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Where are the Dead?

Radically Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity



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Where are The Dead?

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Introduction

Several years ago, I used to evangelize as a licensed minister in the United Pentecostal Church.

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During my revivals throughout the West, I encountered many ministers who had beliefs that were contrary against the Word of God. Some of these ministers were preaching at Camp Meetings spewing their false doctrines among the people.

One pastor believed in soul sleep, that upon death, your soul sleeps with your body in the grave until the Rapture.

Another preacher preached that Hell is not real, Jesus only spoke of it as a parable. He said it did not make sense for God to put someone in Hell, resurrect them, judge them, and then return them back to Hell.

Another preacher informed me that there is no evidence, in the Bible, where the soul or Spirit of Jesus went to Hell after His death on the cross.

In this course, I will attempt to answer these false teachings from the Bible. Let God's Word be true, and every man a liar.

Bishop Donald R. Vestal, Ph.D.
Chancellor



Chapter 1--Where Are The Dead?

“Man dieth and where is he?” This question was uttered by Job, the Patriarch, is not an unusual one. It is on the lips and in the hearts of millions of people. Everywhere, people are wondering about the dead, they are asking a thousand and one questions. What is the final destiny of man? Does he become non-existent, at death, or does the real personality survive? If so, where is he? Is he conscious? Under what conditions does he exist? Is any communication possible? And will separation from loved ones be forever?

Where can we find satisfactory answers to such great questions, as mentioned above? Can science answer them? No, science cannot tell us if there is life beyond the grave. Science cannot tell us where our loved ones are and what their condition is.

The answers to the above questions are found in the Bible. God’s Word is the only

source for information, in answering these great questions, and we must turn to divine revelation.

In the Bible, the Creator not only reveals the origin and nature of man, but He also reveals the **destiny of man**. God's Word clearly answers these great questions, and there can be, no doubt in our minds, in regard to the dead, if we but study the Bible and accept its plain statements.

Since the public, at large, have many questions about the dead, and inasmuch as their opportunity to learn has been small, a so-called "Bible teacher" by the name of Judge Rutherford has taken advantage of the fact and has answered the demand of the public, by publishing low-priced books, which are supposed to be Scriptural. The country is literally flooded with his books, teaching that the dead are entirely unconscious, that they are out of existence until the resurrection, that there is no Hell, and that all the unrighteous who die, will sometime later, have an opportunity to be saved.

Thousands have accepted his false doctrine, as though it were gospel truth, merely because his books contain a few Scripture verses, which make them appear as fundamental and orthodox.

In order to arrive at a better understanding of the true Bible teaching, regarding the dead, first it will be necessary to present briefly, a summary of his false teaching. In this way, the true and the false may be compared.

This false teaching, concerning the dead, is set forth in the false system commonly known, as "Russellism." This system was inaugurated by the late Charles T. Russell, who wrote six volumes entitled, "Studies in the Scriptures." The movement is now carried on by Judge Rutherford and his followers, known, as "Jehovah's Witnesses," "Watch Tower Workers," etc.

Brief Summary Of The False Teaching Concerning The Dead.

First: In Regard to The Soul and Death

Rutherford says, “No man has a soul.” He says, “the preachers have made the people believe that a man carries a soul around him and that when he dies, the soul hikes off to some other place.” Thus, he ridicules the doctrine that a man has a soul.

Here is Russell’s definition of death. “Death is a period of **absolute non-existence.**”

Again, Judge Rutherford says speaking of sinners, “They are entirely **unconscious in the grave.** They are not suffering because **they do not exist.**” In another place, “He is unconscious and would **remain out of existence** forever, if God had not made some provisions for his recovery.” (the provision, according to this false teaching, is the resurrection and second chance).

The Seventh Day Adventists also teach that “The state to which we are reduced, by death, is one of **silence, inactivity, and entire unconsciousness.**”

Second: The False Theory Of Russellism Regarding The Resurrection, Second Chance, and Hell.

Russellism teaches that those who die will be raised Spirit-beings. It teaches that the Apostles and all true Christians, who died prior to 1878, were resurrected in the spring of that year. They were raised as Spirit-beings without bodies. It teaches that the wicked dead will be resurrected to a second chance.

Second Chance

Men will be given a second chance for salvation during the Millennial Reign (Russell’s “Studies in the Scriptures” Vol. 1. P.106, 107, 111, 129).

Second Trial will be more favorable than the first (vol. 1, p. 143).

Christ's work on the cross, simply guarantees, a second chance (vol. 1, P. 143).

Should Nero, during the Millennium, become obedient, he will be saved, will be highly respected, and his past forgotten (vol. 6, p. 178).

False Theory Regarding Hell

God is too good to sustain an everlasting Hell (v. 1, p. 127)

The penalty of the second chance for life will be the second death, which is annihilation (vol. 1, p.151).

Hell fire is symbolic of the destroying of error and the purifying of faith (v. 1, p. 320).

Death, the extinction of being, is the punishment of willful sinners (v. 3, p.117).

This brief summary gives us an understanding of the **Hereafter**, as it is erroneously taught, in Russell's and Rutherford's books.

Dear students, perhaps you can understand now the purpose of why I present this course. The false teachings, that at death, man becomes non-existent, that there is no Hell, that there is a second chance after the resurrection, have deceived thousands of people. It is my purpose to present to all, a complete course, devoted wholly to the true Bible teaching, regarding the dead.

NOW, LET US TURN TO THE HOLY BIBLE AND SEE FOR OURSELVES WHAT IT SAYS, CONCERNING THE DEAD!

Chapter II--The Material And Spiritual Natures Of Man

The Scriptures prove that man has two distinct natures, a Material Nature, which is the physical body, and a Spiritual Nature. These two natures are clearly distinguished in the Bible. The body, and the Spiritual Nature within the body, are recognized as two different and distinct natures.

The Scriptures Everywhere Recognizes The Distinction Between The Body And The Spiritual Nature Of Man

Job 32:8, “But there is a **Spirit in man** and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.”

Zech. 12:1, “The Lord stretcheth forth the Heavens and layeth the foundations of the earth, and formeth the **Spirit of man within him.**”

The “**Spirit within man**” and the “**man**” are as distinct as a house and a tenant within the house.

Job. 14:22, “But his **flesh** upon him shall have pain, and his **soul within him** shall mourn.”

Here, the “**flesh**” and “**soul**” are distinct. The flesh is “upon him,” or envelopes the soul; while the soul is “within him” or in the body. And these two, the “flesh” without, and the Spiritual Nature within, constitute the man.

I Cor. 6:20, “For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your **body**, and in your **Spirit**, which are God’s.”

In this passage of Scripture, the “body” and “Spirit” are so clearly distinguished, that no

comment can make it more plain.

I Cor. 2:11, “For what knoweth the things of man, save the **Spirit of man which is in him**? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

The distinction between the human body and the Spirit is more obvious. The above Scripture proves, that man has a **Spiritual nature**, distinct from the body, in which it dwells.

In Matthew 10:28, the Spiritual nature of man is further distinguished from the body. Jesus teaches, that the soul cannot be killed. Though man can kill the body, he cannot kill the soul. “And fear not them, which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.”

Here, it is evident that the soul is not the body, nor the body is the soul; so that while men are able to kill the one, they are not able to kill the other.

If those who are able to kill the body are not able to kill the soul, how can some say that the body and soul are the same, and that to kill the one is to kill the other, also?

The history of the creation of the first man, Genesis, first and second chapters, shows clearly, that Adam was created as a compound being, a body, and a Spiritual nature.

The order of events, or exact process of God’s creation, is fully described in the second chapter, verse 7. “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” Mark the order of events, as they are stated.

First, the Lord God, “**Formed man of the dust of the ground.**”

This was, of course, a material nature - his body. There it lay, perfect in all its parts. But cold and motionless. The bones, and muscles, and tendons, and veins, and heart,

and arteries, and brain, and nerves, and lungs, and eyes, and ears, were all in place, ready for action; but as yet, there was no consciousness, no sensation, no life, no motion. Why could not the brain have thought, the nerves felt, and the eyes seen, and the ears heard? Why was there no life, motion, or intelligence? Because the intelligent conscious Spirit was not yet there. The man formed of the dust was, as yet, a mere human body, inanimate and lifeless.

In the second step in the process of creation, God “**breathed into his nostrils**, the breath of life.” This act was plainly the infusion of a Spiritual nature into the material body.

The author of the “Literal Translation of the Hebrew” renders the passage, “And Jehovah, Elohim formed a very man of the dust of the ground, and **blew into his nostrils**, the LIVING SPIRIT, and man was for a living creature.” He was, but a body before, but now, has become a “living soul.”

It has been proven, from various Scriptures, that man has a SPIRITUAL NATURE, separate and distinct from the body in which it dwells, and here, the history of the creation of Adam shows that his life began with the union of his material and Spiritual natures.

In addition to the Scripture references already quoted, Job 32:8; Zech.12:1; Job. 14:22; I Cor. 6:20, there are still others which prove that man DOES have a Spiritual nature, and that it is distinct from the body in which it dwells.

The following two references, not only further distinguishes between man’s Spiritual nature and his body, but they also clearly establish the fact, that man is a triune Being.

I Thess. 5:23, “I pray God your whole “SPIRIT” and “SOUL” and “BODY,” be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Heb. 4:12, “The Word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of “SOUL” and “SPIRIT” and the “Joints of

Marrow" (body) and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Note

I shall not attempt to define the difference between "soul" and "Spirit." In this lesson, it is not my purpose to discriminate and to show the shades of meaning between the two. My purpose, is to show that man is a Spiritual being, and in this chapter, I have answered my purpose by proving from the Bible that man has a Spiritual nature, within the body.

However, let it be clearly understood, that "soul" and "Spirit," are not the same. They are distinct - they are different. This is evident from the fact, that reference is made to both, in the two passages above. There are many varied opinions and views as to the exact difference between soul and Spirit. Many writers have gone into lengthy complicated discussions, in attempting to define this difference. Soul and Spirit are so closely related, that it is quite difficult, to accurately distinguish them.

The fact of the matter is, that in the Bible, the words for Spirit and soul are not always translated the same. Sometimes in the original, where the word, "soul" appears, it is translated by the English word, "Spirit." Then again, in the original, where the word for "Spirit" appears, frequently it is translated by the English word, "soul." Thus, we can see that the words are used interchangeably.

Soul and Spirit are both distinct, yet because they are so closely related and because they are seldom distinguished, either of the two words, soul or Spirit, is descriptive of, and is understood to mean, the entire Spiritual nature of man. The two terms in the vocabulary of religious writings, are generally synonymous.

Therefore, hereafter in this course wherever reference is made to "soul" and "Spirit," either of the two words, represent the entire Spiritual nature of man. When we use either of the two words, we are speaking of man's Spiritual being.

It Has Been Definitely Proved From The Bible That Man Has A Spiritual Nature Distinct From The Body In Which It Dwells.

Job 32:8; Zech. 12:1; Job. 14:22; I Cor. 2:11; I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12. (quoted in the preceding paragraphs).

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Thus, Judge Rutherford and all those who adhere to his theory, are definitely wrong when they say that “No man has a soul” or Spiritual nature within the body.

Now, Rutherford says, that “The preachers have made the people believe, that man has a soul.” But, from the foregoing Scriptures, we see that there is plenty of Bible evidence proving, that man does indeed have a “soul” or Spiritual nature.

Of course, these passages, as well as many others, are fatal to Rutherford’s theory, and so he must get rid of them. But, this is *easy* for him. His reply to this would be, that wherever the word, “Spirit” is used in expressions such as, “Spirit within man” or “Spirit in man,” etc., the word, “Spirit” merely means, “BREATH” and at death, the breath passes out into space, and man is completely dead. But again, we find that this is not so. “The Spirit within man, is not the same as the breath within man, that passes out into space, at death. Such a feeble explanation cannot possibly do away with the clear evidence, established in the Bible. I will show that, “Spirit’ and “breath,” are NOT THE SAME.

Notice Job 34:15, “If he set his heart upon man, if he gather into himself his SPIRIT and his BREATH: all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.”

Here, we observe that, SPIRIT and BREATH of man, are TWO DISTINCT THINGS.

If Spirit means the same as breath, then the following predicaments would result. “If he gather into himself, his **Spirit** and his **Spirit**,” or else “if he gather into himself, his **breath** and his **breath**.”

Spirit and Breath do not have the same meaning in the Scriptures. As more evidence of this, see what nonsense this system of interpretation would divert the Scriptures.

In the following, the word, "breath" is substituted for the word, "Spirit" to show the folly of saying that the word, "Spirit" has the same meaning as the word, "breath."

Acts 23:8, "For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor BREATH: but, the Pharisees confess both." Also verse 9, "If a BREATH or an angel hath spoken to him."

Rom. 2:29, "Circumcision is that of the heart, in the BREATH."

I Cor. 5:5, "To deliver such a one unto Satan - that the BREATH may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus."

II Cor. 7:1, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and BREATH."

Gal. 6:18, "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your BREATH, Amen."

In the following the word, "breath" is substituted for the word, "soul," to show that the Scriptures which prove, that man has a Spirit or soul, cannot be so easily explained out of their meaning, by merely saying that "Spirit" or "soul," means "breath."

Psalms 19:7, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the BREATH."

Psalms 106:15, "And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their BREATHS."

Matt. 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the BREATH, but rather fear him which is able to destroy, both BREATH and body in Hell."

Luke 12:19, "And I will say unto my BREATH, BREATH, thou hast much goods laid up for many years."

I Thess. 5:23, "And I pray God, your whole Spirit and BREATH and body be preserved blameless," etc.

James 5:20, "Let him know that he which converted a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a BREATH from death."

II Peter 2:8, "Lot dwelling in Sodom, vexed his righteous BREATH, from day to day."

We now see the Scriptures proving that man has a Spirit, and cannot be so easily done away with, by merely saying, that the word, "Spirit" or "soul," means "breath."

There are other references that could be used on this matter, however, these furnish sufficient and concrete proof.

It has been established, from Scripture, that man does have a soul, distinct from the body in which it dwells, thus Rutherford's supposedly Scriptural theory, fails on its first point, when tested in the light of the Holy Bible.

It is a known fact, that the matter in our body, is gradually and constantly, changing. We are not the identical persons we were seven years ago. New cells are continually being added to our bodies, while other cells are continually being removed, as waste products. The old cells are gradually being replaced by new ones. After this process has continued, for a period of approximately seven years, all the cells have been replaced, and none of the old cells remain. The body, as to actual cells, which compose it, has been changed; thus, we have a new body in a very short time. This means we have a NEW BRAIN - an entirely different brain, approximately every seven years.

It is a remarkable fact, that while we have a new brain in a very short time, yet MEMORIES REMAIN.

People can remember clearly, events that occurred many, many years ago. Aged people especially are noted for their memory of childhood days. The brain may have been changed many times, yet with an entirely different brain, one is able to remember, to the smallest detail, events and experiences of previous years. We can also acquire new experiences, but they, like those of the past, cannot be erased from our memories - they are indestructible. What is the explanation to this phenomenon? There is but one, namely: that there is an indestructible Spirit or Spiritual nature in man.

Certainly, there can be no doubt about existence of the human Spirit. It is the Spirit, the real individuality, distinct from the body, that remembers and remains, long after the body has been changed, many times - it carries the memories and survives all the great bodily changes.

This is in perfect harmony with I Corinthians 2:11, "For what knoweth the things of man, save the "Spirit" of man, which is in him?"

This shows that the seat of knowledge, in man, is not in the flesh and bones, nor even in the brain, but in the "Spirit," "which is in him."

It shows that the physical brain is not the source of thought and will, and memory. While the brain is unconscious, in sleep, the Spirit can have real experience. It is not the body, but the Spirit that thinks, wills, plans, remembers, and holds communion with God.

When a person dies, the brain, eyes, ears, nerves are still the same members - they are still there - yet, the brain cannot think, the eyes cannot see, the ears cannot hear, the nerves produce no feeling. Why? Because, it was not the body, but the real Spiritual nature within the body, that did the thinking, seeing, hearing, and feeling.

Chapter III--The Nature of Death

Death-a Separation of the Spiritual Nature from the Body

In the preceding chapter it has been shown, according to the Bible, that MAN DOES HAVE A SOUL (Spiritual nature), distinct from the body in which it dwells, and that it is the conscious, thinking, remembering, entity- the real individuality. We learned, from this course, of the creation of Adam that his natural life began with the UNION of the Spiritual nature and his body. We shall now proceed to show, that his death was the SEPARATION of these two, and that wherever death is referred to in the Bible, it has the same meaning- a separation of the Spirit or Spiritual nature from the body.

The original decree of death, Gen. 3:19, implies only the death of the body. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread, till thou shalt return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; of dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Here it is plain, that only so much of man as was "dust," and "taken out of the ground," was doomed to return to dust again. But the "breath of life" or **Spirit**, breathed into Adam by his Creator, was not "dust" nor "taken out of the ground." It therefore, was not doomed to return to dust with the body at death.

In harmony with the above, we find that wherever the fulfillment of this original decree is spoken of in the Bible, it is described as taking effect upon the "dust" of the body only; while the Spirit is released from the body and survives its dissolution. **According to the Bible, death is a separation of the Spirit, (Spiritual nature) from the body.**

Eccl. 8:8, "There is no man that hath power over the Spirit, to **retain the Spirit**; neither hath he power in the day of death." This passage clearly refers to death; and the expression, "to **retain the Spirit**," clearly implies that, in death, the Spirit departs from the body. It cannot be "retained," either by burial of the body or by any other means.

Eccl. 12:7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the Spirit shall return

to God, who gave it.”

The allusion to Genesis 3:19, is unmistakable. It shows clearly, the scope and design of the decree, “dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return,” namely, that the “dust” or body, only, is to “return to the earth as it was,” while the “Spirit returns unto God, who gave it.”

The Scripture Further Shows, that Death is a Separation of the Spirit from the Body

The numerous descriptions of death as the “giving up of the ghost” convey the same thought of death as a separation of the Spirit from the body.

Abraham “gave up the ghost,” Gen. 25:8. Isaac “Gave up the ghost,” Gen. 35:29. Jacob “yielded up the ghost,” Gen. 49:33. And, “when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, “Father, into thy hands I commend My Spirit; and having said this, he gave up the ghost,” Luke 23:46. “But, man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the ghost,” Job. 14:10. Sapphira “fell down and yielded up the ghost,” Acts 5:10. And so, throughout the Scriptures, the giving up of the ghost, is a common phrase, to signify dying.

It is evident, from the above Scriptures, that death is a “giving up” or departure of the Spirit from the body.

That death is a separation of the soul from the body, is clearly implied in I Kings 17:20-22, where Elijah prayed that the son of the widow of Zarephath might be restored to life. “And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?” And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, “O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child’s **soul** come into him AGAIN. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him **again** and he revived.”

Here, Elijah prays that the child's "soul" might re-enter the lifeless body; and in answer to the prayer, "the **soul** of the child came into him AGAIN, and he revived." This clearly shows that the soul had departed, and that death is a separation of the soul from the body.

When the ruler's daughter was raised to life, Luke 8:49-55, it is said, "And her Spirit came **again**, and she rose straightway, etc.," implying that in dying, her Spirit had left the body and must needs "come again," before she could again be restored to life. No language could make it more clear, that death is a separation of the Spirit from the body. The same truth is taught in the following:

When David learned that his beloved child was dead (II Samuel 12:19-23), he ceased to weep and fast; and when questioned concerning his unusual conduct, he said, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him **back again**? I shall go to him, but he shall not **return** to me." This language plainly indicates that his child had **gone hence**, and that he could not return, but that the bereft father expected to **depart** also - to "go to him" - when this mortal life should end.

The Apostle Paul sets forth this same truth, that death is a separation of the Spirit from the body. II Corinthians 5:6-9, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are **at home in the body**, we are **absent from the Lord**; for we walk by faith, not by sight, we are confident, I say, willing rather to be **absent from the body**, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or **absent**, we may be accepted of him."

What does Paul mean by "**at home in the body**" and "**absent from the body**" if the soul and body are not distinct, and if death is not a separation of the one from the other? Surely, the "absent" from the body, means that, at death, his soul would separate or depart from the body.

Death, as a separation, is inferred in the following:” The inspired writers represent the human body as a “**Tabernacle**” or frail dwelling place; and death, as the **putting off** of this Tabernacle. Thus, Paul says, “For we know, that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens” (II Corinthians 5:1).

The Apostle Peter, in II Peter 1:13-15 says, “Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off **this, my Tabernacle**, even as our Lord Jesus Christ, hath shown me. Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.”

In these passages, then, the “Tabernacle” to be “dissolved,” and the dwellers in the Tabernacle are as distinct as the house and its occupant. It is equally clear, that by the “putting off” of his “Tabernacle,” (as Christ had shown him, John 21:18-19), Peter meant his “decease.” We are in a Tabernacle, and death is the putting off of our Tabernacle. Death is the separation of soul and body.

VARIOUS REFERENCES SPEAK OF DEATH, AS A DEPARTURE. THIS SHOWS, THAT DEATH IS A SEPARATION OF THE SPIRITUAL NATURE (the real individuality) FROM THE BODY.

St. Paul described death, as a “**departure**,” to occur when he should cease “**to abide in the flesh**,” Phil. 1:21-24. “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor; yet, what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a **desire to depart, and to be with Christ**; which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”

What does the Apostle here, mean, by “abiding in the flesh,” if it be not **living in the body**? And what by “**departing**,” if it be not **dying**?

It is scarcely possible for language to teach more clearly, the doctrine, that death is a separation of body and Spirit, and a departure of the Spirit, from this world.

The same doctrine, that death is a separation or departure, is taught in numerous other Scriptures. For instance, II Timothy 4:6, where the Apostle says, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my **departure**, is at hand."

Also, Genesis 35:18, "And it came to pass, as her soul was in **departing**, for she died, etc." It was revealed to Simeon, that he should not see death, till he had seen the Lord's Christ, and when he saw the infant Redeemer, he said, "Lord, now lettest thou, thy servant, **depart** in peace, according to Thy Word." To him, also, death was a **departure**, which could not be true, in any sense, if the soul died with the body, and was not separated from it.

That death is a separation of soul and body, is further evident from James 2:26, "For as **the body without the Spirit is dead**, so faith without works is dead, also."

Here, the Apostle refers for the illustration of his subject, to a fact acknowledged by all professing Christians of his day, namely: That the body was "dead," when it was "without the Spirit" or, in other words, that death is a **separation** of the Spirit from the body.

The original decree of death consigns only "the dust" (the body) to return to the earth, while the "Spirit returns to God, who gave it." Death is "the giving up of the ghost," and the dead are not restored to life, unless their "souls come into them again." We are now dwelling in "earthly houses of this Tabernacle," which we shall "put off," at death. We now "abide in the flesh," but at death, we will "depart" and will be "absent from the body," and then, "the body without the Spirit will be dead."

Chapter IV--The Abodes Of The Departed Spirits

In the preceding two chapters, according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, the following two facts have been established: First, that man has a soul (Spiritual nature) and second, that at death, the Spiritual nature separates or departs from the body.

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Inasmuch as we have learned, that death is but the separation or departure of the Spirit or Spiritual nature from the body, the next logical question to be asked, by every thinking person would be, WHAT BECOMES OF THE DEPARTED SPIRITS? Are they roaming about in space or do they depart to some definite place? If so, what place?

