Is there Life after Death?

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2 billion Christians in the world today believe in the immortal soul and going to heaven when they die, yet, ITS NOT IN THE BIBLE! What is the truth? After reading this book may God open your hearts to discover the truth of your Bible!

Effects of this life

We feel that this is an important subject to look into because, whatever a person believes about death has a great effect on what he does with this life! Isn’t it true! When we see Islamic terrorists blowing themselves up for the sake of advancing Islam, and believing that dying in Jihad will give them a greater place in heaven, this belief, turns into action and causes heartache, death and murder to many more people including the suicide bomber.

Same with the Kamikaze pilots of World War 2. They had the same basic beliefs of dying for their cause would give them a greater reward in the next life.

What about the so-called Christian world? Many people believe that the more they suffer in this life, the more they will enjoy heaven when they die. That’s why you see many Nuns and Monks denying themselves any hint of pleasure, but punishing themselves with penance etc...Thinking, “The more I do this the more I will enjoy Heaven.” Yes the concept of death and the belief of the afterlife effects what we do in this life. Did you know the concept of the immortal soul and going to heaven when you die immediately is an idea that embraces death?

Think of it! If you go directly to heaven when you die, why fear death? Why try and keep and injured person alive? Why postpone such a blessing? You are going to be with the Lord, right? Why get the doctors to try and help you, and save your life? You are going to paradise, right? You see how this embraces death, AND NOT LIFE! It is a self destructing concept. And that’s what Satan the devil wants you to do, die! And not live.

What does God want for you however? The Apostle John writes: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 1:2). The Old Testament writes: “Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess” (Deut 5:33). God wants us to LIVE NOT DIE! Isn’t that strange coming from a God that knows that Heaven is a better place for his people? If God wanted us to go to heaven why would he write these words in his book called The Bible? Contradictory? Yes! But it contradicts man’s theories about death; there is NO contradiction in the Bible. The Bible shows that heaven is NOT the reward of the saved!

Physical Health

The concept of the immortality of the soul has also affected the physical health of Christians. Many Christians describe the missionary work of the Church as “saving souls,” without any regard to the human body and its physical health. Why did God lay out the food laws in the Old Testament if only the soul matters? Since the salvation of the soul was seen as more important than the preservation of the body, the physical needs of the body often intentionally were neglected or even suppressed.
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However, the view of Biblical Wholism as opposed to Classical dualism from Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics, concerns itself with the health of the physical and the spiritual part of man as one indissoluble unit created and redeemed by God. Biblical Wholism challenges us to view positively both the physical and spiritual aspects of life. We honor God not only with our mind but also with our body, because our body is “a temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 6:19). Scripture admonishes us to present our “bodies as a living sacrifice” (Rom 12:1). This means that the way we treat our bodies reflects the spiritual condition of our souls. If we pollute our bodies with tobacco, drugs, or unhealthy food, we cause not only the physical pollution of our bodies, but also the spiritual pollution of our souls.

Samuele Bacchiocchi comments on Biblical Wholism, “Biblical wholism challenges us to be concerned about the whole person. In its preaching and teaching, the church must meet not only the spiritual needs of the soul but also the physical needs of the body. This means teaching people how to maintain emotional and physical health. It means that church programs should not neglect the needs of the body. Proper diet, exercise, and outdoor activities should be encouraged as an important part of Christian living.

“Accepting the Biblical wholistic view of human nature means to opt for a wholistic approach in our evangelistic and missionary endeavors. This approach consists not only in saving the ‘souls’ of people but also in improving their living conditions by working in such areas as health, diet, education. The aim should be to serve the world and not to avoid it. The issues of social justice, war, racism, poverty, and economic imbalance should be of concern to those who believe that God is working to restore the whole person and the whole world.

“Christian education should promote the development of the whole person. This means that the school’s program should aim at the development of the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of life. A good physical education program should be considered as important as its academic and religious programs. Parents and teachers should be concerned about teaching good eating habits, the proper care of the body, and a regular program of physical exercise.

“The Biblical concept of the whole person also has implications for medicine. Medical science recently has developed what is known as holistic medicine. Holistic health practitioners ‘emphasize the necessity for looking at the whole person, including physical condition, nutrition, emotional make up, spiritual state, life-style values, and environment.’ At the 1975 graduating exercise of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Dr. Jerome D. Frank told the graduates: ‘Any treatment of an illness that does not also minister to the human spirit is grossly deficient.’ Healing and the maintenance of physical health must always involve the total person” (Immortality or Resurrection, pp.34-35, emphasis his).

What is Man?

So what is Man? What is man composed of? Is man flesh and a separate immortal soul inside? Or is man a living being (soul)? Not two separate entities but the body, heart, spirit are all characteristics of the same person, Biblical Wholism? The four fundamental terms of human nature that we find in the Old Testament, namely, soul, body, heart, and the spirit. All these terms describe not wholly different substances each with its own distinct functions, but the
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interrelated and integrated capacities and functions of the same person. The fact that a person consists of various parts which are integrated, interrelated, and functionally united, leaves no room for the notion of the soul being distinct from the body and thus removing the basis for the belief in the survival of the soul at the death of the body.

