

96-03-15b

All right, we've taken our break and we had a very lively discussion, which those of you on tape missed out on, and I'm sorry for that, but we're going to be covering some things related to the judgment of believers at the judgment seat of Christ. And again, it's natural for us to want to be careful in this area, to not go beyond what is written or to not read into Scripture something that isn't there or to go down a wrong road. And the greatest way to elucidate the meaning of Scripture is to stay in the Scriptures and to see what Scripture has to say in other places on this same subject.

So what I'd like to do is take a look at passages that talk about this principle. Now, keep in mind, we have two separate and distinct peoples of God in view in the bulk of Scripture, and that is Israel and the church. That distinction has been blurred in recent days with the onset of progressive dispensationalism and so forth.

But God deals in similar ways and in dissimilar ways with Israel and the church. There are ways in which God's plan and God's economy for Israel is radically different, especially in the area of the revelation of the person of Jesus Christ and the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit. It was far different in the Old Testament days than it is today.

There are other ways in which God is consistent and the plan for Israel and the plan for the church, the principles by which God evaluates, are very similar. And some of the differences are not so fundamental. They are more surface differences.

We immediately think of the law when we think of Israel. But we know that when God evaluates Old Testament saints, he's not going to be evaluating how well they kept the law. Old Testament Scripture is replete with references to the fact that God desires mercy and not sacrifice.

What does God require of you, O man, but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God? God at one point told the Israelites, your sacrifices and offerings are a stench in my nose because your attitude of heart is so evil. You are hypocritical when you worship me. The book of Malachi sums up and addresses that whole problem.

And so we know that when God judges Old Testament saints to determine their level of reward and participation in the millennial kingdom, he's going to use much the same standard that he uses for believers in this age. And it's the faith that was expressed. It's the choices that were made, the priorities that were set with regard to pleasing God versus pursuing one's own personal goals.

And there were different ways of expressing that and manifesting it in the Old Testament. But the fundamental principles by which all believers in every age are evaluated are the same. We'll see here shortly that those same principles are going to apply even for people in the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ.

So what I want to do is take a look at some things that Jesus said about the evaluation of Old Testament believers, and we'll see how that is identical to what we're seeing in Romans for church age believers. Turn with me to Matthew chapter 22, Matthew chapter 22. And you might, if you want to label this, if you're taking notes, what we're going to do at this point is we're going to look at the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth passages.

We're going to see every reference to weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in the New Testament. And we're going to find out exactly what is being discussed in those passages. And I think you might be surprised.

Matthew chapter 22 is the parable of the wedding feast. The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son. He sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding and they were not willing to come.

Again, he sent out other servants saying, tell those who are invited, see, I have prepared my dinner. My oxen and fatted cattle are killed and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.

But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully and killed them. When the king heard about it, he was furious. He sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers and burned up their city.

Then he said to his servants, the wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore, go into the highways and as many as you find, invite to the wedding. So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good.

And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

Then the king said to the servants, bind him hand and foot, take him away and cast him into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for many are called, but few are chosen. Now.

We could go down a side trail here and spend several lessons exploring this concept. So you'll forgive me if every question that might be raised as we go through these passages is not answered. But I'm going to sketch this out for you and put it out for your consideration.

And you can meditate on this and think about passages that apply to it on your own. But first of all, the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son. When we see the marriage motif in the parables of Jesus Christ and in the New Testament, it calls to mind the picture of Jesus Christ as the bridegroom and the church as the bride.

Keep in mind when Jesus Christ is speaking, are we in the church age or are we in the age of Israel at this point? Jesus Christ has not yet been crucified. The day of Pentecost has not yet occurred. The people that he is addressing, if they are believers, they are Old Testament saints, aren't they? And so the challenge to them is going to be to be a guest at the wedding feast of the king.

And this is the role that Israel will play. This is the role that the Old Testament saints will play. They are guests at the wedding feast of the bridegroom.

The bride is the church. The groom is Jesus Christ. The king in this case is God the Father.

And we see a parallel here to what we covered in Romans chapter one, because the king representing God the Father sends his servants to call those who are invited to the wedding, but they are not willing to come. This is God's self-revelation. This is God's revelation of himself in creation.

This is God's revelation of himself through his people. Israel in the Old Testament mirrors the function that we have in New Testament days. The people of God were a new creation.