First, it can be clearly and emphatically stated that the Spirits of the departed, DO NOT roam about in space. The Bible makes it clear, that there is a definite abode for them.

In order to get a correct understanding of the subject, it will be necessary to consider and distinguish between the PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE ABODES OF THE DEAD. We must also get a proper knowledge of the words, as they are used in the ORIGINAL HEBREW AND GREEK TEXTS, and not as the translators have rendered them, in the King James Version. It would be impossible to arrive at an accurate understanding of Death, Heaven, and Hell, from the English Translation, without first going directly to the original Hebrew and Greek..

WHY? The following Scriptures, as rendered in the King James Version, will illustrate the predicament.

Christ said, in Luke 16:22-23, "the rich man also died, and was buried; and in HELL (HADES),"

The original word, (HADES), IS HERE, TRANSLATED HELL.

In Matthew 23:33, Christ said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye

escape the damnation of HELL? (GEHENNA).”

The original word, (Gehenna), is also translated, Hell.

In II Peter 2:4, “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to HELL (TARTARUS).”

Here, the original word, (Tartarus), is also rendered, Hell.

So, you see, HADES, GEHENNA, TARTARUS, are three different words, and are the names of three different places, and are all translated in the King James Version, by the one word, Hell.

Now then, when reading the English word, Hell, in the New Testament, how can we possibly know to which of the three places the writer was referring? One can readily see why it is necessary to go directly to the original text to arrive at a correct understanding of the subject.

Now, let us turn our attention to a similar situation in the Old Testament.

You remember, Jacob thought his son, Joseph was devoured by a “wild beast” and said, ‘I will go down into the GRAVE (SHEOL) unto my son, mourning” (Gen. 37:35).

Here the original word, is SHEOL, and is rendered GRAVE by the translators.

Psalms 16:10, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in HELL (SHEOL).” Here again, is the same original word, SHEOL, but this time, it is not translated grave, as in Gen. 37:35, but is rendered, HELL.

Numbers 16:30, Concerning the wicked that die, it says, “They go down quick into the PIT (SHEOL).” Here again, in the original, is the same word SHEOL, but this time, it is

translated, neither GRAVE nor HELL, but PIT.

Thus, it is easily comprehended why it is absolutely necessary to use, for our foundation, words from the original Hebrew and Greek texts.

Continuing with the thought, TO WHAT PLACE DO THE SPIRITS OF THE DEPARTED DEAD GO? The Bible makes it clear, that the place of the Spirits of the departed dead, is called SHEOL in the Old Testament Hebrew, and HADES in the New Testament Greek.

The Hebrew word, SHEOL, means PLACE OF THE DEPARTED DEAD. The word is found 65 times in the Old Testament. Thirty one times, it is translated "HELL," thirty-one times, "GRAVE," and three times, it is translated, "THE PIT."

The Hebrew Old Testament word for the place of the departed dead is SHEOL, and the Greek New Testament word for the same place is HADES, the abode of the dead - the unseen state.

Perhaps, some sincere seeker for the truth is saying, "How do you know that the word, "Sheol" in the Old Testament means the same as "Hades" in the New Testament Greek?"

The following reference will prove this point:

It was prophesied, of Jesus, that His soul should not remain in "Sheol," and that His body should not see corruption.

Psalms 16:10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell (SHEOL), neither wilt thou suffer thy HOLY ONE to see corruption."

The Hebrew word that appears here, is "SHEOL." THIS SAME VERSE IS QUOTED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT GREEK.

Acts 2:27, "Because thou will not leave my soul in Hell (HADES), neither will thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

This is positive proof that the Hebrew word, "Sheol" has identically the same meaning as the Greek word, "Hades," because this very same verse of Scripture is written both, in the Hebrew and Greek, and the word rendered for "Sheol" is "Hades."

As additional proof on this point, it is well to note that the "Septuagint" version of the Old Testament, translated from Hebrew to Greek by seventy scholars in the year 275 B.C., invariably renders "Sheol," by "Hades."

Then "SHEOL," in the Hebrew, or "HADES" in the Greek, is the same place, and means THE ABODE OF THE SPIRITS OF THE DEPARTED DEAD.

Judge Rutherford, and all those who adhere to the theory, in attempting to establish the fact, that there is no abode for departed Spirits, would like to have us believe, that, "Sheol" or "Hades" IS NOT the place of departed Spirits, but that it means the GRAVE where the bodies are laid. He tells us that, "Sheol" means the grave - the condition of death, not the abode of Spirits.

BUT AGAIN, WE FIND THAT THIS IS NOT SO, SHEOL is one place, and the grave is another. They are not the same. The following considerations furnish definite proof of the distinction between **Sheol, the abode of the departed Spirits**, and the **grave, the resting place of the body**.

The Grave for the Body is Clearly Distinguished from the Abode for the Spirits

FIRST: The words for "Grave" in both, the Hebrew and Greek languages, are altogether different than the words "Sheol" or "Hades." The Hebrew word for "grave" into which only the "bodies" of the dead go, is "QUEBER" and the Greek, "MNEMEION." These are used many times in the Scriptures.

This is definite proof that “Sheol” does not mean “grave” as the grave for the body, but is the abode of the departed Spirits.

SECOND: The word, “Sheol” is NEVER USED IN THE PLURAL, for it is one place (abode of Spirits), but the word for “grave” is used many times in the plural, (proving that there can be many “graves” but only one “Sheol.”

THIRD: We never read of a person having a “Sheol,” but we often read of a person having a “grave.” This proves that, “Sheol” is the abode of Spirits and not the grave for the body, inasmuch as a person cannot have a “Sheol,” but he can have a “grave.”

FOURTH: The body is never to be in “Sheol” and the “Spirit” is never said to be in the “grave,” which again proves, that “Sheol” is not the grave.

FIFTH: No “Sheol” was ever dug by man or was ever located on the earth, but this can be said of graves. Therefore, we know that “Sheol” is the abode of the departed Spirits and not the grave - the place of bodies.

Other Scriptures clearly distinguish between the abode of the Spirits and the resting place for the body, which further, proves that, Sheol or Hades is not the grave, as Rutherford claims it is.

SIXTH: In the final judgment, both the GRAVE and HADES, will deliver up the dead. Rev. 20:13, “Death (the grave, the abode of the body) and Hell (Hades, abode of the Spirit) delivered up the dead which were in them.” This distinguishes between the two, and shows that Hades is not the grave.

SEVENTH: Christ has the keys of both. Rev. 1:18, “Behold I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hell (Hades) (abode of the Spirits) and of death” (grave) (abode of the bodies). This again shows, that Hades is not the grave.

EIGHTH: Christ's soul was not left in Hades, neither was his body left in the TOMB. Acts 2:27. Here again, the grave is clearly distinguished from "Hades" the abode of departed Spirits, which shows that

"Hades" is not the grave.

NINTH: When Jacob's twelve sons sold Joseph into Egyptian slavery, they deceived their father, Jacob by bringing to him Joseph's blood-stained coat, making him think that a "wild beast" had devoured Joseph (Gen. 37:35). Jacob's sons and daughters tried to comfort him, but he would not be comforted, and said, "I will go down into the "GRAVE," unto my son, mourning."

The original word in the Hebrew where this word is rendered "grave," is "Sheol." It is easy to be seen, that Jacob expected to go to the TOMB. But we shall prove that this word, "Sheol" does not mean grave - the place of bodies, but that it means, place of departed Spirits.

From what Jacob thought and said, we can see that he did not intend to go into the "grave" or tomb to meet his son Joseph, but into the abode of the departed Spirits. As proof of this, we know that Jacob did not believe that Joseph was in the grave, for he believed that a "wild beast" had **devoured him** (Gen. v. 33). Therefore, it would have been impossible for Jacob to go to the grave to meet Joseph, if a wild beast had devoured him, but where he really intended to meet him, was the abode of the Spirits of the departed dead.

This clearly shows the distinction between the grave and the abode of the departed Spirits, and proves that "Sheol" - "Hades" is not the grave for the bodies.

TENTH: Jacob is said to have been gathered unto his people at the moment of death, Gen. 49:33, though his body was not buried with the bodies of his ancestors, till months afterward.

“And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.”

Jacob died in Goshen in Egypt, but was buried in the land of Canaan. They were forty days embalming the body, and the mourning in Egypt continued, thirty days longer. Joseph then obtained permission from Pharaoh to go and bury his father, Gen. 50:3-6. How long they were gone, is not stated, but they mourned seven days more at the threshing floor of Atad (50:10), so that at least, eighty days elapsed, between the gathering unto his people, and the burial of the body, in the cave of Machpelah in Canaan.

Jacob was “gathered unto his people” at the time of his death, by the departure of his soul to the souls of Isaac, his father, and his grandfather, Abraham. It is certain, that his body was not then gathered to his people, at the time he expired, nor till seven weeks later, therefore his gathering to his people was not to their bodies in the graves, but to a place where they were in their disembodied state.

Consequently, the place of departed Spirits, which is Hades in the Greek, Sheol in the Hebrew, is not the same as the grave for the body.

These ten considerations mentioned above, conclusively proves, that Judge Rutherford and others are wrong, who believe that Hades means the grave, for Hades, the abode of the departed Spirits, has been clearly distinguished from the grave for the body.

HADES or SHEOL THEN, IS NOT THE GRAVE, the abode for the body, but the place of departed Spirits.

In studying its location, we find that in twenty of the sixty-five Old Testament passages that refer to Sheol, it is located downward. In Gen. 37:35, Jacob said, “I will go down to Sheol.” In New Testament references to Hades, we also find that it is located downward, Matt. 11:23, “thou shalt be brought down

into Hades.” Luke 10:15, “Thou shalt be thrust down to Hades.” Never do we find the Scriptures locating Sheol-Hades on the earth or above the earth, but always downward.

Thus far, in this course, it has been established, from Scripture, that man does have a soul, and that, at death, the soul separates from the body, and that it departs to the place called “Sheol” or “Hades,” which is not the grave, but the abode of the separated Spirits of the dead. We are now ready for the next logical question that follows:

WHAT IS REVEALED ABOUT THE PLACE CALLED SHEOL? What kind of place is it?

The student will notice, that thus far, in the discourse on “Sheol,” nothing has been said, relative to the righteous and the unrighteous. It has been merely stated, that the Spirits of all the dead, regardless of moral distinction, righteous or unrighteous, departed to “Sheol.”

When we turn to our Bibles to learn what kind of place it is, we find that the Old Testament sheds little light on the subject. Nothing is said, in regard to the Spirits of the righteous and unrighteous. The Old Testament only tells us, that all the dead departed to “Sheol.” It makes no distinction between abodes for the saved and the lost. Thus, it can be said, that in the Old Testament, the light as to the state of the departed dead, is in the twilight stage.

Perhaps, this question comes to the mind of some sincere seeker for the truth. Why is it, that the Old Testament is almost silent on the future state? Why does it leave us with so little information? The Bible clearly answers that question. The time for the revealing of the conditions beyond the grave had not yet come in the Old Testament days, It was reserved for Christ to “BRING LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT, THROUGH THE GOSPEL.”

And this is just what Christ did. We know Christ came to save sinners, but II Timothy 1:10, also tells us that His coming “hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel.” The Old Testament teaching, which is in the twilight stage on immortality and conditions in “Sheol,” is now made manifest, or revealed, by Christ, through the Gospel.

Notice the Scripture verse does not say, that when Christ came He brought life and immortality into EXISTENCE, but that He brought it to light - He brought it into revelation - He revealed it. LIFE AND IMMORTALITY EXISTED IN OLD TESTAMENT DAYS, but now, it is made manifest or revealed by Christ, through the Gospel.

Since Christ was the One who has brought immortality to light, we must accept His statements. We should learn what His teaching was, regarding to the conditions, in the abode of the departed dead.

WHAT WAS CHRIST’S TEACHING REGARDING ALL THE DEAD, BOTH SAVED AND LOST, IN HADES?

His teaching is found in Luke 16:19, 31, in the account of the rich man and Lazarus. This gives us a description of the abode of the departed dead, as it was in the Old Testament days and in the days of Christ’s earthly ministry.

Hades in Old Testament Days and Days of Christ’s Earthly Ministry

The description of the abode of the departed dead is drawn from the account of the rich man and a beggar named Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). Lazarus died and the rich man also died, and his body was buried, but in HELL, (HADES) he was suffering torment, (vs. 23). The word, “torment” is used five

times in the account. Notice the rich man was in a “PLACE” not merely a “state,” because vs. 28 says, “this PLACE of torment.” From this place, he saw in the distance, Abraham and also Lazarus, who was being comforted (vs. 23, 25). Thus, in Hades, according to

the teaching of Christ, there was a “place of torment” for the unrighteous, and a place of comfort for the righteous. Further description of Hades is given. These two places, the place of comfort, or Abraham’s bosom, as it is called in verse 22, and the place of torment were separated from each other by a GREAT GULF FIXED, so that no one could pass from one PLACE to the other (vs. 26).

We now have the description of Hades, as Christ gave it. There were two compartments in Hades, one known as Abraham’s Bosom, a place of comfort for the righteous, which was “afar off,” and separated from the “place of torment” for the wicked - by a “Great Gulf Fixed.”

Notice again, Acts 2:27, which speaks of Christ, “thou will not leave my soul in Hell, (Hades).” Here, it is definitely stated, that Christ’s soul went to Hades (after His death on the cross), but notice, it does not say to which of the two compartments in Hades His soul went. When we associate Christ’s statement to the penitent thief on the cross, the meaning is clear. Christ said, “Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). It can be easily understood from this, that when Christ and the thief went to Hades, they did not go to the “place of torment,” because Christ said, that they both, were to be in “Paradise.” Therefore, this “Paradise,” must have been the place of comfort, called “Abraham’s Bosom.” This being true, we see that “Abraham’s Bosom” is also called, “Paradise.”

Now, it has been shown that Christ’s teaching, was that Hades, the abode for the Spirits of the departed dead, was in two sections, the abode of the righteous, known as “Abraham’s Bosom” or “Paradise,” which was separated from the “place of torment” for the wicked, by a “Great Gulf Fixed.”

This is what Christ revealed of Hades, as it was in the Old Testament times and in the days of His earthly ministry, BUT WE FIND A GREAT CHANGE TOOK PLACE WHEN CHRIST ASCENDED.

Hades Since Christ Ascended

The Scripture reveals, that since Christ's resurrection and ascension, the section known as "Abraham's Bosom" or "Paradise," in Hades, IS NO LONGER THE ABODE for the Spirits of the righteous dead.

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Before Christ's resurrection and ascension, Hades or Sheol, the Spirit-world, is represented as being below and into it, all the dead, both saved and lost, are said to have DESCENDED. Following the resurrection and ascension of Christ, Hades is never mentioned as the ABODE OF REDEEMED SPIRITS.

After the ascension of Christ, the Spirits of the righteous instead of "descending" are spoken of as "going up."

(1) In II Cor., chapter 12, Paul relates his experiences. He tells of being "**caught up to the third Heaven**" (vs. 2). "Caught up into Paradise" (vs. 4). According to this account of New Testament Scripture, "Paradise" and the "third Heaven" have the same location. This proves that Paradise, the abode of the righteous Spirits, is "UP" and that it is "**in the third Heaven.**"

This Change Took Place At The Ascension

(2) The Scripture says in, Ephesians 4:8-10, that before Christ ascended up into Heaven, "**He descended first**, into the lower parts of the earth" (vs. 9). Now then, when Christ ascended, did He go alone? No! He brought a multitude with Him. He took the waiting Spirits of the Paradise section of

Hades with Him. The Scripture says, "When he ascended up on high, HE LED captivity captive" (vs. 8). The marginal reading is "He led a **multitude of captives.**" Mark 16:19, and many other Scriptures, tell us that Christ ascended into the Heavens to the right hand of God, and this account, in Ephesians 4:8-10, tells us, that He brought a multitude with

Him.

(3) In addition to the two accounts, referred to above, here is more evidence, which proves that Paradise, the abode for the righteous Spirits, has been changed, and is no longer below, in Hades.

We are positive that the righteous dead are no longer in Hades, because we know that **THEY ARE WITH CHRIST, WHERE HE IS.**

Paul said in, Phil. 1:23, that he desired to “DEPART TO BE WITH CHRIST.” Paul was a righteous man, and he knew that to depart in death, was “to be WITH CHRIST.” And in II Cor. 5:6-8, Paul uses strong words in expressing his confidence, that to be “absent from the body,” in death, is to be “**present with the Lord.**” The righteous dead are “with Christ” - they are “present with the Lord,” therefore they must be where Christ is.

Now, where is Christ? Is He in Hades? No! We know that the Lord is not in Hades, because the Scripture says of Christ, (Acts 2:27), His soul was not left in Hades. Where is He then? Dozens of other Scriptures tell us, that He has ascended into the Heavens and is at the right hand of God. Inasmuch as the departed Spirits of the righteous are **PRESENT** with the Lord, they must be there where He is - **up in Heaven**, not down in the “section” of Hades, known as “Abraham’s Bosom” or “Paradise.”

These conclusions conclusively prove, that “Paradise,” the abode for the righteous is no longer in Hades, but that since the ascension of Christ, the abode of the righteous is “Paradise” up in “the third Heaven with the Lord.”

Jesus plainly declared, that Sheol-Hades will not prevail against the righteous of this age; that is, against the Church. “And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of Hell (Hades) shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). No, Sheol-Hades will never be the abiding place of any true Saint, of this age. The reason the Old Testament righteous went to Sheol-Hades was because their

sins were not yet **put away**, (Heb. 10:4). But the Scripture says, “But now, once in the end of the world, (ages) He (Christ) hath appeared to **put away** sin, by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26). Therefore, when the sins of the Old Testament righteous were “put away” by Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary, they could enter into the very presence of God, as do the Spirits of the righteous of this age.

Abode Of The Unrighteous Unchanged

The Spirits of the lost, the wicked dead, still go to HADES in “the place of torment.” No change in their abode has been revealed in the Scripture. They are still in Hades, and all the Spirits of the unrighteous who die in the future, will also go there. This is true, because at the “Great White Throne” Judgment, at which the wicked are to appear, we read in Rev. 20:13, that “HELL, (HADES) DELIVERED UP THE DEAD.” This proves, that Hades is still the abode of the wicked, and that it will be in the future, because when they will appear at the “Great White Throne” Judgment, the Spirits of the wicked will be brought up out of Hades, not out of some other place.

The Present “Three” Heavens

The word, “Heaven” is used in the Bible in three distinct, yet clearly related senses. In the Scripture, we read of THREE HEAVENS.

First, in Acts 14:17, we read of the Heaven of the earth’s atmosphere. “God gave you rain from Heaven.” This is the region of the clouds.

Second, The “high places” or Heaven of the stars, where the “principalities and powers” of evil are - Satan’s kingdom. Eph. 6:12, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against Spiritual wickedness in high places.”

Third, The Heaven of Heavens or third Heaven - God’s throne and dwelling place.

Neh. 9:6, "Thou has made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens with their hosts." "The throne of the Majesty in the Heavens" (Heb. 8:1). It was to this third Heaven, that Paul was caught up when he was stoned, at Lystra (Acts 14:19-20). In II Cor. 12:1-4, he calls it both, the "third Heaven" and "Paradise," therefore, the two must be the same or "Paradise," a part of the "third Heaven." It is here where he said, "There is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7).

Be sure not to confuse the present "Paradise" or "third Heaven" with the final Heaven, the New Jerusalem.

LET US CONSIDER, FOR A MOMENT, WHAT THE BIBLE REVEALS CONCERNING THE LOCATION OF PARADISE (HEAVEN), AND THE THRONE OF GOD.

Where is Heaven? Spiritually speaking, it is just a little way - to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Some people are trying to find out just how far away Heaven is, Well, there is one thing we know, that it is near enough, that God can hear us when we pray.

The location of the throne of God and of Paradise is a matter of importance. Jesus arose in a body of flesh and bone, and ascended to Heaven and is NOW living in Heaven in that body. And, the dead in Christ are now absent from the body and present with the Lord. This means, that Heaven is somewhere in particular, and not just everywhere, in general.

We must remember, that Paradise and the throne of God are very closely associated. Many Scriptures testify, that Jesus is ascended up into Heaven and is seated on the right hand of God. His ascension is told in Luke 24:51, Acts 1:9-11, Mark 16:19. Jesus is now seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens" (Heb. 8:1). He is there to "appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). He is there forever, interceding for us (Heb. 7:25). Stephen, when dying, saw the Heavens opened and Christ at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55-60). There are dozens of Scriptures which tell us, that

Christ is ascended to the right hand of God.

Paradise, the abode of the righteous, must have the same location as the throne of God. It is plain that both are together, because Christ is said to be at the right hand of the throne of God, and the righteous dead are also said, to be with Him.

This places the throne of God in the third Heaven, because that is where the righteous are - in Paradise, which is the third Heaven. This agrees perfectly with what has already been said, in preceding paragraphs, about the three Heavens and the dwelling place of God in the Heaven of Heavens.

Thus, we know that Paradise and the throne are in the third Heaven - somewhere above the other two Heavens - but the location of the throne of God and of Paradise, can hardly be everywhere in general and nowhere in particular. It must be a place, for Jesus is in His glorified body, and is at the right hand of the throne of God, and is in the presence of the righteous of Paradise. Where in the third Heaven is that place?

The following Bible study seems to result in a very probable and logical answer:

The Scriptures always speak of Heaven as “up.” But which way is “up?” If we say it is in the direction at right angles with the earth’s surface, wherever we may happen to be, then it would be in a different direction from every place on earth. From North America, and from China it would be in exactly opposite directions. According to this, “up” would be everywhere, in general, and nowhere, in particular.

The following reference will help us establish some facts. In Isaiah 14:12-14, which speaks of Lucifer (Satan), we read:”

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will **ascend into Heaven**, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, **in the sides of**

the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

Here we have information that Heaven is “in the sides of the north,” and that it is above the heights of the clouds, and above the stars.

What is the meaning of the words, “in the sides of the north?” The Revised Revision, which gives the clearer meaning, reads, “in the uttermost parts of the north.”

God says in Psalms 75:2-7, “When I shall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly....For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge.”

Here, it is implied that the throne of God, where He receives the congregation and judges uprightly, is in the north. Since it is not in the east, nor in the west, nor in the south, it must be in the north.

North is in the same direction from every point on the earth’s surface, it is the same from China as from America, the same from the Antarctic as from the Arctic.

And north is “up” from everywhere. Whoever heard anyone say “down north” or “up south?”

How significant it is, too, that the geographic and magnetic poles of the earth are always kept pointing north! Who can tell why the magnetic needle in a compass points toward the north star?

When “the glory of Jehovah” visited the prophet Ezekiel, it came with a whirlwind which “came out of the north” (Ezek. 1:4-28).

And there is yet another point of great interest in connection with this course of study. In the northern Heavens, the telescope camera reveals an apparently empty space where

there are no stars, though the region all around is thickly dotted with them. Some astronomers say that this is a “rift in the sky.” It may be wondered, if the Holy Spirit had any reference to this, when He recorded in Job 26:7, “He (God) **stretcheth** out the **north** over the **empty place**, and hangeth the earth on nothing.”

What is the meaning of these various Scriptures which refer to the **north**?