The beginning is the best place to start to understand what man is.

In the book of Genesis God forms man out of the dust of the ground. The Bible says, “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.” (Gen 2:7). In addition to this, God says, “…Let us make man in our image, after our likeness…So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Gen 1:26, 27). Man is a created being,

not evolved, as the Atheist would have us believe. Man is a special creation by God for a purpose. God created man in his own image, but in the physical form. What God created here was a physical clay prototype of what is to come, of man literally becoming the same image and likeness of Almighty God in the spirit form, to be like God, to be part of his family, the same kind as the Father and the Son. Added to that, Mankind is to do and act as God does but in a finite level, to have dominion over the earth, to create, reason, think, and feel on an emotional level. To judge, and live in righteousness as God does in the infinite level.

The scripture says that Man was “formed” out of the dust of the ground, God breathed into man the “breath of life” and man “BECAME A LIVING SOUL”! It doesn’t say God added a soul to man, but that MAN IS A SOUL!

It is interesting that the same phrase “living soul” “nephesh hayyah” is also used for animals. The first time it is used for man is in Genesis 2:7. But it is not the first time it is used in the Bible. The first time this phrase is used in is in Genesis 1:20, 21 24 and 30. In all for cases “living soul” “nephesh hayyah” refers to animals. The English translators however chose to translate the text “living creatures” rather than “living souls,” why? The reason is simple. The translators during that time were conditioned by the belief that human beings have an immaterial, immortal soul which animals do not have. Norman Smith finds this “most reprehensible” and says . . . “it is a grave reflection on the Revisers [translators of the Authorized Version] that they retained this misleading difference in translation. . . . The Hebrew phrase should be translated exactly the same way in both cases. To do otherwise is to mislead all those who do not read Hebrew. There is no excuse and no proper defense. The tendency to read ‘immortal soul’ into Hebrew nephesh and to translate accordingly is very ancient, and can be seen in the
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Septuagint…” (Norman Smith, “Justice and Immortality,” Scottish Journal of Theology 17, 3, (September 1964), pp. 312-313, emphasis added.).

Basil Atkinson, a former Librarian at Cambridge University, offers the same explanation. “Our translators [of the Authorized Version] have concealed this fact from us, presumably because they were so bound by current theological notions of the meaning of the word ‘soul,’ that they dared not translate by it a Hebrew word that referred to animals, although they have used it in the margin [of the Authorized Version] at verses 20 and 30. In these verses we find ‘the moving creature, even living soul’ (Heb.) (ver. 20); ‘every living soul (Heb. nephesh) that moveth’ (ver. 21); ‘Let the earth bring forth the living soul (Heb. nephesh) after his kind’ (ver. 24); ‘and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is living soul’ (Heb. nephesh) (ver. 30).” (Basil F. C. Atkinson, Life and Immortality (London, n. d.), pp.1-2.). Many translations now are beginning to translate the phrase “living Soul” as “living being,” pertaining to man. (see, NIV, ERV, GW, ISV, YLT).

So man IS a living soul or being compose of flesh and blood. What kick started man as a living being is something the bible calls the “breath of life.” Some assume that the “breath of life” is the immortal soul that God implanted into Adam’s material body. This interpretation cannot legitimately be supported by the Biblical meaning and usage of the “breath of life,” because nowhere in the Bible is the breath of life identified with an immortal soul. So what is it?

Basil Atkinson points out that, “…the inhalation of oxygen out of the air, and medical science today knows, of course, a great deal about the connection between this intake of oxygen and the blood.” (Life and Immortality (London, n. d.), (note 18), p. 17). Genesis 2:7 says God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” The Hebrew word “breathed” is “n phach” (Strong’s #5301). This word means “A primitive root; to puff, in various applications (literally, to inflate, blow hard, scatter, kindle, expire; figuratively, to disesteem): - blow, breath, give up, cause to lose [life], seething, snuff.” (Strong’s). God inflated Adams lungs with air. When this happens, the air that comes into the body through the lungs dissolves in the water lining of the alveoli that contains oxygen and other gases. In the lungs, the oxygen is moved into the bloodstream. Oxygen clings to red blood cells as they pass through the alveolar capillaries - now the oxygen is in the blood and carried through the body. Oxygen, a basic gas, is needed by every cell in your body in order to live. Every breath we take is the breath of life! God started it with Adam, and continues today. We are “living beings” because of this process. As the bible says when God breathed into us the Breath of Life, man “became a living soul [being].” Even animals have the breath of life as well (Gen 7:15).

It’s interesting that the word “soul” Hebrew “nephesh” in Leviticus 17:11 is translated “life.” “For the life [nephesh] of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”

Verse 14 of the same chapter says the same thing as well, “For it is the life [nephesh] of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life [nephesh] thereof …for the life [nephesh] of all flesh is the blood thereof…” This corresponds exactly with the breath of life. It is only when God breathed into man the breath of life, did the air go into his lungs, and the oxygen entered the blood stream. The body without the spirit cannot function, like a battery linked to a machine, the one could not
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survive without the other, “For as the body without the spirit [pneuma Gk. “Breath, air”] is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26). It is by this process that we live and move and are living souls [beings].

