

**Job 37:23.** “...in His [the Almighty’s] justice and great righteousness, He does not oppress; therefore men revere Him.” Elihu’s Hebrew words have been rendered “He does not oppress” in the NIV and “he will not oppress” in the World English Bible. In the NASB it is stated that: “..he will not afflict.” Barnes commented as follows: “It is true that he did afflict people, but the idea is that there was not harshness or oppression in it.” Any future use of cruel and everlasting punishments on lost people is precluded by these inspired words. Elihu’s remark is but one of many phrases contradicting the theory of never-ending torment (see also Isaiah 57:16 and Lamentations 3:31-33). When believers fully understand that God does not oppress those who die outside of Christ, the clause “therefore men revere Him” in Job 37:23 will be more gloriously fulfilled. People

show even greater reverence to the One who has provided ultimate reconciliation for all mankind instead of permanent oppression.

**Job 42:2.** “I know that you are able to do all and that no plan of yours can be thwarted.” These were Job’s remarks to the Lord. Similar words are found in several other scriptures like Jeremiah 32:27, Isaiah 14:26-27, Isaiah 45:22, Matthew 19:25, and Luke 1:37. Every purpose that God has announced will be accomplished, including His many promises to save the whole world through Christ.

**Psalm 22:27-29.** “All the ends of the earth will remember and they will return to the Lord. All the families of the nations will worship before You. For the kingdom is the Lord’s and He is the One ruling the nations. All the prosperous ones of the earth will feast and kneel before Him. All they that go down to the dust will bow before Him, the soul of him that had not stayed alive.” In one glorious event all humanity will turn to God in worship. The living people will feast and bow before Him. Even those who have died will acclaim Him. The magnanimity and clarity of reconciliation in Psalm 22:27-29 are unrivaled in the entire Bible. People should not contradict or doubt these words or those in Isaiah 55:11. This future feast of total reconciliation is also covered in Isaiah 25:6-8.

**Psalm 25:8.** “Good and upright is the Lord, so He teaches sinners in the way.” The dealings God has with sinful people are good and upright; His judgments are instructive as well as corrective. Will God’s attitude change after a lost person dies? Will He stop all instruction and exude permanent condemnation posthumously? No Bible verses make such statements.

**Psalm 30:5.** “His indignation lasts one moment; His favor, for a lifetime. In the evening lamentation lodges and in the morning is jubilation.” If chastening for sin lasted forever, Psalm 30:5 would be in error. A brief history of God’s dealings with mankind goes something like this: indignation, lamentation, confession, and then jubilation. A joyful finale awaits everybody “in the morning.”

**Psalm 33:5.** “He [Jehovah] loves righteousness and justice; the Lord’s unfailing love fills the earth.” Love and righteousness always temper the justice and judgment of God. In light of Psalm 33:5 what chance is there that this same Lord will send lost sinners to an endless hell? King Solomon understood that it is God’s unfailing love that atones for sin, see Proverbs 16:6.

**Psalm 48:9.** “Within Your temple, O Lord, we meditate on your unfailing love.” The NIV, quoted here, communicates the delightful manner in which God’s unfailing love should be the centerpiece of the believers' worship. When Paul in I Corinthians 13:8 indicated that “...love never fails...” he was probably referring to Old Testament references like Psalm 48:9, which speak repeatedly of God’s unfailing love. An extremely important syllogism is: God is love; love never fails; God never fails. Discipline? Certainly: but who says “forever?” Not God and not the Bible. In both Old and New Testaments God's discipline is always “related to the age” [*aiOnion*” in Greek and “*ad olam*” in Heberew] and it is not said to be “everlasting” in either language.

**Psalm 64:9.** “And every human will fear, and they shall declare the accomplishments of God, and His work they will ponder.” The Hebrew word for “every human” (*adam*) means all mankind. It is not limited to those who are on earth and alive at the specific time. The time is coming when all people will magnify the works of God with reverence, respect, and wise-hearted contemplation, as the passage teaches.

**Psalm 65:2-3.** “O You that hear prayer, **unto You will all flesh come.** Iniquitous things triumph over us: our transgressions. **You will make atonement for them.**” “...All flesh” means all humanity, with no restrictions concerning the “elect” versus “non-elect.” Matters of depravity surely gain sway in our lives and attain the mastery over us. Making atonement for our sins means that God through Christ has covered and forgiven them. In earlier translations, atonement was called “propitiation.” It is through Christ that the

propitiation was accomplished (Romans 5:11 and I John 4:10). In I John 2:2 the Holy Spirit clarified the whole issue even further by stating that propitiation was achieved for the sins of the whole world. This verse and many others prove that God's atonement for sin is unlimited, hence the title: ULA.

**Psalm 65:5.** “With awe-inspiring righteousness, You will answer us, O God of our salvation, Hope of all the ends of the earth and the far-away seas!” The awesome answer God gave to the problem of human sin was the coming of “God the Son,” our Lord Jesus Christ. God is not simply “the God of Creation” or “the God of might and power.” He is likewise the God of **our salvation**. The “our” in Psalm 65:5 refers to everyone because it is stated that He is the Hope of the most remote human families in time and space. When Christ became our salvation, He did it for all. All sin was “set aside” (Hebrews 9:26) and the work of Satan was completely undone (I John 3:8).

**Psalm 68:18.** “You ascend to the heights. You take captivity captive. You apportion gifts to mankind, and even to the rebellious ones, that You, O Lord, may tabernacle.” Most English translations have an error in Psalm 68:18. Where the Hebrew says that God **apportioned** (or gave) gifts **to** mankind, the translators mistakenly stated that God **received** gifts **from** mankind. When Paul quoted Psalm 68:18 in Ephesians 4:8, however, he plainly wrote that God **gave** the gifts. Since He intends to dwell, to tabernacle, or to rest among all people, the Lord will supply gifts to them, even to the stubborn or refractory individuals, who will by that time evidently be changed. God's universal approach in giving gifts to all people, even the rebellious ones, is well substantiated in scriptures such as Luke 6:35-36 where He is said to be kind unto the ungrateful and the wicked. Likewise, Paul taught that God would have mercy on people who cannot be convinced or persuaded (Romans 11:32), that He might have mercy upon all. In Ephesians 4:8, Paul applied Psalm 68:18 to God's giving various spiritual gifts to Christian believers. It is interesting that God will enslave captivity itself, a remark that proves He will not use everlasting captivity to punish those who “die in their sins.”

**Psalm 77:7-9.** “Will my Lord cast off for the ages? And will He be accepting no more? Has His unfailing love come to an end permanently? Has His promise from generation to generation failed? Has God forgotten to be merciful? Or has He in anger shut off His compassion?” Asaph posed six rhetorical questions, the answers to which demonstrate that even during indignation, God exudes unfailing love, faithfulness, benevolence, grace, and favor. God’s dealings with lost dead people will surely have salutary and remedial effects, as verified in Lamentations 3:31-33 and Isaiah 57:16. In effect this passage answers the poignant question: “Is it true that God will punish people forever?” The resounding answer is “No.”

**Psalm 86:9.** “All of the nations which You have made will come and worship before You, my Lord, and they will glorify Your Name.” Every person from every nation will come in true worship before God. They will bow before Him to glorify His Name, as affirmed also in Philippians 2:10-11 and Revelation 5:13. Some will be Christian believers, whom God reached during this age through missionaries. But there will be many more who come to worship God for the first time. All of our questions about “What will God do concerning people who rejected the gospel or those who never even heard it during their whole lives?” will be joyfully answered.

**Psalm 86:15.** “And you, my God, compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and abundant in unfailing love and faithfulness!” In the verse just before this one (Psalm 86:14) David reported that he was being attacked by arrogant, ungodly, and ruthless men who wanted to kill him. What a contrast David drew between those evil enemies and God Himself! In verses 15-16 David committed the whole crisis to God and asked for merciful deliverance. David understood personally that God is slow to indignation and that even His discipline is permeated by unfailing love. David knew that God would save even the blood-thirsty men pursuing him.

**Psalm 96:10-13.** “Say among the nations 'Jehovah reigns...' He will judge the peoples with equity. The heavens will rejoice and the earth will be glad. The sea and all that is in

it will roar. The fields and all that is in them will leap for joy. All the trees of the forest will be jubilant before Jehovah, for He is coming; for He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in His truth.” Here is a balanced picture of God's judgment on nature and humanity. It is permeated by equity, joy, exultation, jubilant song, triumph, righteousness, and truth itself! A stark contrast exists between this lucid description of judgment in Psalm 96:10-13 and the vision of everlasting gloom and doom, often wrongly associated with God's judgment.

**Psalm 99:8.** “You have been a God carrying them and One bringing vengeance on their deeds.” Psalm 99:8 covers God's mercy and judgment in one brief sentence. He Who brings judgment on people for their evil deeds is also the One Who carries them, bears them up, and ultimately forgives their sins. Although aimed at Israelites, who are a kind of “first fruit,” Psalm 99:8 spills over to all mankind.

**Psalm 100.** “You, **all of the earth**, raise a shout to Jehovah! Serve Jehovah with joy! Come into His presence with jubilation! Know that Jehovah, He is God! It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves. **We** are His people and sheep in His pasture. Enter His gateways with acclamation, His courts with praise! Extol Him! Praise His Name! For Jehovah is good, His unfailing love is age-enduring, and His faithfulness unto generation after generation.” The entire earth will someday serve God and joyously shout to Him. The “**we**” of “we are the sheep of His pasture” includes every created individual in “**all of the earth**.” God's unfailing love is directed to the whole earth; it endures through all ages, and applies to all generations. The truth of total reconciliation and atonement could hardly have been presented more plainly than it is in Psalm 100. Praise God.

**Psalm 103: 6, 8-10, and 14.** “Jehovah is the One doing righteousness and justice for all of the ones being oppressed. The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in unfailing love. He will not always accuse and He will not hold on to His anger for the age. He did not do to us after our sins nor did He treat us according to our iniquities, for He knows our frame, being mindful that we are dust.” Psalm 103:7 and 11-

13 carry specific ties to Israel. But verses 6, 8-10, and 14, have reference to “all” people of all time and all places, as in the phrase “all of the ones being oppressed.” His unfailing love, His refusal to harbor indignation beyond the age, and His recognition of human frailties all rise in opposition to the belief that God's judgments last for ever.

