

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

For the past 11 months, we have used Ecclesiastes 12:13 to guide us as we study lessons from God's Word, showing us how to live in order to be saved. In a broad sense, there are two types of people in this world: (1)-those that care for God and His commandments, and (2)-those that do not. A description of Type 1 would be: a person who believes the Bible is the unerring Word of God, the God Who created all things; a person who believes it is by and through God that all things, including man, exist; a person who believes there are blessings to be received or condemnation and punishment to be encountered in the final judgment, according to each individual's obedience, or disobedience, to God. A description of Type 2 would be a person who totally refuses the thought of the Supreme Being framing and creating this universe, a person who rejects the reality of a judgment day in which the Supreme Being will judge each person. Briefly, we might say Type 1 is a religious person who believes in God, and Type 2 is not. What will be the end result for Type 2 persons? Notice Revelation 21:8: *"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."* Here is a question for the "believers": Will the fact that an unbeliever does not believe in God or in an eternal punishment, keep the unbeliever from suffering that eternal punishment? God, through His Son and the Holy Spirit, directed John to write the words of Revelation 21:8. If an individual dies an unbeliever, he will end up in the eternal place of torment - the second death. Let us notice Ephesians 2:11-13: *"Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; and at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, **having no hope**, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."* (All emphases mine, HL) Those who have not come in contact with the blood of Christ have no hope of eternal salvation, if they die in that condition.

But, we have made the believer/unbeliever distinction far too broad, haven't we? There are, have been, and will be, those who will die without hope of a place of rest after death. There is another division to be made, and that division is within the group who claim to be believers in God and in Jesus Christ as His Son Who died on the cruel cross to become the Savior of all who obey Him. Beginning next week, we will further notice that division.