They were called to be the residents of God. It was pictured, symbolized in the Holy of Holies, in the tabernacle and later in the temple. The place of the residents of God on earth was among the people of God.

And of course, now we have the privilege of having that inside each one of us. But it was pictured in Israel in that way. If you go back to Isaiah chapter 55, we see that this was the role that Israel played in the Old Testament.

I'll just read you one verse. This entire chapter is terrific for this principle because it is a call to Israel, much as we have a call to the church in Romans chapter two. But God says through Isaiah in chapter 55, ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.

You who have no money, come buy and eat. Come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me and eat what is good and let your soul delight itself in abundance.

Incline your ear and come to me here and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the sure mercies of David. In the Old Testament, when you heeded the call of God as Naaman the Syrian did, you came to Israel because that was the residence of God.

God's interface with man, the way that you approached God and worshiped God and came to learn about God was through the nation of Israel. And so God called all nations to Israel. The book of Jonah is a tremendous admonition to Israel.

Jonah represents Israel. That's why his name is Yonah, the dove, because he's flighty. He thinks

of himself instead of the people of Nineveh.

He tries to run the other way. He's not interested in carrying the word of God to these pagans. He's got a bone to pick with these pagans in Nineveh.

They're degenerate and he doesn't care about them. And God, in the story of Jonah, you remember that that book was addressed to Israel, even though it talks about the Ninevites and what a tremendous response there was to this tiniest morsel. All Jonah preaches is in 40 days your city is coming down.

That's all he says. And the people fall all over themselves responding. And it's a reminder to Israel.

It's designed to stab them in the conscience and say, look, if you had any response to your opportunity to show forth the word of God, this is what God can do among the nations. You're supposed to be a light to the Gentiles. You are supposed to be Jonah.

And the book of Jonah ends with God speaking to Jonah and saying, you're more concerned about the gourd than you are about all of these people in the city who don't even know their right hand from their left. And it's a reminder that Israel had a responsibility as part of God's creation to be a way in which God reveals himself to the nations and create that responsibility for response. This is what he's saying in Isaiah 55 to these people, incline your ear and come to me here and your soul shall live.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with you. The sure mercies of David. He's calling them in the Old Testament days to come and participate, to be a proselyte to Judaism.

Indeed, I have given him as a witness to the peoples. David, the nation of Israel, is a witness to the peoples, a leader and a commander for the people. Surely you shall call a nation you do not know and nations who do not know you shall run to you because of the Lord your God and the holy one of Israel, for he has glorified you.

God's glory revealed in Israel and through Israel was a call to the nations to salvation. And so this revelation of God through his servants is a known principle in the Old Testament. That's what we have pictured in this parable.

God sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding. They were not willing to come. He sent out other servants saying, tell those who are invited, see, I have prepared my dinner.

My oxen and fatted cattle are killed. Remember what it says in Isaiah 55. Come if you're thirsty, come and get wine and milk and food without cost.

If you want to come to the feast, it's ready. Just come. That's the call that God issued to the world

through Israel.

But notice the response in verse five. They made light of it. They went their ways, one to his farm, another to his business.

And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully and killed them. When the king heard about it, he was furious. Now, this rejection, this outright rejection of the invitation is rejection of God.

It's the rejection that we saw in Romans chapter one. And that is no salvation. The penalty for that is the lake of fire because you never come to Christ.

And when the king hears about this, he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers and burned up their city. Notice that the judgment for this is fire. The city is burned.

And that's important. These people that reject the invitation outright don't even think about coming. They're destroyed and burned up.

And that's a reminder of the lake of fire. Then he said to his servants, the wedding is ready. But those who are invited were not worthy.

Go into the highways and as many as you find invite to the wedding. So the servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

And these are those who did respond to the invitation. They why does it talk about the fact that they were in the highways and byways? They didn't have something more important. They are more humble.

In this case, they're humble in their appearance, humble in their standing in society. But what that means is they didn't have pride. They didn't have the arrogance that says my farm is more important.

My business is more important. I've got more important things to do than respond to the call of God. These are people who don't have something that obsesses them and that is higher in importance than the call of God.

And so they're pictured by these people that are just in the highways and byways. And when they get the invitation, whether they're bad or whether they're good, they come. And so the hall is filled with guests.