**Psalm 106:1, 107:1, 118:1, and 136:1.** “Give thanks to Jehovah, for [He is] good, for His unfailing love is age-lasting.” After presenting these same words in verse 1, Psalm 136 then repeats the refrain “For age-lasting is His loving-kindness” 25 more times, giving it a superlative emphasis. We are told to give thanks to Jehovah and to “extol” Him. The reason that He deserves this acclamation is that (1) He is good, and (2) His love is age-enduring. His everlasting love is clearly seen in the “telos” (I Corinthians 15:28) when God will become “all in all,” by uniting with every individual.

**Psalm 110:1.** “Jehovah declared to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I shall set the ones who are Your enemies as a stool for Your feet.'” Psalm 110:1 is quoted in Acts 2:34-35. Mention is also made three other times in the New Testament of God's enemies being converted into His footstool. There is no discussion of great military subjugation by which the enemies are crushed and then stepped on by the Lord's feet. It is said instead that God will “set” (*sit*, is the transliterated Hebrew) the enemies as a footstool. Evidently God will repair His enemies so they will enjoy a peaceful and helpful relationship with Him ultimately. Of special interest, Psalm 110:1 highlights the identity of two of the three Partners within the eternal Trinity: God the Father and God the Son, since there is a comment by One Member of the Trinity to the Other.

**Psalm 119:68.** “You are good and are doing good; teach me Your decrees.” Psalm 119:68 is just a few words long but speaks volumes about God's overall attitude. It does not shed light on God's plans for dead lost people but it is a bright backdrop against which those redemptive plans may be enacted.

**Psalm 130:7.** “O Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with Jehovah is unfailing love and with Him is great redemption.” Israel and, by extension, all others are to trust in the Lord and to wait for Him because His love does not falter and His redemption has no limit. This verse is a harbinger of blessing ahead for all, even for the gentile nations, as stated by Christ in Matthew 12:21.

**Psalm 145:8-10.** “Gracious and compassionate is the Lord, slow to anger and great in unfailing love. Jehovah is good to all and His compassions are over all His deeds. All your deeds will extol You, O Lord, and your kindly ones [saints] will bless You.” Verses 8-10 have been selected but this entire Psalm shows God's goodness to all people. Verse 14, for example, states that He supports all who fall and raises up all who are bent down. The use of the word “all” here is significant because it has no “strings” attached. But verse 20 says, “...and all of the wicked He will destroy.” God's judgment on the wicked is quite obvious throughout scripture, but it is another act of His love. It will bring improvement to those being judged and tranquility to His kingdom rule in the meantime. The word “destroy” means to kill or remove; it does not signify annihilation of their spirits nor does it herald their being subjected to everlasting retribution. The final phrase of Psalm 145:20 “...for the age and beyond,” may be showing that at least some of the events being described in Psalm 145 will occur during the one-thousand year aeon. The word “beyond” may then tell of a subsequent period during which God will rule, a time which might be called “the age of the New Heaven and New Earth,” described near the end of the book of Revelation.

**Proverbs 16:6a.** “In unfailing love and faithfulness He will make atonement for sin...” In stating that God will make atonement for sin, King Solomon laid down no limitations. The atonement is for sin, presumably all sin. The boundless character of atonement is also clearly communicated in I John 2:2 in terms of propitiation for the sins of the world. Would God's love and faithfulness be “unfailing” and “faithful” if they were demonstrated only to the “elect?” In one short and sweet sentence, Proverbs 16:6a teaches unlimited atonement.

**Ecclesiastes 12:7.** “And the dust returns to the earth, as it was, and the spirit returns to God, Who gave it.” When a lost person dies, their spirit is not forever separated from God. To the contrary, God, Who is the giver of all human spirits, receives all spirits back, with no exceptions.

**Isaiah 12:1-3.** “You will say, in that day, 'I extol You, O Lord. You were angry with me and shall reverse Your anger and You shall comfort me. Behold, the Lord is my salvation, I will trust and will not be afraid. Jehovah is my strength and my song and He is becoming my salvation.' And with joy you draw water from the wells of salvation.” Probably all of Isaiah chapter 12 should be memorized because it is a proclamation of overwhelming joy for Israel, a joy that will flow across all the earth, as clearly indicated in other passages. Anger turns into comfort, strength, and singing. All people draw and drink the water of salvation joyfully.

**Isaiah 14:26-27.** “This is the plan that is determined for the whole earth, and this is the hand outstretched over all nations. For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? And His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?” Many scriptures affirm God's fulfilling all His promises to Israel, the Church, and all mankind. Like Joshua 23:14 and Numbers 23:19, Isaiah 14:26-27 shows that God carries out each action He has ever pledged to every group of people. It is heart-warming to find in Isaiah 14:26 there is mention of “the whole earth...” God's early works on behalf of Israel during a one-thousand year earthly reign, and for the Church of Christ (in this church age and during the “rapture”), are preludes to the full final harvest in which the whole human race (all creation) is to be redeemed (see James 1:19).

**Isaiah 25:6-8.** “...and Jehovah of Hosts makes, on the mountain, for all the people, this banquet of oils, [this] feast of wine dregs, of fat things with marrow, and of filtered wine dregs. And in the mountain, He swallows up the face of the shroud, the one covering all people, and the veil blanketing over all the gentile nations. He swallows up death

permanently and the Lord God wipes away every tear from all faces and the reproach of His people He will take away from all of the earth; the Lord has spoken.” As if permanently swallowing up death were not enough, the Lord promises to make a reconciliation banquet of the finest foods! The Hebrew word *goy* shows that Isaiah 25:6-8 applies to all gentile nations too. God will personally wipe away every tear from each human face and He will entirely remove the reproach that has hovered over Israel. It has got to be true because it is the Lord who said so! Come, rejoice, and forget the horrendous idea that most of the earth's population will reside forever in “eternal death.”

**Isaiah 26:9b.** “For when Your judgments [come] upon the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.” God's judgments have an educative and remedial effect in which everybody will learn righteousness. Under God's judgments, the world learns righteousness because His chastening is not merely punitive but is likewise corrective, remedial, instructive, and restorative.

**Isaiah 26:19.** “Your dead will live; their bodies will rise. Awake, you who dwell in the dust, and shout for joy. For your dew is like the dew of the morning and the earth will give birth to the dead.” There will be a literal bodily resurrection and it will cause great joy affecting all who dwell in the dust. The whole earth will restore the dead people in it.

**Isaiah 29:24.** “And those wayward in spirit [will] know wisdom, and the ones complaining will learn doctrine.” God will make big changes in people's hearts. The individuals whose spirits were wandering will gain understanding; good sense will descend on those who were grumbling. Isaiah 29:24 is a specific example of how God will instruct sinners in His ways, as indicated in Psalm 25:8. If unending hell were the destiny of lost sinners, I think that each scripture dealing with dead lost people would clearly point to permanent punishment. Instead, **no** Bible verse when properly translated from the original languages, makes any such claim.

**Isaiah 40:5.** “And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind will see it together; the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” Isaiah 40:5 indicated that all people (with no exceptions listed) will see “the glory of the Lord.” No individual isolated will remain isolated from God at that moment; no one is said to be locked out forever in torment. This prophecy was quoted and applied to the Lord Jesus in Luke 3:6 with a change showing that all mankind will also see the **salvation** of the Lord. Perhaps part of “the glory of the Lord” is this salvation in which He intends to redeem every last person, uniting with them as indicated in I Corinthians 15:28.

**Isaiah 45:22-23.** “Face Me, all the ends of the earth, and be saved. For I am the Lord and there is none else. Unto Myself I swear. From My mouth has a word gone forth in righteousness and shall not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear.” The command “Face Me...and be saved” was directed to everyone because it includes the ends of the earth. It was sworn under oath by the Lord Himself. He sealed the pledge by using Himself as security. On Whom else could God have sworn except Himself to assure His promise? The vow was affirmed by God's Own word which cannot be rescinded, as stated by Isaiah in 14:26-27. It foretells a marvelous event in which every knee will bow in true worship and every tongue will swear allegiance to the Lord. Do you believe this will be fulfilled just as it was written? Portions of Isaiah 45:22-23 were quoted twice in the New Testament and also expanded by the Apostle Paul.

**Isaiah 49:6.** “And He says to Me that He is [would be] lightly esteemed '...for You to become My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to bring back the preserved ones of Israel. And I give You also for a light to the gentiles, to become My salvation unto the ends of the earth.’” According to God, it would have been an event of only light esteem if His Servant [Jesus] had brought back only the Israelites. The fact that God the Son will be a light to the gentiles as well, with all the earth experiencing salvation, is something of far greater value. The statement that the Servant will become God's salvation “**unto the ends of the earth**” is found in several other passages throughout the Bible such as Romans 16:25. It is a pronouncement unrestricted by time, space, life, or death; it is a

worldwide proclamation of salvation for the whole race. The Israelites recognized two groups of people: 1. themselves and 2. the gentiles (Hebrew: *goy*.) Isaiah 49:6 highlights the salvation of both groups through the monumental work of His “Servant.” The fact that the Servant is able to “bring back” Israel may be speaking about His work of raising people from the dead, as well as bringing living Israelites back from far and near to their ancestral land. He is able to “raise up” and to “bring back” all.

**Isaiah 53:11 and 12b.** “Out of the trouble of His soul, He will see. He will be satisfied. Through His knowledge My righteous Servant will justify many. And He will bear their iniquities...And He bears the sin of many and He makes intercession for the transgressors.” The word “many” was sometimes used by Paul in a similar sense. “The many” in Romans 5:19, for example, is a vast group that includes every last human **except** “the One,” Who is the God-Man, Jesus the Christ. The contrast was between The One (Jesus) and “the many” who are all other people. Isaiah 53:11 stated that this “many” have had their sins carried away by God's Servant and that the “many” have also been justified. God's great atonement applies to “the many.”

**Isaiah 55:11.** “So will be My word, which will come from My mouth. It will not return to me empty. But rather it accomplishes what I desire and prospers in that for which I sent it.” Even though Isaiah 55:11 says nothing about God's atonement for people, it has a direct bearing. It says that every word uttered by the Lord will achieve every objective He intended. The widespread effect of God's spoken words was seen in creation where God said “Earth, sprout sprouts!” and plants were instantaneously alive across the whole earth. According to Isaiah 55:11, Christ's other words like “I will draw all people unto Myself” (John 12:32) will likewise be fulfilled in every way.