Could it be, that this empty place in the north, is the location of the throne of God and of Paradise?

Judge Rutherford and others, use several Scriptures to try to DISAPROVE the fact, that the Spirits of the righteous are in the third Heaven, in the presence of Christ. According to his belief, we are all wrong when we teach, that the righteous are up in Heaven, because he points out, that the Bible says. “No man hath ascended up to Heaven” (John 3:13). He also uses Acts 2:34, “David is not ascended into the Heavens.”

Let us consider first. John 3:13, “No man hath ascended up to Heaven.” Christ uttered this statement BEFORE His death, resurrection, and ascension. And, as it has already been said, the Spirits of the righteous were in HADES, not in the third Heaven or Paradise, prior or before the time of Christ’s ascension. It was not until His ascension, that the righteous were transferred to the third Heaven-Paradise. At the time Christ uttered this statement, no man had yet ascended into Heaven. Therefore, this statement is not contradictory to the fundamental teaching above. It has no bearing on the subject whatsoever.

Even though this statement had been uttered after the ascension, and after the abodes had been changed, it would not contradict the orthodox teaching, for the word, “man,” in the light of the context, no doubt refers to the body, and in this sense, no man has ascended to heaven in bodily form, because the resurrection **of the body** has not yet taken place.

Let us now consider Acts 2:34. “David is not ascended into the Heavens.” This reference, like the first, offers no opposition against the orthodox teaching, that the righteous are in the third Heaven-Paradise. Unfortunately for Rutherford, the whole drift of the context shows, that Peter was speaking of David’s “body” and not of his soul.

The subject under discussion, here, is the resurrection - the resurrection (of the body) of Christ. God raised Jesus up bodily, and He is ascended and exalted by the right hand of God, but this is not true of David. “David (bodily) is not ascended into the Heavens.”

It has been proved, from Scripture, first, since the ascension of Christ, the Spirits of the righteous depart to the third Heaven-Paradise, in the presence of Christ, and second, that the Spirits of the unrighteous are still in their abode in Hades.

Chapter V--The Unscriptural Theory Of Non-Existence After Death

Thus far, in this course, according to the Scriptures, we have learned that man has a Spirit within the body, and that, at death, the Spirit departs or separates from the body, and in chapter four, we learned the place to which the Spirit departs at death. It has been established that since the ascension of Christ, the spirits of the righteous, depart to the third Heaven-Paradise, to be in the presence of Christ, and that the Spirits of the unrighteous still depart to Hades, to the section prepared for them.

IS THE SPIRIT CONSCIOUS AFTER DEATH?

The Bible answer is, Yes! However, before we consider the Scripture references which, prove beyond a doubt, conscious life beyond the Grave, **we must consider the arguments put against this teaching**, by those who believe, that the dead are UNCONSCIOUS and OUT OF EXISTENCE between death and resurrection.

The error, that physical death is CESSATION OF ALL CONSCIOUSNESS, until the resurrection of the body, is usually called "Soul Sleeping." However, it is a very unfitting name, for we have already pointed out, that those who adhere to this theory, tell us that "no man has a soul," and that at death, man passes entirely out of existence. If it were true, that no man has a soul, there would be no soul that could sleep, therefore neither word, "soul" nor the word, "sleep" is truly descriptive of this erroneous teaching.

The theory of "Soul Sleep," is based principally, upon a few Old Testament passages.

For example: These are the ones which Judge Rutherford uses. He says, "Now what do the Scriptures say about the dead? Are they conscious or unconscious?" Then, he gives the following Old Testament passages:

"For the living know that they shall die; but **the dead know not anything**....Whatsoever

thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is **no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom**, in the grave whether thou goest” (Eccl. 9:5, 10).

“The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that goeth down into silence” (Psalms 115:17).

According to Rutherford’s theory, these Scriptures are supposed to prove that when a man dies - he knows not anything; that he has no knowledge nor wisdom, nor memory; and that he is in a condition of silence, unconscious, and non-existence.

In answering this so-called Scriptural proof, presented by Rutherford from the Old Testament, it should be remembered what has already been said in the previous chapter about the Old Testament, being almost silent, and in the “twilight stage,” as to the future life. It was said, that the time for the full revelation of conditions beyond the grave, had not yet come in **Old Testament Days**, but that it was reserved for Christ to “bring life and immortality to light, through the Gospel” (II Tim. 1:10). Remember, it was Christ’s coming that brought life and immortality into **existence**, through the Gospel, but His coming, brought it into **revelation**.

In the Old Testament, without the FULL revelation of this truth, as we have it today, since Christ revealed it through the Gospel, the GRAVE is the limit of the Old Testament vision. Accordingly, the Old Testament writers speak within the limits set to their knowledge, and speak of the grave, as a place where activities of life cease.

Furthermore, the New Testament, in which we should expect to find every doctrine of the Old Testament completed, we find that the dead, whether saved or lost, are in full consciousness. Therefore, if the doctrine of “Soul-Sleep” were true, it would be completed in the New Testament, but unfortunately for Rutherford, the New Testament, as we shall see, teaches consciousness beyond the grave.

NOW LET US CONSIDER ONE OF THE MAIN SCRIPTURES that is used, so often,

to try to prove that the dead are unconscious and non-existent.

Psalms 115:17, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."

Dear Student, this Scripture reference, as you see it, stands alone. It is separated from the verses that precede and follow it. II Peter 1:20, makes it clear, that "no Scripture is of private interpretation." This means, that we cannot take a verse out of the Bible away from its surrounding verse and try to interpret it, by itself, (privately) without considering the context.

For example, IF we had the right to take a few words of Scripture out of the Bible and let them stand alone without considering the context or other verses from which they were taken, we could even go so far as to make a so-called proof from the Bible that there is no God. These words are found in Psalms 14:1, 53:1, "THERE IS NO GOD," and according to the system of "private" interpretation, this would be a proof, that there is no God. But when we put these words back where they belong, with the context, we find that this is not the meaning at all. The true meaning reads, "The fool hath said, in his heart, there is no God." Thus, we see when these words are properly placed, the entire meaning is changed.

And so it is, with this particular verse, that Rutherford uses, so often, in trying to prove that the dead are unconscious. When the verse is put back in its proper place, in the context, and when the following verse is added, the meaning is changed. Psalms 115:17, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Now, let us add the part Rutherford omitted. "But we will bless the Lord, from this time FORTH and FOREVERMORE."

If the first of these two verses teaches that the dead are unconscious and have no knowledge of God, then, the second verse CERTAINLY CONTRADICTS the first, because the inspired Psalmist said, he was going to praise and bless the Lord from this time FORTH and "FOREVERMORE." If he were going to praise the Lord "forevermore," it

would have necessitated his being alive and conscious “forevermore,” not unconscious and out of existence, until the resurrection.

Now, when we consider Eccl. 9:5, 10, which also has been taken apart from its context, and when we supply the words that Rutherford left out, we find that it, too, has an altogether different meaning. (The words in bold type are the ones that Rutherford omitted).

Eccl. 9:4-6. “For to him that is joined to all the living, there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them, is **FORGOTTEN**. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they **ANY MORE PORTION FOREVER**, in anything that is **DONE UNDER THE SUN**.” Vs. 10, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.”

When we consider the words in bold type - the ones that Rutherford left out - it requires little effort to see that this text, like the preceding one referred to, has reference solely to what the dead can know, or do, or receive, of anything “**UNDER THE SUN**,” that is, what the dead can know, or do, or receive, of anything **IN THIS WORLD**. And of course, when a person dies, he has no more “portion” or part in anything that is done “**UNDER THE SUN**” or in this world. The verses that were omitted are simply explanatory of the statement of the first - that our hope and interest in all things earthly, is limited to this short and transitory life.

REMEMBER the vision of Ecclesiastes is limited to those things “that may be seen and known and done ‘**UNDER THE SUN**’ (in this world). The phrase “under the sun” is the key to the book, and is found 29 times. The book is **WRITTEN** from a **WORLDLY VIEW POINT**- a **HUMAN** view-point of things “under the sun.” It is the reasonings of a man “under the sun” set down by inspiration.

Verse 10 is no more of a revelation from God, concerning the state of the dead, than any other conclusion of Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes.

Verse 10 reads, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." No one would think of quoting verse 2 of chapter 9, as divine revelation. The reasonings of man, "under the sun," are set down by inspiration just as the words of Satan (Gen. 3:4; Job 2:4) are recorded by inspiration. Satan said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." These words of Satan were put down by inspiration of God - they were recorded accurately, but they were not truth. Satan was lying all the time, but his words are recorded in the inspired Bible. Just so are these words of the backslidden Solomon. They are set down by the inspiration of God, yet they are written from the human standpoint of things, "under the sun;" therefore, they cannot be held as a revelation of truth concerning the dead.

Solomon declared that "UNDER THE SUN" all things were vanity. He was giving his estimates of life from a worldly viewpoint. BUT WHEN HE RISES "**ABOVE THE SUN**" in the last chapter he sees things from a "**HEAVENLY VIEWPOINT.**" He then declares, "then shall the "**dust**" (the body) **return to the earth as it was**; and the "**Spirit**" **return to God who gave it**" (Eccl. 12:7).

Thus, he teaches, when looking at it from the "Heavenly viewpoint," that only the body goes to the grave and that the "Spirit" returns to God. So, the first chapters of Ecclesiastes, including the references we first discussed, chapter 9, verses 4, 5, 6, 10, were set down in inspiration from the "human standpoint" of man, "under the sun," and can no more be used as divine revelation, concerning the dead that the words of Satan can be used, as divine revelation. But, the last chapter is set down from the "heavenly viewpoint," "above the sun." The passage, therefore, that Rutherford uses, has no bearing whatsoever upon the question, whether or not souls are conscious after the body dies.

It has been clearly shown that Rutherford's "soul sleep" theory, has absolutely no Old

Testament foundation to stand on. Now, let us see what his New Testament claims are, and how they are supposed to support his far-fetched scheme.

It is claimed, that the words “DEAD” and “DEATH” imply “unconsciousness” and “non-existence,” and therefore, when a man is spoken of as dead, the meaning is that he is out of existence. BUT SUCH AN INTERPRETATION, IS NOT, ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE.

The words, “dead” or “death,” do not mean unconsciousness or non-existence. We read in Ephesians 2:1, “For you, hath He quickened who were DEAD in trespasses and sins.” Here, the unregenerate are spoken of, as “dead.” It does not mean that they are unconscious or out of existence, for the unregenerate have conscious existence, as well as, the regenerate.

Also, in Luke 15:24, we read that when the Prodigal Son returned, the Father said, “This, my son, WAS DEAD, and is alive again.” And I Timothy 5:6, “She that liveth in pleasure, IS DEAD, while she liveth.” Death does not mean unconsciousness or non-existence. These people were said to be “dead,” in one sense of the word, and yet, they had conscious existence.

Those who adhere to this “soul sleep” theory, also claim that words such as “sleep,” “slept,” “fell asleep,” when used in reference to death, mean unconsciousness and non-existence. But again, we shall find that this is not so. In order to prove that the words “sleep,” “fell asleep,” when used in connection with death, do not mean unconsciousness, four Scriptural references are cited:

(1) In John 14:11-14, we read the Words of Jesus concerning Lazarus, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said the disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spake of His **death**; but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus IS DEAD.”

Here, Jesus speaks of death as a sleep, but it is very plain that He is referring, not to Lazarus' soul, but to his body, for Jesus said, "I go to awake him out of sleep." and this He did by raising his BODY from the dead. Additional proof of this is found in the words of Martha, "But this time, he "STINKETH." This shows that it was only the BODY and not the soul of Lazareth, that the disciples were thinking of, as that which was asleep.

(2) In Matthew 27:52, we are told that at the time of the resurrection of Jesus, "many BODIES of the saints which SLEPT, arose." The fact that the word "BODIES" is used in this sentence, shows that the word "SLEPT" refers to "BODIES," and not to the souls of the dead, otherwise the word "BODIES" would have been omitted and the sentence would have read, "Many of the saints which SLEPT arose," instead of "Many of the BODIES of the saints which slept arose."

(3) In Acts 7:54-60, we are told of the stoning of Stephen. This stoning was so severe that he "FELL ASLEEP," that is, he died. Here the words, "FELL ASLEEP," cannot possibly mean that the "SOUL" of Stephen became unconscious because verse 55 tells us that he "looked up steadfastly into HEAVEN, and saw the GLORY OF GOD, and JESUS, standing at the right hand of God." And then when Stephen was dying, he said, in verse 59, "Lord receive my SPIRIT." Why should Stephen utter such a prayer if the soul, at death, entered into a state of unconsciousness?

(4) In I Corinthians 15:20, it is revealed that Christ was the "Firstfruits" of them that "SLEPT." Here again, the word "sleep" clearly refers to the BODY and not to the soul, for the subject of this chapter is the RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

The word "sleep," used in reference to the dead, always applies to the body. The dead body naturally presents itself to us, as sleeping. Nowhere in the Bible do we find that the soul, separated from the body, is said to be sleeping. "Shall we sleep between death and the judgment?" asks Tertullian, "Why souls do not sleep even when men are alive. It is the province of bodies to sleep."

Chapter VI--Consciousness Of Souls After Death

It has been proved, from Scripture, that man's soul separates from the body, at death, and we have learned, that it departs to either of two places - the third Heaven, Paradise, for the righteous, or the abode in Hades, for the unrighteous. It has been shown in chapter V, that the "soul sleep" theory, IS NOT TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE. We are now ready to consider Scripture references, which prove beyond a doubt, THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF SOULS AFTER BODILY DEATH.

1. The consciousness of souls, after death, is clearly taught in the account of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. This is the authentic account given by Christ Himself.

The rich man "died, and was buried; and in Hell (Hades) he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." And "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom."

Both, had died and their bodies were buried, but in their disembodied condition, their souls were conscious. They could **see, recognize each other, hear, talk, feel,** and **remember** being **comforted** or **tormented**, after death.

There are many preachers who oppose the teaching of consciousness, after death, and say that this was only a parable that Christ was relating, and therefore, cannot be submitted as evidence, to show conscious life, after death.

Dear student, there is NO indication whatsoever that this is a parable. Our Lord is telling a true history of what happened to two men who once lived and died. The experience was a statement of fact. "There WAS a CERTAIN rich man" and there WAS a CERTAIN beggar, NAMED Lazarus." Further evidence that this is not a parable, is seen in the fact, that parables of our Lord begin with the words such as these, "And he spake unto them, a parable, saying." Furthermore, PARABLES DO NOT GIVE PROPER NAMES, SUCH AS ABRAHAM and LAZARUS. No parable mentions any person's name.

But, let us suppose, for a moment, this is a parable. We know that a parable is an illustration that is purposed to make clear, an obscure truth. Then, to be true to its purpose, every detail of a parable must distinctly and accurately, portray the obscure truth. Therefore, even IF THIS WERE A PARABLE, the very same doctrine is taught. In either case, whether we regard the account as a parable or as actual history, the souls of the dead are presented as living, talking, remembering, being “comforted,” or “tormented,” after death.

Indeed, this teaches that the soul is alive and conscious after the body dies, and is happy or miserable in the Spirit world. Language could scarcely teach the doctrine more plainly, and the mind that can mis-interpret or pervert such language, would pervert any language that could be used.

The fact that the soul lives and is conscious after death is plain from Matthew 10:28. Our Saviour teaches, that the **soul cannot be killed**. “And fear, not them, which **kill the body**, but are NOT ABLE **to kill the soul**.” The body can be killed, but the soul cannot be killed. Killing the body does not kill the soul. Certainly, the soul is alive and conscious after the death of the body.

The same truth is taught in Matthew 17:3, in the account of Christ’s transfiguration, we are told that “there appeared, unto them, Moses and Elijah talking with Him” (Christ). We know that Moses **died** on Mount Nebo several hundreds of years before. Deut 34:5-6 “So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there, in the land of Moab, - and He (Jehovah) buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-pe-or; but no man knoweth the place of his sepulcher unto this day.”

Notice that Moses was **dead** and **buried**. Here then, we have the Spirit of Moses, with Christ and Elijah on the summit of Mount Tabor, several hundreds of years after his body died.

It is certain, therefore, that the soul survives the death of the body; and **lives** and

thinks, and even **talks**, if necessary, ages after its “earthly house” has crumbled to dust.

One of the strongest passages in the entire Bible, which conclusively shows that the souls of the dead are alive and conscious, and not non-existent, is Hebrews 12:1. Hebrews 11, mentions many of God’s heroes from Abel down to David, who died in the faith. Hebrews 12:1 says, (referring to all these faithful ones who died), “Wherefore seeing, we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of WITNESSES, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us,” etc. Then the souls of the faithful dead are not unconscious and out of existence, but they are LIVING WITNESSES. The word used for witnesses in the Greek, is “Marturon,” the same word that we find in Acts 1:8, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me.” This word is used **only** of those who have **life** and **conscious intelligence**, therefore it would never have been used here, if these who had died in the faith, had not been **alive** and possessed of **conscious intelligence**, at that very moment. The faithful dead are not out of existence, but they are LIVING, CONSCIOUS WITNESSES.

The words, “Eternal Life,” are full of significance and are worthy of our consideration, in this discourse, on CONSCIOUSNESS OF SOULS, after the death of the physical body.

If a dying person is a child of God, being born again of the water and the Spirit, they HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. They are in present possession of eternal life. John 3:16, “He that believeth on the Son, HATH everlasting life.” John 5:24, “He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, HATH everlasting life.” Also, John 10:27-30.

This, “Eternal Life,” cannot be destroyed, by death. “Eternal Life,” cannot possibly be broken by a period of non-existence, from death till resurrection, for “Life” interrupted by a period of non-existence would not be “ETERNAL.” **Eternal Life is Eternal CONSCIOUSNESS.**

The death of the body, does not mean non-existence of the soul; for death cannot possibly break “Eternal Life,” or that life would not be “Eternal.”

John 11:25-26, “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on Me, **though he were dead, yet shall he live**, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me **shall never die.**” Here, is the assurance, given by the Son of God, for the dying believer, that he shall “live” forever, **because he is in possession of the Spiritual eternal life that never comes to an end.** That life flows on forever.

The fact that souls are alive and conscious, after bodily death, is plainly taught in Luke 20:27, 37, 38. The Sadducees, a certain sect of the Jews, came to Jesus on one occasion and asked Him questions concerning the resurrection. Various Scripture and historical references tell us, that the Sadducees did not believe in life after death. They denied all future existence. Josephus, a learned Jewish historian, who lived about that same time, wrote, “the doctrine of the Sadducees is this, THAT SOULS DIE WITH THE BODIES.” (Antiquities b. 28:4). “They take away the belief of the immortal existence of the soul, and the punishments and rewards of Hades,” (Wars b. 8:14). In Acts 23:8, St. Luke tells us, that “the Sadducees say, that there is no resurrection, neither Angel, nor SPIRIT,” and in Luke 20:27, we read that “the Sadducees.....deny that there is any resurrection.”

These Sadducees who denied, that souls live after death, and who said, that there will be no resurrection, came to Jesus intending to ridicule and make fun of the doctrine of the resurrection. Jesus told them in Luke 20:37, “Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the burning bush.” God spoke to Moses out of the midst of the bush, and said, “I AM...the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” God spoke to Moses from the bush, 1,491 years before Christ was born in Bethlehem. Abraham died in 1821 B.C.; Isaac died in 1716 B.C., and Jacob died in 1689 B.C., consequently at that time, (1491 B.C., when God spoke to Moses), Abraham had been dead 330 years, Isaac 225 years, and Jacob 198 years. And yet, God declared Himself to be the God of these three persons who had long been dead. He said, “I AM the God of Abraham, etc.” - present tense, not “I WAS” - past tense. God was, at that time, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, therefore, these three patriarchs must still have been ALIVE. And, this is supported by the plain declaration of our Lord. “For ALL LIVE UNTO HIM.” If all live unto Him, then ALL are alive.

Remember, Jesus was addressing the Sadducees who denied, that the soul lived after death, and who said, that there will be no resurrection. What was Jesus' purpose in using the quotation, "I AM the God of Abraham, etc..." from the Pentateuch? The purpose is clearly seen, - the Sadducees accepted **only the Pentateuch as the divinely Inspired Word of God**. Therefore, IF ANY LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE COULD BE PROVED FROM THE PENTATEUCH, THEIR THEORY WOULD BE IN RUINS, because with the Sadducees, the two doctrines, the consciousness of the soul, and the resurrection of the dead, stood or fell together; and to prove that the **souls of men** LIVE after death was, effectually, to overthrow the system of the Sadducees, and silence their objection to the resurrection of the body. Jesus settled the question of consciousness and existence after death. He proved that there was life after death. He affirmed, that God was still the God of those patriarchs, and that they were not dead, but still alive. He could not be the true God of those who had no existence.

Jesus chose the words from the Pentateuch and directed them at the resurrection of the dead. The Scripture says, "After that, they (the Sadducees), durst not ask Him any question at all." (Luke 20:40).

It is well to notice that, those who now teach, that there is no "Spirit" distinct from the body, or that the Spirit or soul dies with the body, are only reproducing the ancient doctrines of the Sadducees, which Jesus so often, sternly rebuked.

Consciousness, after death, is implied in II Corinthians 5:6-8. Paul uses strong words in expressing his confidence, that to be **absent from the body** (in death) is to be **present with the Lord**. "We are always confident, (literal translation, We can say with absolute boldness). "Knowing that, whilst we are at **home in the body**, we are **absent from the Lord**." In verse 8 he says, "We are confident, I repeat, and willing to be ABSENT from the body, and to be **PRESENT with the Lord**, wherefore we labour, that, whether **PRESENT** or **ABSENT**, we may be accepted of Him."

Paul was "WILLING" to be "**absent from the body**" to be "**present with the Lord**."

Certainly Paul believed, that in the presence of the Lord, he would be **CONSCIOUS**, for there could possibly be no satisfaction, in being **unconsciously** present with the Lord. Why should Paul be “willing” or want to be with Christ if he would not be **conscious**? Certainly, this teaches consciousness of the soul, after death.

The same truth is taught in Phil. 1:21-24, where Paul says, “For me to live is CHRIST, and to **die** is **GAIN**...For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart (die) and to be WITH CHRIST: which is **FAR BETTER**: nevertheless, to abide IN THE FLESH, is more needful for you.” Paul said, it would be “GAIN,” it would be “FAR BETTER,” to be out of the flesh and WITH CHRIST. How could Paul “be with Christ,” after death, if he became unconscious and out of existence? Would it be “gain” and “far better,” to be unconscious and out of existence, cut-off from conscious fellowship with God, for perhaps centuries, awaiting the resurrection? No child of God can say, that oblivion is “far better” than living in this world. This passage of Scripture teaches, conscious life, after death. There can be no other explanation. Paul desired to, “depart to be with Christ,” because he knew he would be conscious.

Luke 23:42-43, tells us that the dying thief on the cross, said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.” And Jesus said unto him, “Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” Now, the promise of Jesus, was that the thief should be with Him in Paradise, THAT DAY.

Many preachers do not believe in conscious being after death. They try to do away with this clear evidence that the soul of the thief, that day, met Christ in Paradise by telling us that the sentence, “Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise,” is not correctly punctuated. They say, that the comma before the word, “today,” should be placed behind it, to make the sentence read as follows, “Verily, I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with Me in Paradise,” which completely changes the meaning, and makes the verse read as if Jesus said, “I make it known unto you right now, - today, that sometime in the future, you shall be with Me in Paradise.”