This wedding hall, this is the wedding feast of the lamb. This is Jesus Christ celebrating with church age believers at the onset of the millennial kingdom. And Old Testament saints come and feast at this banquet.

And they are guests there. When the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. Now, notice.

This is a different kind of rejection. This is a different kind of failure. This man responded to the invitation, didn't he? He came to the feast.

But he doesn't put on the garment. Garments are a constant symbol in Scripture of righteousness. Putting on the new man is more than a mental attitude.

It's a mental attitude that works itself out in life, in priorities, in decisions and actions. The garment speaks of the righteous acts of the saints. In fact, it is so designated in the book of Revelation that this white garment is the righteous deeds of the saints.

And so this now is a judgment that's going to be based on a lack of deeds, a lack of obedience, a lack of faith and response, faith obedience, after responding to the invitation. So this man pictures saved but disobedient. Old Testament saints.

Is he in the millennial kingdom? Yes, he is. Does he see the bride and the groom? Yes, he does. If he was an unbeliever, he would be dead and those dead live not until the thousand years are over.

But this man is there and observes the feast. He shows up. He's responded to the invitation, but he's not prepared to take advantage of what is offered because he doesn't have the garment.

And so the king asks him, and this is God the Father, and this is a reference to the judgment, just as there is a judgment seat of Christ for church age believers. Once we're resurrected and we stand before God, there's going to be a judgment of Old Testament saints. Same parallel concept.

And Old Testament saints who are saved when they're resurrected, there's going to be a judgment based on deeds and there will be consequences. How did you come in here without a wedding garment? And the man is speechless. There is no response there.

We are without excuse when God reveals the truth of his plan after salvation. We are just as much without excuse as an unbeliever who doesn't respond at all. The king said to the servants, bind him hand and foot, take him away and cast him into outer darkness.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Notice this is a separate and distinct judgment. He is not wiped out.

He is not destroyed. His city is not burned up with fire like the people that didn't respond to the invitation. There's no fire associated with this.

Let me ask you what seems like an absurd question. Are fire and darkness the same thing?

They're not. And yet we have consistently equated the two in our theology.

There is a big difference. The people that reject the invitation are destroyed and burned up with fire. This man who comes without the wedding garment goes into darkness, not into fire.

He is not burned up. He is not destroyed. If you're going to destroy a man, you don't have to bind him hand and foot.

Binding is for someone that's staying alive. There's no point in binding someone that's destroyed and is dead or that's burned up. Binding is restriction of opportunity.

Someone that is in prison, someone that is handcuffed, someone that's got a ball and chain around their leg, they're on the chain gang. They don't have the same freedom of movement, but they haven't suffered capital punishment. This is a lesser punishment.

Binding means a restriction. You don't have the same freedom, the same opportunities as other people. And in the outer darkness, what are we talking about when we say inner and outer? Well, there's a wedding feast going on in this banquet hall, and this man is ejected from the banquet hall.

He's not in the banquet hall anymore. And by comparison with the place of feasting and celebration and the things that we saw in Isaiah 55, this man doesn't get to participate in those things. He's outside.

And there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now, the people that got destroyed and burned up, they're not weeping and gnashing their teeth. They're gone.

They're out of the picture. This man is weeping and gnashing his teeth. Why? Because he's disappointed.

He is anguished. He is experiencing the wrath of God. He is experiencing anguish, tribulation.

All the things that we saw in Romans chapter 2 that are the consequence of a believer that fails to pursue those things that are a part of the plan of God, who performs the same kind of rejection of truth that an unbeliever does. And that's the big comparison between Romans chapter 1 and Romans chapter 2. Paul says, you who sit around judging others and deciding what kind of righteousness they have, you're going to be held to the righteous standard of God. And you're doing the same thing as these people you're judging.

You better be thinking about God's judgment. Quit judging others and start judging yourself or you're going to be judged by God. And of course, we have the classic passage, judge not lest ye be judged.

If we judge others and we busy ourselves with analyzing others, we're going to fall short of God's

righteous standard of obedience after salvation. And we will be held to account at the judgment seat of Christ. Old Testament saints will be held to account at their judgment at the beginning of the millennial kingdom.