**Isaiah 57:16.** “For I do not contend to the age and I will not be permanently indignant. For the spirit would grow faint before me and [so would] the souls that I have made.” God revealed His intention not to punish endlessly and not to remain indignant forever. The reason God gave for not punishing endlessly is that the very spirits and souls of those

under chastisement would grow faint. God's unfailing love and mercy will have preeminence, even in His contentions with sinful people being disciplined. The phrase "the souls I have made" demonstrated that all of humanity (every last person) was being described. God's judgment of all the "lost" ones is temporary.

**Jeremiah 23:20 and 30:24.** "The anger of Jehovah will not turn back until He does and carries out the plan of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it fully." Jeremiah 30:24 has exactly the same wording as Jeremiah 23:20, except that 30:24 has the word "fierce" or "burning" inserted before the word "anger." God's anger will continue until it establishes the goals that are on His heart. God's anger is purposeful and is no mere fit of rage. The objective of His indignation is to cause changes that are central to the heart of God and the corrective anger continues until those missions have been accomplished. The fact that God's anger is burning (30:24) fits with the fact that God's Word is like a fire, see Jeremiah 23:29, in that it has a marvelous cleansing function. I John chapter 4 states three times that "God is love." "In the latter days you will understand it fully," Jeremiah was told. Could this refer to Christ's coming and Paul's presenting us the full revelation of reconciliation, long after the days of Jeremiah?

**Jeremiah 32:27.** "Behold, I am Jehovah, God of all flesh, is anything to wonderful for Me?" The original word translated "wonderful" carries the idea of something that is very difficult, even humanly impossible. After Christ emphasized the difficulty of a rich man entering the kingdom, the disciples asked him "Who then can be saved?" And Christ replied that what is impossible with man is possible with God. The context in Jeremiah 32:27 is somewhat similar: the Babylonians were about to conquer Jerusalem at the same time that the people inside Jerusalem faced famine and plague. Right then, however, the Lord was directing Jeremiah to buy a field in Jerusalem and to have the purchase witnessed. This was a seemingly senseless transaction because the city was on the verge of falling to the enemy. But the purchase was a sign to Jeremiah and the Israelites that the Lord would once more return the land to them, impossible as that seemed. Some believers wonder how God could save a sinner who dies in a rebellious condition. But

whether it comes to getting land back that is going into captivity or saving the soul of a dead resistant human, nothing is too “wonderful,” marvelous, difficult, or even miraculous for God.

**Lamentations 3:31-33.** “My Lord does not reject for the age. Though He afflicts, He will show an abundance of compassion. He does not humiliate and afflict the children of men from His heart.” God's work with people involves their being cast off, humiliated, afflicted, and grieving. But all of these are more than counterbalanced by the abundance of His compassion. God's compassion is from His heart, and it is the force behind all His disciplinary actions. Realize that the phrase “the children of men” means that this verse is not directed to Israel alone but to all humanity. How could Lamentations 3:31-33 be made to fit with the idea that God will reject some people, leaving them in hell forever?

**Ezekiel 33:11.** “As I live,' declares my Lord, Jehovah, 'I delight not in the death of the wicked but rather that the wicked one turn back from his way and live. Turn you, turn you from your evil ways! Why do you die, house of Israel?’” These words come right from God's heart and they clearly display His attitude. In their evil doings, the Israelites faced the wage of sin, which is “death.” But no mention was made of a permanent judgment in hell for those who died in sin. Since this verse proves that God is in a state of displeasure when wicked people die, will He choose to be unhappy forever by consigning them to “eternal death?” If this were so, it would mean God intends to remain permanently disgruntled, even though He has the power to train, educate, and reform lost sinners after death! Although Ezekiel 33:11 does not mention the hereafter, it poses poignant questions concerning the validity of the “limited atonement” theory.

**Hosea 6:1-3.** “Go! and we will return to Jehovah. For He tore to pieces and will heal us. He is smiting and will bind us up. He will make us alive after two days. The third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him. And we shall know, we shall pursue to know, Jehovah. His coming forth is established, like the dawn. And He will come to us like the downpour, like the latter rain that refreshes the earth.” God's tearing and smiting

are a prelude to His binding up and healing, which means that God's chastisement is ultimately constructive. He brings life and resurrection on day two and day three, which may speak of Christ's three days in the tomb. His return is promised with all certainty, like the coming of morning light, and like rain on a parched earth. A people who strayed from God will finally bend every effort to know Him. God's restorative dealings with all Israel speak prophetically of His salvation for the whole human race.

**Hosea 13:14.** “From the hand of *sheol* I will ransom them. From death I will redeem them. O death, where are your diseases? O *sheol*, where is your destruction?” The word *sheol* was often translated “hell” in the KJV. In later English translations, it was wisely changed to some another word like “death,” “the grave,” or simply to the transliterated Hebrew word *sheol*. It refers to the unseen status of the dead and has nothing to do with the concept of “hell” that has evolved in the English language over hundreds of years. Since many of the dead have died of diseases and all of them have experienced “destruction” from the land of the living, Hosea 13:14 is God's battle cry heralding the demise of death. In II Timothy 1:10 it is said that Christ “abolished” death. Hebrews 2:15 tells us that the power of death and the devil himself were destroyed through Christ. Paul quoted Hosea 13:14 in I Corinthians 15:54 and said that death has a “sting,” that its sting is sin, and the victory over death was accomplished through Christ.

**Hosea 14:4.** “I will heal their backsliding. I will love them freely. For My anger turns back from him.” The judgment of God results in healing, not in permanent punishment. God's anger has a turning point, beyond which all that remains is the love which expressed itself earlier in the form of a cleansing anger.

**Joel 2:13 and 14a.** “And tear your heart and not your garments. And turn back to Jehovah your God. For gracious and compassionate is He, slow to anger and of abundant kindness. And He relents from sending disaster. Who knows, if He will turn back and regret and leave a blessing behind, a present and a drink offering of Jehovah your God?” Many passages in the Old Testament repeatedly emphasize that God does not enjoy

bringing judgment on people. He does not rejoice in His own adverse discipline, and the correction He must bring is shown to be temporary, with God often “turning back” and sending a blessings as a result. These passages militate against the concept that He will be pleased to consign people to unending chastisement.

**Micah 7:18b-19.** “He [Jehovah, our God] does not hold fast His anger for the future. For He delights in kindness. He will return to having compassion on us. He will subdue our iniquities and hurl all our sins into the depths of the sea.” Verse 20 and the first part of verse 18 deal with God's faithfulness to Jacob and Abraham, showing that God has removed the iniquities of the Israelite remnant. This fact may cause some to limit all of the promises in the Old Testament to the Jews only. Doing this, however, neglects the “first-fruit” practice of the Old Testament and its New Testament application in James 1:18. James wrote that believers in Christ are a first-fruit of the whole creation, meaning all mankind. Adoption of these promises prepares us for the blessings God will finally shed upon all people. Micah 7:18b-19 demonstrated that God delights in kindness, not in judgment. Through the infinite work of Christ, God the Father is able to tread all our iniquities underfoot and cast all our sin into the depths of the sea.

### **Some New Testament Passages Supporting the Reconciliation of All**

**Matthew 1:21.** “...and you shall be calling His name Jesus for he will be saving His people from their sins.” Words of an angel in a dream to Joseph show that Christ came to save “His people.” “His people” indeed has reference to the Jews but without any strictures regarding the living versus the dead. Every last human being is likewise one of “Christ's people” as a result of creation. Christ came for the “setting aside of sin” in an overall and very general sense, as the writer of the book of Hebrews noted (9:26).

Here are five similar passages:

**Matthew 11:27a.** “All was given over to Me by my Father.”

**John 3:35.** “The Father loves the Son and has given all into His hands.”

**John 6:37.** “All that the Father gives to Me will come to Me and the one coming to me I will not, will not, be casting out.”

**John 13:3.** [Jesus] ”...knowing that the Father has given all into His hands and that He came out from God and was going away to God...” John then continued to show Christ's amazing example of humility in the verses which follow. Despite Christ's divinely appointed Lordship of all and His direct contact with the Father, He set aside His clothing, took up a towel, and went about washing and drying the disciples' feet!

**Hebrews 1:2.** “God ...in these last days speaks to us in [a] Son, Whom He appoints Heir of all, and through Whom He makes the ages...”

In these five different New Testament texts the Bible has shown that God the Father put God the Son in charge of all, meaning the whole creation, not just all “things.” In fact, “things” appears nowhere in these texts. There is a lock-step syllogism in these verses which goes like this: **1. Whoever** the Father gives to the Son will actually come to Him (John 6:37).

**2.** The Father gives **all** to the Son (Matthew 11:27, John 3:35, John 13:3 and Hebrews 1:2). **3.** So, **all people** will come to the Son and none will be cast out! The conclusion in step 3 of the syllogism is confirmed in John 12:32, which will be discussed separately. The Bible makes a strong case for unlimited redemption which is the ultimate salvation of all people through Christ's work. Consider another syllogism: **1.** While being crucified, **Christ prayed that God would forgive the individuals who were killing Him. 2.** Hebrews 1:2 says that **Christ has become the Heir of all. 3.** Hebrews 13:8 indicates that **Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and for the ages. 4.** Jesus, who never changes, will do with all people exactly what he did to the individuals killing him: He will forgive them. There is an interesting change in “leadership” seen in the Bible. **First,** God the Father was in control, but **then** He made Christ heir of all. The Father even helped Christ change all of Christ's enemies into His footstool (I Corinthians 15:25.) And, **finally,** God the Son will someday deliver up the Kingdom (all) to God the Father (I Corinthians 15:24

and 27) so that the Father ultimately becomes “**all in all**” (I Corinthians 15:28). There is a gracious integration and bipartisan sovereignty-sharing evident here.

**Matthew 12:20-21.** “A reed that is crushed He will not be breaking and flax that is smoking He will not quench, [**until He will ever be casting out judging into victory. And the gentile nations will rely on His name.**.]”

