



[Ephesians 2:11-12](#)

(11) Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—(12) that at that time you 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.

New King James Version

What a depressing status! If these verses stood alone, these "aliens" and "strangers" would indeed live their lives in vain. Without a future opportunity for [salvation](#), they would truly be lost forever.

Are millions lost because they never heard the name of Christ? What about infants who died? What about the billions enslaved under the dreadful yoke of atheistic communism? They did not choose to be born in a godless society. Are the doors forever shut on those born in a nation dominated by Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, or Islam? Most calling themselves Christian think so.

Could we call [God merciful](#) if He consigned people to hopelessness merely because of an accident of birth? Would He be fair to condemn those who never heard? God can do anything He wants. It is, after all, His creation. In verse 13, though, there is a slight crack in the door of [hope](#): "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." Everyone has stood in the Gentile's position of being far off from salvation. We have all had to be brought near by the blood of [Jesus Christ](#). Could the only difference between us and them be a matter of timing?

Imagine the multiple billions who have lived through childhood unloved, uneducated, and unhealthy in body and spirit. They may have endured miserable marriages, reared and lost children to disease, war, and natural disaster. Others may have spent seemingly pointless lives growing old, neglected, and disrespected as fodder for the next disaster.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Ephesians 2:11-12 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

The heaven and hell doctrines of this world's Christianity may make for interesting reading, but they render the judgments and [resurrections](#) of God as superfluous. They diminish the creative power of the great, merciful God in these areas as finished and past, not as ongoing and future.

In contrast, the [Last Great Day](#) has a very special meaning to those who understand. It answers perplexing questions about the great masses of humanity who are living or have died without knowledge of God's way or a true understanding of Jesus Christ, the only "name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" ([Acts 4:12](#)). In my multiple decades as a minister, I have yet to talk with anyone from another church who knows the fate of these "lost" people.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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