



# THE GREAT COMMISSION; WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD THE GOSPEL?

By George Lujack

Many people throughout the centuries have wondered, “What happens to people who have never heard the Gospel message? If they never knew Yeshua (Jesus), does this mean that they will automatically go to hell when they die?” This article will discuss the Great Commission and address the salvation concern over persons who have never heard the Good News.

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

### MATTHEW 28:18-20:

And Yeshua (Jesus) came and spoke to them, saying, **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”**

### MARK 16:15-16:

And He [Yeshua (Jesus)] said to them, **“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned...”**

Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), upon His resurrection - on a mountain in Galilee, in what was later termed, ‘The Great Commission,’ instructed His disciples to spread His teachings to all the nations.

There have been many preachers throughout millennia who have proclaimed, “Without Jesus, thou cannot be saved.” Then they go a step further and erroneously go on to explain the ‘Bad News’ concerning persons who have unfortunately never heard the Gospel message, that they are hell bound.

Yeshua (Jesus) didn’t come to condemn, but to save. He didn’t come to condemn righteous-living people who never heard the Gospel salvation message. He will condemn those who have heard the Gospel message and reject it *and* the unrighteous who haven’t heard His name.

## WE ARE JUDGED BY OUR DEEDS

### **ROMANS 2:6-11:**

**The righteous judgment of God, who “WILL RENDER EACH ONE ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS,” eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.**

## THE DOERS OF THE LAW WILL BE JUSTIFIED

### **ROMANS 2:12-29:**

**For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (FOR NOT THE HEARERS OF THE LAW ARE JUST IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, BUT THE DOERS OF THE LAW WILL BE JUSTIFIED; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), according to my gospel.**

**Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, “Do not commit adultery,” do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For *“the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,”* as it is written.**

**For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.**

Concerning circumcision, if a circumcised man is an unrepentant adulterer or fornicator, what righteousness is there in circumcision? If an uncircumcised man who is celibate or only engages in sexual intimacy with his wife, what unrighteousness is there in an uncircumcision? It is not circumcision or uncircumcision that justifies a man, but how a man conducts himself in matters of sexual morality, whether he is circumcised or not.

**JOHN 3:16:**

***“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”***

**ACTS 4:12:**

**Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**

**1 TIMOTHY 1:15-16:**

**This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Messiah Yeshua (Christ Jesus) came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.**

How can people throughout the world be saved if they have never heard the name of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ)? Upon their resurrection, they will be judged by their deeds and will then hear the name of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) then, when they meet Him.

If what some preachers have said were true, that if a person in some region of the world who has never heard the name of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), and therefore could not accept Him or the Gospel message, that such persons were automatically doomed to hell, then it would also mean that all children who died in early childhood or infancy, including aborted babies, would also be doomed to hell. Infants cannot accept Yeshua (Jesus).

The Catholic Church attempted to address the concern of salvation of babies through infant baptism, but infants cannot be saved by baptism. Baptism can only be rightly done on those who willingly accept and submit to Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), who are making a public declaration of their faith, and are symbolically having their sins cleansed through submersion in water.

ALL PEOPLE INSTINCTIVELY BELIEVE IN A RIGHTEOUS GOD

**ROMANS 1:20:**

**For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse...**

There are people who have heard the Scriptures and the Good News and deny there is a God and live lawlessly. There are people who have not known the Scriptures or heard the Gospel message and believe in a God and live righteously. Instinctively, all people everywhere know that there is a righteous God and are without excuse.

**EZEKIEL 18:32:**

**“For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says YHWH (the Lord) GOD. “Therefore turn and live!”**

**EZEKIEL 33:11:**

**“As I live,” says YHWH (the Lord) GOD, “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! ...”**

**2 PETER 3:9:**

**The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.**

Yeshua (Jesus) didn't issue the Great Commission to His disciples, so that they should hurry up and spread the salvation message of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), lest the people of the nations didn't hear it before they died, then they would all perish in hell. All righteous-living people who have never heard the salvation message through Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), from all the nations, will have an opportunity to be saved after they are resurrected.

Unrighteous-living people will be condemned for rejecting Yeshua (Jesus) if they have heard of Him, or if they never heard of Him, for their unrighteous deeds.

Righteous-living people will not be condemned if they have never heard the name of Yeshua (Jesus); they will be judged by their righteousness and have an opportunity to accept Him upon their resurrection.

People will be condemned for REJECTING Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), and for unrighteousness, NOT for never having heard His name or the Gospel's salvation message.