**Isaiah 42:3b-4a.** “Into truth He will bring forth judgment. He will not fade or be discouraged until He establishes justice on earth. And for His law, the coast-lands will wait.” Christ made it plain that the Isaiah passage is parallel to His words in Matthew. When quoting Isaiah, however, Christ introduced some wonderful changes. He spoke the phrases that are in brackets and bold type in the Matthew 12:21 quotation above, instead of the corresponding Isaiah 42:3b-4a words. **Isaiah** simply said that **the Lord would be persistent in bringing justice and that the coast-lands would wait for His law.** Christ changed those remarks to say that **He** would be **casting out judgment to make room for victory in which gentile nations would be trusting in Him.** Jesus took generalized prophetic statements about the coming judgment and converted them to show that judgment will be cast aside to make way for victory. Scripture4all.org is the only translation group I have seen to show that Matthew 12:20-21 specifically says judging will be “**cast out**” to prepare for the final victory. Christ's remark changed a simple prediction of waiting for God's law into a full-blown comment concerning how salvation of the gentile nations will be in His name. Like John 12:32, Matthew 12:21 is one of several “salvation-of-all” statements made by Christ Himself while ministering on earth.

**Matthew 20:14-15.** “Take what is yours and be going. I wish to give this last one what I gave you. Am I not allowed to do what I want with my own?” The parable of the landholder paying workers what he chooses (the same amount to each one) can be applied to entering the Kingdom of Heaven and “getting saved.” Christ actually started with these words: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like...” If God intended to save gentiles as well as Jews, that was His prerogative. If God intends to save and reconcile lost people

after judgment, who is to say He cannot, should not, or will not do this? All human souls are His property (Job 12:10) and nothing is impossible for Him.

**Matthew 20:28.** "...even so the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom in exchange for many." Christ said that His soul was given as a ransom for "many," where "many" most likely means "all." In several Bible verses the statement "many" (or "the many") is used generically in contrast to "the One." "The One" is the Lord Jesus Christ while "the many" refers to all other people. This contrast was used by the Apostle Paul at least five times in Romans Chapter five: 5:15, 5:16, and 5:19. Paul worded Romans chapter five very carefully, showing that "the many" who became sinners through the one offense includes all people. And then He specifically stated that through the obedience of the One, the many (also all people) will be constituted just: total reconciliation! Isaiah used the Hebrew word for "many" in Isaiah 53:12 and 13 to state that Christ made intercession for the sins of many and that His life was given as a ransom for many. There are no grounds upon which to say that "the many" refers only to God's elect, be they Israel or the Church. Matthew 20:28 is another verse to be put into the list of passages showing that Christ Himself emphasized the ultimate reconciliation of all people.

**Matthew 26:28.** "And taking the cup and giving thanks, He gave it to them saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is My blood of the new covenant that is poured out on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.'" Christ told all of His disciples to drink the cup. It was a type of His blood that was going to be shed "for many," giving to them the remission of sins, by which He meant that His blood was poured out for all people (see Matthew 20:28) because "many" and "the many" in scripture often mean all people except the Lord Jesus Christ. Every believer who takes part in the "communion" service is in fact celebrating Christ's blood sacrifice for the whole human race, whether they know and appreciate this or not.

**Luke 1:37.** "...because every word with God will not be impossible." Most of the translations, including the literal and even the interlinear ones, have changed Mary's sentence structure somewhat, to avoid a double negative in English. But no change is necessary. Mary's "double negative" (not...impossible) boldly demonstrated the strong faith she had in all of God's plans. May we follow her example and fully believe all of God's words, without trying to revise them. All His words on all subjects will "**not be impossible**" for God to accomplish. Thanks, Mary.

**Luke 2:10-11.** "And the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I am bringing good news to you of great joy which will be to all the people, that a Savior who is Christ the Lord was brought forth to you today in the city of David.'" The angel said "*euaggelizomai*" which is rendered "I bring you good news" in the NIV and "I bring you good tidings" in the KJV. The meaning of *euaggelizomai* in English could be even better captured by coining a new verb: to "good-news" somebody. The angel was saying "Behold, I am **good-newsing** you..." If we take the gospel of Christ to people, we are said to be "evangelizing" them, a transliteration of the Greek word *euaggelizomai*. When we evangelize people, let us give them the **really** good news that Jesus died and rose again to take away the sins of all the people. Would we be "**good-newsing**" our friends if we told them: "Should you die while failing to believe this message, God intends to consign you to hell forever"? And, what kind of good news would it be to tell people that God can and will save you but all your ancestors who never heard this message are slated to burn in hell for eternity"? The good news of great joy" in the angelic outburst was conferred on "all the people." It was not confined only to those who believed in the Messiah or who "made Him Lord in their lives." The good news is not to be draped with legalistic human trappings; it is God's work on behalf of everybody.

**Luke 2:19.** "Now Mary closely observed all these declarations, putting them together in her heart." Although Mary may have discussed the "virgin birth" with her Son's disciples and a few friends, she probably never gave public lectures on the subject! Certain Christians nowadays may be in the same position; they agree with all the reconciliation

verses but are unable to make statements about it openly. Like Mary, however, they can parley and savor these great truths in their hearts, without writing articles or giving bold speeches. God's great plan to save all people brings unspeakable joy in the heart, whether or not one is able to unfurl their "banner" widely. Furthermore, the teaching of "the virgin birth" of Christ is an essential part of the core gospel truth; it must not be treated lightly.

**Luke 3:6.** "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

**Isaiah 40:5.** "And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind will see it together." Isaiah told us that it is God's glory which will be revealed. The Isaiah 40:5 passage was quoted in Luke 3:6 such that not God's glory but His salvation will be seen by everybody. This is not a case of "take a quick look you lost sinners, and then off to everlasting hell with you!" Instead, it is "seeing" in the sense of "seeing is believing." Maybe Luke's quotation of Isaiah was not really a "revision." Perhaps the "glory" of God always includes and involves the fact that He will save lost humanity.

**Luke 6:35-36.** "Moreover you, love your enemies and do good and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be much, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be you merciful, just as your Father is merciful." The following tasks are assigned to Christians by the Lord Jesus to make them more like God: 1. start practicing love for enemies, 2. do good deeds, 3. lend freely, and 4. be merciful. Jesus made it clear that God treats everyone with love, mercy, and kindness. Christ would not have attributed this attitude to God the Father and recommended a similar behavior for Christians if God were intending to consign all of His own enemies to everlasting punishment.

**Luke 15:4.** "What man among you having one-hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one having been lost until he find it?" **Matthew 18:14.** "Thus it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." Christ's words in Matthew 18:14 follow

immediately after His parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:4.) Nothing in the Bible prevents the one lost sheep from representing each lost human soul, living or dead. Christ's assertion that it is not the Father's **will** that one of the little ones should perish involves a Greek word for “will” that does not simply mean “wish,” “desire,” or “hope.” Instead, the word “will” used by Christ is a verb meaning **to plan** or purpose. It indicates that the eternal perishing of a lost soul is outside God's **program** and as such, absolutely will not happen. “All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Christ said that each of us lost sinners will be found. The loving Lord is like the man in Jesus' parable who kept on looking until his sheep was recovered.

**Luke 16:16.** “The law and the prophets until John. From then the good news of the Kingdom of God is being preached and everyone is being forced into it.” Luke 16:16 differs in its tone from many of the verses that can be marshaled in support of total reconciliation. Everyone will ultimately press into the Kingdom and there will be a benevolent and breathtaking violence about that event.

**Luke 19:10.** “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Did Jesus qualify His pronouncement saying that He came to save only the elect among the lost? But if He said He came to save the lost people, is that impossible with Him? Is there any reason not to believe that Christ will do everything He said He came to do, including this? These assertions made by Christ about the ultimate reconciliation of all people, are the strongest and broadest of all such promises in the whole Bible (consult also John 12:32.)

**John 1:6,7, and 9.** “There was a man named John who was commissioned by God. This one came as a witness, that he might witness concerning the light, that all should believe through **it**.. Verse 9: **It** was the true light which enlightens every human coming into the world.” The Greek word *autou* can mean either **it** or **him**. *Autou* appears in verse 7 as follows: “...that all men should believe through it [*autou*]”, where “it” must mean either “it” [the light] or “him” [John Baptist]. The *autou* of verse 7 has been handled both ways in different English translations: e.g. “...through **him**” in the NIV and “...through **it**” in

the Concordant Literal New Testament. The use of **it** makes more sense. If the Apostle John had intended to write that God planned for all men to believe through John the Baptist (him), then God's plan surely failed! But if *autou* means “it” [Christ, the light], then the verse is saying that all people will believe through Christ, something that is altogether possible for God to accomplish. Furthermore, in verse 9 another word meaning “it” in the expression “it [*ēn*] was the true light...,” confirms the idea that “it” (through whom all will believe, verse 7) is the same as “it” (“Who enlightens the whole world”) in verse 9. Thus both verses 7 and 9 are both bold parallel proclamations in which “it” signifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One Who causes every person to believe and also the One Who gives light to everybody. John 1:6,7, and 9 clearly support ultimate total salvation.

**John 1:29.** “On the next day, he [John Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold the lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.” When he saw Jesus, John told his own followers the **complete** good news that Jesus would remove sin worldwide. If God had meant something different, I think He would not have inspired John Baptist to say this or John the Apostle to write it down. Sermons and church songs about Jesus remitting the sins of the whole human race are few and far between. In many songs one hears that Jesus died for “our sins,” meaning the sins of believers, or that He has forgiven “my sins” but seldom do contemporary writers exclaim that the Jesus takes away the sin of the world. Isaac Watts, however, was a leading hymn writer who understood and believed in the reconciliation of all people. So did Charles Wesley, brother of John. These songsters often spoke in terms of worldwide salvation.

**John 3:16-17.** “For God thus loved the world that He gave His Son, His only begotten Son, so that everyone believing in Him may not perish but may have age-lasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world but that the world might be saved through Him.” John 3:16 is a favorite verse among all Christians, including eternal torment believers. It is immediately followed by a verse revered by

unlimited-salvation people (John 3:17). Individuals who hold to everlasting hell emphasize the limitation implied by “whosoever believes” in John 3:16, and they feel this limits salvation to people who have expressed true faith in Christ while they lived. The reconciliation Christians argue that 3:17 shows Christ was sent by the Father to save the whole world and not merely to judge it. They believe that someday all mankind will have faith in Christ and be saved. Reconciliation people also stress that the love of God in verse 16 was directed to the whole world, not just to believers. Which view are you going to take concerning John 3:16?