The Hebrew Words “Neshamah” & “Ruach”

Many believe that the word “spirit” and “breath” have two different meanings. But the Bible shows that the two words for breath and spirit “neshamah” and “ruach” can be used interchangeably to mean the same thing. Like today we use different words to describe something, like mind, heart, spirit all describing one thing, a person’s inner self. Why is it, the Bible cannot use many words to describe the same thing as well. Sometimes I feel we get a little too technical with the Bible.

The First word “neshamah” means, “From H5395; a puff, that is, wind, angry or vital breath, divine inspiration, intellect or (concretely) an animal: - blast, (that) breath (-eth), inspiration, soul, spirit.” (Strong’s #5397).

The second word “ruach” means, “From H7306; wind; by resemblance breath, that is, a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extension a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions): - air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, X quarter, X side, spirit ([l-ual]), tempest, X vain, ([whirl-]) wind (-y).” (Strong’s #7307). The two words virtually mean the same thing, and are used in the Bible synonymously in many passages, and both animals and people have this breath of life, both ruach and neshamah, see Ecclesiastes 3:19-21; Gen 7:22.

In Scripture, the “breath [neshamah] of life” is the life-giving power that is associated with the breath of God. Thus we read in Job 33:4: “The spirit [ruach] of God has made me, and the breath [neshamah] of the Almighty gives me life.” The parallelism between the “spirit of God” and “the breath of the Almighty” suggests that the two are used interchangeably because they both refer to the gift of life imparted by God to His creatures.

Another clear example is found in Isaiah 42:5: “Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, . . . who gives breath [neshamah] to the people upon it, and spirit [ruach] to those who walk in it.” Here, again, the parallelism shows that breath and spirit denote the same animating principle of life that God gives to His creatures.

Here again, Job says: “As long as my breath [neshamah] is in me, and the spirit [ruach] of God is in my nostrils; my lips will not speak falsehood” (Job 27:3).

“If he [God] should take back his spirit [ruach] to himself, and gather to himself his breath [neshamah], all flesh would perish together, and man would return to the dust” (Job 34:14-15).

Psalms says, “O Lord how manifold are thy works! . . . the earth is full of thy creatures. . . . When thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath [ruach], they die and return to their dust. When thou sendest forth thy Spirit [ruach], they are created, and thou renewest the face of the ground” (Ps 104:24, 29-30). “Breath” and “Spirit” here translate ruach,
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thus indicating that the “breath of life” is equated with the life-giving Spirit of God who creates and renews “the face of the ground.”

Clearly, the Bible used the two words interchangeably to mean the same thing, but “ruach” is used more than “neshamah.” When the Bible uses the term “ruach” for other meanings like angles, demons, or the “spirit” in man, meaning the mind of man, we must understand the context of the scripture, and the scripture giving us the clear meaning, and not to put our ideas and preconceive notions into the Bible. But the Bible does talk about a “spirit in man.”

The “Spirit” IN Man

There is however a spiritual component in man as well. But not an immortal soul, but a human spirit, which is part of the whole, not a separate entity, but a part of the whole man.

Many passages of Scripture show that there is a “spirit” IN man! (Job 32:8, 18; Zech. 12:1; I Cor. 2:11). This spirit is not the man---it is something that in IN the man. Joined with the physical brain of the man, it forms the human MIND. It imparts to man's brain his unique powers of intellect and personality---the ability to think rationally and make free will decisions. It imparts the ability to learn mathematics, languages or other types of knowledge such as music, art, carpentry, flying. This is the conscious part of man also called the “spirit IN man.” “The spirit is used to represent the seat of insight, feeling and reasoning...This accounts for many uses of the term ‘spirit’ in the Old and New Testaments. ‘Man’s spirit is stirred’ (Ezk 2:2), or troubled (Gen 41:8); is hardened (Deut 2:30). A man being patient in spirit (Ecc 7:8)...ruling one’s spirit (Prov 25:28)...” (Immorality or Resurrection, p.97).

The spirit that is IN man can be called the “human” spirit, for it is in each human, even though it is spirit essence and not matter. It is not a “ghost,” spirit being or the Holy Spirit. It is not the man, but spirit essence IN the man. It is NOT a soul---the physical human is a soul.

The human spirit does not supply human life---the human life is in the physical blood, oxidized by the breath of life (Lev. 17:11). But the spirit in man does impart the power of intellect to the human brain. This nonphysical component in the human brain is spirit essence; just as in the material world air is a gaseous essence. This “human” spirit cannot see. The physical brain sees through the eyes.

The human spirit in a person cannot hear. The brain hears through the ears.

This human spirit cannot think. The brain thinks---although the spirit imparts the power to think far above the level of brute animals’ brain function. Without such spirit animals cannot do original thinking.