And those that show up with no wedding garment, no deeds that are the fruit of faith, will not participate in the kingdom. Will they have eternal life? Yes. They will have a measure of peace and joy and happiness just because they're not going to the lake of fire.

But they're going to be outside the boundaries of Israel. They are the sons of the kingdom. And yet they've been ejected from that kingdom and they're going to be living among the nations.

They're going to be out among the Gentiles. And those who were born Israelites are going to find themselves outside the nation of Israel in the millennial kingdom. We're going to see that in some of these other passages.

But I want you to notice in particular the difference between fire and darkness because that's key. And we see both judgments here. We see people that are unbelievers because they reject the invitation outright.

We see believers who accept the invitation, but who don't put on the wedding garment, which is deeds. And this is a deeds based judgment. Turn with me just a page or two over to Matthew chapter 24, beginning at the parable that he teaches here or the comparison he gives starting in verse 45.

Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his master made ruler over his household to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to him, he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, my master delays his coming and begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and to drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now, let's think about this. We've got two servants.

They have an identical relationship to the master, don't they? One is a faithful and wise servant who does what his master tells him to. Another is an unfaithful servant who beats his fellow servants. He eats and drinks with the drunkards.

And he says, I'm not worried about when my master is coming back. I'm not worried about the analysis that my master is going to put on me. Instead, he is inflicting punishment on other servants.

He's judging other servants and deciding that they have fallen short. And he's executing sentence

on them. He's beating them.

He's judging them instead of judging himself. And he doesn't worry about the judgment of the master. This is exactly the case that we have in Romans chapter 1 and in Romans chapter 2. That master will come on a day when he is not looking for him at an hour that he is not aware of.

And what happens? This is not a fire judgment. This is not a destruction judgment. He is cut in two.

This is the functional equivalent of the binding of the guest from the wedding feast. What does it mean to be cut in two? You're powerless. And he has apportioned his lot or appointed his portion with the hypocrites.

He's not swimming in the lake of fire. He has a portion, but he gets the portion of the hypocrites. What is the portion of a hypocrite? A hypocrite believes one thing and does another, says one thing and does another, puts up a false front, outwardly righteous, inwardly full of dead men's bones.

Hypocrites have an inheritance in the kingdom. It's the inheritance of smoke. It's the inheritance of loss.

It's the inheritance of failing to receive the fullness of eternal life that God has for us. And he is going to be weeping and gnashing his teeth. There's going to be tremendous disappointment.

There is going to be loss and sorrow at that loss when one of two servants fails and another identical relationship to the master servant is approved and has made a ruler over all his goods. There will be Old Testament saints who are going to be rulers in the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ. The disciples, Jesus told them, you're going to be pillars in the temple.

Well, you've got to be in the kingdom to be at the temple and be a pillar. And they're going to be there because they live the life of faith and they pursued the obedience of faith. There will be other Jewish saved believers who are going to wind up spending the millennial period outside the kingdom and they're going to be gnashing their teeth as a result.

But I kept the law. I was well thought of. I dropped big bags of money into the coffer there at the temple and so forth.

And Jesus is going to say, sorry, your reward is the reward of the hypocrite and you're cut in two. You have no power. You're not going to be a ruler.

Notice the contrast. The wise and faithful servant is a ruler. The unfaithful servant is cut in two.

He has no authority. He has no power in that coming kingdom. Just almost on this same page here, Matthew chapter 25, verse 14.

The kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country who called his own servants and delivered goods to them. Notice these are servants of the master. There are lots of people who aren't servants of the master, but these people are all servants.

All bear the same relationship to the master. To one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one, to each according to his ability. The master evaluates based on circumstance and ability.

Some people have great opportunities for evangelism. Some people have great opportunities for witness. Other people have opportunities in different areas.

God will apportion us opportunities based on our ability. He doesn't overload us. He doesn't expect something from us that we can't perform.

And we sometimes confuse this because this measure of money called a talent, we have an English word talent that means ability and it's a little bit confusing. It would almost be better if we used a thousand dollars as a substitute for talent. Talent was a big chunk of gold or the equivalent.

So we could say to one he gave five thousand dollars to another two thousand dollars to another one thousand dollars, each according to his own ability. And then he went on a journey. He who had received the five talents, the five thousand dollars, went and traded with them and made another five talents or another five thousand dollars.