**John 3:35.** Consult Matthew 11:27.

**John 4:42.** “And they said, 'Now we believe; no longer because of your speaking, for we have heard him ourselves and we know that this truly is the Anointed One, the Savior of the world.’” What did Jesus tell these men of Samaria about Himself? Did He simply say that He came to save the people who trust Him? If so, why would they come away saying that Jesus was “the Savior of the world?” The answer to these three questions comes by listening to the men whom Christ Himself had evangelized. Surely they were repeating exactly what Christ had had proclaimed. And if Christ had told them that He was the Savior of the world, who are we to revise, reject, or qualify that statement?

**John 5:24-25.** “Truly, truly I say to you, the one who hears my voice and believes on the One having sent me, has age-enduring life and comes not into adverse judging but has passed over out of death into life. Truly, truly, I say to you that an hour is coming and now is when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.” And then John 5:28-29 tells of a resurrection to life and another resurrection to judging. People who receive the gift of Christ's faith in this life will not face that judgment. And for those who are to be judged, nothing is said about their judgment consisting of an unending consignment to hell. John 5:24-25 states that all people will be raised by God's voice, some to live with Him and others to face His just, fair, and

righteous judgment. All of this passage fits very well with the view that God will finally restore all people.

**John 11:49-52.** “But a certain one of them named Caiaphas, being high priest of that year, said to them, 'You do not know anything, nor are you considering that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people and not all the nation perish.' He did not say this from himself, but being high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also [for] the children of God having been scattered, that He might gather [them] into one.” Caiaphas did not realize what a bold prophet God was making of him! The prophecy was about the death of Christ for the nation of Israel, so that none of them would perish. There were no exclusions about the living versus the dead, about past, present, or future. In Romans 11:26 Paul also wrote that all Israel would be saved. Another prophecy concerning the gigantic coverage of Christ's death was revealed to John the Apostle. To the prophecy of Caiaphas, John the writer added that Jesus died to draw into one all the “scattered children of God,” which undoubtedly included individuals who believed during the church age and are called “the Sons of God” by Paul in Romans 8 verses 19-21. But John 11:52 is much like Ephesians 1:10 where Paul said God would head up “all” in Christ, both in the heavens and on the earth. Every human being was included in John's phrase “the children of God” because all people are His children through creation. In the parable of the lost sheep, Christ said that God is not willing (planning or purposing) that “one of the little ones” (people He created) should perish. Therefore, the “substitutionary death and atonement” of Christ is not limited to “the Children of God” but will finally apply to every lost sheep. And here John wrote that Christ's sacrifice will apply to all people.

**John 12:32.** “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will be drawing all to Myself.' And this He said signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.” Christ proclaimed that if He died on the cross, He would be drawing all [meaning all people] to Himself. Some say this means “In Christ's judgment all will be drawn to Him and He will separate the believers from those who rejected Him, giving to each a permanent sentence.” Others

propose that, “These are words coming directly from the mouth of the Messiah and they confirm that, based on His crucifixion, He intends to save everybody who ever lived,.” What do you think Christ meant by saying, “I...will be drawing all people unto myself?”

**John 13:3.** See Matthew 11:27a.

**Acts 2:34-35.** See Psalm 110:1.

**Acts 3:20-21.** “And He may send to you Jesus, the anointed, the One having been appointed for you beforehand, Whom heaven indeed must receive until the times of restoration of all, of which God spoke through the mouth of all His holy prophets from the age.” The “times of restoration” were described by David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and other Bible prophets. The prophets prepared the way for Christ and dwelt on reconciliation in their writings. Restoration covers “all” so that people are included too, not just “things,” the word “things” not even being in the Greek. The Lord spoke of restoration in Revelation 21:5 saying “Behold, I am making all new...” Restoration of all is like a building for which God the Father was the **Architect**, Jesus Christ was the **Contractor**, and the prophets/apostles were its **promoters**, spreading the good news.

**Acts 10:36.** “The word which He sent to the children of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ; this One is Lord of all.” The apostles brought a message that was permeated with peace, a topic that was relayed to them by the Lord. They affirmed that Jesus is Lord of all. Isaiah showed that this peace is both for those who are “near” and likewise for the “far” (Isaiah 57:19.) All who bear the Christian message ought to be figuratively “shoeing” their feet “with the readiness of the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:16). No “strings” are attached to the gospel of peace, no fine-print exclusions. A gospel of peace sent by a God who is love fits marvelously with the concept that God will reconcile all people. The good news of peace is at odds, however, with the orthodox belief that the billions of people who die outside of Christ will burn forever in hell.

[Concerning anyone who passes judgment on others for things of which they themselves are guilty...] **Romans 2:4.** "...are you despising the riches of His kindness, forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"

Passing judgment on other people involves scorning God's kindness and other traits. It is the kindness of God that leads people to repent. With this in mind, Christ said (Luke 6:26) that God is kind even to the ungrateful and the wicked. Why should believers reject God's many Bible statements about reconciling all people to Himself? Let them consider Christ's words in the Matthew 20:15 parable, "Am I not allowed to do what I want with that which is mine?"

**Romans 3:23-24.** "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, **being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption in Christ Jesus.**" It is clear that absolutely everybody has sinned (verse 23), and it is thus clear in verse 24 (bold face type) that the "all" who have sinned are going to be justified by Christ's redemption! The redemption of all is a "done deal" by God's grace, mediated through Jesus Christ. Verse 24 should always be quoted when we quote verse 23; there is no break in the Greek text.

**Romans 5:6** "For when we were weak, according to the [scheduled] time, Christ died on behalf of the ungodly."

**Romans 5:7** "For hardly would anyone die on behalf of a just man. Yet for a good man perhaps some would even dare to die."

**Romans 5:8** "But God approvingly demonstrated His love to us, such that when we were yet sinners, Christ died on our behalf."

**Romans 5:10** "For if, being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much rather, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

**Romans 5:15-16** "But not as the offense so also the grace gift. For if by the offense of one the many died, much rather, the grace of God and the grace gift of the one man Jesus Christ super-abound to the many. And the grace gift is not like the one sinning. For the judgment is out of one [offense] into adverse judgment, but the grace gift is out of many offenses into justification."

**Romans 5:18-19.** “Therefore through one offense, adverse judgment into all people. So also through one righteous act, justification of life into all humans. For as through the disobedience of the one human, the many were constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of the One, the many will be constituted righteous.”

Here are some **observations** on these amazing passages. In verse 6 it says that, Christ's death for us occurred **when we were without strength**. This means His death is applicable to all others who are also “weak” and without strength, being fallen, sinful creatures. His death was effective for the impious ones, and that includes everybody, for all have sinned. Verse 8 shows that Christ died on behalf of “**sinners**,” which is an almost boundless term. **If He died for sinners, do you believe he can and will save them all, dead or alive?** Verse 9 is an important part of this section and it is directed to believers. Verse 10 teaches that we were actually reconciled to God when we were His enemies. Christ died for all of the weak, the impious, the sinners, and His enemies. When we receive His faith, Christ begins to live in and through us so that we are “saved by His life.” Romans chapter 5, verse 11 is a reminder that reconciliation has come from God through Christ. Verses 12-14 cover the origin and history of sin. Verse 15 reveals that **Christ's work has a far greater effect than Adam's sin**. Adam's sin merely brought death to “all” (who are called “the many”). But God's grace and Christ's “grace-gift” **super-abound** to that very same “many” which means all people.” Whereas Adam's work merely affected all people with death, Christ's sacrifice super-abounds (Greek *eperriseuo*), initiating a glorious tidal-wave, supplying restoration to every human being. Adam's offense brought us death but from Christ's gift, all of us humans experience a much greater grace-gift that dwarfs death in its magnitude. Verse 17 speaks of believers, “those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness,” by stating that they will reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Verses 18-19 carry a complete message of total salvation. They can be called “**The Declaration of Reconciliation**,” in keeping with the American “**Declaration of Independence**.” By the one offense, **all people** were destined for “adverse judgment.”

But in the same comprehensive manner, Christ's death on the cross (the one “righteous act”) guaranteed that the “justification of life” will **enter every human being**. There are a host of other Bible sections that confirm the reconciliation of all people, but if there were no other verses except Romans 5:18-19, total reconciliation would stand as a firm Bible doctrine. Verse 19 states that through the **disobedience** of Adam, all people (“**the many**”) became sinners. In the same universal fashion, all people (“**the many**”) were said to be constituted just through the obedience of the One man Jesus Christ. No amount of exegetical casuistry can change this **Pauline Manifesto** of total salvation into anything less. Let believers stop resisting this passage! Let them believe it and praise God!

**Romans 6:8.** “For in that He [Christ] died, He died to sin once for all [*ephapax*]. But in that He lives, He lives unto God.” Does the “all” in the phrase “once for all” refer to “all time,” “all people,” or both? The Greek word *ephapax* is not limited to time nor does the word “time” appear anywhere in the derivation of *ephapax*. *Ephapax* simply says “once for all.” Translating *ephapax* “once for all time,” as some scholars have done, narrows the scope of the word. *Ephapax* can and does deal with “coverage” in addition to time. Its biblical function is somewhat like its usage in the following remark: “The emancipation proclamation granted freedom once for all.” “Once for all” in that sentence means that the proclamation had a grandiose **extent** which included every last slave in the United States! It was proclaimed **once** and it included **all**. In the same manner Romans 6:8 means that Christ died unto sin **once** which affected **all** people through all time. This is reinforced by the word pattern in the verse: His death to sin was for all people [**individuals**] and His life currently is for God [**An Individual**]: His death was **for** all people, and His life now is **to** One Person.