Whatever knowledge enters the brain through the five senses is instantly stored (memorized) in the “human” spirit within the person, much like a computer stores information. It enables the brain to have instant recall of stored-up knowledge in the spirit, thus enabling the brain to utilize bits of related knowledge in the process of THINKING and REASONING.
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The human spirit imparts the power of intellect to the physical brain in two ways: 1) it gives the brain instant recall of whatever the brain calls for in the knowledge stored in this memory; 2) it supplies the brain whatever energy is needed to cause it to think—that is, to put the pieces of information stored in the spirit together in the processes we call “thinking,” “reasoning” and “drawing conclusions.” The human spirit also is the means God has instilled to make possible a personal relationship between human MAN and divine GOD.

Job Said “But there is a spirit in man” (Job 32:8). The mind and the body react one toward another. Healthy mind, healthy body and vice versa.

"A bodily disease, which we look upon as whole and entire within itself, may, after all, be but a symptom of some ailment in the spiritual part." ~Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter

The Soul Works as a Whole

As mentioned above, the breath, body and mind, which is the soul, or being, the Bible says YOU ARE A SOUL, work as one, like different parts of a machine. Tory Hoff writes, “…the body, the heart the bowels and other parts of the body also function as emotional centers [see Psalm 15:&; 73:21; Lam 2:11] From the biblical wholistic view of human nature, one part of the body can often represent the whole…emotional content of the soul is equated with the self or the person and is not an independent entity” (ibid, p.53, emphasis added).

In the scriptures, the following identifying marks of a conscious personality are ascribed to the soul:

1. Knowledge (Joshua 23:14 ; Psalm 139:4; Proverbs 2:10; 19:2)
2. Thought (Esther 4:13; Prov 23:7; Psalm 13:2)
3. Memory (Lam 3:20; Deut 4:9; 11:18)
4. Love, Joy & Delight (Deut 6:5; 13:3; Psalm 35:9; 86:4; 94:19; Matt 22:37)
6. Mourning, Sorrow, Grief (Job 14:22; Jer 31:25; 1 Sam 2:33; Psalm 42:5)
7. Abhorrence, Hate (Lev 26:15; Psalm 11:5; 107:18; Isaiah 1:14).

In reaction to all these emotions, the soul, meaning the human being, both mind and body are affected.

The New Testament Word for “Soul”

Now in the New Testament, the Greek word psuche is the only word that is translated “soul” in the New Testament. You will find the word 105 times in the New Testament, of which it is translated “soul” only 58 times, but can also be rendered “life” (40 times), “mind” (three times),
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and “heart,” “heartily,” “us” and “you” (one time each). The Greek word *psuche* is the *exact* Greek rendering of the Hebrew word *nephesh* and is used in the same way throughout the New Testament.

For example, *psuche* is used of the *lower animals*, just as you have seen *nephesh* used of lower life forms in the first chapter of the book of Genesis! In Revelation 8:9, the Greek word *psuche* (remember this is the ONLY word which is ever used for the word “soul” in the English language) is rendered “life.” Notice also Revelation 16:3, where lower life forms are spoken of, yet the word “soul” is used. Read that last scripture carefully! It describes one of the horrible plagues yet to fall upon the land and the sea, and says “every living soul DIED”! Here is one more *New Testament* proof that the word “soul” as it found its way into the *English* language means a *being, or living thing*, which can DIE! In this case, it is used of various forms of life (of which there are *thousands*) in the sea!

The Greek word *psuche* is also used for an *individual on* many occasions, when a newspaper Headline speaks of so many “souls” being lost in the sinking of a ship, it is using the word in much the same way as it occurs 14 different times in the Bible! For proof, read Acts 2:41-43; 3:23; 7:14; 27:37; Romans 2:9; 13: 1; I Corinthians 15:45; James 5:20; I Peter 3:20; II Peter 2:14; Revelation 6:9; 18:13; 20:4. In those passages, the Greek word *psuche* is used for the *life of man*, which can be *destroyed, or lost.*

A classic example of where the translators have *tampered* with the *English* in translating from the *Greek* is found in Matthew 16:25 and 26. Notice the way it is rendered in the King James Version: “For whosoever will save his *life* [*psuche*] shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his *life* [*psuche*] for my sake shall find it.

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul [*psuche*]? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul [*psuche*]?” Obviously, since the identical *Greek* word is used in both passages; and since it is rendered *differently* in verse 26 (soul) from the way it is used in verse 25 (life), it was a translator’s *decision* as to *changing* the way he rendered this *Greek* word *psuche* in the two verses!

To be *honest*, and to be *fair* with the word, it should have been rendered *the same* in both passages!

Here, it is obvious the word should better be rendered “*life, *” just as it was rendered in verse 25! For, after all, it is your *life* you can lose—and what can you give in exchange for your LIFE? The point is, the Greek word *psuche* is capable of nearly as many applications as is the Hebrew word *nephesh*, and can even be used of man’s moods, passions and feelings!

The word *psuche*, for example, is translated “mind,” “us,” “you” “heart” and “heartily.” By no stretch of the imagination can this Greek word EVER connote anything which is *immortal*, or “extra physical,” in the sense of being *spiritual*.

*The English* word “soul” in the Old Testament is always taken from the Hebrew *nephesh* and does NOT mean anything immortal; just as the English word “soul” in the New Testament is
taken from the Greek word *psuche*, and only means *mortal*, temporal, human physical MAN, who is subject to *death*.