Dear Student, such an interpretation cannot possibly be correct. There are many verses in which Jesus said, "Verily, I say unto thee," etc., but **never** did He say, "Verily I say unto thee, TODAY," except in this one particular instance. Therefore, because Jesus used the word "today," in the above passage, it is certain that He meant that He would meet the saved thief in Paradise **that very day**, and not sometime in the future, perhaps after the resurrection.

After death, that day, Jesus met the believing thief in Paradise. This proves that there is life, after death. In answer to this, some say that Paradise means the grave and that they met in the grave, that day. If Jesus simply meant to say that they would both soon be in the grave, then it was no news to the thief, for he already knew that he was going to die, physically on the cross, and that there was no escape from the grave. Such a statement for Jesus to make surely would have been no answer to his prayer. And if Paradise simply meant "a paradise" of unconsciousness and non-existence, what kind of a "remembrance" was that which the dying thief obtained? What better off was he, who repented and prayed, than he who railed and was forgotten? The passage of Scripture cannot be twisted to mean unconsciousness or non-existence in the grave. It can only have one meaning. Jesus and the thief met in the Paradise section of Hades, and conscious. "Paradise" signifies, "pleasure" or "delight." These are emotions that demand consciousness. If the thief were not **conscious** of the **presence** of Jesus, in Paradise, there could not possibly have been any comfort in the promise.

In harmony with other Scriptural references, which testify that the soul is conscious after death, is I Corinthians 2:11, "For what man knoweth the things of man, save the **Spirit of man**, which is in him."

This passage proves that the seat of knowledge, in man, is not in the flesh and bone, nor even in the brain, but in the "Spirit," "which is **in** him." It shows that the physical brain is not the source of thought and will and consciousness. Therefore, merely because the physical brain ceases to function, at death, it does not mean in the least, that death destroys the conscious thinking powers of the individual. Since it is not the body, but the

Spirit that thinks, wills, plans, and holds communion with God, it follows, that man's continued existence, after death, is not dependent on the body. This is sufficient proof that the Spirit, which departs from the body, at death, is conscious.

THE ATTITUDE OF EARLY CHRISTIANS AND MARTYRS TOWARD THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF SOULS AFTER DEATH.

It is very clear from the study of Church History that the early Christians and martyrs understood the Scriptures to teach the consciousness of the soul, after death, as it has been explained in this chapter. It is certain that they looked for conscious joy, in Paradise, immediately after death.

Of the thousands of Christian martyrs, was a Christian, by the name of Polycarp. He was the companion of St. John, and had often heard him preach. Polycarp suffered martyrdom in 166 A.D., at the age of 87. From the account of his death, it is clear that he looked for an immediate life with Christ, in Paradise, when the pains of martyrdom were over. Such was the testimony of the first martyrs, it was **the doctrine they learned from the Apostles and from the Holy Scriptures.** Hour after hour has been spent in research work, and I have found that during the first three centuries, not one instance can be cited in which a Christian ever expressed any other hope in his last hours, than that of entering, AT ONCE, upon the joys of conscious and endless life.

In the catacombs of Rome, (the underground tunnels and rooms, in which the bodies of the martyrs were buried, during the first three centuries of the Christian era), the inscriptions upon the tombs throw great light upon the faith of the early Christians. The following are samples of the inscriptions found on these tombs.

"In Christ, Alexander is not dead, but lives - his body rests in the tomb."

"One who lives with God." "Gone to dwell with Christ." "Snatched home eternally."

It is worthy to note that the word, DEATH is never used in reference to even one of all the vast company of the departed.

To the martyrs, who died, it was death and immediate glory. And, so it is with other Christian believers. Among the millions of Protestant Christians who have had the privilege to make the Bible their study, during the last sixteen hundred years, how very few have understood it to teach another doctrine. Not one in ten thousand! They read the Bible to learn the way to Heaven, and they understood it to teach that death was merely, the separation of the soul from the body, and that the souls of the righteous, entered immediately, into the conscious joys of Paradise. In this faith, they lived, and in this hope, they died.

Now then, were all the early saints and martyrs, in error? Have nine hundred and ninety-nine, out of every thousand Christians, who have had the opportunity to study the Bible, lived in error upon this vital point, and died with a false hope? Who can believe it?

And today, many preachers come along with their teaching, that the dead are unconscious and non-existent, and make a “big thing” out of what they call the “DUE TIME.” According to their false doctrine, God didn’t reveal to the Disciples what He did to them, because the time wasn’t due. According

to many preachers, Polycarp and Ignatius and all the early Fathers, didn’t know what they were talking about. Augustine and all the other great theologians were clearly off base. Luther and the other reformers were in darkness, but now, “**IN DUE TIME,**” the light is shining brightly - the light that the dead are unconscious and out of existence, and these many preachers and their followers, have been the first and only ones to see it.

Now, it is evident that when men like Russell, Rutherford, and many other preachers come along and put a black eye on all the scholarships of the past and claim to be the only right interpreters of the Bible, Christian people should not be so quick to adhere to their so-called “Scriptural” teachings.

Chapter VII--The Scripture Revelation Of The Righteous In The Present Paradise

We have seen from many Scripture references that the souls of the departed are alive and conscious. Now let us inquire into the Scripture to see what else is revealed concerning the departed dead, besides the fact, that they are CONSCIOUS.

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Let us consider the righteous dead. What is revealed about them? And what is known of their abode - Paradise?

First: It can be positively said, that for a Christian to depart in death, is to enter a condition "FAR BETTER" than what we have known in this world (Phil. 1:21-24). The assurance of entering a condition "far better," immediately after death, should be a great source of comfort for the Christian.

The most outstanding fact revealed, concerning the righteous in Paradise, is that they are "PRESENT WITH THE LORD." In II Cor. 5:6-8, Paul uses strong words in expressing that "to be absent from the body" is to be present with the Lord. Twice he uses the phrase, "We are confident," which is, in the literal translation, ("We can say with absolute boldness"), "to be absent from the body, and to be PRESENT with the Lord."

Other Scriptures shed light and give us a greater understanding of what it really means to be PRESENT with the Lord.

Here is the Blessedness of being present with Christ. John 17:24: In Christ's prayer for the Church - the Christians, He says, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, BE WITH ME WHERE I AM, that THEY MAY BEHOLD MY GLORY." At death, the true Christians go to be with Christ where He is, there to BEHOLD HIS GLORY. What more could anyone possibly ask, than to behold the glory of Christ? Yet, there are those of us, at times, who desire to have our loved ones back with us again. But if we truly understood, in the fullest sense, what it means to be "present with the Lord" and to "behold

His glory,” there would not be one of us who would desire our righteous loved ones to return from Paradise to this earth. We love them too much to have them leave Paradise, where they are, “beholding the glory of Christ,” to return to this ordinary realm.

In addition to what has already been noted about the righteous being in the presence of Christ, and beholding His glory, is an outstanding reference in one of the Messianic Psalms.

Psalms 16:11, “In thy Presence is FULLNESS OF JOY; at thy right hand there are PLEASURES FOREVERMORE.”

Truly, it is a wonderful place to which the righteous have gone. This reference not only gives us an idea of what it means to be present with Christ, but it is also more positive proof, that the departed dead are conscious. They must be conscious, in order to enjoy “Fullness of Joy” and “Pleasures Forevermore.” There is JOY in Heaven, we are told, over the conversions that take place on earth. In Luke 15:7, we read, “I say unto you, that likewise, joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-and-nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

It is certain, that Paradise, is a most glorious and wonderful place. The word “Paradise,” itself, signifies “pleasure” or “delight.” It is glorious and wonderful, to the extent, that it is impossible for human words to express it. When Paul was caught up into Paradise (II Cor. 12:1-4), he heard “UNSPEAKABLE” words, which were not lawful (not possible) for MAN to UTTER.” He heard such unspeakable and glorious things, that it was impossible for man to explain them. Yes, he saw such exceedingly great and marvelous things, that it was impossible for Paul to find words to tell what he saw, and because of the “abundance of revelation,” a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him to keep him from becoming exalted or puffed up.

It is certain, that the souls of the righteous, in Paradise, are in a wonderful place, for Paul could not find words beautiful enough to describe it, and a messenger of Satan was

sent to keep him from becoming puffed up over the glories, that had been revealed to him.

Concerning Paradise, the following reference makes it clear, that the righteous, those who die in their Lord, are “BLESSED,” and are resting.

The Greek word for “Henceforth,” is “aparti,” and means from this time on, IMMEDIATELY - NOW! Those who die, in the Lord, are not asleep in the grave, or out of existence, for perhaps, thousands of years before the Heavenly joy’s begin, they enter at once, immediately into “Blessedness.” The word “Blessed,” means “happy,” this implies consciousness, because happiness is an emotion that demands consciousness.

The reference quoted above, is written primarily, of those who shall die sometime during the Great Tribulation, yet, it also can be applied, to those who now die in the Lord.

Another verse that will add to the evidence of what we have already learned, concerning the righteous in Paradise, is Psalms 116:15. The death of the believer is “precious” to the Lord. “PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord, is the death of His saints.” Certainly, it would not be precious in the sight of the Lord, to send His saints into oblivion, or to put them out of existence, until the resurrection. The death of the believer is “precious,” to Him, because it brings the Spirit into a perfect and permanent communion with himself; because it is the beginning of joyful and never-ending reunion; because it is from mortal limitations; and because it is deliverance from the realm of Satan and sin.

Will We Recognize One Another In Paradise?

This question has been of great concern to many people. In answering this important question, the following considerations are worthy of our attention:

1. David said, regarding his son, who had died, “he shall not return to me, but I shall go unto him” (II Samuel 12:23). Surely, David knew he would recognize his son, when

he would go to him, in death. If David would not recognize his son, there would be no purpose in his making this statement.

2. Christ said, to the dying thief, "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:34). Certainly, they expected to recognize each other, in Paradise, or the thief would have no consolation or comfort in the promise.

3. Certainly Paul would not have desired to depart, to be with Christ, if he were not sure he would recognize and know, the One, whom he desired to be with (Phil. 1:21-24).

4. If the disciples recognized Moses and Elijah, when they appeared with Christ on the "Mount of Transfiguration," certainly, the disciples would be able to recognize them, in Paradise, (Matt. 17:1-8). Moses and Elijah were recognized by the disciples without a formal introduction. These men had departed from the earth, centuries before, yet, when they returned, they had sufficient of the earth's personality, to be instantly recognized by men who knew them, only, by their description.

5. The rich man; in the account of the rich man and Lazarus, recognized both, Abraham and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).

6. Since to be in Paradise is "far better" than to be here, we may be sure, that we shall NOT know less in Paradise, than we know here. If we know loved ones here, surely, we will know them there. I Corinthians 13:12, declares that we shall then see, not "darkly," but "face to face," "now we know in part," but then, we shall know, even as we are known.

We may certainly expect to know our loved ones, in Paradise, and it is very probable, that we will know every person there, and that they will all be, "our friends and loved ones."

No doubt there are many who are wondering whether or not the righteous are able to speak with the Lord. That the saved are able to speak with the Lord, with whom, they are

thus, “at home,” seems beyond doubt. We are able to speak to Him even from here; surely those who are in His bodily presence will not be less privileged than we are. As an indirect reference, we cite Rev. 6:9-11, in which the tribulation saints, who have died, address the Lord. “They cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, Holy and True, doest thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them, that dwell on the earth?” This verse applies to the tribulation, which is still future, however, if these saints will be able to address the Lord, why wouldn’t those, who are now in Paradise, be able to do the same?

Let us direct our thoughts, again, to the righteous in Paradise. It has been shown from the Scripture, that they are conscious, and that they are in the presence of Christ, in a condition “far better” and are “blessed,” having “fulness of joy” in this “unspeakable” place. While all this is true of the righteous, still it can be said, that they are in a condition of “INCOMPLETENESS.”

In Paradise, man is said to be “incomplete,” because, at death, the real man - the Spiritual nature, separates and leaves the **physical body**, on earth. Before man can be complete again, he must get his physical body, which will be resurrected and glorified. All the righteous, are in Paradise, awaiting their resurrection bodies.

It should be carefully noted, that no saint has yet entered the final Heaven, nor is any sinner, yet said, to be in the final Hell, (Lake of Fire). Paradise is not the FINAL HEAVEN for ETERNITY. At death, the souls of the righteous, go to this Paradise in the presence of Christ, not to the final Heaven. This eternal Heaven, which the saints will occupy after they receive their resurrection bodies, is described in the last chapters of Revelation, which the righteous occupy, until the resurrection.

Chapter VIII--A Study Of The Resurrections

In the preceding chapters, we have learned according to the Scriptures, that the departed Spirits of the righteous are in Paradise - the third Heaven, and that they are conscious and in the presence of Christ.

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However, the righteous will not remain in this Paradise for all eternity, for the Bible teaches that the bodies of the dead WILL BE RESURRECTED, and that after the righteous have received their resurrection bodies, there will be a FINAL HEAVEN, in which, they will spend the countless ages of eternity. Therefore, before we see what the Bible reveals about the FINAL HEAVEN, let us first consider the next logical subject, namely the resurrections.

The Resurrections

There are those who think of the resurrection of the dead, as just foolishness. People make all kinds of excuses for not believing in the literal resurrection of the body. Some say, that it is unnecessary. Others even go so far as to say, that if all the dead that have ever lived on this earth were to be raised at one time, there would not be standing room for everyone. This is a silly argument, for it has been figured out, that if every person, since Adam, were raised all at the same time, and if each person were given a square yard to stand on, all of them together, could stand on less than one half of the state of Texas.

Others say that bodies that have been cremated, or torn to pieces by explosives, or destroyed by fire, or those decomposed in the grave, CANNOT POSSIBLY BE RESTORED. But the Bible says that nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37).

All the excuses, that man can offer against the resurrection of the body, will not change or alter the fact, one bit. The infallible Word of God declares, that the dead WILL BE resurrected, so we need not be concerned, in the least, how the resurrected body will be

provided.

The RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, is taught in the Old Testament, also.

Job 19:25-27, "Though, after my skin worms, destroy this body, yet in my **flesh**, shall I see God."

Daniel 12:2, "And many of them, that **sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake**, SOME to everlasting LIFE, and SOME to everlasting SHAME and CONTEMPT."

The RESURRECTION OF THE BODY was taught by Christ, Himself.

John 5:28-29, "marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which, all that are in the graves, shall hear His voice, and shall **come forth**: they that have done good unto the RESURRECTION of LIFE, and they that have done evil unto the RESURRECTION of DAMNATION."

Jesus taught the Resurrections of both, the "Righteous" and the "Unrighteous." The same was taught by the Apostle Paul, in: Acts 24:15, "And have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, both of the JUST and of the UNJUST."

These passages of Scripture, clearly teach, that ALL the dead, will be resurrected. At first glance, they might appear to teach, that there will be JUST ONE RESURRECTION, in which the bodies, both of the "righteous" and "unrighteous," will be raised, all at the same time. However, this much believed theory that there will be one general resurrection in which bodies, both of the saved and unsaved, will be raised from the dead, is not supported by the statements of Scripture. When the above passages are considered

in light of other references, on the same subject, it is clear that there will be TWO DISTINCT RESURRECTIONS, one for the "righteous" and one for the "unrighteous,"

separated by a period of time.

Daniel 12:2, plainly teaches TWO RESURRECTIONS, when we add the literal translation. “And many of them, that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some (lit. those who awake, at this time), to everlasting life, and some (lit. those who do not awake, at this time), to shame and everlasting contempt.” This passage is translated by some of the most eminent Hebrew scholars, as follows: “And, (at that time), many (of thy people) shall awake (or be separated), OUT FROM AMONG the sleepers in the earthly dust. These (who awake), shall be unto eternal life, but those (who do not awake, at that time), shall be unto contempt and shame everlasting.” This shows, that there will be two separate resurrections. Those, who will be resurrected “out from among” the rest of the dead, will be those who “shall be found written in the book.” (Dan. 12:1)

Phil. 3:11, brings out the truth, that all the dead are NOT resurrected, at one time. “If, by any means, I might attain unto the resurrection **of the dead.**” The literal translation, is (the resurrection “OUT OF” the dead). Paul was speaking of being in the resurrection, “out from among,” the dead. This shows, that the righteous are to be raised, out from among the rest of the dead, that is, the wicked, and that there will be an “interval” of time, before the wicked are resurrected.

Paul, in I Cor. 15:22-24, plainly shows that all the dead will NOT be resurrected, at the same time. Speaking of how, “all shall be made alive,” (Resurrected) he says, “But every man in his own **order.**” Here, the word that is translated, “order” and is a military word, which means, “battalion, brigade, band, rank, group.” But, every man (shall be raised), in his own “group” or “rank.”

The Apostle, then names, the different “groups” or “ranks,” that will be resurrected and gives them in proper succession.

1. “Christ the Firstfruits.” (The Resurrection of Christ - now about 2,000 years ago).

2. “Afterward, THEY THAT ARE CHRIST’S, at His coming” (Resurrection, righteous, still future).

3. “Then cometh, THE END.” (Resurrection of the wicked).

The Greek word, “then” means next in order, or sequence. This shows, that there will be an “interval of time” between the resurrection of, “they that are Christ’s,” and, “the end.”

Luke 14:14, also makes it clear, that ALL the dead will not be raised in just one general resurrection, but that there will be TWO resurrections., one of the righteous, and one for the wicked. Christ said, “Thou shalt be recompensed at the **Resurrection of the Just.**” This shows, that there must be another resurrection, for the rest of the dead - the wicked. Here, Jesus is referring to a “certain class of the dead,” who are to be raised.

The fact that there will be two resurrections, is brought out, in Hebrews 11:35, where the writer refers to a “BETTER” resurrection. This shows, that there must be, also, another resurrection, but of the two, he was referring to the one termed, “better.”

Here is more evidence of two distinct resurrections. Revelation 20:6, “Blessed and Holy, is he that hath part in the FIRST RESURRECTION, on such the Second Death, (the fate of the wicked), hath no power, but they shall be Priests of God and of Christ, and shall Reign with Him a THOUSAND YEARS.”

Verse 5, tells us, “But the REST OF THE DEAD, lived not again, until the thousand years were finished.”

Here, we read of the FIRST RESURRECTION, and that those in it, will be blessed and Holy. The use of the word, “FIRST” implies that there, is yet, another resurrection - a second resurrection, and here, we see, that there is a period of one thousand years between the TWO resurrections. “For the rest of the dead, lived not again, until the thousand years were finished.”

The Scripture then, clearly teaches, that there will be two distinct “resurrections, OUT OF the dead” (Phil. 3:11), and not one general resurrection, for the raising of all the dead. Terms such as resurrections, one for the righteous and one for the wicked, not just, “they that are Christ’s at His coming” (I Cor. 15:23). ‘Resurrection of the Just,” (Luke 14:14), “Better resurrection” (Heb. 11:34), “First resurrection” (Rev. 20:5, clearly distinguish the resurrection of the righteous from the resurrection of the rest of the dead - the wicked. Acts 24:15, John 5:29, Dan. 12:2, the Scriptures first quoted, also name the two resurrections, and from Rev. 20:5-6, we learn, that there will be a period of one thousand years between them.

Now, that the fact of the two resurrections, separated by a period of one thousand years has been established by Scripture, let us ask a question,

WHEN WILL THE FIRST RESURRECTION OR RESURRECTION OF THE RIGHTEOUS TAKE PLACE?

The Bible testimony, is that the righteous will be raised, at the second coming of Christ. “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, **concerning them which are asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe, that Jesus died and rose again, even so them, also, which **sleep** in Jesus, will God bring with Him. For this, we say unto you, by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the **coming of our Lord**, shall not prevent (precede) them, which are asleep. For the Lord, Himself, shall **descend from Heaven**, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the DEAD IN CHRIST, SHALL RISE FIRST: Then, we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together, **with them**, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall **we ever be with the Lord**” (I Thess. 4:13-17). Some call this the Rapture, although the word, “Rapture” is not in the Bible.

From this passage of Scripture, we learn, that **when Christ descends from Heaven** from the throne of God and Paradise, **He will bring the righteous**, (them which sleep

with Jesus), **with Him**. The righteous will come to earth to get **their** resurrection bodies (for the dead, in Christ, shall rise first). After the Spiritual natures of the righteous have been reunited with their bodies, that is, after the righteous dead are resurrected, THEN **“we which are alive, and remain,”** meaning the living saints, **“shall be caught up together with them, (the resurrected dead) in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”**

Speaking of the same event, the raising of the righteous dead, and the changing of the living believers, Paul says, in I Corinthians 15:51, “Behold I shew you a mystery, WE, (meaning the Christians) - WE shall not all **sleep**, but WE shall **all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the **dead** shall be **raised** (dead in Christ) and we shall be **changed** (living saints).” This refers, only to those in Christ, and not to the ungodly, because it is said, “For this **corruptible** (the dead in Christ) must put on **incorruption**, and this **mortal** (the living saints) must put on **immortality**.” (The “putting on” of incorruption and immortality, refers only to the righteous - see the next chapter on the resurrection body).

Then Paul goes on to say, “So when this **corruptible** shall have put on **incorruption**, and this **mortal** shall have put on **immortality**, then shall be brought to pass, the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.”

O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?

O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY? (I Cor. 15:51-57).

The two statements above, apply only to those who are “changed without dying,” for they are the only ones who will be able to make such a declaration.

Yes, “we shall all be changed,” the “dead in Christ” as well as, the righteous who are “alive and remain.” Both the resurrected saints and those who are changed, without dying, shall be “caught up together,” to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall **we ever be with the Lord**.

WE SHALL EVER BE WITH THE LORD

After the “dead in Christ” are raised, and the “living believers” changed, there are several events which will take place before they will enter the final Heaven to spend eternity with Jesus Christ.

One of these events will be the JUDGMENT OF BELIEVERS AS TO WORKS.

There are erroneous ideas about judgment. Some think of judgment, as being administered immediately, at death. A study of the subject will show differently. There are the Post-Millennialists, who believe that there is to be one great judgment, which will take place at the end of the world, when all mankind shall be judged as to destiny and rewards. We, at Cypress Bible Institute, believe that such a view is incorrect.

The Christian’s judgment, as to DESTINY, is PAST.

“There is, therefore, NOW, **no condemnation** (judgment) **to them that are in Christ Jesus.**” (Romans 8:1)

“He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him, that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and **shall not come into condemnation** (judgment) but, is **PASSED from death unto life**” (John 5:24).

The word translated “condemnation,” means “judgment.” The believer’s judgment, as to SIN, is PAST. This judgment took place on Calvary’s cross, on the basis of Christ’s finished work (Gal. 3:13; I Peter 2:24; II Cor. 5:21). The sins of the believer were judged and put away. Thus, Paul rightly says in I Timothy 5:24, that some men’s sins are open beforehand, and go before into judgment, and some men’s sins follow after. The believers judgment, as to SIN, is long PAST, but the believers judgment as to WORKS, is still FUTURE and will take place at the “Judgment Seat of Christ” after the “dead in Christ”

are raised and the “living believers” are changed. This judgment has reference to the works of the believer, not to his salvation. It is not to decide destiny, but is for adjustment, REWARD, and position in the Kingdom. Every person shall be judged according to their works. This will not be a judgment for “sin,” but for “works.”