**Romans 8:19-21.** “For with anxious watching, the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the children of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not willingly but through the One subjecting it, with the hope that the **creation** will be freed from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the children of God.” God caused the creation to become

vain and did so with the plan to change it. Meanwhile, the whole creation is waiting “on pins and needles” for this change to take place! As used here, “**the creation**” is comprehensive, including all humanity and everything else. God’s “hope” is a real expectation, a plan that will make this happen. God saddled the creation with emptiness and one of His purposes was to demonstrate His program whereby the creation would be liberated from that slavery of corruption and brought into a glorious liberty, which the children of God will have already experienced. Frustration and emptiness will be removed and replaced by freedom. Restoration, reconciliation, and salvation will come to all people through Jesus Christ. As an end result, people will all move from decay, death, and corruption into a marvelous liberty. How could total salvation have been made any more understandable or any more comprehensive? Also, in verses that follow (Romans 8:22-23), Paul stated that even the people who are the first fruits of the Spirit groan inwardly while they wait for the completion of their “son-ship,” which will involve the deliverance of their bodies. These “first fruits” people are the “elect” to whom God gives the faith of Christ before they pass from this life. While alive, they now groan under that same bondage of bodily decay, but they will ultimately move into freedom.

**Romans 11:26a.** “...and so will all Israel be saved...” These seven words are meaningful in their magnitude. If God had meant that all those Jews alive at a particular time in the future will get saved, I think He would have said that. If He had wanted to communicate that all Israel will be given a “chance” to receive Christ, He would have phrased the verse in that manner. If God had intended to have the apostle say anything less than what these seven words so plainly announce, Paul would have done so. Maybe what God meant was exactly what these seven words say! But is it possible for God to save all Israel at once: the far, the near, the living, and the dead? You don't even need to ask!

**Romans 11:32.** “For God locks up all into unconvincibility in order that He **should** be merciful to all.” In English the “should” here means “shall” or “will” and not “ought to.” In drafting His great plan of redemption spanning all ages, the triune God decided to consign everyone to “unconvincibility, a word I coined to mean firm unbelief: to

“unpersuadability,” a word coined by the scripture<sup>4</sup>all people. In doing so, God subjected them all to the position of unbelief. Part of His marvelous reasoning for doing this, we are told, is that He might then show His greatness by manifesting mercy to everyone! Since He demonstrates mercy to all, that means that all become believers ultimately. Believe it, accept it, and thank God!

**Romans 11:36.** “...seeing that out of **Him** and through Him, and back into Him [is] the all. To Him [be] the glory for the aeons. Amen.” All arose **from** God, coming “out of Him.” Creation was not actually “out of nothing,” as is sometimes said, but “out of God.” Next, all was established and formed “**through** Him,” wherein the “Him” is the Lord Jesus Christ (God the Son), as emphasized in John 1:1-2. So far, all believers will say, “So good.” But the last step is the one over which diversity of opinion prevails within the church: all (where “all” includes all dead lost souls) come back “**into** Him” and none are eternally separated from God. It is sometimes argued that if people learn that God's judgment does not last forever, they will take a light view of sin and begin to misbehave grossly. Paul reasoned differently. After having written that all come back into God, Paul used that universal mercy in the very next verse (Romans 12:1) as the basis on which to ask believers to lead godly lives, “ We beseech you **therefore** brethen, by the **mercies** of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, entirely acceptable unto God...” In loose paraphrase, Paul was saying that: “since God is so merciful to all people, you who have that faith now ought to live lives sold-out to God.” God's mercy was the bedrock upon which Paul phrased his call for good works. Evidently Paul believed that full disclosure of God's mercy leads not to misbehavior but to righteousness. Likewise in II Corinthians 5:18-19, after having explained the reconciliation of the whole world to God (verses 14-17), Paul said, “We beseech you **therefore** on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God..” An understanding of God's reconciliation and His mercy is a powerful motivating force helping people find personal salvation; it does not serve as a deterrent or an excuse to sin.

**Romans 14:9.** “For this purpose Christ died and was raised, that He might be the God of the dead as well as the living.” In experiencing death, Christ identified Himself with every person who has ever died. Since Christ is the God of the dead, He is able to work with them, to raise them to life, and to change them, just as He does with living people, drawing them unto Himself.

**Romans 14:11.** “‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow to me and every tongue will be extolling God!’” This unified worship around the throne of God indicates that God will become “all in all” with all people of all times! Even though the Lord does not spell out the operating procedure by which this is accomplished, it is a fact of scripture and should not be denied.

**Romans 16:26.** “...for obedience of faith to all the nations made known...” The “secret” that had been kept quiet during past ages and that was now part of Paul's good news message (Romans 16:25) was that all nations are going to place faith in Christ and obey Him. In this announcement, and others like it throughout the Bible, there are no “small print” limitations inserted in regards to space, time, life, death, past, present, or future. In verse 27, as a tribute to this, Paul wrote, “...to the only wise God through Jesus Christ, glory into the aeons.” All the nations coming to an obedience of faith is a token of God's wisdom and a glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

**I Corinthians 8:6.** “Yet to us One God: the Father out of Whom all and we in Him and one Lord Jesus Christ through Whom all and we through Him.” While this verse does not discuss or even mention God's final reconciliation of all people, it shows the basis by which reconciliation of all is both possible and logical. If all exists **in** God and **through** God, then God owns all. It should not surprise us that God decided to save all people because they are His possessions! I Corinthians 8:6 also contains a bold presentation of Jesus Christ as part of the everlasting Godhead. All punctuation marks in English translations are of human origin, there being no such punctuation in the manuscripts. To foster the meaning of Paul's discussion of “God” in English, I suggest that a colon be

placed after "...One God:" Following that colon, the entire remainder of the verse then designates two Individuals Who are each part of the "One God: " the Father [Who is the Ground of All Being] and the Lord Jesus Christ [Who is the agency or channel through whom all exists]. To punctuate the sentence so that the "One God" remark covers only the Father turns the Lord Jesus Christ into a unitarian afterthought. I do not think this is what Paul had in mind. It was Paul's desire to proclaim Jesus Christ as a coexistent and co-eternal Deity along with the Father. Punctuating the verse to show otherwise is to set it in opposition wrongly to the the rest of scripture and does damage to our understanding of Christ's nature.

**I Corinthians 13:8a.** "Love never fails." Many verses in I Corinthians chapter 13 deal with love as it can be expressed by God in human lives. I Corinthians 13:8a focuses on God's unfailing love because God is love. Putting that together with I John 4:8b forms the reconciliation syllogism: God is love; love never fails; God never fails. While the reconciliation of all people is not mentioned, the connection is evident.

**I Corinthians 15:20.** "But now has Christ been raised from the dead, first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." If Romans 5:18-19 can be called "**The Reconciliation Proclamation**" then I Corinthians 15:20-28 is "**The Declaration of Salvation,**" as in the United States "**Declaration of Independence.**" Verse 20 introduces the first event which is the rising of Christ from the dead. The first fruits theme in the Old Testament was based on an offering made from a small early harvest as the forerunner of the full crop's ripening later. Christ's resurrection signifies that all others will rise from the dead too and their life, like Christ's, will be a new life with God. Every time rising from the dead is mentioned in this chapter it portrays an entrance into life in God's presence. Of course there is judgment after death for those who died outside of Christ's faith. But that judgment does not obscure or obliterate the life showered ultimately upon them through the work of Christ. The reference to people having "fallen asleep" is, of course, a figure of speech for their having died; it does not support the teaching that dead people are somehow unconscious until they are resurrected.

**I Corinthians 15:21.** “For since in fact through one human death [came], and through a Human a resurrection of dead people.” The coming of resurrection means that real life enters all people, just like the curse of death settled upon them all. Paul's strict parallel allows no room for doubting: **by one man death to all; by another Man resurrection life to all the “dead ones.”** Let all who read believe this verse, remembering II Timothy 3:16 which tells us that every verse of the Bible is “God-breathed.”

**I Corinthians 15:22.** “For in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. This verse also reinforces total reconciliation. All people are slated to enter new life in Christ, just like they all have embarked upon death through Adam. Why labor to sidestep these remarks? Why not accept them and rejoice? Even if you fear being censured by other Christians, trust Paul's statements, privately, and experience the overwhelming joy which comes in acknowledging God's wonderful plan for the entire human species!

**I Corinthians 15:23-24.** “Yet each one in their own order: Christ first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His presence [appearing]. Then: the end when He delivers the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He abolishes all rule and all authority and power.” Paul presented the resurrection schedule as having three events: 1. Christ's rising from the dead as the first fruits, 2. “His own,” meaning the believers, being resurrected when He returns to earth, and 3. “the end” when all the rest of humanity will unite with God as detailed later in verse 28. Step 3 will involve the abolition of all spiritual powers. In verses 24-26 Paul conveyed some of the changes that God will make in carrying out step 3. Verse 25 indicates that Christ will reign until God the Father sets all previous enemies under Christ's authority, like pieces of a footstool stationed under the loving Savior's feet. Verse 26 indicates that death is to be made powerless. “Death” is mentioned with no qualifications, so I think that Paul was referring to both the first and the second death when he stated that death would be destroyed. Gone is the notion of “everlasting death” or “eternal death.” Verse 27 clarifies the fact that the Father will make all else subdued to Christ's dominion but the Father will not undergo that subjection Himself.

**I Corinthians 15:28.** “But when the all has been subjected unto Him, then will the Son be subjected to the One Who put all under Him, in order that God may be all in all.” The great action in which the Son delivers up the kingdom to God the Father is described both in verse 24 and verse 28. Some scholars have wisely called this event “The Great Abdication.” It has the blessed purpose of making God the Father “all in all.” The Son will abdicate His own Lordship and deliver all unto His Father. This will be done so that the Father will fill all and unite with all in order to construct a glorious eternal “complex” that we cannot begin to describe or understand. Verse 28 probably speaks of the last Biblical event, the end of all revealed truth. But it is just the beginning of an eternal system, the joy and fulfillment of which is far beyond our present comprehension.

**I Corinthians 15:54-47.** “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death--where your victory? O death--where your stinger? Now the stinger of death: sin, and the strength of sin: -the law. But thanks be to God, the One giving to us the victory in Jesus Christ our Lord!” Here Paul quoted and amplified Isaiah 25:8. Paul showed that sin is like a hornet's sting resulting in death because “the payment for sin is death” (Romans 6:23.) And the stern regulations of the law are the “strength of sin.” The law supplies the basis upon which the death penalty is exacted because all have sinned. But against the background of a stinging hornet empowered by a strict law, comes the Lord Jesus Christ, God's victory over death for all people. God's loving victory is just as universal as death itself! Wouldn't one expect this from the God Who **is** love and is also omnipotent?