**The New Testament Word for “Spirit”**

In the Old Testament Job said there is a “spirit” in man. The word in the Hebrew is rendered “ruach.” In the New Testament it is “pneuma.” “…the Greek noun pneuma...is used as the equivalent of the Hebrew word ruach, and means the ‘spirit’ or the breath of life from God…” (Is Your Soul Immortal, Robert Leo Odom, p.34, emphasis added).

Romans the 8th chapter the Apostle Paul makes clear that God’s Spirit, and the spirit in Man can be joined together, so that we are the children of God (Romans 8:16). In this chapter he speaks of the “carnal mind” and the “Spiritual mind” (Rom 8:6). Here Paul is comparing the human spirit, and God’s Spirit, in which God imparts to the Christian. Humans were made to need another spirit---the Holy Spirit of God! Just as a human could not know the things of human knowledge except by the human spirit within him, so he or she cannot know the things of God---spiritual knowledge---except by the addition of the Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:9-11, 14). The Spirit of God in this same chapter is described as the “mind” of God, the “mind of Christ.” The human spirit is described as the same, the human mind, the fleshly mind, that mind the things of the flesh, meaning the material world, and its ways. Paul wrote, “And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;” (Ephesians 4:23).

So, basically the Bible says that you are a soul, meaning a living being, composed of flesh, blood, the breath of life that sustains that life. The oxygen that we take in, and goes into our blood stream, the basic gas needed by every cell in your body in order to live. Added to this, the spiritual component in your brain, called the “Human Spirit,” meaning your mind, your consciousness, which gives you the capacity to think, reason, create, have emotions. As your mind reacts, so does your body react with it. These are all parts of ONE machine that WORK TOGETHER, not separately, and are called the SOUL!

**Origins of the Immortal Soul**

As we have seen above, the person is a soul, composed of many parts that act as one. The concept of the immortal soul is not in the Bible! In fact you cannot find those two words put together in the Bible! In fact the Bible says Christ, “only hath immortality” (1 Tim 6:16). Other scriptures that mention immortality say that we must “put on immortality” (1 Corith 15:54). Or that we “seek” for “immortality” (Rom 2:7). It is NOT something inherent within you, something you already have. So, if it’s not in the Bible, where did it come from?

Few beliefs are more widely held than that of the “immortal soul.” Virtually everyone is familiar with the concept. The average religious person, if asked, would state it something like this:

A human person is both *body* and *soul*. The body is the physical flesh-and-blood “shell” temporarily housing the soul. The soul is the nonmaterial aspect, made of spirit. At death the soul leaves the body, and lives on consciously forever in heaven or hell. (Some hold that liberated souls are reborn in new bodies in a series of “reincarnations” or “transmigrations.”).
Some form of this concept is found among virtually all peoples and religions in the world today. The average religious person generally takes the idea for granted.

Science, which deals with the material universe and physical data, cannot verify or deny the existence of any such soul.

How, then, can one know whether or not man really has an "immortal soul"?

Few have stopped to ask where the concept came from in the first place. Many simply assume it has its origin in the Bible.

So prepare yourself for what could be one of the big surprises of your life!

The idea of an “immortal soul” according to the ancient Greek historian Herodotus (5th century B.C.) tells us in his History that the ancient Egyptians were the first to teach that the soul of man is separable from the body, and immortal. He writes, “The Egyptians were the first who maintained the following doctrine, too, that the human soul is immortal, and at the death of the body [the soul]… There are Greeks who have used this doctrine, some earlier and some later, as if it were their own.” (The Histories, A.D. Godley, ed., Book 2, chapter 123 at).

Pythagoras was thought to have gained many of his philosophical and religious concepts from the Egyptians. One of Pythagoras’ pupils was the renowned Plato, who clearly taught the immortality of the soul.

Origen, the Christian apologist, wrote a book titled Against Celsus. Celsus was a pagan opponent of Christianity, a philosopher of the system now called Neo-Platonism. Addressing Celsus, Origen writes that the followers of Celsus: “… have accepted the doctrine of Pythagoras and Plato regarding the soul, that it is its nature to ascend to the vault of heaven, and in the super-celestial space to behold the sights which are seen by the blessed spectators above. According to you, O Celsus, they also who have accepted the doctrine of the duration of the soul (after death), and who lead a life through which they become heroes, and make their abodes with the gods, are won over by vain hopes.

“Probably also they who are persuaded that the soul comes (into the body) from without, and that it will be withdrawn from the power of death, … let him meet the arguments, which are not lightly advanced among Greeks and Barbarians, regarding the immortality of the soul, or its duration (after death), or the immortality of the thinking principle; and let him prove that these are words which deceive with empty hopes those who give their assent to them; … [they] give birth to no hope at all, on account of the immediate and complete destruction of the soul (after death).” (Origen, Against Celsus, Book III, chapter 80, emphasis added).