“We must all appear before the “Judgment Seat of Christ;” that everyone may receive the things “done in the body,” according to that he hath done, whether it be “good” or “bad” (II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 3:11-15).

The Greek word for “judgment seat,” is “bema,” a tribunal of AWARD. It has to do only with those who are saved. This is not a trial to see whether the subjects are to be saved or lost. The references in II Cor. 5:1, 5, 7, 9, and also I Cor. 4:5, make it clear, that saints are referred to, for we read that those who are judged, “shall have praise of God.” This is not true of the wicked. I Cor. 4:5, sets the time of this judgment, at the second coming of Christ.

Various crowns mentioned in Scripture are referred to as rewards:

The Crown of LIFE - James 1:12; Rev. 2:10

The Crown of GLORY - I Peter 5:2-4

The Crown of REJOICING - I Thess. 2:19-20

The Crown of RIGHTEOUSNESS - II Tim. 4:8

The Crown INCORRUPTIBLE - I Cor. 9:25-27

Now we have learned, that after the “dead in Christ” are raised, and the “living believers” are changed, they will appear before the “Judgment Seat of Christ,” for rewards, according to their works. There are still other events that will take place before the righteous enter the final Heaven to spend eternity with Christ. There is to be a great event - “the marriage of the Lamb” (Christ) Rev. 19:7-9. The bride of Christ will be the true Church - those of the first resurrection and the living believers, who will be caught up and changed without dying. It is believed that the Great Tribulation period will be the REVELATION of Christ, the “apocalypse,” the other phase of Christ’s second coming.

The TWO phases of Christ's second coming are clearly distinguished in the Greek. The "parousia" or corporeal appearing, is His coming FOR HIS SAINTS (living believers). This will be the raising of the "dead in Christ" and the changing of the "living believers" (Rapture). The "apocalypses" (the revealing, unveiling, making manifest), is His coming WITH HIS SAINTS following the believer's judgment and the marriage of the Lamb. The following are some of the references in which the word, "parousia" is found. It is translated, "coming." Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 2:19, 4:15, 5:23; II Thess. 2:1. (Luke 17: 34-36 and John 14:3 and others refer to Christ's "parousia"). Some verses, which refer to the "apocalypses," are Rev. 1:7; Col. 3:4; Jude 14; Zech. 14:5; II Thess. 1:7-8.

This REVELATION of Christ, His coming with His saints, will climax the Tribulation period and usher in the Millennial Reign of Christ with His saints (Rev. 20:6). After this, the earth will be renovated by fire (II Peter 3:10-13), and the New Jerusalem, the eternal abode for the righteous, will descend from Heaven (Rev. 21:1-2).

Before we study the chapter devoted to the Bible teaching, relative to this FINAL HEAVEN, the following important chapter is inserted:

Chapter IX--The Resurrection Body

It has been established from the testimony of the Scripture, that the resurrection of the Righteous will take place at the second coming of Christ (Rapture), when Christ comes for the living believers (I Thess. 4:13-16). This gives us the fact of the resurrection, as well as the time. Now, the next logical consideration would be:

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WHAT WILL THE RESURRECTION BODIES OF THE RIGHTEOUS BE LIKE?

All of us who expect to be listed among the righteous, should be interested in knowing, what kind of body we are going to have. We should be anxious to learn, from the Scriptures, all we can about the resurrection body.

Here, in this life, we are very much concerned about our bodies. Therefore, how much more should we be concerned about the bodies we are to have, not just for a few years, but for all eternity.

The resurrection body will not be exactly like the body put into the grave - "thou sowest not that body that shall be" (I Cor. 15:37). It will far excel the body that died, yet, there must be an identity of SUBSTANCE, or it would not be "resurrection," (the rising of that which fell).

Identity is not necessarily absolute sameness of substance. As it was noted in chapter two, we are not the same identical person we were about seven years ago. New cells are continually being added to our bodies, while other cells are continually being removed as waste products. The old cells are gradually being replaced by new ones. After this process has continued for a period of approximately seven years, all the cells have been replaced. The body, as to actual cells which compose it, has been changed. It is an entirely new body, yet memory and IDENTITY REMAIN. And so, there will be great changes in the resurrection body, from the one put in the grave, yet identity will remain.

The features of the new body that are not characteristic of this mortal state are given by the Apostle Paul.

“How are the dead raised up, and WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?” This question is asked in I Cor. 15:35, and Paul then answers the question, by telling us what the resurrection body will be like.

“It (the body) is SOWN (buried) in corruption, it is raised in incorruption” (vs., 42). The present body is corruptible - and though it is buried a corruptible body, it shall be resurrected an incorruptible body.

In I Cor. 15:53-54, we read. “For this **corruptible** must put on INCORRUPTION, and this **mortal** must put on IMMORTALITY.”

From the two Scripture references above, we see that at the resurrection of the righteous, these corruptible bodies will be gloriously changed, INCORRUPTABLE and IMMORTAL. “Mortal,” means “perishable, or subject to death,” and has to do with the BODY. “Immortal,” means “imperishable, not subject to death,” and refers to a glorified BODY. Adam’s body became mortal when he sinned and mortality passed with sin, upon all men. The true word for “immortality” occurs in only three places (I Tim. 6:16; I Cor. 15:53-54).

Inasmuch as the righteous are to be raised to IMMORTALITY, at this place in our course, it would be well, to clearly distinguish between “Eternal Existence,” “Eternal life,” and “**Immortality.**”

ALL have eternal existence, both saved and unsaved, whether in Heaven or Hell.

The difference between eternal existence and eternal life, is that eternal life is possessed only by those who have received Christ, and have been born again of the water and the Spirit. It refers to the receiving of the Spiritual nature of Christ, in

regeneration, which carries with it the promise of continuing forever in Heaven. Only those who accept Christ and have obeyed Acts 2:38 have the “GIFT” of **eternal life**.

The “gift” of **immortality** is not for everyone. It is not for all who have eternal existence. Only those who have the “gift” of eternal life - only those who are saved, born again, are eligible to put on “IMMORTALITY.” Those who are eligible do not “put on” this immortality immediately at death, but the gift of eternal life entitles them to immortality, which they will “put on” all, at the same time - at the resurrection of the righteous at the second coming of Christ (Rapture), and not before.

While we are on the subject of immortality, it is interesting to note what the teachers of the erroneous “soul-sleep” theory, tell the public, regarding immortality. First, here are the Scripture references which prove, that man is now only MORTAL, and that Christ is the Only One that has immortality.

I Cor. 15:53, “This mortal must put on immortality.”

I Cor. 15:54, “When...this mortal shall have put on immortality.”

Job 4:17, “Shall mortal man be more just than God?”

Romans 6:12, “Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal BODY.”

Romans 8:11, “He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal BODIES.”

I Tim. 6:14-16, “Our Lord Jesus Christ...Only hath immortality.”

Those that teach the false “soul-sleep” theory, delight in telling the public that we, who hold to the true Apostolic doctrine of life and consciousness after death, believe that man is now IMMORTAL. They falsely tell the public, that we teach that man is now immortal, but such, is not the case. We believe that man is now only MORTAL, just as the above Scriptures teach. After they have given the public the wrong impression of our teaching, they then point out the above Scriptures which prove that man is now only MORTAL, and thus, they make the Apostolic clergy appear to the public, as false teachers.

The true Apostolic teaching, according to the Scripture, is that man's soul is immortal, and that his body is mortal. In preceding chapters, we have shown that the soul is alive and conscious after the death of the body, and we remember, that Christ said, that the soul cannot be killed (Matt. 10:28). The soul of man is immortal, but the **body is mortal**. The Scripture makes this very clear, for if you will notice Romans 6:12 and 8:11, the word, "mortal" definitely refers to "body." "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal BODY" (Romans 6:12). "Shall also quicken your mortal BODIES" (Romans 8:11).

Here, the use of the word, "bodies" makes it clear, that it is the body that is mortal. I Corinthians also makes it clear, that it is the body that is mortal, for the verses refer to the resurrection of the BODY.

Now, in the study of what the resurrection body will be like, we have learned:

FIRST, that the resurrection body will be INCORRUPTABLE and IMMORTAL. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in **incorruption**" (I Cor. 15:42). "For this corruptible, must put on **incorruption**, and this mortal, must put on **immortality**" (I Cor. 15:53).

SECOND, Paul continues to reveal the character of the resurrection body. "It (body) is sown (buried) in DISHONOR, it is raised in GLORY" (I Cor. 15:43).

A body of "dishonor," no doubt, means a disfigured or deformed body. There will be no more of this, in the resurrection. The body is to be raised, "IN GLORY." It will be a glorious body, with no more dishonor or shame.

THIRD, Paul continues to reveal the character of the resurrection body. "It is sown in WEAKNESS, it is raised in POWER" (I Cor. 15:43). A dead body is a perfect example of weakness, yet, God says He will raise it with POWER, providing it is the body of one of His saints. The resurrection body is to be a **powerful** one.

FOURTH, "It is sown a NATURAL BODY, it is raised a SPIRITUAL BODY" (I Cor. 15:44).

The use of the word, “Spiritual” in connection with the word, “body” does not mean that the resurrection body will be one that has no substance, for we shall soon learn that it will be a body, capable of being handled.

Thus far, we have learned that the resurrection body of the believer will be incorruptible, immortal, glorious, powerful, and Spiritual. But perhaps, the greatest and most wonderful fact revealed, concerning the resurrection body, is the following. It is one that floods the Christian with joy and hope.

FIFTH, THE RESURRECTION BODY OF THE BELIEVER WILL BE LIKE THE RESURRECTED, GLORIFIED BODY OF CHRIST.

Few people realize this, but the Scripture declares that the believer’s resurrection body will be LIKE that of our Lord’s: That is, it will have the like attributes - the characteristics of Christ’s resurrection body.

Phil. 3:20-21, “Who shall change our vile body LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY.”

I John 3:2, “We know that when He shall appear, we shall be LIKE HIM, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Psalms 17:15, “As for me, I will behold the Lord in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I wake with THY LIKENESS.”

Truly, this thought should be a great source of joy and hope for the believer. Now, let us see what was Christ’s resurrection body is like.

It was a real body of visible shape and form. It was capable of being handled, yet able to pass through materials. Of the ten appearances of Christ, in His glorified body after His resurrection, here are the records of three of them. They prove that Christ’s body was a real body, capable of being handled.

Matthew 28:9, “they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him.”

Luke 24:39, When Christ appeared to the eleven, “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is Myself, handle Me, and see, for a Spirit hath not FLESH and BONES, as ye see Me have.”

John 20:26-27, Eight days later, when the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side.”

Christ’s resurrection body was not only capable of being handled, and able to pass through materials, but it was recognized. Mary recognized Him (John 20:16). Mary Magdalene also recognized Him (John 20:18). And the disciples recognized Him (John 20:20). The believer’s resurrected body will be a glorified body like Christ’s - a real body of flesh and bone, capable of being handled, yet able to pass through materials. And it will be a body that others will recognize.

SIXTH, There is yet another important fact to be considered in connection with the resurrected body of Christ. According to John, Jesus also ate fish and bread with His disciples. A glorified body can also eat. We will be eating at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9). The Tree of Life, in the New Jerusalem, brings forth her twelve fruits every month (Revelation 22:2).

SEVENTH, The resurrected body will not be a body of FLESH and BLOOD, for the Bible says, that “Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (I Cor. 15:50). The believer’s body will not be flesh and blood, but flesh and bone. Luke 24:39, says that Christ’s body was flesh and bone, but no mention is made of it being flesh and blood.

The glorified resurrection body will be BLOODLESS, because “flesh and blood” cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and because our body is to be like Christ’s glorified body,

which was “flesh and bone.”

The resurrection body will have no blood, because there will be NO NEED OF IT. The purpose and duty of the blood, in the present body, is to supply nourishment to the wasting cells that are constantly in need of repair. Where there is no wasting body cells and tissue, there is no need of blood. We shall see from various statements, that there will be no wasting tissue in the glorified body. Therefore, there will be no need of blood.

We read, that in Heaven, the inhabitants shall “neither hunger nor thirst,” that there shall be no more sickness or death, that “there will be no night there.” Food is to supply nourishment to a wasting body, sickness is a sign of a wasting body, and night, is for the purpose of sleep and rest and recuperation of a wasting body. Since none of these things are going to have any place in Heaven, it can be seen, that there will be no wasting of the body, and where there is no wasting of the cells of the body, there is no need of blood to supply nourishment.

EIGHTH, The resurrection body will endure ETERNALLY. A body that will not waste away - one that is incorruptible, immortal (not subject to death), will be eternal (without end). This agrees with Luke 20:36 which says, “Neither can they die anymore,” and also, Revelation 22:5, which points out, that the redeemed “shall reign forever and ever.”

From this course, we have learned that the resurrected body will be INCORRUPTABLE, IMMORTAL, GLORIOUS, POWERFUL, SPIRITUAL - it will be LIKE CHRIST’S GLORIOUS BODY, a body capable of being handled, and that shall endure ETERNALLY.

Our course, thus far, has been about the resurrection body of the righteous dead, the “dead in Christ,” but nothing has been said concerning the living believers, those who shall be “caught up” together with the resurrection saints, to meet the Lord, in the air.

In I Corinthians 15:51-55, which was referred to in the preceding chapter, makes it clear

that, “we shall not sleep, but WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED.” “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and WE SHALL BE CHANGED.” “We shall all be changed,” the “dead in Christ” as well as the righteous who are “alive and remain.” The next verse tells what the change shall be. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal (living saints), must put on immortality.” The change then, for the living believers, will be from mortality to immortality. As there will be no blood in the resurrection body, so there will be no blood in the changed body of the living believers, for “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (I Cor. 15:50). It is only logical and reasonable, that the changed body of the living saints will have all the other glorious attributes that are characteristic of an incorruptible resurrection body.

Christ, after receiving His resurrection body, was recognized. Mary, Mary Magdalene, and the disciples recognized Him (John 20:16-20). On one occasion, He appeared to five hundred. Since the believers’ resurrection bodies are to have like attributes of Christ’s resurrection body, they will have the characteristics of recognition.

Chapter X--The Final Heaven

The Eternal Abode of the Righteous

From our study in the preceding chapters, we have learned that the departed Spirits of the righteous dead, are now in the third Heaven - Paradise - in the presence of the Lord. This is the present Heaven . We also learned, that they will not always remain there in their disembodied condition, but that, they will again, become glorified in their body. We have learned that the righteous will receive glorious resurrection bodies, and that ALL the righteous will receive them, at the same time, - at the second coming of Christ (Rapture). This will be the perfecting for entrance into the final Heaven.

“For the Lord, Himself, shall descend from Heaven with a shout....**and the dead in Christ, shall rise first:** Then, **we which are alive and remain,** shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, **and so shall we ever be with the Lord**” (I Thess. 15:17). After the righteous dead have received their resurrection bodies, and after the living believers have been changed, they will then be fit for entrance into the Final Heaven. Those who dwell in the Eternal Heaven will be fully redeemed - Spirit, soul, and body.

NO SAINT, has yet entered the FINAL HEAVEN; neither has a sinner, yet entered the final Hell, (Lake of Fire).

We must clearly distinguish between the present Heaven, and the eternal Heaven. Many believers have been confused on this subject. The description of “Heaven,” from the fourth chapter to the end of the Book of Revelation, is FUTURE. In the twenty-first chapter, the description of the city of precious stones, having gates of pearl and streets of pure gold, cannot be used as a description of the believers present abode. Remember, all these chapters, are FUTURE, and every description applies to the future habitation of the believers. They cannot be used to describe the present Heaven. Yet, this is exactly

what many have done, and it is this sort of idea that many people have, of the present Heaven. It is surprising indeed, to see the great numbers of prominent writers and preachers, who, in their descriptions of the present abode of the righteous, have given the public, a false conception. They represent the believer, at death, as departing at once, to the pearly white city, where the streets are purest gold.

Certainly, those who give others this false impression of Heaven, know better than to confuse the present Heaven with the final Heaven. Perhaps many of them have not distinguished between the two, because they wished to avoid a complicated and detailed explanation, which would be necessary, to make the subject clear.

Here are references to the FINAL HEAVEN. Heaven is spoken of as a city “which has foundations whose **builder** and **maker** is God.” In Hebrews 11:16, we read, “He hath prepared for them a city.” “Here (on earth) we have no continuing city (no permanent abiding place), but we seek one to come” (Heb. 13:14). The city is described in Revelation 21. It is the New Jerusalem, or city foursquare. This city, in itself, is not the entire Heaven, for John tells us that he saw it “coming down from God **out of Heaven**” (Rev. 21:2). The Heavenly city is a prepared place for a prepared people. It is the place that Jesus went away to make ready. “I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:2).

Heaven is also spoken of as a country. “They seek a country” (R.V.) “a country of their own” (Heb. 11:14). “They desire a better country, that is, a Heavenly” (Heb. 11:16).

Peter refers to Heaven, as a place where believers have an inheritance awaiting them (I Peter 1:3-5). So wonderful is this inheritance, that Paul exclaims, “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him” (I Cor. 2:9). Therefore, He exhorts us, to “set our affections on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth” (Col. 3:2). And according to what Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-20, we are to lay up, for ourselves, treasures in Heaven, rather than here on earth.

HERE IS THE DESCRIPTION OF THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM AS THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED IT TO THE APOSTLE JOHN ON THE ISLE OF PATMOS.

“And I saw a new Heaven and a new earth; for the first Heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and **He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people**, and God, Himself shall be with them, and be their God. **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;** for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new” (Rev. 21:1-5).

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In verse 11, John says he saw the Holy Jerusalem, “Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone, most precious, even like a **jasper stone**, clear as crystal.” “And the building of the wall of it, was of **jasper**, and the city was **pure gold**, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of **precious stones**” (Vs. 18-19). “And the twelve gates were **twelve pearls**; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city **had no need of the sun**, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the **glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof**” (Vs. 21-23).

“And there, shall in no wise, enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are **written in the Lamb’s Book of Life**” (Vs. 27). “And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; And they **shall see His face**; and His Name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the **Lord God, giveth them light**; and they shall reign FOREVER AND EVER” (Rev. 22:3-5).

It will not be the pearly gates, or the walls of jasper, or the streets of gold that will make it HEAVEN to us. These would not satisfy us. If this were all, we would not want to stay forever. But it will be our association with God that will make Heaven attractive. All the joys that we will know, will come from the presence of God. These earthly beauties are used to describe Heavenly beauties. This is the only way that human minds are able to grasp, in part, the beauties of Heaven, for in I Corinthians 2:9, Paul says, “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, **neither have entered into the heart of man**, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

Since the Bible makes it clear, that those in the present Paradise will recognize one another, it is certain, and only reasonable, that the righteous, when in the final Heaven, will also recognize one another. In support of this, let us read Matthew 8:11. We read the Words of Jesus Christ. “And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven.” These men lived hundreds of years before Christ began His earthly ministry, yet, when the time comes when many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with them in the final Heaven, they will not have lost their identity. They will be known as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Many believe that the New Jerusalem will hover over the new earth, however, this is their theory only. There is no Scripture to support this view. Scripture seems to support the idea, that the New Jerusalem will be ON the new earth. The leaves of the Tree of Life were for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2).

Chapter XI--The Present Hell

The doctrine of Hell is not a very popular doctrine. The first argument advanced against Hell, in most cases, is that a God of love would not send anyone to Hell, not even a wicked sinner. Many use John 3:16, to support their claim. We hear that "God is too good, He is too just, to send men to Hell." This is the difficulty in most people's minds. Let it be understood, by all, that God sends no one to Hell. Hell was not originally made for man, it was made for the Devil and his angels. Sinful men condemn themselves by rejecting the salvation of Jesus Christ. Many reject the Word of God, which commands us to be born again of the water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). Jesus Christ went to Calvary to save the whole world, however, the whole world will not be saved. We are born as free moral agents. God will not go against the free-will of man. We choose whether we want to go to Heaven or go to Hell. God recognizes us as free moral agents, and lays at our doorstep, the awful responsibility of choosing our own destiny. If a person goes to Hell, they go there against the Will of God.

One writer tells us that, "Few educated people, at the present day, trouble their heads about everlasting damnation or fires of Hell - the old doctrine of Hell is dying. It was something for the Medieval ages."

It may be true, that the attitude of the present day people, toward the doctrine of Hell has changed, but the Word of God is Eternal, Unchangeable, Immutable, and our ideas, no matter how different, will not alter or change the truth, one bit. Hell is a place, as truly as Heaven, is a place. The only way we can silence the awful truth of Hell, is by sealing the lips of the Son of God.

The Bible, more frequently speaks of the wrath of God, than it does of His love. Not because God's wrath is greater than His mercy, but because it is His purpose to warn men of the punishment for sin. The Bible speaks of the love of God, 28 times, but it speaks of His wrath and indignation, 61 times. It is a remarkable fact, that both, Jesus and John, who more than anyone else in the New Testament, represent the element of

love in their lives and teaching, speak most of the punishment of the wicked.

The Present and Future Hell Distinguished

In our course in the previous chapters, we have clearly distinguished between the Present Heaven (Paradise) and the Future Heaven (New Jerusalem). Now, let us distinguish between the PRESENT HELL and the HELL of the FUTURE.

Many people, in their study of the Bible, often confuse the PRESENT HELL with the FUTURE HELL. Even many authors of books, on the subject of Hell, never distinguish the two, and thereby, often mis-apply Scripture references. However, the Bible is very clear on this point. For a proper understanding of the Scriptural teaching concerning Hell, we must turn to the original Greek Testament.

It has been shown in chapter four, that the Greek words, "Hades," "Tartarus," and "Gehenna" have ALL been translated into the English in the King James Version by the ONE word, "HELL." For example:

(1) In Luke 16:22-13, Christ said, "The rich man also died, and was buried; and in HELL" (HADES) etc.

The original word (Hades), is here, translated HELL.

(2) In Matthew 23:33, Christ said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of HELL?" (GEHENNA).

The original word (GEHENNA), is also translated, HELL.

(3) In II Peter 2:4, we read, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to HELL" (TARTARUS).

Here the original word (TARTARUS), is also rendered, HELL.

The Greek words HADES, GEHENNA, TARTARUS, are three different words, and are the names of THREE DIFFERENT PLACES, and are all translated into the English King James Version by the ONE WORD, "HELL."

From reading the English translation, the King James Version, in which the three different Greek words are translated, "Hell," it can be easily seen how impossible it is for the student to know that there are three different places. It appears to the student, that there are just ONE place called, "HELL," which, of course, is not, according to the original Scripture. From reading Luke 16:22-23 and Matthew 23:33, in the English translation, how is the student to know, that Christ was referring to two different places? It is from this translation, that many people have been confused and have not clearly distinguished the present Hell from the future Hell. Let us distinguish between the present Hell and the future Hell, by studying them in order.

THE PRESENT ABODE OF THE WICKED

Just as there is a present Paradise for the righteous to occupy until they receive their resurrection bodies, and a final Heaven for them to occupy after they receive their resurrection bodies, so there is a present abode for the unrighteous to occupy until they receive their resurrection bodies, and a final Hell for them to occupy after they receive their resurrection bodies.