**II Corinthians 5:14-15.** “For the love of Christ impels us, judging this, that One died on behalf of all [and so] all have died. And He died on behalf of all so that the living ones live no longer to themselves but may live to Him Who for their sakes died and was raised.” Note that the driving force in Paul's message was the love of Christ which literally impels us to serve Him. If we wonder for whom did Christ die, Paul answered two times in verses 14-15 that Christ died for all. Set aside the false idea that Christ died

only for the “elect.” One of the reasons Christ died for all is that the ones who already receive His “life” will no more go on living selfishly, but they will live totally for Christ.

**II Corinthians 5:18-19.** “And all is out of God Who has reconciled Himself to us through Christ and has given unto us the ministry of reconciliation [which is] that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to them their transgressions and placing the word of reconciliation in us.” The “God” from who all arises is the same God who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. In doing this, God did not hold the trespasses of the world against each sinful creature. He implanted this message of reconciliation into the people whom He had already converted. Then verses 20-21 show that the converts are to be ambassadors, imploring or begging them to receive reconciliation with God and to realize that God intends to reconcile them.

**Galatians 3:8.** “And the scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham that 'All nations will be blessed in you.’” It was obvious that God intended to justify the nations (meaning all nations: past, present, and future) by faith. The Bible writers like Moses included this prophecy from the very onset. The fact that all nations will ultimately be blessed (joyful) in Abraham means that they will all be “saved,” as we now say. They will be redeemed through the “descendant of Abraham” Who is none other than God the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 1:10.** “He purposed within Himself when the times have reached fulfillment, to head up all in Christ, both in the heavens and on the earth in Him.” The phrase “He purposed within Himself...” from verse nine has been co-joined here to verse ten because verse ten continues to describe what it was that God purposed. We need to remember that punctuation is not part of the manuscripts. “Heading up” mentioned here is an act in which God brings together “all” under the aegis of Christ. It involves ALL. not just “all things.” The misleading word “things” is not even present in this text. “All in the heavens and on the earth” certainly includes every person who ever lived. Christ is the one head under whom they will be assembled, according to a plan issuing from deep within the

Godhead (“...within Himself...”). There is no doubt that such a program will be enacted and its culmination is simply waiting until God's chosen time has arrived!

**Ephesians 1:11.** “In Whom [Christ] also the lot was cast for our inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of **the One working all according to the plan of His will.**” The first 16 or 17 words of verse 11 apply to Christ's selecting those who will become believers. But the last 11 words (in bold face type) describe the work of God on behalf of all (“**the One working all according to the plan of His will.**”) These 11 words form a bridge to passages like Matthew 18:14 where it says that “...it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these **little ones** should perish.” Part of the “all” which God works according to the purpose of His will (Ephesians 1:11), is that sinful lost people (the “little ones”) will certainly not perish but each one will be reclaimed, fulfilled, and restored posthumously through the work of Christ.

**Ephesians 1:22-23.** “And [God] puts all under His [Christ's] feet and gives Him [to be] head over all, to the called-out-ones [ekklesia], who are His body: the fullness of the One Who fills all in all.” God puts all under Christ's feet, setting Christ up as head over all, which means that the whole world will get saved. Christ's headship is exercised in and through the “church universal” which is the body of Christ. The English word “church” can be used here only in the sense of the true church which includes all Christian believers. These “called-out-ones” in a very special manner express the fullness of the One [Christ] Who fills “all in all.” Ephesians 1:22-23 is a forthright declaration that Christ does indeed fill all in all and in such a fashion that His fullness is completely expressed through the church universal.

**Ephesians 4:6.** “One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, the One over all and through all and in all.” Chapter four of Ephesians has much to say about the life of believers. But right in the midst of the words to the ekklesia, Paul supplied an amazing litany of God's relationship to the whole creation. It demonstrates God's boundless presence and is predicated on His redeeming all mankind. “The universal

Fatherhood of God” is taught right Ephesians 4:6. The KJV translators had it say “...and in **you** all,” but this makes the passage sound as if it were describing only Christian believers, which is not the case. The KJV “you” is not in the text. God is in all, not just “you all believers.” How great is our God!

**Ephesians 4:10.** “The One descending [to the lowest parts of the earth] is Himself the One ascending far above all the heavens, that He might fill the all.” After taking captivity captive and then descending into the earth, Christ rose up to fill “all”. In the process, He obviously repairs, restores, and brings all into conformity with Him. “He is the One working all according to the purpose of His will” (Ephesians 1:11). That “will” says that “not one of these little ones should perish” (Matthew 18:14.) Christ Who fills all is also saving all; that's all there is to it, but that's plenty.

**Philippians 2:10-11.** “...in order that **in** [not 'at'] the name of Jesus every knee will bow: heavenly, and earthly, and under the earth, and every tongue will acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Immediately after stating in verse 9 that God gave Jesus “The Name which is above every other name,” Paul said God did this “in order that” every knee will bow before Him. “every knee” includes all heavenly persons, all on earth, and all the people “under the earth” in reference to those who have died. And every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, meaning that they will all worship God through Jesus Christ. These verses are not at all describing a “forced confession” of conquered sinners, slated for eternal damnation: people who bow in unrepentant fear upon hearing the name of Christ. We know this because in another text Paul wrote “...no one can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:3b), all these people are proclaiming Jesus as Lord. The Corinthians passage also shows that there is a “Godhead” in which both Jesus and the Holy Spirit have always been a “part.” Philippians 2:9-11 was sung as part of an ancient hymn in the early church, showing that many believers back then (long before Augustine) held to the “salvation of all.

**Philippians 3:20-21.** “And we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will be changing our lowly body, conforming it to His glorious body, according to the operation of His ability even to subject all unto Himself.” Paul's message was that Christ will change people's old bodies into ones like the body He had upon rising from the dead. In stating this, Paul let us know that Christ's ability to change old bodies into glorious ones rests in His capability of bringing “the all” under His control. This remark showed us that God will eventually bring all into subjection under Christ. This will be a happy subjection because even His enemies will be made useful, like becoming a footstool for His feet.

**Colossians 1:20.** “Through Him [Christ] to reconcile the all into Him [God the Father], making peace through the blood of His [Christ's] cross. Through Him [Christ] whether those on the earth or those in the heavens.” Reconciliation is shown to involve two Persons of the Godhead: Christ and God the Father. The Father reconciles all into Himself through Christ's death on the cross. The result is a peace that ensues, peace between God and all people in the heavens and on the earth with no restrictions given. The verse is one of the “flagship” references, speaking so directly about total salvation that the great Bible teacher G. Campbell Morgan was brave enough to use it as the basis for his classic comments on complete reconciliation, a sermon that is still in print.

The next passage was chosen as representative of those verses which, in the English translations, appear to teach that “hell” lasts forever. It is well to address this passage here because it contains one of the strongest English statements used by eternal torment people to show that God's judgment involves everlasting discipline and a permanent banishment from God. Another whole book ought to be written to discuss all these English Biblical sections which seem to contradict the very passages teaching the ultimate reconciliation of all people.

**II Thessalonians 1:7b-9.** “At the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with angels of His power in flaming fire, giving out vengeance to those knowing not God and to the

ones not obeying the gospel of our Lord Jesus, who will receive justice, age-related destruction, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His strength...” II Thessalonians 1:7b-9 is a prime example of statements that are claimed to refute the total reconciliation view. In studying it, together with other verses like it, one discovers that anti-reconciliation conclusions are based on mistranslations and misinterpretations. When Christ appears He will bring divine vengeance which will be just. It will involve a stern destruction that is age-related [*aioniOn*], however, not “everlasting.” This destruction is not a banishment away from God forever but it is a judgment coming directly “from the face of the Lord” and “from the glory of His strength.” The judgment thus occurs in the presence of the Lord and is based on His glorious power, a power is able to rebuild and bring all under His control, as stated in Philippians 3:21. This is a glorious force that enables God to “subject all to Himself.” The passage describes the just demolition which faces rebellious sinners but does not sentence them to everlasting torment or complete annihilation.

**I Timothy 1:15.** “This is a faithful saying and worthy to be accepted that Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Christ saved Paul, who called himself the chief of sinners by directly stopping him on the Damascus highway, in a “salvation by confrontation” experience. If Christ's main mission coming to earth was to die and thereby save sinners, how successful do you believe He will be at this task? Will he get an A, a B, or a C-minus grade? Some of us believe Christ will earn a grade of A-plus by saving every last sinner for whom He died.

In presenting a translation of the following three verses, Bible words are put in bold face while my own comments are in brackets. Note the compelling evidence for the salvation of all. **I Timothy 2:3-6.** “**This** [our praying for all people, as stated in the two previous verses] **is good and acceptable before God our Savior Who wills** [not just “wants” or “wishes” but actually “wills,” with a will that cannot be thwarted or turned back] **all people to be saved and to come to a full knowledge of the truth** [“full knowledge” shows that this is real salvation, full-orbed salvation and nothing less]. **For** [there is] **one**

**God and one mediator of [between] God and men, a man Christ Jesus , the One having given Himself as a ransom on behalf of all, to be testified in due time.”**

Following this inspired outburst describing total salvation of our species, Paul told us that God's universal plan is why he wants each one of us to be praying “...in every place, lifting up holy hand without wrath and doubting” I Timothy 2:9. Through Christ we are enabled to set aside our innate anger for lost people who commit evil deeds and we are then able to pray for their salvation, **without doubting.**

**I Timothy 4:9-11. “Faithful is the saying [referring to the words which follow] and worthy to be accepted for therefore we are toiling and bearing reproach, that we rely on the living God who is the Savior of all mankind, especially of those that believe. These things command and teach.”** As he was about to make a statement, Paul first said that it would be a faithful statement, one that was worthy to be accepted. He also noted that it the forthcoming remark would be one that he had labored hard to promote and for which he had been reproached. The remark which warranted all this “build-up” is that Paul relied totally on the living God Who is the Savior of the whole human species. He hastened to add that God is especially the Savior of those who believe. Paul closed this remarkably forthright comment by telling Timothy, and all other pastor/teachers, that they are to teach fellow Christians about complete salvation and that they are to **charge** people to believe it. I have never heard a church sermon, however, in which the minister acknowledged the truth of I Timothy 4:9-11 and then admonished people to believe that God is saving all people. And this is so in spite of the fact that I have been listening to sermons for over 70 years now. Maybe in the future such messages will become a regular part of evangelical preaching.