Notice also the following assertion from Plato, again taken from the Phaedo: “The soul whose inseparable attitude is life will never admit of life's opposite, death. Thus the soul is shown to be immortal, and since immortal, indestructible...Do we believe there is such a thing as death? To be sure. And is this anything but the separation of the soul and body? And being dead is the attainment of this separation, when the soul exists in herself and separate from the body, and the
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body is parted from the soul. That is death.... Death is merely the separation of the soul and body.”

In Book X of *The Republic*---another of Plato's major works---he again wrote: “The soul of man is immortal and imperishable.”

Statements by such ancient Greek and Roman writers as Polybius, Cicero, Seneca, Strabo---and even Plato himself---have led some modern historians to question whether Plato really personally believed the immortal soul doctrine. They suggest that he may have simply popularized what he knew to be a fiction as a means of keeping the citizenry in line through the fear of mysterious "unseen things" beyond this life.

The immortal soul concept, in other words, was a necessary companion doctrine to the doctrine of the terrible torments of parts of Hades or hell. Such fearsome teachings, some philosophers thought, were necessary to scare the masses into being good citizens.

Regardless of his motives and personal beliefs, Plato’s teachings did have a wide impact. They spread throughout the known world and were accepted as truth by millions.

**Plato and the Jews**

The Jewish communities of antiquity were deeply influenced by Greek philosophical ideas. Many will suppose that the Platonic view of the soul imprisoned in the flesh would have been nothing new to the Jews. Many of you will undoubtedly be surprised to discover that the idea of the immortality of the soul was not derived by the Jews from the Old Testament scriptures, but rather taken from *Plato*. Notice the testimony of Jewish scholars themselves: “The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is...nowhere expressly taught in *Holy Scripture*...The belief in the immortality of the soul came to the Jews from contact with Greek thought and chiefly through the philosophy of Plato its principle exponent, who was led to it through Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries in which Babylonian and Egyptian views were strangely blended” (The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, article, “Immortality of the Soul”).

**Christianity and Plato**

But what of the professing Christian world? Certainly here we should find the doctrine of an immortal soul independent of any Greek influence.

Now consider this fact:

Many of the early theologians and scholars of the professing Christian religion---including such men as Origen, Tertullian and Augustine---were closely associated with Platonism.

Tertullian (A.D. 155-220), for example, wrote: “For some things are known even by nature: the immortality of the soul, the instance, is held by many ... I may use, therefore, the opinion of *Plato*, when he declares: 'Every soul is immortal'” (*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. III).
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Notice, it is the opinion of Plato that is cited!

Augustine of Hippo (A.D. 354-430)-held to be the greatest thinker of Christian antiquity---also taught the immaterial and spiritual nature of the human soul. But notice the source of his teachings. The Encyclopedia Britannica states: “He [Augustine] fused the religion of the New Testament with the Platonic tradition of Greek philosophy.”

The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology notes how Origen, an early and influential church Theologian, was influenced by Greek thinkers: “Speculation about the soul in the sub-apostolic Church was heavily influenced by Greek philosophy. This is seen in Origen’s acceptance of Plato’s doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul as pure mind (nous) originally, which, by reason of its fall from God, cooled down to soul (psyche) when it lost its participation in the divine fire by looking earthward” (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1992, p. 1037, Soul).

Why should those early professing Christian scholars have resorted to the opinions of a pagan Greek philosopher? Could it be that the immortal soul doctrine is not clearly supported in Christian Scripture?

Notice the much later view of Martin Luther, leader of the Protestant Reformation in Germany. More than a thousand years later, in 1522, he wrote: “It is probable, in my opinion, that, with very few exceptions, indeed, the dead sleep in utter insensibility till the day of judgment .... On what authority can it be said that the souls of the dead may not sleep ... in the same way that the living pass in profound slumber the interval between their down lying at night and their uprising in the morning?”

Luther himself encountered difficulty in finding support for the immortal soul doctrine in the pages of Scripture.

Notice that he asked, “On what authority...?”

But the deep-seated teachings of centuries were not to be easily dislodged, even by Protestant reformers. Theologians and churchgoers alike persisted, for the most part, in their unquestioning embrace of the ideas passed down from the ancient pagan philosophers. As the Encyclopedia Britannica summarizes: “Traditional Western philosophy, starting with the ancient Greeks...shaped the basic Western concepts of the soul.”

Now that we know the truth we must look at the scriptures with a Biblical wholistic mind set. The problem with most people is, they view the scriptures with the classical Greek “dualistic mind set” and they will have great difficulty understanding the Biblical wholistic view of human nature, and the real meaning of nephes [soul] escape us and furthermore, we are left with innumerable pseudo-problems. If we do it this way it will be like reading the American Constitution with Old Soviet Communists glasses on. You will get the total opposite message of what the Constitution is suppose to say. The Bible must interpret itself, “no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” (2 Peter 1:20). We let the Bible speak we will get the true message of death and the afterlife. If we look at it with a pagan Greek Platonic view, then we have seen the effects it has on people in this life, and them being blinded to the truth of the Bible.
Part 2
What Happens When You Die?
Is there Life after Death?