Likewise, he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground and hid his Lord's money. After a long time, the Lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

This is a reference to the judgment of Old Testament saints at their resurrection at the beginning of the millennial kingdom, settled accounts with them. He who had received five came and brought five others saying, Lord, you delivered to me five talents, five thousand dollars. Look, I have gained five more beside them.

His Lord said to him, well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things.

Enter into the joy of your Lord. And this is responsibility, participation, rulership in the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ, reward for faithful obedience for a believer. He who had received two came and said, Lord, you delivered to me to look, I've gained two more beside them.

His Lord said, well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things.

Enter into the joy of your Lord. Notice we don't have to compare quantity to quantity. The person

that received the two and made two more gets the identical reward to the person that received five and gained five.

A housewife can be as faithful as Billy Graham and receive the same reward as Billy Graham. Billy Graham has been given five talents and he has certainly made five more. Whatever we are apportioned, it isn't what we're given or the nature of our opportunity.

It's what we do with it. It's the attitude in the heart that counts. Do we have the response of faith when the truth is revealed? That's where these deeds come from, that we're evaluated on.

Then he who had received the one in verse 24 came and said, Lord, I knew you to be a hard man reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.

And quickly in verse 24, this man doesn't know his master at all. He has no idea what the master is like. It doesn't say anything about this master reaping where he hasn't sowed.

He knows him to be a certain kind of master. And that's not the kind of master he is at all. Look how generous he has been to his servants up above.

This is a false view of the master. This man knows nothing about his master. And because he doesn't know his master, he makes a bad decision.

He says, well, I think you're a hard man. And I think you reap where you don't sow and gather where you haven't scattered seed. I don't understand the way you operate.

To me, you appear to be strange in the way you operate. And I was afraid. I didn't understand the way you operate.

I don't know the kind of master you are. And so I just took what you gave me and buried it in the ground. And here it is.

You gave it to me. I'm just giving it back. I'm giving you what you gave me.

I don't want to have any part of it. His Lord answered, you wicked and lazy servant. You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not sown seed.

So you ought to have deposited my money with bankers. And at my coming, I will receive back my own with interest. Therefore, take away the talent from him and give it to him who has ten talents.

For everyone who has more will be given and he will have abundance. From him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Notice it's not fire. He's not destroyed.

The servant is cast out. He's cast out from the immediate presence of the master. He doesn't participate in the rewards that the other servants get.

He doesn't get to rule. He doesn't get to enjoy. Notice that these servants keep what the servants were given to invest.

The man that was given five talents and made five more, he thought that he was doing this on behalf of his master, but he winds up keeping the benefit of that faithfulness. He says, take that talent and give it to the servant that has ten talents. The master doesn't come and take that all away.

The servants wind up keeping what they invested. And so this is the judgment that takes place at the beginning of the millennium. And just as a note, we don't have time to go through it, but verses 31 and following there are a judgment that takes place at the end of the millennium.

It says, when the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. The nations will be gathered before him. He will separate them one from another as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

We don't have time to address this, but if you want to peruse it, you will see that the basis of this judgment is the way that the servants of the Lord are treated. And let me just tell you, we'll cover it later on, but right now that is a judgment at the end of the millennium. That is the separation of believers from unbelievers who have not broken the law, who have not experienced capital punishment, who have made it to the end of the millennial kingdom.

And there is a judgment of those who made their decision about Jesus Christ during that thousand years. And the manifestation of that faith in Christ will be love. When they see the sick, the thirsty, those who are in prison, they respond in love.

And that manifestation of their faith in Christ is the basis on which they're identified as sheep. And one of the reasons we know this, because it says, he says to those on his right hand, these sheep, Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And it says, when did we do these things? When did we feed you and so forth? And he says, if you did it to the least of these, my brethren, you did it to me.

And this judgment, those who are saved will go into the kingdom of the Father. And the goats will go into fire. And the separation of people to the kingdom of the Father or to fire takes place at the end of the millennial kingdom.

After the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the thousand-year reign, comes the kingdom of the Father. That's the new heaven and the new earth and the new Jerusalem. That's not the kingdom of

Jesus Christ, that is the kingdom of the Father.