God has a plan to save sinners by grace and while they are living. That plan was enacted before the world began, as Paul told us in II Timothy 1:9. Next, in **II Timothy 1:10**, Paul stated that “...**the plan is being manifested now through the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the One, indeed, abolishing death and shedding light on life and immortality through the good news...(II Timothy 1:12): because of which cause I**

**also am suffering these things, but I am not ashamed: I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which is committed of me unto the day.”** By writing here that God “abolished death” Paul was stating that God would annihilate death of all types: the “first” death and the “second” death too. In so doing, Christ brought life into the spotlight and immortality (incorruptibility) as well. It is unimaginable that the very God who inspired Paul to write these lucid remarks would confine anyone to an “eternal death.” Paul knew better, he said so, and he was subjected to suffering because of this truth and others that he promoted. Evidently Paul had committed many things to God, such as the salvation of his beloved Israel (Romans 11:26), a commitment that looked forward to “the day”--the day of reconciliation of all.

**Titus 2:11.** “For the grace of God made its advent, saving all people.” The Greek for this passage is: “*epephanE gar hE charis tou theou hE sOtErios pasin anthrOpois*”. A word-for-word translation on [www.scriptureforall.org](http://www.scriptureforall.org) is “Made its advent for the grace of-the God the saving to-all people.” These words have been rearranged and modified several different ways in producing the popular English translations. My own rearrangement is shown above. Apparently Paul was telling Titus and everyone else that the coming of God's grace [through Jesus' work] has saved every last person. This is marvelous.

**Hebrews 1:2.** See Matthew 11:27a.

**Hebrews 2:8-9.** “You put all under His feet. For in the subjection of all to Him, He leaves nothing that is out of subjected to Him. Yet now we do not yet see all made subject to Him. But we see Jesus, having been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that He, by the grace of God, might taste death on behalf of all human beings.” Everything will be brought under Christ's control. Although this cannot be seen yet, we can meditate on Jesus. He was made a step lower than the angels and came to earth as a man that He might then be in a position to taste death for every last human being. God's grace enabled Him to provide this limitless atonement by a sacrificial act, for which Christ has earned glory and honor.

**Hebrews 2:14-15.** “Since therefore the little children have partaken of flesh and of blood, in like manner He also was very near in sharing the same, in order that through death He might destroy the one having the power of death, this is the Devil, and might release those whoever by fear of death lived all their lifetime involved in slavery.” Christ will discard the Devil and clear or release all those who lived in slavery to the fear of death. These comments fit with “total atonement” view but do not correlate with the idea of “everlasting incarceration.” Since the Devil is to be destroyed, there could be no Devil's Hell where Satan enslaves, rules, and torments all lost souls. Certainly all those who spent their lifetimes in the fear of death will not be subjected later to “eternal death.” It is all humanity that lives its entire lifetime in fear of death and therefore it is the entire human species that will ultimately be released from such slavery.

**Hebrews 7:27.** [This passage speaks about the work of Christ as Supreme High Priest and of His sacrifice of Himself, made for the sins of the people.] “For this He did, once for all, offering up Himself.” The word “time,” seen in the CLV translation of Hebrews 7:27, is not present in the Greek text. Instead, the Greek word *ephapax* simply means “once for all” and one would need to examine the context carefully to see if it means “once for all time,” “once for all people,” or both. Since Hebrews 7:27 is comparing Christ's atonement for the sin of the people with the atonement made by other priests who repeated sin offerings, it is clear that *ephapax* means Christ's offering of Himself was for all people. To be an offering “once for all” people, it also covered “once for all time”!

**Hebrews 9:26b.** “...yet now, once for all, at the conclusion of the ages He is manifest, for the setting aside of sin through the sacrifice of Himself.” Christ came at a critical time: the end of one age and the beginning of another. He came to annul all sin, no exceptions. This He accomplished by sacrificing Himself “once for all” (Greek *hapax*). Remember that *hapax* simply means “once for all,” and does not mean just “once,” as the CLV has translated it here. Instead, it means that Christ only had to sacrifice Himself once, after which that sacrifice put all sin aside for all people: **once for all!**

**Hebrews 10:11-12.** [Concerning Christ as the Great High Priest in contrast to all other high priests: “Yet this One, having offered up a sacrifice for sins in perpetuity, sat at the right hand of God, henceforth waiting till His enemies are to be placed as a footstool for His feet.” Christ's one sacrifice for sin is perpetually effective. After making this universal sin sacrifice, Christ sat at God's right hand where He waits expectantly as the Father changes Christ's enemies. It does not say that God crushed these enemies under His feet, as a conquering general might do. Nor is it stated that the enemies of Christ are forever kept in outer darkness. Somehow they are all reworked and become useful to the Lord, as a footstool assists one who relaxes after a grueling task.

**Hebrews 13:8.** “Jesus Christ, yesterday and today the same, and unto the ages.” When Christ reappears, He will not come as a despotic hard-hearted victor. He will certainly be involved in the process of adverse judgment upon those who rejected Him. Likewise He figures clearly in the global reckoning seen in the tribulation period in the book of Revelation. But throughout all such acts of justice, His love will prevail even as it did when He prayed to the Father to forgive those who crucified Him. In the end, all judging will be cast out for victory and God, through the work of Christ, will become “all in all.”

**James 1:18.** “Having willed, He brought us forth [gave birth to us] prolifically, by the word of truth, so that we might be a kind of first fruit from [among] His own creatures.” During the church age, God has given birth to many faithful believers. This spawning of Christians has been like the teeming reproduction of insects! God gave birth to great numbers so that they would serve as a bellwether of the even greater future “harvest” which will include all his “creatures.”

**James 5:11.** “The Lord is super-compassionate and merciful.” The Greek word “*polysplagchnos*” begins with the syllable “*poly*” which means “many.” Alfred Marshall rendered it “very compassionate” and the NIV “full of compassion.” I think the hyphenated adjective “super-compassionate” conveys the meaning of *polysplagchnos*”

quite well. Do you think that God, Who is super-compassionate and merciful, will confine even one person (let alone most of humanity) to everlasting torment and separation? Think again!

**I Peter 3:18-19.** “...because Christ died for sins once for all, a righteous one on behalf of unrighteous ones, that He might bring us to God, being put to death indeed in flesh, yet made alive to the Spirit, in which He also went and preached to the spirits in prison.” The death of Christ for sins was once and it was for all [Greek *hapax*] meaning that there are no limits on His atonement. While dead, Christ went in spirit as a herald to the ones who had been incarcerated: the people who lived in disobedience during the time of Noah. The reason for this being done was explained more fully in I Peter 4:6.

**I Peter 4:6.** “For this the dead ones were also good-newsed, in order that they might be judged indeed, according to men in the flesh, yet should live according to God in [the] spirit.” The reason why Christ conveyed the complete good news to souls in prison was that they might experience spiritual life after having been judged in the flesh. This is joyful news about dead folks receiving new life after their physical death, a fascinating scripture! I Peter 4:6 ties closely with facts revealed in I Peter 3:19, which we just studied.

**II Peter 3:9.** “The Lord is not being slow concerning His promise, as some people regard slowness, but is long suffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Every person who ever lived will come as a repentant convert to God, either now or later. This is God's will and whatever He wills **will** take place. It is not His will that lost people permanently perish; take a close look at II Peter 3:9 again! Since this is not His will, it will **not** occur. We must not grow restless waiting for all this to happen. God enacts all this at a given rate, not because He is slack with respect to His promises, but because He is patient to all people and plans to bring all to repentance.

**I John 3:8.** “The one committing sin is of the devil for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this the Son of Man was manifested, in order that He should annul the works of the devil.” Christ came to earth with the purpose of destroying the devil's works. Those works certainly include all that the devil has accomplished including opposition to God and turning people astray. These will all be rendered powerless and Satan's control will be unloosened so that everything which now prevents people from gravitating to God will be gone. The work of salvation will be accomplished in the hearts of all lost people. How do I know? The Bible tells me so!

**I John 4:10 and 2:2.** “In this is love, not that we love God but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. . . And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the whole world.” God's propitiation for sin should not be described as “limited” when we are told that it covers the whole world (Greek: *holou kosmou*). If Christ made atonement for the sins of the whole world, as stated here, wouldn't it be strange if this same Jesus would condemn lost sinners to hell forever? Perhaps Calvin and Augustine can be excused for neglecting all this, but is there any excuse for us ignoring it?

**I John 4:14.** “For we have seen and are testifying that the Father commissioned the Son to be the Savior of the world.” The world will be saved because the loving Father sent His only begotten Son to do the required sacrificial work. Could John have made “world-wide” salvation any more plain? If God had intended that the doctrine of everlasting torment be canonized in scripture, could this verse have been written differently, so as to communicate that point? And if God had planned eternal torment for all those who refuse to receive the faith of Christ, would not the whole Old Testament have been written differently? Think it over, please. It might improve your view of the Bible, the Christian life, and God Himself.

**Revelation 5:13.** “And every created being who is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that in them is, heard I also saying, 'Blessing and honor

and glory and power be unto Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb for the ages of the ages!” Realize that this mighty chorus includes the voices of the living and the dead from all times, indicating that all people have been raised to life and reclaimed. Take stock also of the fact that these are not just “creatures,” as we use that word now, like little fishes, huge whales, and birds, although they too may be involved. The voices of all sentient beings can be heard too, with *Homo sapiens* certainly included.

**Revelation 14:20.** “...and death and *hades* were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” Far from being an everlasting death in Hell, the second death is the lake of fire which destroys death altogether. Death will be destroyed and so will *hades* which is the abode of the dead. All people will ultimately live in glorious union with God.

**Revelation 20:5.** “And the One sitting on the throne said 'Behold, I am making all new,' and He said, 'write this down, that these sayings are trustworthy and true.'” When God said that He is making all new, He wanted John's readers to know and believe the authenticity of that remark. This is somewhat akin to Paul's telling Timothy: “These [things] command and teach!” (I Timothy 4:11.)

May the Lord give you grace as you study these verses with an open mind, seeking His will. May you work them all into your world and life view.

Note: if you find errors or translation problems in this book, please let me know. If the book is some help to you, I invite correspondence by e-mail:  
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