The Bible clearly distinguishes between the Present abode and the Future abode of the departed Spirits of the wicked dead. In Luke 16:19-31, which has been referred to before, Christ made it clear, that the place of torment, in HADES, is the PRESENT abode of the unrighteous. The FINAL HELL, is clearly distinguished, from the PRESENT ABODE of the wicked (Hades), for an altogether different word is used. The word, used by Christ, for the FINAL HELL, is "GEHENNA," not "Hades."

TARTARUS

The Greek word, "Tartarus," also translated, "Hell" in the King James Version, is found only once. II Peter 2:4. **It is not the abode of any departed human Spirits, it is the "prison" of "Fallen Angels."**

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"For if God spared not the **angels that sinned**, but cast them down to Hell (Tartarus), and delivered them into chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

The place in which the "Fallen Angels" are confined, is clearly distinguished, from the present abode of the wicked. The "Hell," in which the "Fallen Angels" are confined is, "Tartarus," and the present Hell, the abode of unrighteous human Spirits is, "HADES."

From our study of the abodes of the departed Spirits in chapter four, we learned that in the Old Testament days, and in the days of the earthly ministry of Christ, the Spirits of all the dead departed to a place which is known as, "Sheol" in the Hebrew, and "Hades," in the Greek. We learned, that at death, all Spirits departed to that place, regardless of moral distinction, righteous or unrighteous. We learned, that this Sheol or Hades, the place of departed Spirits, was divided into two sections - one for the righteous, called Abraham's bosom or Paradise, and one for the unrighteous, the place of torment, and that these two sections were separated by a Great Fixed Gulf, so that no one could pass from one to the other. This is the description, as Christ gave it.

We learned, that SINCE the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, the righteous are no longer in the section they once occupied in Hades, but that they are now in the Paradise in the third Heaven in the presence of Christ. The change took place at the resurrection and ascension of Christ, when He took with Him, the Spirits of the righteous from Hades and ascended on high, leading captivity captive. Since the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the section for the righteous, in Hades, has been unoccupied, and the righteous, who die, depart immediately into Paradise, the third Heaven, to be in the presence of Christ.

BUT, the abode for the unrighteous dead, has not been changed. All the unrighteous, who die, depart to Hades in the place of torment, just as they did in the Old Testament days and in the days of Christ's earthly ministry. The resurrection and ascension of Christ had no effect upon the abode of the unrighteous.

The proof that this place, in Hades, the present Hell, will be the abode of the ungodly until they are resurrected, is found in Revelation 20:13, which speaks of the resurrection and judgment of the wicked.

“Death (the grave) and Hell (HADES) delivered up the dead that were in them, and they were judged, every man according to their works.”

Here, we see that at the time of the resurrection and judgment of the wicked, HADES is still the abode of the unrighteous, for they will be delivered up out of HADES, not out of some other place. These two Scriptures, Luke 16:19-31 and Revelation 20:13, show that Hades was the abode of the wicked dead in the time of Christ, and that it STILL IS, AT THE TIME the wicked are to be raised and judged.

Hades, then, is the present abode of the wicked - the present “Hell,” and all the unrighteous, who die, depart to Hades. This will be their abode until they receive their resurrection bodies, in which, they will appear at the judgment, for sentence to the FINAL HELL (Lake of Fire).

The Present Hell (Hades) is Described in Luke 16

Clearly notice whose teaching this is. Our Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, relates the account of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man DIED and was BURIED (vs. 22) and in HADES, his Spirit was alive and conscious - he could see, for he recognized Abraham and Lazarus afar off - he could feel, thirst, talk and remember.

Being in torment, the rich man cried to Abraham and said, “Have mercy on me and

send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame” (vs. 23:24). When the rich man found that it was impossible for his request to be granted, he prayed that Abraham would send Lazarus to earth to warn his five brethren, “lest they also should come INTO this PLACE of TORMENT.”

The rich man’s second request was not granted either. He was told, that on earth, they have Moses and the prophets (the writings of Moses and the prophets), to warn people to repent, so as not to come to this place. He was told, that if people would not hear to those warnings (their Bible, at that time), and repent, neither would they be persuaded to repent, though one rose from the dead, to warn them.

Notice, Hades is a PLACE - “this PLACE of torment.” The word torment, or tormented, is used five times in the thirteen verses. He was tormented by flames (vs. 24).

A Scripture that is as strong and unmistakable in meaning, as the above, is fatal to the doctrines which teach, that the dead are unconscious and that there is no Hell. Of course, there are many preachers who believe and teach that the dead are unconscious and that there is no Hell. In order to try to explain away the truth of Hell and the passage of Scripture above, they have an explanation.

Many preachers begin by telling us, that this account of the rich man and Lazarus is only a Parable and that it is not a true incident. Some suppose that the rich man is supposed to represent the nation of Israel, and Lazarus represents all the other Gentile nations. “The drop of water, in the Parable, pictures the small measure of truth, that would help refresh the Israelites in their distress.”

Many preachers can make “white” read “black,” change a mountain into a mole hill, or vice versa, if it suits their purpose. Their entire doctrinal dream is bolstered up by explanations that ridicule human reason.

There is no indication, whatsoever, that the account of the rich man and Lazarus is a

Parable. Our Lord is telling a true history of what happened to two men who once lived and died. The experience was a statement of fact “There WAS a CERTAIN rich man.” “There WAS a CERTAIN beggar, NAMED Lazarus.” Further evidence that this is not a Parable, is seen in the fact, that Parables of our Lord begin with words such as these, “and he spake unto them a parable saying.” Furthermore, PARABLES DO NOT GIVE PROPER NAMES SUCH AS ABRAHAM AND LAZARUS. No Parable mentions any person’s name.

But, let us suppose, for a moment, that this is a Parable. We know that a Parable is an illustration that is purposed to make clear, an obscure truth. Then, to be true to its purpose, every detail of a Parable must clearly and accurately portray the obscure truth. Every detail of a Parable teaches truth! Therefore, even IF THIS WERE A PARABLE, the same doctrine is taught. In either case, whether we regard the account as a Parable or as a veritable history, the doctrine is, that after death, the unrighteous are punished in Hell, and are alive and conscious, and are able to see, hear, talk, feel, remember, and recognize each other.

The Resurrection Of The Wicked

Just as the righteous will not remain in Paradise, to spend eternity in a DISEMBODIED STATE, but will receive resurrection bodies, to spend eternity in the Final Heaven, even so the unrighteous will not remain in the present Hades, to spend eternity in a DISEMBODIED STATE, but will receive resurrection bodies to spend eternity, in the Final Hell.

Much space was given in Chapter Eight on the course of the resurrections, to show that there will be two resurrections; one for the righteous - at the second coming of Christ, and one for the rest of the dead - the wicked, a thousand years later. In addition to these references to the resurrection of the wicked, given in chapter eight, the following one is very important:

Revelation 20:13 says, 'DEATH (the grave) and HELL (Hades) **delivered** up the dead that were in them.'

It is certain, that the resurrection here, referred to, is the resurrection of the wicked, because the Scripture says, that "HADES" delivered up the dead. We know that only the Spirits of the wicked are confined in Hades - not the righteous. The righteous are with Christ in the Heavens. Furthermore, Revelation 20:5 says. that after the FIRST resurrection (resurrection of the righteous), "the REST of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished." Since the first resurrection is the resurrection of the righteous, then the REST of the dead, must be the wicked. The resurrection of the wicked will take place, one thousand years, after, the resurrection of the righteous, that is, one thousand years, after, the second coming of Christ.

At this resurrection, according to Revelation 20:13, quoted above, the grave will deliver up the bodies, and HADES, the present Hell, will deliver up the Spirits of the wicked. And thus, the unrighteous will again, be united with their bodies.

When we turn to our Bibles to learn what the resurrected bodies of the wicked will be like, instead of reading that they will be incorruptible, immortal, glorious, powerful, and Spiritual, like the bodies of the righteous, we find that the Scripture is strangely silent on this subject. No statements concerning the resurrection bodies of the wicked can be found in Scripture. However, we do know this, that the bodies of the wicked will NOT be like the believer's immortal glorified bodies. The wicked have eternal existence, but they will NOT have immortal bodies, because immortality is a gift, bestowed upon a certain class, only - the righteous, at the first resurrection. God would not give the wonderful attributes of a glorified body to those who are to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

In speaking of the resurrection bodies, Paul said, "To EVERY SEED his OWN BODY" (I Cor. 15:37-38). In connection with this Scripture, can be cited the Scripture, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." We know that a man cannot sow tares and expect to reap wheat. We reap just exactly what we sow - tares do not change

to wheat and wheat does not change to tares. So when Paul says, "To EVERY SEED his OWN BODY," the Spiritual application in connection with the resurrection, can be easily seen. Those who die without the Christ-life, cannot rise to a Christ-like resurrection. This shows that the dead will be resurrected, the same in kind, as they were buried. If they were buried without the Christ-life, they will be resurrected without it, and therefore, will not be eligible to receive immortal bodies.

After the unrighteous receive their resurrection bodies, instead of entering the final Heaven to enjoy the countless ages of eternity with Christ, we find that they will appear at the

GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Peter speaks of "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (II Peter 3:7), and Revelation 20:13 says, "And death (grave) and Hell (Hades) delivered up the dead that were in them; and THEY WERE JUDGED, EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS." Verse 11, speaks of the Great White Throne, therefore, we call it the Great White Throne Judgment. The wicked will stand before God and the Books will be opened, and also "another Book," which is the "Book of Life," in which, will be only the names of those who are saved. The wicked will be judged from the "Books," I believe meaning the Books of the Bible (Word of God). Every sinner will receive a fair and just judgment by God, using the Bible as the standard to judge. We see today, the importance of the Books (Bible), in our everyday lives. We can either, obey the Bible and be saved, or reject the Bible, and be lost forever. Many sinners will be found to have been respectable citizens, and perhaps, liberal givers to the Church, but regardless of their record, whether good or bad, we find, that because their names were not found in the "Book of Life," they were cast into the Lake of Fire. The Book of Life is a Book of born again believers, those who have obeyed the Word of God, being baptized in Jesus Name and born again of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38).

God will judge every sinner on the basis of His Word. The wicked will not be judged

to see whether or not they are entitled to eternal life, but to determine their degree of punishment. We read, that after sinners have appeared before the Great White Throne Judgment, "Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire, and whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire" (Revelation 20:14-15). We are told, that "the....unbelieving....shall have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimstone: (Revelation 21:8). The sentence to the Lake of Fire includes all the wicked - we do not read that any will escape. This is called the second death (Revelation 20:14; 21:8).

One Pentecostal Minister who did not believe there was a literal Hell said, "It doesn't make sense for God to send someone to Hell, resurrect them, judge them, then send them back to Hell."

In our civil society, when one commits a crime, they are held in jail until their trial before a judge. After their trial, the judge then sentences them to prison. The wicked sinners who die, are in Hell, waiting for their resurrection bodies, and then will stand before the judge of all mankind (Jesus Christ), who will then cast them into the Lake of Fire, the second death. Scripture seems to indicate that the Lake of Fire is a separate place than Hell. For death and Hell will be cast into the Lake of Fire. This place will also be the abode of the Anti-Christ, the false prophet, and the Devil and his wicked angels.

The second death, as we shall learn, does not mean unconsciousness, non-existence, annihilation, any more than the first death does. The second death may be, that the wicked will lose their bodies a second time, and again, become disembodied Spirits to exist in the "Lake of Fire," forever. This view is in harmony with what has already been said, namely, that BODIES of the wicked, will not be immortal, but mortal, and therefore, will be subject to death.

There are those that believe, that men will be given a "second chance" for salvation. The Bible teaches no such thing, as a "second chance." If the ungodly are to have a "second chance" for salvation after death, who is to announce it? If such a thing were

true, then God made a great mistake when He ordained that the Bible, and the preaching of the Gospel, and the striving of the Holy Spirit, should lead men to Christ and salvation, for if there is a “second chance,” then these are of no avail, here in this life.

We will now see what the Scripture reveals, concerning the final Hell, the “Lake of Fire” or (Gehenna) into which the wicked, after the judgment, will be cast to spend eternity.

Chapter XII--THE FINAL HELL “GEHENNA” or the “LAKE OF FIRE”

At the present time, the final Hell, the “Gehenna” or “Lake of Fire,” is unoccupied. The very first ones who will be cast into it, will be the “Beast” and the “False Prophet” (Revelation 19:20). Satan and his angels will be cast into it, a thousand years later (Revelation 20:10). And then, all the wicked (those who will be delivered up from HADES - the PRESENT HELL, whose names will not be found written in the (“Book of Life”) after the “Great White Throne Judgment,” will be cast into the “Lake of Fire” to spend eternity (Revelation 20:12-15).

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In the Old Testament Hebrew, this place is called, “Tophet” (Jer. 7:31-32; 19:6; Isa. 30:33; II Kings 23:10). In the New Testament Greek, it is called, “Gehenna,” twelve times. The words, “Lake of Fire” are used five times, to describe it.

The word used by Christ for the “Final Hell,” was the New Testament Greek word, “Gehenna,” not “Hades.” This Greek word, “Gehenna” is from the Hebrew word, “Ghi-Hinnom” or “Valley of Hinnom,” which was on the south side of the city of Jerusalem. In this valley, there was a certain high place called, “Tophet,” and during the times of Isaiah and Jeremiah, there were numbers of backslidden parents who forced their children to pass through the fire in worship of the false god, Molech (II Kings 23:10).

According to Isaiah 30:33, this fire was kindled with brimstone. The valley, afterward, became a place for the burning of the garbage and refuse of the city of Jerusalem. The garbage of the city was thrown over the wall into the valley below, where the fires were kept burning, continually. Some of the garbage and decaying matter would lodge on the rocks of the wall and breed worms. Jesus used this valley, (Ghi-Hinnom, in Hebrew, - Gehenna, in Greek,) as a type of “Hell” or the “Lake of Fire.” Therefore, we read the expressions in Mark 9:43-48, “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

The following are the passages of Scripture, in which Christ used the Greek word, “Gehenna.”

Matt. 5:22, "But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council, but whosoever shall say, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of HELL FIRE" (Gehenna).

Matt. 5:29, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into HELL," (Gehenna).

Matt. 10:28, "And fear not them, which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but fear Him which is able to destroy both, soul and body in HELL," (Gehenna).

Matt. 18:9, "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into HELL FIRE," (Gehenna).

Matt. 23:15, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more, the child of HELL, (Gehenna), than yourselves."

Matt. 23:33, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of HELL?" (Gehenna).

Mark 9:43, "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off, it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into HELL, (Gehenna), INTO THE FIRE that NEVER shall be QUENCHED."

Luke 12:5, "BUT I WILL FOREWARN YOU WHOM YE SHALL FEAR...Fear Him, which after He hath killed, hath power to cast into HELL," (Gehenna). Yea, I say unto you, fear Him.

These passages, which the Greek word, "Gehenna" for the Final Hell, are thus clearly distinguished, from the passages which use the Greek word, "Hades," for the PRESENT HELL.

The Bible Describes This Final "Hell," as a Place of "Fire"

Rev. 20:15, "And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of FIRE."

Mark. 9:43 and 45, "FIRE that never shall be quenched."

Matt. 5:22, "Whosoever shall say, Thou, fool, shall be in danger of HELL, (Gehenna), FIRE."

Matt. 18:8, "to be cast into everlasting FIRE."

Matt. 18:9, "Hell, (Gehenna), FIRE."

Matt. 3:12, "he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable FIRE."

Mark 9:43, 45, "into the FIRE that never shall be quenched."

Mark 9:44, 46, 48, "Where the worm dieth not, and the FIRE is not quenched."

Matt. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting FIRE."

Matt. 25:46, "And these shall go away into everlasting FIRE."

Rev. 21:8, "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."

Matt. 13:41-42, "them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The great question, in most people's minds, seems to be - IS THIS HELL "FIRE," A LITERAL "FLAME" or is it "symbolical" of a punishment as severe as, "Literal Fire?"

Study the following passages of Scripture carefully:

James 3:6, "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire, the course of nature; and it is set on Fire of Hell."

Would it seem from this, that Hell "Fire," is a Literal Flame?

Would you insist that the word, "FIRE," in all of the following passages of Scripture, must mean a Literal Flame of Fire?

Psalms 78:21, "Therefore, the Lord heard this, and was wroth," so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel."

I Peter 1:7, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold, that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Psalms 104: 4, "Who maketh his angels, Spirits; his ministers, a Flaming Fire."

I Cor. 3:13, "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

Heb. 12:29, "For our God is a Consuming Fire." Jer. 23:9; Zech. 13:9; Ps. 66:10-12.

We could hardly insist that the word, "FIRE" in all of the above passages, must mean a Literal Burning Fire.

In view of the symbolic use of the word, "FIRE," as shown above, it would seem that the references to HELL "FIRE," are an INTENSE SYMBOL of the agony and suffering of

Hell.

Let it be clearly understood, that just because it is believed that this word, "FIRE" is symbolic, we are not trying to show that the punishment of Hell will be less severe than it would be if there were Literal Flames. But on the contrary, if this "FIRE," is symbolic, then the punishment will be all the greater, because the REALITY is always greater than the symbol. So, if this "FIRE" is merely a figurative expression, it must stand for some GREAT REALITY, some great suffering, and what an awful thing the punishment, symbolized by FIRE, must be. So whether we believe in LITERAL FIRE, or not, the fact of terrible punishment remains.

Because we do not necessarily believe in the Literal Fire of Hell, some may think that we are recanting or are giving up the old fashioned doctrines of eternal punishment. However, that is not so, in the least. Whether the "FIRE" spoken of, is literal or figurative, the fact remains, that there is severe punishment of Hell. For those who are willing to study their Bibles, and face the issue squarely, it seems clear from the Scriptures given above, that this "FIRE" is figurative. There are many views regarding this subject of eternal Hell. If the wicked are resurrected at the second resurrection, what type of bodies will they have? If they have flesh and bone bodies, they will burn up in Hell, if there are Literal Flames. This subject is open for debate, however, whether Literal Flames or not Literal Flames, it will be a horrible place of torment forever.

Other Language Is Used To Describe The Terribleness Of Hell

The condition of the lost is described in words such as these:

"Cast into OUTER DARKNESS; there shall be WEEPING and GNASHING OF TEETH."

These two terms, are found together, seven times. Matt. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28.

For anyone to say that there is no future punishment of Hell for the wicked, is to ignore scores of plain statements in the Bible.

The Scriptural fact, that there is a place of punishment into which the wicked will be cast after their judgment, cannot be denied. And according to the Biblical description of that place, neither can anyone deny the fact of the dreadfulness and severity of the punishment. The next fact to be established, will **be that the punishment of Hell will be eternal**. However, before we establish this fact, that the wicked are to suffer in Hell, ETERNALLY, just as the righteous are to enjoy Heaven, ETERNALLY, we must give Bible answers to those who have theories and doctrines, which they think prove, that the punishment of the wicked will NOT be ETERNAL.

ANNIHILATION THEORY

Of the various false theories concerning the final destiny of the wicked, one of the most often heard of is the ANNIHILATION THEORY. The word, “annihilate” means to **reduce to nothing, to wipe out of existence**. Those who believe in the annihilation theory, believe that the wicked will be annihilated, or put out of existence.

There are many forms of the annihilation theory - they vary in detail. Some teach that the wicked are annihilated, at death, never to be brought back into existence. Then there are those who teach, that the wicked are annihilated, at death, but that they will all be re-created and restored to consciousness, and given a second chance for salvation. This “re-creation” or “bringing back into existence and restoring to consciousness,” is called, “resurrection.” by many ministers.

This would not be a “Resurrection” because, according to their teaching, the wicked are out of existence. Therefore, they would have to be “re-created” to be brought back into existence.

Many preachers teach, that after the wicked have been “re-created,” they will be given a trial for life, or a second chance, an “opportunity to gain everlasting life, under favorable terms.” There is no such thing mentioned in the Bible. This is what many preachers call, “the Judgment.” And according to this false theory, those who refuse the second chance for eternal life, will be cast into the Lake of Fire, and will be ANNIHILATED. To be cast into the Lake of Fire, according to the Bible, is called “the second death.” Many preachers say, that this “second death” means that the wicked, who will be cast into the Lake of Fire, WILL BE ANNIHILATED - that is, consciousness and existence, will both end - they will cease to exist. The Bible nowhere teaches a second chance. We will prove, from the Bible, that the Annihilationist’s are wrong when they say, that the wicked will be annihilated when they are cast into the Lake of Fire.

These false teachers, in quoting Scriptures which apply to the final destiny of the wicked, try to prove that the wicked will be annihilated, by saying that such words as “DESTROY,” “DESTRUCTION,” “CONSUME,” mean ANNIHILATION.

For example, in the following Scripture, which applies to the ungodly, they say that the word, “destruction,” means annihilation.

II Thess. 1:9, “Who shall be punished with everlasting **destruction** (annihilation).” This is supposed to teach that the wicked will be annihilated or put out of existence. Likewise, the word, “destroyed” is also claimed to teach that the wicked will be annihilated or put out of existence. And because several passages infer that the wicked are to “perish” and are to be “consumed,” it is argued that they must therefore, go out of existence. But, such an interpretation is not true. We shall prove, from the Bible, that the words DESTROY, DESTRUCTION, PERISH, CONSUME, DO NOT MEAN ANNIHILATION.

The following little test shows, beyond a shadow of doubt, that these words DO NOT mean annihilation, for if they did, the entire Bible would be turned into nothing more than nonsense.

In the following Scriptural references the word, “annihilate” or “annihilation” is SUBSTITUTED for the word, “destroyed” or “destruction.”

Remember, annihilation means, putting out of existence.

Psalms 78:45, “He sent frogs among them (the Egyptians) which destroyed (annihilated) them.” If the word, “destroyed” meant annihilation, the frogs, according to the above illustration, must have been endowed with the power to put the Egyptians out of existence.

Job 19:10, “Thou hast destroyed (annihilated) me on every side.” Again, if the word, “destroyed” means annihilation, he was put out of existence on every side, yet, he lived to tell about it.

Job 21:17, “How oft destruction (annihilation) cometh upon them.” How could they be put out of existence many times?

Isaiah 34:2, “For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, He hath utterly destroyed (annihilated) them.” Here again, if the word, “destroyed” meant annihilation, the nations were put out of existence, yet, they are still here.

Jer. 17:18, “Destroy (annihilate) them with double destruction” (annihilation). They were doubly put out of existence. How absurd!

Hebrews 2:14, says that Christ came to **destroy** the Devil. But did Christ “annihilate” him? Did He put him out of existence? No! The Devil is still in existence, and from Rev. 20:10, we see that he will be in existence **forever and ever**.

If the words, “destroy” and “destruction,” in all these instances cannot possibly be forced to mean annihilation (cessation of existence) without making the Scriptures into nonsense, then they cannot be forced to mean, annihilation when applied to everlasting

punishment of the wicked. II Thess. 1:9, “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.” But, in answer to this Scripture, those who teach annihilation will say, that no man can be put away from the PRESENCE of an OMNIPRESENT God without being put out of existence. Let us turn to Genesis 4:16, and we shall see that a man can be put out of the PRESENCE of an OMNIPRESENT God, and still not be annihilated - put out of existence.

“Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.” According to these false teachers and their interpretation, Cain would have been annihilated, put out of existence, when he went out from the presence of the Lord, but according to the Scripture, we find that he lived after that, in the land of Nod, and had a family.

The divine presence is more powerfully and gloriously manifest in Heaven, than anywhere else, and it is from this presence, that the unjust will be forever banished.

We have seen that the words, “destroy” or “destruction,” never mean annihilation. Now let us prove from the Bible that

The Word, “Perish” Never Means Annihilation

Those who teach that the wicked will be annihilated, or put out of existence, after they are cast into the Lake of Fire, say that this word, “perish” signifies this going out of existence. For example, in John 3:16, “whosoever believeth shall not “perish,” but have everlasting life.” In other words, the Scripture infers, that the wicked will perish. But, we shall see that the word, “perish” does not mean annihilation, or non-existence.

The word for “perish” in the original Greek, is “apollumi.” It denotes “ruin” or “rendering, unfit for the intended use,” not going out of existence. For example, Matt. 9:17, the bottles (the old wine skins) into which the new wine is put, are said to break. “The bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles **perish.**” If the bottle (the wine skin) is broken, it is just rendered unfit for its intended use, it has not been annihilated, or reduced to

positively nothing. In Mark's account of this same word, "apollumn" is translated "marred," instead of "perish."

Here is another test to prove that the word, "perish" does not mean, annihilation. The Prodigal Son, in Luke 15:17, said, "I perish with hunger." Was he about to be annihilated from hunger?

In II Peter 3:6, we read, "the world being overflowed with water, **perished.**" But, was the earth annihilated or reduced to nothing? No! It is still here.

Of the Heavens and earth, it is said, "they shall perish." Heb. 1:11, and yet, when this perishing is explained, it is said, "they shall be changed."

THE WORD, "PERISH" NEVER MEANS ANNIHILATION

In Matt. 10:6, 15:24, this same word, "apollumi" is translated "lost" instead of "perish." "Go gather the **lost** sheep." If the sheep were annihilated, or out of existence, how could anyone gather them? In Luke 15:24, the Prodigal Son is said to be "lost," yet, he was not out of existence.

It has been shown, that the word, "PERISH" as well as the word, "destroy" and "destruction" cannot possibly, be forced to mean annihilation. Now let us prove, from the Bible, that **The Word, "Consume" Does Not Mean Annihilation.**

In the following test, substitute the word, "annihilation" for the word, "consumed" and we shall see that the word, "consumed," whenever it is used in speaking of the wicked, does not mean that they will be annihilated or reduced to nothing.

David said, "I shall, one day, be **consumed** by the hand of Saul." (I Samuel 27:1). Surely, David did not expect Saul to annihilate him.

The Psalmist said, "Mine eye is **consumed**" (Psalms 6:7), and "My bones are **consumed**" (Psalms 31:10). And yet, neither his eye nor his bones were annihilated, (put out of existence).

God said of the children of Israel, "I have **consumed** them in Mine anger," they were then living by the hundreds of thousands.

"Take heed," says the Apostle, "that ye be not **consumed**, one of another" (Gal. 5:15). Were they to take heed that they should not annihilate one another?

The Anti-Christ, "whom the Lord shall **consume** with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" will not be annihilated, or put out of existence, for we find that the Anti-Christ, a thousand years later, will be in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone (Rev. 20:10). The word, consume cannot possibly, denote annihilation.

Once again, the teachers of this annihilation theory, tell us that the words "burned up" used in reference to the wicked, must mean that they will be put out of existence.

Mal. 4:1, "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven: and all the proud, yea, and all they that do wickedly shall be stubble; and the day that cometh, shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither, root nor branch."

In the first place, it may be said, that a literal burning cannot annihilate anything. A building may be destroyed by fire; but, as science clearly teaches, no particle of the matter is annihilated. Wood may be placed in the fire, and by the process of combustion, it may be decomposed, and it's elements scattered in the form of flame, and vapor, and smoke, and ashes, but **nothing goes out of existence**. Things pass from one form of existence into another, but are not reduced to nothing - only the "form of its existence is changed." So, in reality, THERE IS NO ANNIHILATION of anything. Nothing can be annihilated, only changed in form.

In our discussion in the beginning of this chapter, it was said that this “fire” of Hell, was probably an INTENSE SYMBOL of the terrible REALITY of the suffering of Hell, rather than a literal flame. In this view, the burning up here, referred to, would symbolize a severe and dreadful punishment.

But, even if this were a literal fire, which is not probable, it is still evident that the “burning up,” could not possibly mean, that the wicked are to be annihilated, or are to cease to exist, for we have seen that nothing can be annihilated.

We have learned, that the words “destroy,” “destruction,” and “perish,” never mean annihilation, or blotting out of existence. They simply denote “to ruin” or “to render unfit for the intended use” or “to change the form of existence.”

The same word for “destroy” is translated “make without effect,” in Romans 3:3, and “make void” in Romans 3:31. In every case, it means “to render powerless or inoperative.” It has no reference to ceasing to exist. So these words, when they are applied to the destiny of the wicked, cannot mean that they will be put out of existence, or reduced to nothing, but that in some way or other, they will suffer a dreadful change. The words “destroy,” “perish,” “consume,” can only denote the calamity, distress, tribulation, and anguish that the wicked will know, but it cannot denote annihilation.

Furthermore, the annihilation theory contradicts the Bible teaching, that there are degrees of reward and punishment. In Romans 2:6, we are told, that God “will render to every man according to his deeds,” and in Rev. 20:13, it says, that “they were judged every man according to their works.” But, if the wicked are to be annihilated (put out of existence), they will be punished, every man alike.

Another of the false theories, concerning the final destiny of the wicked, is the

RESTORATION THEORY

This theory teaches, that after a lapse of time - after the wicked have been punished in the Gehenna of fire, a sufficient length of time for their sins, and after they have been purged or purified, they will be brought out and transferred to Heaven. Those who believe in this restoration theory, use several passages of Scripture, in which they tell us, teach that the wicked will be reconciled to God.

Acts 3:21, "Whom (Christ) the Heaven must receive, until the **Times of the Restitution of ALL THINGS**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began."

Those who teach the restoration theory, claim that, "ALL THINGS," includes Satan, his angels, and all the wicked, and that at a time of restitution, (restoration), they will be restored and reconciled to God. But, if we carefully examine the text, the true meaning is very clear. The next clause says, that the restoration is to be only of ALL THINGS, "**which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets.**" We can find nowhere in the Bible, where "God spoke by the mouth of His Holy Prophets," that He would restore the "wicked" and "Satan and his angels" to everlasting righteousness, after they have been punished for a certain length of time, but Rev. 20:10, says that the punishment will be forever and ever.

It is also plain, that this resurrection refers TO THOSE who have been reconciled to God, THROUGH CHRIST. From II Corinthians 5:17-21, which speaks of those who are new creatures in Christ - those who have been born again, it is clear, that they are the ones who have been reconciled to God, through Christ, not the wicked.

"God who hath reconciled US (Christians) to Himself by Jesus Christ." "In Christ's stead, be ye (Christians), reconciled to God." In Col. 1:20-21, those who are reconciled, are the ones who were, at one time, aliens and enemies by wicked works, but who now have made peace through the blood of His cross.

This reconciliation to God is not a hope to be realized by the lost in Hell, but is for ALL

who have been reconciled to God, THROUGH Christ.

Those who believe in the restoration theory, try to use Phil. 2:10-11, and Rev. 5:13, to show that the wicked will be restored to Heaven. “At the name of Jesus, **every knee should bow** of things in Heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth, and that **every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.**”

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The fact that all will confess, that Christ is Lord, does not imply, in the least, that the lost, who are compelled to admit it, will be taken to Heaven. For the lost, to confess that Christ is Lord, does not mean that they will have a change of heart - or will be born again. Repentance and faith, in Christ, are necessary to keep out of Hell. The Bible says, “Repent or ye shall likewise perish.” God commandeth, all men everywhere, to repent.” It is repentance, born again of the water and the Spirit, that leads to a change of heart, and salvation, and according to the examples in the Bible, a period of suffering never has or never will, cause repentance. In every instance, where suffering was inflicted upon the wicked to make them repent, the punishment HARDENED the wicked, instead of causing them to become penitent.

The example of the wicked in the Book of Revelation, who suffered from the plagues, instead of repenting and calling on God, they cried for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from God (Rev. 6:16-17). And when the plague of hail came, instead of repenting, they **blasphemed God** (Rev. 16:21). And even Satan, after suffering for 1,000 years in the Bottomless Pit, comes out as wicked as he ever was (Rev. 20:7-8).

The fact that the lost, as well as Satan, will confess that Christ is Lord, does not mean, in the least, that they will be taken to Heaven. The Bible plainly shows, that Satan is to be tormented in the Lake of Fire FOREVER AND EVER (Rev. 20:10).

Jesus said, concerning Judas Iscariot, who in advance of all others, received the sentence of condemnation, (Matt. 26:24), “It had been good for that man, if he had NOT been born.”

If Judas suffered torments, for ages, and then if he were transferred to Heaven, as the restoration theory teaches, even then, it could still be said, that it was GOOD for him to have been born, instead of GOOD for him NOT to have been born.

We have learned, according to the Bible, that the wicked after they have been cast into the Lake of Fire, will neither be ANNIHILATED, nor later RESTORED TO HEAVEN. Now, let us prove from the Bible that

The Punishment Of The Wicked Will Be Endless - Forever And Ever

The final Lake of Fire is a place of eternal duration, as well as the final Heaven is a place of eternal duration. There can be no eternal Heaven without its counterpart, eternal Lake of Fire. The one demands the other. People are ready to accept eternal rewards for the righteous, but will back off in horrified amazement, at the thought of eternal punishment for sin. If it is eternal, in the one case, why not the other? If the life is eternal for the righteous, why would the punishment not be eternal for the sinner? We must be reasonably logical. If the punishment of the Lake of Fire is not eternal, what was the purpose of Christ's supreme sacrifice on Calvary? Christ suffered, and agonized, and died on the cross to save men from Hell, and the Lake of Fire. Certainly Christ died IN VAIN - He paid too great a price - He made too supreme a sacrifice, if there is no eternal Hell, from which, to save men. It is true, God is love, but God is also JUST. He must keep the righteous from the wicked. Thus, it is necessary that they be separated for all eternity.

God has given the doctrine of eternal punishment and we cannot teach otherwise.

Here are Christ's own words in Matthew 25:46, "And these (the wicked) shall go away into EVERLASTING punishment, but the righteous into life ETERNAL."

These words are spoken primarily of, "The Nations;" however, they also apply to individuals who make up the nations.

Let us notice these two words, EVERLASTING and ETERNAL, in the above passage of Scripture. The punishment of the wicked is EVERLASTING, and the life of the righteous is ETERNAL.

When we examine this passage of Scripture in the original Greek, we find that these two words, EVERLASTING and ETERNAL are not two different words, but are both the SAME Greek word, "AIONIOS." The one Greek word, "aionios," which appears twice in the passage, is translated one time, EVERLASTING, and the other time, ETERNAL. It is the same Greek word, in both cases, therefore, both should be translated by the same word - ETERNAL.

From this information the following fact can be established, namely, **that the punishment of the wicked will be JUST EXACTLY as long as the life of the righteous**, because the same Greek word, "aionios" is used for both. CHRIST STATED THESE TWO FACTS IN THE ONE SENTENCE, and used the same qualifying word, for both. The punishment of the wicked, MUST be exactly, as long as the life of the righteous.

Those ministers who teach that the punishment of the wicked will NOT be endless or forever and ever, try to prove this, by saying that the word, "aionios" only means "age-long," or "for a period," not forever and ever. It is true that this word, "aionios" is the only one, in Greek, that can be used to express the idea of "eternal" or "everlasting." It is the only way, in Greek, to say "eternal" or "everlasting."

To prove that this word, "age," "aion," (which was the only word the Greeks had to express eternal or everlasting) - to prove that this word stands for ENDLESS DURATION and not for just an age or period that is to end, we need only to point out that in the New Testament, it is used 71 times, and in all but four places, it is translated "eternal" or "everlasting" meaning, ENDLESS DURATION. **No other meaning could possibly suit the context.** The word, in all these cases, cannot possibly mean just, "age-long" or "for a period," without throwing the Scripture into confusion. In the cases where the word is

used to mean “for an age or period that is to come to an end,” the rest of the verse makes this clear (Matt. 24:3; 28-20). But when it is applied to human destiny, the rest of the verse shows that it does not mean, “age-long” or “for a period.” For example, in II Cor. 4:18, “the things which are seen are **temporal** and the things which are not seen are **ETERNAL**” Here the word, “aions” (eternal) is in sharp contrast with that which is “temporary” or “for a period.” It can easily be seen, that in the example above the word, “aions” does not mean a limited period, but ENDLESS DURATION.

Remember that Christ, in the same sentence, used the Greek word, “aionios” both for the “eternal” punishment of the wicked, and for the “eternal” life of the righteous. And here, is positive proof, that this word stands for “endless duration,” and not for an age or period that is to come to an end.

This word is the VERY SAME WORD, that we find in Romans 16:26, “the commandment of the everlasting (aionios) God.” Now then, if the word means, endless duration, when applied to the existence of God, and if it means, endless duration, when applied to the existence of the righteous, then it also means, endless duration, when applied to the existence and punishment of the wicked, for the very identical word is used, in all cases.

If any say that the word, “aionios,” before punishment of the wicked, means only an age or period that will come to an end, not endless duration, then the existence of God will only be age long, not endless, and the existence of the righteous, in Heaven, will be only age-long, not endless, for the very same word is used, in all cases. If the “Lake of Fire” is to be blotted out, “Heaven” must necessarily be blotted out, and God must come to an end. Such an idea is contrary to Scripture.

Forever And Ever

Here is another positive proof that the punishment of the wicked will be of “endless duration,” or “for- ever and ever.” The expression “forever and ever,” in the Greek, is (eis

tous aionas ton aionon). The words, “aionas” and “aionon” come from the Greek word, for “age.” Thus, the expression is translated “unto the Ages of the Ages.” It POSITIVELY expresses, “Endless duration,” Eternity.

This expression “forever and ever” (eis tous aionas ton aionon) or “unto the ages of the ages” is used in speaking of the sinful followers of the Anti-Christ. “And the smoke of their torment ascended up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night” (Rev. 14:11). The expression is also used of Satan (Rev. 20:10) “and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

It is also used of Christ in Rev. 1:18, “I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore.” This expression is also used of the existence of God. He is called, the God “who liveth **forever and ever**,” (Rev. 4:9-10; 5:14; 10:6; 15:7).

THIS SAME EXPRESSION “FOREVER AND EVER,” IS USED OF THE RIGHTEOUS (Rev. 22:5) “They shall reign forever and ever.”

This Scripture definitely shows, that the righteous are to live “forever and ever.” Now, we can use this as proof, to show that the wicked will be punished “forever and ever.” Here, is the importance of the very first fact that was established in our discussion of endless punishment. It was the fact, that “the punishment of the wicked, will be JUST EXACTLY as long as the life of the righteous,” inasmuch as the same Greek word, “aionios” (eternal) is used in both cases, (eternal punishment - life eternal). Christ stated the two facts, in the same sentence.

How long will the life of the righteous be? Revelation 22:5 says, “forever and ever.” Then, the punishment of the wicked will also be, “forever and ever.”

In other words, since the punishment of the wicked will be just exactly as long as the life of the righteous, then the punishment of the wicked will be “forever and ever.”

Remember, that the expression, “forever and ever” (eis tous aionas ton aionon) or “unto the Ages of the Ages,” positively expresses, “Endless Duration.”

The Fact That Endless Punishment Is Taught In The Bible Cannot Be Denied

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“And these, (the wicked), shall go away into EVERLASTING punishment” (Matt. 25:46).

“Them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;.....shall be punished with EVERLASTING destruction” (II Thess. 1:8-9).

“Some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2).

“But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of ETERNAL damnation” (Mark 3:29).

“Depart from me ye cursed, into EVERLASTING fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41).

“to be cast into EVERLASTING fire” (Matt. 18:8).

“To whom is reserved, the blackness of darkness FOREVER” (Jude 13).

“God shall, likewise, destroy thee FOREVER” (Psalms 52:5). (from our previous study “destroy,” does not mean annihilation)

“When the wicked, spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed FOREVER” (Psalms 92:7).

“into the fire, that NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED” (Mark 9:43-45).

“Where the worm DIETH NOT, and the fire is NOT QUENCHED” (Mark 9:44-48).

It has been shown, that the wicked, after they have been cast into the Lake of Fire, will neither be ANNIHILATED, nor later, TRANSFERRED TO HEAVEN, but that their punishment will be endless, forever and ever.

The annihilationist, in speaking of this EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT, as it is referred to in Matt. 25:46, and II Thess. 1:9, would say that the “everlasting” refers to the “results or consequences” of that punishment and not to the punishment itself. They say that the punishment is “annihilation” and that this punishment is everlasting, in the sense that the wicked will be everlastingly annihilated, (out of existence). In other words, the banishment to the Lake of Fire, is ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, in the sense, that the wicked will be eternally annihilated, not eternally suffering.

This cannot be true, annihilation would be ended punishment, rather than endless punishment. The Bible states, that it is the “punishment” itself, and not the consequences, that is everlasting. And besides, there is no such thing as, “unconscious” punishment.

Anything that is, “unconscious,” cannot be punished. A brick or a house cannot be punished. Punishment can only take place only where there is consciousness.

It is a very remarkable fact, that the Ministers and Churches, who have believed most firmly in the doctrine of eternal punishment, have been most influential, in leading sinners to Jesus Christ.

Note

Here is a note of interest, in regard to the attitude of unbelievers toward the Biblical doctrine of Hell. Those, who at one time, denounced Christianity, and the Bible and its teaching, concerning the punishment of the wicked, when faced with death, expressed in their dying words their belief in Hell. Here are the dying words of some well known infidels:

“Oh the insufferable pangs of Hell. Oh, the eternity, forever and forever” - Newport.

“ I would gladly give one-hundred and fifty-thousand dollars to have it proved that there is no Hell” – Charteres

“I would gladly give worlds, if I had them, if “The Age of Reason” had not been published. O Lord, help me. Christ, help me. Stay with me. It is Hell to be left alone” - Thomas Paine

“I am abandoned by God and man. O Christ, O Christ Jesus.” He then said, “Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six more months of life.” The doctor answered, “Sir, you cannot live six weeks.” Voltaire replied, “Then I shall go to Hell,” and soon after expired.

Here is a statement that should set everyone to serious thinking, it is the plain teaching of the Bible that

Heaven Is Forever Closed To Those Who Die Unsaved

Here are the words of Jesus Christ in John 3:3, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

“He cannot,” is expressed in the Greek by “ou dunatie” and means, “it is not possible.” It is not possible for a man to see the Kingdom of God, unless he is born again of the water and the Spirit.

Again, Christ says, speaking of sinners who will die in their sins, “I go away, and ye will seek Me, and you will die in your sins; where I go away to (Heaven) YE ARE NOT ABLE TO COME” (literal translation) (John 8:21). This shows, that if men die in their sins, they must be shut out of Heaven

forever, for they can NEVER go where Jesus is.

From our study of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31, we see that there are no conversions in the realm of the lost.

The climax to this thought, that Heaven is forever closed to those who die unsaved, is found in the words of the Apostle John, when he declares, concerning the dead, Rev. 22:11, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still." These words, prove most conclusively, that as we die, we must remain all through eternity; death does not change character, it only petrifies it.

We have learned, from the Bible, that Heaven will be forever closed, to those that are unsaved. Those who die, in their sins, must remain that way forever. Heaven is not a place for a sinner to slip in without any preparation. To abide in Heaven, after death, and to be safe for eternity, demands preparation, and that preparation must take place here, in this life. "NOW, is the accepted time, NOW, IS THE DAY OF SALVATION" (II Cor. 6:2). "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

Dear student, do not delay - face this issue squarely. Are you prepared to die? Where will you spend eternity, in Heaven or Hell? Why not make Heaven your home? A little preparation, on your part, will give you the assurance of Heaven, and you can know, beyond a shadow of doubt, that you are saved and ready to meet your Maker. God's way of salvation is so plain, that though a man be a fool, he need not err therein. God's way is marked in plain red - it is the way of Christ and His shed blood. Jesus said, "I am the way" (John 14:6).

According to the Bible, everyone is accountable to God. Romans 14:12 says,

“Everyone shall give account of himself to God.” Romans 3:23 says, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

The Bible says, that all are under sin, and that none can be saved by his own good works (Titus 3:5).

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Jesus purchased our salvation on the cross of Calvary. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, we can be saved, if we repent, be baptized in His Name (in water) and let Him fill us with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). The Apostles obeyed this plan of salvation, the early Church obeyed this plan of salvation, thousands today, have obeyed this plan of salvation, sinner how about you?

One of the most wonderful facts about salvation in Christ, is that it is for everyone. “God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34). There is Only One Way to Heaven and Eternal Life, and that is through Jesus Christ, the Door to Heaven.

The Bible says, “choose ye, this day, whom ye shall serve” (Joshua 24:15). Now, is the accepted time, now, is the day of salvation, today, if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts” (Heb. 3:7). Do not postpone salvation through Jesus Christ. Do not die without being born again of the water and the Spirit. Where you spend Eternity is the result of your choice today. Spend your Eternity with Jesus Christ, the Holy Angels, and all the Redeemed Saints of God. Do not spend Eternity with the Devil and his angels in the Lake of Fire, forever.

I feel I have, done my best, to point you to the way of Eternal Life. If I could put “Eternal Life” into a bottle and sell it, I would be a rich man. Eternal Life only comes through Jesus Christ. With Him is Eternal Life. With Him is the Fountain of Youth. With Him is Eternity.

Questions And Answers

1. How can anyone possibly be happy in Heaven when he knows that some of his loved ones are suffering in Hell?

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It seems clear that those in Heaven will completely forget their sinful loved ones who ever lived. We read in Psalms 112:6, "The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance." This strongly implies that the wicked will not be in everlasting remembrance. Job 24:19-20 says, "drought and heat consume the snow waters; so doeth the GRAVE (here, the word is Sheol, abode of Spirits, not Queber - the grave in which the body is buried) - so doeth the grave (Sheol) those which have **sinned**. The womb (the mother) shall **forget** him (the sinner)....He shall **no more be remembered**." In Isaiah we read, "For behold I create new Heavens and a new earth: and the former shall **not be remembered, NOR COME INTO MIND**."

Here then, is God's own answer to this question of how anyone can be happy in Heaven when some of his loved ones are in Hell. After the unrighteous have appeared at the final judgment, and have been sentenced to the final Lake of Fire, the fact that unrighteous ones ever lived, will forever be erased from memories of the righteous.

2. Is the **ABYSS** or **BOTTOMLESS PIT** (referred to in Revelation) the same as the final Hell, the Lake of Fire, or is it a separate place?

The Bottomless Pit, or abyss, is a separate place from the final Hell. The word, translated "Bottomless Pit," is "ABUSSOS" or "ABYSS." It is found in Rev. 9:1-2; 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1-3. The Bottomless Pit is the "prison" of the "Demons" Rev. 9:1-21. The following two references show, that this Abyss is not the same place as the Lake of Fire. The Bottomless Pit or Abyss, is the place in which Satan is to be bound for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3, 7-8). After he has been confined there for 1,000 years, he will be loosed for a short time, and then will be cast into the Lake of Fire, where he will be tormented, day and night, forever and ever (Rev. 20:10).