And Jesus says, then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father. And that is the judgment that takes place at the end of the millennium and they go into the kingdom of the Father. So that's the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now, if there was any doubt, turn with me to Luke chapter 13, verses 22 through 30. And you might make a note that this is parallel to Matthew chapter 8, verse, I believe it's 11 and 12. But Luke chapter 13 is the fuller treatment of what Jesus said on this occasion.

Luke chapter 13, starting at verse 22. Some people came up to him in verse 23. Are there few who are saved? And he said to them, strive to enter in through the narrow gate.

For many, I say to you, will seek to enter in and will not be able. And because of this question at the beginning, Lord, are there few who are saved? We tend to think this is going to be believers, unbelievers, lake of fire versus eternal life. But that's not what Jesus is talking about.

This question is raised by people who are following Christ, who have been listening to what he's teaching. And this deliverance here, this use of sozo, is talking about the deliverance that we've seen elsewhere in the New Testament. It's talking about deliverance, like we saw in the beginning of Galatians.

Deliverance from this present evil age. This is talking about justification of the receiving of reward and eternal life in the eternal future. Those who are delivered and who stand before the Lord as approved servants.

And that's why Jesus says, strive to enter in through the narrow gate. For many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Now, there is no seeking to enter and not being able when you talk about unbelievers.

At the great white throne, there's no place to enter. They're resurrected, they're judged, and they're sent to the lake of fire. This is the narrow road that few find that Jesus talks about.

And that narrow gate and that narrow road is traversed by believers who respond to the truth that is revealed after salvation and respond with the obedience that comes from faith. The wide road and the broad way that leads to destruction is also populated with believers. And that destruction is a picture of loss of opportunity, a meaningless life, no reflected glory of Jesus Christ in the eternal future.

It's easy to go down the broad road. Many, I say, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door saying, Lord, Lord, open for us.

Now, these people know the Lord. They know who he is. They acknowledge who he is.

They address him as Lord. He will answer and say, I do not know you, where you are from. Then you will begin to say, but we ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets.

But he will say, I tell you, I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out. Many will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south. These are people outside of Israel.

These are Gentiles. Will come and sit down in the kingdom of God. And there are last who will be first.

And there are first who will be last. Now, keep in mind, this is the kingdom and these people are the last. They're not, they're not outside of the millennium.

They're not going to the lake of fire. They are the ones who are last. Many of those that they look down on and judged and said, oh, look at these, these poor people, let's put them in the back row.

Let's put the rich people up front who have been hypocritical, who judged people like whether or not they were circumcised, whether or not they kept the Mosaic law. They're going to be last. And being last means you don't even get in the gate.

They will be outside and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The parallel to this over in Matthew chapter eight, verses 11 and 12, Jesus is talking to the Pharisees and the other Jews that are hanging around when he talks to the centurion who believes him when he's asking on behalf of his servant. And Jesus says, I've not seen such great faith, not in Israel.

And I say to you in Matthew 8, 11, that many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. Who's he talking about? He's talking about this Gentile centurion, Old Testament type believer. But the sons of the kingdom, the Jews who should have known better, who had the law and the prophets, will be cast into outer darkness.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. These Pharisees and scribes are going to see the Gentiles coming and sitting down. Why will they see it? Because they're resurrected.

They're going to be there, but they're going to be outside the kingdom. And it's going to cause them to weep and wail and gnash their teeth when they see the despised Gentiles sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These people have been waiting for the resurrection, thinking that they're going to be sitting right at Abraham's right hand because they're great sons of Abraham and they've kept the law and so forth.

But they try to establish their righteousness by their own works. And they're going to weep and

wail and gnash their teeth when hears these despised Samaritans and Gentiles and Roman centurions sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they themselves are cast out. So this is a judgment of believers based on their deeds.

And it is severe. It causes weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And we say, but wait a minute, doesn't scripture say that once Jesus comes back, there's no more tears, no more pain, no more death and so forth? That scripture, as we reviewed during the break, that is Revelation chapter 21, verse 4. And if you look at the context, this is after the great right throne judgment, after the lake of fire, after the heavens and earth have been completely rolled up like a blanket and taken out of the way.

And there is a new heavens and a new earth. And there's no more sea. And the heavenly Jerusalem comes down out of the sky.

This is the kingdom of the Father. And at that point, there will be no more tears, no more sorrow, no more pain. So we need to be sure and apply scripture in its context.