3. What is the truth about PURGATORY?

According to the teaching of the Catholic Church, "Purgatory" is supposed to be a "Place of Purification." The Catholics believe, that the souls of men, at death, must wait for a while in Purgatory, and be purged from their sins by physical suffering, before they can enter Heaven. They also believe, that the souls in the torments of Purgatory, can do nothing to deliver themselves, but only "prayers" and "masses" said by the living, can get them out.

Here is a statement made by one of the most well-known Catholic authorities of America. It is taken from page 205 of his book entitled: "The Faith of Our Fathers," which was published in 1904.

"The Catholic Church teaches, that besides a place of eternal torment for the wicked, and everlasting rest for the righteous, there exists in the next life, **a middle state of temporary punishment**, allotted for those who have died in venial sin, or who have not satisfied the justice of God, for sins already forgiven. She also teaches us that, **although the souls consigned to this intermediate state, commonly called Purgatory, cannot help themselves, they may be aided by the suffrages (prayers) of the faithful on earth.** The existence of Purgatory naturally implies the correlative dogma - the utility of praying for the dead - for the souls consigned to this middle state **have not reached the term of their journey. They are still exiles from Heaven.** and fit subjects from divine clemency."

This scholarly man does not even submit, one Scripture, in proof of this doctrine of Purgatory. If this doctrine were really true, it is reasonable that we should expect to find some proof of it in the Bible, but we can emphatically state, that not even one single reference can be found to support such a theology. The word, purgatory is nowhere found in the Bible. This doctrine is based, not upon Scripture, but upon the TRADITIONS of the Catholic Church, which are without value to the believer in the Word of God.

The belief in Purgatory is Paganism. The idea of Purgatory was not advanced, as a doctrine, until around 600 A.D. The purpose of this unscriptural doctrine, was to get additional money for the Church. The treasury could be greatly increased, by charging people large fees for the saying of “prayers” and “masses” to deliver the souls of their helpless loved ones from the awful torments of Purgatory.

Millions who have been ignorant of the Bible, have been induced to pay hard earned money to Catholic clergymen to say prayers and masses for the dead, in the hope that it would relieve the “terrible sufferings” of their helpless loved ones and bring them a little closer to Heaven.

How absurd! The road to Heaven doesn’t run through Hell (a Purgatory of suffering). Not only is this doctrine unscriptural, but there is no possible need of a Purgatory, a place of purification, for the Bible says, **“the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from ALL sin”** (1 John 1:7).

4. Can the Living and Dead Communicate? And What is the Truth About Spiritualism?

The question, “Can the living and dead communicate?” is age old. Volumes have been written on this subject. Among those who believe the living and dead can communicate, are the Spiritualists, who have a false system, known as “Spiritualism,” which should be called, according to the Bible, “Spiritism,” not “Spiritualism.”

In this false cult, a MEDIUM, usually a woman, is one who **supposedly contacts the Spirit of a loved one, and brings it into the presence of the friend or relative, who wishes to communicate with it.** A communication with a Spirit, is called a “séance,” and strange to say, these Mediums will not even attempt a “séance,” except in the dark. They fear the light, and invariably, work in the dark.

There has been a great deal of research into Spiritualism and other like cults, to find

out if it is really true, that the living and dead can communicate. But in all the research on this subject, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN FOUND, ONE PROVEN CASE, IN WHICH THEY DID.

The Scientific American Magazine offered five thousand dollars, half of which, was to be given to the first Medium, who could present a proven case of psychic phenomena, such as table-tipping or Spirit writing, produced by supernatural origin. The other half of the five thousand was to be given to the Medium, who could present a proved case of psychic phenomenon, such as a trance communication, produced through the personality of the Medium.

A great many Mediums, made it known, that they were going to try for the five thousand dollars, but later when it was learned that the famous Houdini, who was considered the greatest authority on so-called “magical works,” was to be the head of the investigation committee, most of those who entered the competition withdrew, for he had already exposed many of them, as tricksters.

In all the efforts put forth by all of the Mediums of the different nationalities, who competed, **not one case** of Spirit communications, had been proved genuine. The five thousand dollars is still unclaimed.

After Houdini’s death, Mediums claimed, his Spirit returned in their séances. They claimed this to make it appear that Houdini had been wrong in his previous attitude, toward Spiritualism. But, when Mrs. Houdini, in order to expose them, declared that she would give a Medium, ten thousand dollars, who could reproduce a message of ten words written by Houdini’s Spirit, they were immediately silenced, and have not been heard from since.

The Science and Invention Magazine offered twenty-one thousand dollars for any trick or phenomenon, that could not be reproduced, by ordinary means. Mr. Joseph Dunninger, the man at the head of the investigation committee, was able to reproduce

and duplicate, by ordinary means, every trick that Mediums submitted, and in most cases, he was able to perform the same thing in about one-tenth of the time that it took the Medium to do it.

Any good stage magician can duplicate any of Spiritualism's Spirit communications. Houdini, Herman, Blackstone, and many others have specialized in reproducing such, not in the dark as the Mediums find it necessary to do, but in the extremely bright light of the stage. Blackstone offered one thousand dollars to any Medium, who could do any psychic trick under darkness, that he could not duplicate in the light.

A strange experience was had by a young woman and her companion who were investigating and making a survey of the many Spiritualists' meetings in Los Angeles, for one of the Los Angeles daily newspapers. The very first séance they attended, the young woman expressed her desire to communicate with the Spirits of her dead husband. Her companion asked to speak with the Spirit of his dead sister. To their great surprise, they each had the opportunity of talking with the Spirit of their loved ones. Both the woman and her companion learned a great deal about the frauds of Spiritualism, for she had never been married, and her companion never had a sister.

Some very interesting records have been prepared by Dr. John E. Purdon of Dublin University, from some of his extensive psychic research. By an instrument that records the variations of the increasing and decreasing pulse beats, it was absolutely proved that the record of a person entering a condition of insanity was exactly like that of a Medium, who was going into a trance condition. It was shown, that the pulse variations of a terrible maniac were identical with those of a Medium, when fully in a trance. And the records of one recovering from insanity, correspond to those of a Medium coming out of a trance condition. The pulse variations of a person who had once been insane, but was then cured, were identical to the ordinary daily variations of a Medium.

This does not necessarily imply, that the Medium is insane, while in the trance, but it does show that the Medium has given up mental control. While a great percentage of

their, so-called Spirit communications are pure fake, in many cases, the SUPERNATURAL is involved.

What does the Bible say about Spiritualism?

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The Bible is very clear on the subject of Spiritualism (Spiritism). The Bible exposes its fraud and tells us the source of its power, and definitely warns man of the consequences of becoming entangled in it. Just before I go into the Bible and what it says concerning Spiritualism, it will be well to note, that Spiritualists deny the divinity of Jesus; they deny the personality of the Holy Spirit; they deny the existence of the Devil; they declare that man never had a fall - that there is no resurrection and no judgment. They deny the inspiration of the Bible, and the truth concerning Hell. The Old Testament, to them, is no more than Jewish history, and the New Testament is made up of traditions and theological speculations by unknown persons. They leave out the record of Saul's disobedience with the Witch (the Medium) of Endor, in I Samuel 28; for this would put them out of business. Spiritualists believe, that Christ was a Medium, and that He was an advanced Spirit in the sixth sphere.

“Regard not them, that have familiar Spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 19:31). In Old Testament days, Spiritualist Mediums were to be stoned.

“A man, also, or woman that hath a familiar Spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death, they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them” (Lev. 20:27).

Spiritualism Is Sternly Forbidden By God. Bitter Condemnation Is Upon Those Who Consult Mediums

“And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar Spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set My face against that soul, and will cut him off from

among his people” (Lev. 20:6).

DIVINATION is the attempt to foretell events, yet, in the future. The “Diviner” uses many varied means such as gazing bowls; etc. The word appears in the Bible thirty-six times, while the word, “wizard” is found, eleven times. The phrase, “Familiar Spirits” is found fifteen times, and always involves bitter condemnation.

There are various kinds of Spirits mentioned in the Bible. There are “unclean Spirits,” “evil Spirits,” “lying Spirits,” “familiar Spirits,” etc. Each kind has its particular purpose in Satan’s kingdom, but the kind we are interested in here, is the “familiar Spirit.” The name, in itself, is highly significant. “Familiar Spirits” “familiarizes” themselves with individuals. They can hear and learn the secrets, only known by certain persons, and after the death of individuals, they impersonate the dead and reveal and disclose information regarding them.

A Medium, or one who has a “familiar Spirit,” is capable, through this familiar Spirit, to impersonate human beings who have died.

When people ask us “can the living and dead communicate?” and when they advise us to seek communication with departed Spirits, we should answer them with Isaiah 8:19, “And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar Spirits, and unto the wizards that peep and mutter, should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living, why should we seek unto the dead?” The next verse goes on to tell us WHY some seek Spirit communication in spite of what the Word of God says against it. “Look to the Law and to the testimony and **if they speak not according to this Word, surely THERE IS NO LIGHT IN THEM.**”

Then, according to the Word of God, those who do such things, are in darkness as to God’s true teachings - they have no light, and we can readily see, that this is true, for in a preceding paragraph, we mentioned a few fundamental points of doctrine, that Spiritualists deny. In order to start a riot in a Spiritus séance, all that one would have to

do, is mention the blood of Christ, and Hell would boil over, and from then on, you would never need to doubt the Satanic origin and nature of Spiritualism.

King Saul and the Medium at Endor

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The account of King Saul with the “Witch of Endor” was put in the Bible to expose the fraud of Spiritualism, and to show, for all times, that any attempt of Spirit communication is a SIN and is sternly forbidden by God.

KING SAUL DIED because of the SIN of consulting a Medium. This is plainly stated, in I Chronicles 10:13, “So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the Word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one, that had a familiar Spirit, to enquire of it.”

The account of King Saul and the “Witch of Endor,” is found in the twenty-eighth chapter of First Samuel. Here is the story:

The Philistines had gathered their armies together to fight against Israel. And when Saul, King of Israel, saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart greatly trembled, and he was sore distressed, because when he enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not. God did not answer him, because he was backslidden and out of God’s will. So, Saul said unto the servants, “Seek me a woman that hath a familiar Spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her.” And his servants said unto him, “Behold there is a woman that hath a familiar Spirit at Endor.”

Previous to this time, King Saul, who had supreme authority, ordered all the wizards and those who had familiar Spirits, either put to death, or put out of the country, because it was an abomination to God, for anyone to consult them. The practice was sternly forbidden, therefore, Saul disguised himself, so that the woman would not recognize him. He knew that she would be fearful of losing her life, and would not attempt a so-called Spirit communication for him, if she knew that he was the king - the very person who had

put to death many of those who had familiar Spirits. Saul became involved in the very thing he had forbidden others to do. And so Saul, disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman, by night, and he said, "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar Spirit, and bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee."

The woman did not recognize Saul, the king, so she told him all the things that the king had done, how he had cut off (killed) those that had familiar Spirits, and wizards from out of the land. She told him that he was setting a snare for her, that she might be caught in the act and be put to death. Saul then went deeper in sin, by swearing a most ridiculous oath. He swore, by the Name of the Lord, that no punishment would befall her, for disobeying the Law of the Lord. Old Saul must have been, terribly backslidden, to swear such an oath as that.

Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up unto thee?" And Saul answered, "Bring me up Samuel."

This was not an ordinary Spiritualist séance, in which a familiar Spirit impersonates the one called for. God intervened in this particular instance. This is the only instance in the entire Bible where God permitted, the departed Spirit of a dead person, to return to communicate with the living. God permitted the witch to be fooled. She must have been expecting the "familiar Spirit" to impersonate Samuel, because when the Spirit of Samuel really appeared, it was so unexpected, and was such a great surprise and shock to her, that she screamed with a loud voice. She knew that the Devil could not bring back a Spirit, but that he could only impersonate one.

This alone exposes the fraud of Spiritualism, for when the real thing happened, instead of the trickery work of the "familiar Spirit," she was frightened half to death.

The Spirit of Samuel must have been revealed to the woman, that the one in disguise was Saul, himself, for at this time, the woman said, "Why hast thou deceived me? For

thou art Saul.”

Then Samuel said to Saul, **“Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?”** In this one case, God sent the Spirit of Samuel back, to show the sin of seeking counsel of those who have “familiar Spirits.” Samuel sternly rebuked Saul for what he did, and because of his sin, Samuel said, “the Lord hath rent the Kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David; because thou obeyed not the voice of the Lord.....therefore, the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee, into the hand of the Philistines; and tomorrow, shalt thou and thy sons be with me.” And I Chronicles 10:13 says, “and so Saul died for his transgression, which he committed against the Lord, even against the Word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also **for asking council of one that had a familiar Spirit, to enquire of it;** and he enquired not of the Lord; therefore, HE SLEW HIM, and turned the Kingdom unto David, the son of Jesse.”

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Samuel’s words to Saul, “tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me,” should not be a problem in anyone’s mind, for we must remember, that in Samuel’s time, Sheol or Hades, was the abode of all the departed Spirits, both righteous and unrighteous. The Paradise section for the righteous, and the place of torment for the wicked, were BOTH, in the ONE PLACE, HADES, but were separated by a Great Fixed Gulf. So, in this sense, they would go to the same place Samuel went, (Hades). Samuel could be in the Paradise section, while the others could be in the place of torment. Both, would be in the one place (Hades), but in different compartments.

As further evidence that this was not an ordinary séance in which a familiar Spirit impersonates someone’s departed Spirit, it is well to notice, that the communication between Samuel and Saul, was a stinging rebuke, in which a severe sentence, was pronounced.

In an ordinary séance, when the “familiar Spirits” impersonate, the messages always come in a favorable and pleasing language, such as “All is well” or “I wish you were here,” etc., the sole purpose being to deceive souls and to send them to an eternal Hell. If

messages would come, such as, “Hell is a terrible place of torment, don’t come here,” then perhaps, we’d be partially justified, in hearing a little more of what Spiritualists have to say.

The account of Saul and the Medium of Endor, shows that the ordinary séance, or Spirit communication, is a fraud, and strictly forbidden of God.

And the entire Bible, sternly forbids, any attempt, at this so-called Spirit communication, and it is clear from the references cited, that those who consult Mediums are transgressing God’s Laws and are committing great SIN.

The account of the Rich Man and Lazarus, shows plainly, that it is impossible for the living and the dead to communicate (Luke 16:19). If the rich man found that it was impossible to have Lazarus sent back to earth to warn his five brothers, how can a Medium produce the “Spirit” of the departed dead? This is more evidence that the so-called Spirit communications are produced by “familiar Spirits,” who impersonate the Spirits of the dead.

When the rich man requested that Lazarus be sent back to earth to warn his brothers, he was told that, “They have Moses and the Prophets (the writings of Moses and the Prophets - their Bible, at that time) let them hear them.” But the rich man was not satisfied, he wanted more than the Bible to warn his brothers, so he reasoned again, “but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent,” but he was told “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets (if they hear not their Bible), neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

Neither of the rich man’s requests were granted. Communication between the living and the dead, is impossible. We have the Bible, and in it is a full revelation of what God wants us to know, regarding the departed dead.

5. Did Lazarus Die Twice?

Many people have wondered if Lazarus died again after the Lord raised him from the dead. The Bible makes the answer very plain. But first, let it be understood, that this Lazarus, whom Christ raised from the dead, is not the Lazarus mentioned in the account of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16, but is the Lazarus of Bethany, the brother of Mary and Martha. The account is recorded in John 11.

At the time Jesus came to the grave, Lazarus had already been dead four days. Christ commanded, that the stone be taken away from the place where Lazarus was laid. After this was done, Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth," and the Bible says, "And he that was dead came forth." Concerning the raising of Lazarus, many have been in doubt, as to whether Lazarus's body was a glorified immortal, resurrection body, like the believer shall receive at the first resurrection, or whether Lazarus' body was just the old mortal body, restored to life. If Lazarus received a glorified body, it would mean that he did not die again, and that he must have been, at some later date, taken directly to Heaven, in his resurrection body.

But if Lazarus' body was the old mortal body, restored to life, then he went through death a second time. This is the difference between a "raising to life" and a "resurrection." The Bible does not tell us if he died again, or whether he was taken to Heaven. However, the Bible is very clear on this point. Consider carefully the following Scriptures:

In Acts 26:23, we read, "That Christ should suffer, and that His should be the FIRST from the dead."

In I Corinthians 15:20, Paul declares that Christ, by His resurrection from the dead, had become "the FIRST FRUITS of them that slept."

In Col. 1:8, Christ is called "the FIRST born from the dead, that in all things, He might have the pre-eminence."

In Rev. 1:5, John calls Him, “the FIRST BEGOTTEN from the dead.”

Several persons were raised from the dead, prior to Christ’s resurrection. All of these were raised in their natural bodies, to die again. Christ was the “first” begotten from the dead. He was the first born from the dead, that in all things, He might have the pre-eminence. Christ had to be the first raised from the dead in a glorified body, so Lazarus was not raised in a glorified body. He was raised in a body that had to die again.

No one, prior to Christ, who were raised from the dead, had a glorified body. Christ was the first to receive a body of that kind - He had the pre-eminence, in all things.

Therefore, the conclusion is, that Lazarus, and all others, died again, - they went through death a second time, because they were not “resurrected” with immortal glorified bodies, but were merely, “raised from the dead,” or restored to life again.

6. What Does The Bible Say About Marriage In Heaven?

The Bible makes the answer to this question very clear. We refer to Christ’s conversation with the Sadducees, as recorded in Luke 20:34-36; Mark 12:25; Matt. 22:30.

The Sadducees were a religious group of people who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23:8). Therefore, on one occasion, a number of the Sadducees came to Jesus in an attempt to ridicule and make fun of the doctrine of the resurrection. They intended to entangle and confound Jesus, by asking Him a ridiculous question.

Here is what they said, (Paraphrased) “Master, according to the Law of Moses, if a man dies, and leaves no children, the brother of the man who died, can marry the widow of the dead man, and bring up children by her.” They continued, “there were seven brothers, and the first brother married a wife, but later he died, leaving no children. Then the second brother married the same woman, but later he also died, leaving no children.

Then the third brother married the woman, but he also died, leaving no children. And the fourth, fifth, sixth, and the seventh, also married her and had no children and also died.”

Then they went on to say, “In the resurrection, when all these shall rise from the dead, which of these seven brothers shall have this woman for a wife?”

The Sadducees, no doubt, felt that they had achieved great success in ridiculing the doctrine of the resurrection. No doubt, they thought that Jesus would be unable to answer them, but Jesus silenced them in a single statement.

Jesus said, “They which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, NEITHER MARRY, nor are GIVEN IN MARRIAGE. Neither can they die anymore; for they are equal unto the angels” (Luke 20:35-36).

Those who will get to the final Heaven, after the resurrection of their bodies, NEITHER MARRY, NOR ARE GIVEN IN MARRIAGE. This shows, that man and wife will not live together, in Heaven, in the “marriage relationship” to have children, neither will there be any new marriages. Procreation will not be necessary, in Heaven, because people will never die, therefore, there will be no need to beget more of their number.

Notice the clause of Luke 20:36, “Neither shall they die anymore, for they are equal unto the angels.” This does not mean, that men and women become angels when they go to Heaven. Angels are a separate and distinct order of beings. The account in Matt. 22:30 and Mark 12:25, renders the clause, “But are as the angels.” The people of Heaven are as the angels of God - they never die. And since angels never die, there is no need for them to marry and beget more of their number, either. In these two respects, the angels and the people of Heaven will be alike.

7. Does Peter’s Statement About Preaching to The Spirits in Prison Mean That There is a Second Chance For Salvation After Death?

“For Christ, also, hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which, also, He went and preached unto the Spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (I Peter 3:18-20).

Many of those who teach, that the wicked dead will have the Gospel preached to them that they might have a second chance for repentance and salvation, seem to think that this Scripture, “preaching to the Spirits in prison,” is proof of their theory. Let us examine the passage of Scripture.

It is clear, that this preaching was done between Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection, for His crucifixion is plainly spoken of. “Christ hath also suffered....being put to death in the flesh.” Although He was put to death in the flesh, “He (His Spirit) went and preached unto the Spirits in prison,” while His body lay motionless in the tomb.

Peter tells us in Acts 2:27, speaking of the death of Christ, that Christ’s soul went to Hades, and that His body did not see corruption. But, to which of the two sections in Hades did His soul go? The student will remember from this course, that before Christ’s resurrection and ascension, all the Spirits of the dead departed to Hades. (Hades was divided into two sections, one for the righteous, called Abraham’s bosom, or Paradise, separated by a Great Fixed Gulf from the place of torment, the abode of the unrighteous). We know that Christ went to the Paradise section with the righteous, because, while yet on the cross, He promised the thief that He would meet him in Paradise, that day.

Now, these “Spirits,” that Christ preached to, were “in prison.” The Scripture says, they were “disobedient” and that they lived on the earth and were disobedient in NOAH’S DAY, before the flood. Many scholars say, that since the term “Spirits in prison,” is used without any qualifying word, such as “evil Spirits in prison” or “unclean Spirits in prison,” more than likely, they are Spirits of supernatural beings.

However, such an interpretation could hardly be true, for Acts chapter 4:6, tells us that the preaching was to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God, in the Spirit. This could not be the Spirits of fallen angels, because angels do not die (Luke 20:36), yet, here it says in I Peter 4:6, “preached to them that are dead.” (That is, to the Spirits who have experienced bodily death).

As further evidence that these were the Spirits of men who had died, we read “that they might be judged according to men in the flesh.” (That is, they might be judged according to men living in their bodies; yet, at the same time, living in the realm of God in the Spirit).

When Christ went to Hades, He went to the Paradise section and met the converted thief, and from that place, He preached across the Great Fixed Gulf, to those Spirits who were disobedient in Noah’s day, and were now confined in the place of torment in Hades.

The Meaning of The Word, “Preach”

There are two different words in the New Testament that are translated, “preach.” One means, “to preach the Gospel,” and the other means “to proclaim” or “to herald” - to herald the King or Kingdom. In this passage the word used is, “to herald.”

There is not the slightest suggestion, in this passage, that the offer of salvation was preached to anyone. The King and Kingdom were heralded. There is not a hint of another chance for salvation for the Spirits of those, who had died in sin.

Furthermore, in showing that this does NOT mean that men will have a second chance after death, notice there is not a word which suggests that any of the Spirits were converted by this “preaching.” There is not a single passage, in the entire Bible, which suggests that this “preaching,” resulted in conversion and salvation. The purpose of the preaching was not the salvation of those already lost, but the proclamation of the King and Kingdom.

Still another reason why this passage cannot be used to show that men will have a second chance for salvation after death, is that this “preaching,” was LIMITED to a certain few Spirits. ONLY those, who were disobedient in Noah’s time before the flood, were preached to. We can go so far as to say, that EVEN IF the offer of salvation were preached to them, there is absolutely no indication, whatsoever, that any other Spirits ever have heard, or ever will hear any preaching. This was, limited strictly, to those of Noah’s day.