And there will be sorrow at the judgment for believers who fail the grace of God. Look at Hebrews chapter 6. Look at Hebrews chapter 10. These passages also talk about that.

Now, there is a gnashing of teeth passage that talks about the lake of fire, and that's in Matthew chapter 13. In Matthew chapter 13, and I hope you'll notice the difference. Matthew chapter 13, verse 42 is the pertinent part of that, where the field is sown with the good seeds, which are the sons of the kingdom, the tares of the sons of the wicked one.

A lot of people try to say that this is the church age. But keep in mind, Jesus Christ is talking to Old Testament saints. And he's talking about the kingdom.

And the parable of the wheat and the tares is talking about the status of things during the millennial kingdom. There are going to be sons of the kingdom who are wheat, and they are the seeds. Notice they are already sons of the kingdom when they are sown as seeds.

And there are also tares who are sons of the wicked one, but they look just like the wheat. And these are people who go along, who are obedient, who don't break the law, who blend in with society in the millennial kingdom. But they are sown by the devil.

The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. The tares are gathered and burned in the fire. And that's how it will be at the end of the age.

The son of man will send out his angels. They will gather out of his kingdom. Notice this is the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

This is the millennial kingdom. The angels will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and all those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. Nobody goes into

the furnace of fire until the great white throne judgment.

And that is consistent with the justice of God. Think about the fact that if an unbeliever dies and immediately goes to the lake of fire, if you believe that Cain was an unbeliever and he went into the lake of fire, well, he gets some 7,000 years in the lake of fire before he ever comes up before the judge to have his life judged. And we have enough sense about justice to not punish criminals before they're tried and sentenced.

Nobody on this planet has been tried and sentenced yet. Therefore, nobody can be judged and nobody can go to the lake of fire. When you see someone going into fire judgment, that's the lake of fire.

And the timing is the great white throne. This is the end of the age and this is the end of the millennial age. And the wheat and the tares are not the church age.

And it's not people that profess Christianity and really aren't. These are people who go along with the justice system that Jesus Christ imposes. And they succeed in being obedient, but their heart is not in it.

And they don't have the love that comes from faith. And they are going to be judged, as we saw in the sheep and goats judgment, because what's the basis of their judgment? They haven't been transformed by faith in Christ. They don't care about others.

The love that goes along with faith isn't present. And Jesus uses their outward works to convict them of their inner lack of faith. And they go into the fire.

Jesus is cleansing his kingdom. They will cast them into the furnace of fire, wailing and gnashing of teeth. Notice verse 43.

Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father. This is a different kingdom. Jesus Christ cleanses his kingdom of everything that offends.

And then he turns his kingdom over to the father. There are other passages that talk about this, that Jesus Christ will ultimately be the authority over all things. And then he will turn all things over to the father.

And that takes place at the end of the millennium. And the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of the father. He who has ears, let him hear.

And that's an admonition to be discerning. Pay attention to the details and understand what Jesus is talking about. Again, he gives another example here in verse 47.

The dragnet is cast into the sea and gathers fish of every kind. When it's full, they draw it to shore. They sit down and gather the good into vessels, throw the bad away.

So it will be at the end of the age. Once again, this is the end of the millennial kingdom. They gather the good into vessels.

They throw the bad away. The angels will come forth, separate. Notice it's always the angels.

There's no mentions of angels needing to separate people out at the end of the tribulation or at the end of the age of the church. Angels will go through the millennial kingdom at the end. Will separate the wicked from the just and cast them into the furnace of fire.

Now, if this takes place any other time than at the point of the great white throne, then you have two different castings into the lake of fire, which is inconsistent with scripture. It's inconsistent with the justice of God. Uh, you have a judgment that's not mentioned anywhere else in scripture.

If that takes place at some point other than the lake of fire, because, uh, those who are dead aren't raised according to Revelation 20 until the great white throne judgment. And, uh, Jesus, as he did in verse 43, admonishes his disciples. He says, have you understood all these things? And they said, oh, yes, Lord, we understand.

He says, every scribe that is construct instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old. And the teaching about the millennial kingdom was something new. This is not mystery doctrine.

This is not church age doctrine. This is something new about the age of Israel. This is something new about the fate of saints.