Now that we know what man is, and what he is composed of. What happens to man when he dies? What I find interesting is that you cannot find the following phrases in the Bible:

1) When we die we go to heaven
2) Heaven is the reward of the Saved
3) We will all meet in heaven
4) The immortal soul

Isn’t interesting that the Bible does not promise heaven, even though most people believe it does! Again that concept as we have seen is from Greek philosophy, and was adopted by the church.

Instead the Bible promises that the “the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5). The saints inherit the kingdom of God (Matthew 25:34). That kingdom is going to be set up on this earth (Isaiah 11:9; Daniel 7:27; Zech 14:9; Rev 5:10; 14:1). The Bible promises eternal life in the kingdom on this earth. This happens at the second coming of Christ (Isaiah 11; Zech 14). Between that time and this, where are all the people that are dead and buried? If they are not in heaven, where does the Bible say these people are?

Death Likened Unto Sleep

God inspired Moses, Job, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Daniel, Luke, Paul and Peter to refer to the death as being asleep. We read in Deuteronomy 31:16: “And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers;” But wait, didn’t the apostles see Moses with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration in Matthew 17? Does the Bible contradict? We will answer this in the argument section of this booklet.

But this same expression “slept with thy fathers,” occurs 36 times in the books of Kings and Chronicles alone! Thus it would seem that God desires that his people should become familiar with this inspired phrase. However this terminology did not long survive in apostolic times. It was seldom used in the Middle Ages, during the time that Catholicism held sway. It was revived shortly during the Protestant Reformation, but it died out once again. Today we only hear it when the scriptures are read. But no one really takes notice of what God is TRYING TO TELL THEM THE STATE OF THE DEAD IS! THEY ARE ASLEEP!

Let’s look at some of the scriptures the Bible writers said concerning the connection between death and sleep:

1. So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. (Job 14:12)
2. Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death; (Psalm13:3)
3. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. (Psalm 17:15)
4. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. (Dan 12:2)

5. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days. (Dan 12:13)

6. And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be. (Job 7:21).

We find the same concept used throughout the New Testament as well:

1. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. (Luke 8:52-53).

2. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep...Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. (John 11:11,13)

3. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. (1 Corith 15:16-18)

4. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. (1 Corith 15:20)

5. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (or, “will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with him” CV.) (1 Thess 4:15).

6. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. (1 Thess 4:15).

Thus we see both Old and New Testaments describe death as the exact parallel in condition of sleep.

Both in sleep and in death men are unconscious of time and events that occur around them. Those who believe that man himself retains consciousness after death teach that consciousness is independent of the body. Thus, when the body dies, the consciousness remains unaffected. But this notion is proven daily to be false. No man remains conscious while his body sleeps, for sleep itself is an unconscious state of being, “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalm146:4).

Some say that dreaming is proof that the thought of humans prove that the body operates independent from the body. However researchers have found that dreams occur as the physical body is disturbed.
Comas are an unnatural sleep brought on by injury, drugs, or illness. The body is alive, but decreased activity of some part of the body has made the mind unconscious. No doctor who has had medical experience would dare insist that mind’s consciousness increases as body’s life and brain function decreases.

Natural sleep, comas or other types of unconsciousness seems to verify that consciousness of the mind only exists in a LIVING BODY.

Paul admonished Timothy to “hold fast the form (“pattern”-CV) of sound words” (2 Tim 1:13). It is important that we used the inspired words of God when we speak of death, lest we should be led astray in our understanding of it.

**Unconsciousness in Sheol**

Many times in funerals you would hear of the person being “with the Lord,” in heaven. But are the beloved deceased truly in the presence of God in heaven as the story goes? What does the Bible say about people who died? Where are they? In Heaven? Hell? Purgatory? Or as anybody can plainly see at the funeral, IN THE GRAVE? Let’s examine the place of the death.

King Solomon wrote: “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” (Eccl 9:10).

He also said, “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.”

“All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.” (Eccl 3:19-20). Man and beast all have the breath of life (Gen 7:15). They all go to one place, the dust of the ground, as God said men and beast go (Gen 3:19).

King Hezekiah, a righteous man before God, see 2 Kings 20:3, when he was about to die knew where he was going and what state he would be in, that’s why he said: “For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth...The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth” (Isa 38:18-19).

King David wrote the same thing when he said: “The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence” (Psalm 115:17).

The prophets of the Bible knew they would go to sheol, but they had faith that God would not leave them there forever. Job knew that he would have to wait in sheol till his “change come” meaning the resurrection (explained later): “If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come” (Job 14:14). The Septuagint of this passage is very enlightening: “For if a man should die, shall he live again? Having accomplished the days of his life? I will wait TILL I EXIST AGAIN.”
Thus according to the Septuagint translation, Job said that he would have to wait in the grave until he existed again at the resurrection. Meanwhile: “If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.” (Job 17:13). Notice that his dwelling place is the grave where he lies in darkness, the state of unconsciousness. Not a place of darkness, but his bed, where he sleeps in death, in darkness, meaning unconsciousness.

Sheol is a place of darkness and silence, but it is also a place where mental activity ceases as well: “For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?” (Psalm 6:5). “…his thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:4).

Note: “Perish” in the Hebrew is “abad” which signifies “to be lost.” At dead man looses consciousness.

King Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived confirmed what his father said about the dead in Ecclesiastes 9:5: “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward…” They DON’T have a reward. But the common belief is that when you die, you enter heaven, your eternal reward. But the Bible says otherwise!

“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.” (Eccl 9:10). Some people may criticize Solomon on these verses saying that at this time Solomon was “backslidden” when he wrote these things. But this book was written by “The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.” (Eccl 12:10). God made Solomon “wise” and “understanding of heart,” (see 1 Kings 3:11, 12; 4:29-31). Not to mention that Solomon’s statements on death are in exact agreement with the statements of Job and David. Are we to say then that David and Job were backslidden as well? God forbid!

The above scriptures are not isolated passages in any way. There are many scriptures that coincide with them. God’s words say that the dead lie unconscious in the graves, and are awaiting their respective resurrections. The prophets all agree on this issue, in contrast to all the false religions around them, and you can also apply it today as well. The Bible is the only religious book that says when you die you are in the grave, dead and unconscious. All other religions speak of Heaven and Hell, a place where people live forever, and this happens immediately after death. They speak of Heaven as paradise, or Nirvana. They speak of Hell as a place of torment where a person suffers forever and ever without any relief. Jesus as well put his stamp of approval on the truth of the prophets by telling his two disciples: “O fools slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken” (Luke 24:25).

Sheol Etymology and Translation

The word “Sheol” etymology is uncertain. According to D.K. Stuart it appears only once outside of the Old Testament—in a fifth century Aramaic papyrus from the Jewish settlement at Elephantine (ISBE, vol.4, p.472). “Most scholars tend to think it come from the root meaning ‘ask’ or ‘inquire.’ Older writers sometimes suggest a root meaning ‘to bury oneself.’ The idea of something hidden appears in synonyms of several languages.” (Fudge, The Fire That Consumes, p.44). Doermann proposes a derivation from the stem shilah, which has the primary meaning “to
be quiet,” “at ease.” He concludes that “if a connection between sheol and shilah is feasible, it would appear that the name is not connected with the location of the realm of the dead, but rather with the character of its occupants, who are primarily ‘at rest.’” (Ralph Walter Doermann (note 14), p. 37).

The Bible speaks of two extremes Heaven and Sheol. Amos writes, “Though they dig into hell [Sheol], thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:” (Amos 9:2). The dead reach Sheol by “going down,” a euphemism for being buried in the earth.

Job describes dead bodies as sleeping in their dusty, worm covered graves in the dust, “If I wait for the grave [sheol] as my house, if I make my bed in the darkness, if I say to corruption, ‘You are my father,’ and to the worm, ‘you are my mother and my sister,’ where then is my hope? . . . Will they go down to the gates of Sheol? Shall we rest together in the dust?” (Job 17:13-16, NKJV).

Perhaps the clearest example of the location of sheol beneath the earth is the account of the punishment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who had revolted against the authority of Moses. “The ground under them split asunder; and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their household and all the men that belonged to Korah and all their goods. So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them” (Num 16:31-33). This episode clearly shows that the whole person, and not just the soul, goes down to sheol, to the realm of the dead.

Sheol’s Inhabitants

The people portrayed in the Bible in Sheol are people who are without life, resting in a deep sleep, in a place of no “return,” a place of “deep shadow” (Job 10:21). Although individuals are sometimes pictured as conversing in Sheol (Isa 14:9-18), they are not “whole persons but mere shades personified for dramatic purposes…a metaphorical expression of non-being” (Fudge, The Fire that Consumes, p.45). Eight texts in the Old Testament refer to the inhabitants of sheol as rephaim, according to Job 26:5; Ps 88:10; Prov 2:18; 9:18; 21:16; Is 14:9; 26:14, 19. The dualists capitalize on this misleading translation to argue for the existence of disembodied spirits or souls in sheol. In a scholarly article on the derivation and meaning of rephaim published in the American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature, Paul Haupt writes: “The Hebrew rephaim denotes those who have ‘sunk’ to their unseen abode, descending into Hades as the sun goes down to a fiery death in the west; the rephaim are those who ‘sank,’ vanished, disappeared, passed away, departed. The best translation would be ‘the departed.’” (Paul Haupt, “Assyrian Rabu, ‘To Sink’—Hebrew rapha,” American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature 33 (1916-1917), p. 48.). This word, Burns says, “For the member of the community of Israel, the dead were beyond his interest for they have ceased to live and praise Yahweh” (Mythology of Death, p.339).

The translation of rephaim proposed by Haupt as “the departed” or “the dead” fits well with the usage of the term in the eight texts where the word occurs. Let us take a brief look at each of them. In Isaiah 14:9, we read that the descent to sheol by the king of Babylon caused a stir:
“Sheol beneath is stirred up to meet you when you come, it rouses the shades [repaim] to greet you.” Here repaim could well be translated as “the departed” or “the dead,” since we are told that they are “roused” to meet the king. The implication is that they were asleep, a common euphemism for death in the Bible. Disembodied spirits do not need to be “roused” from sleep. The taunt “You have become as weak as we!” (Is 14:10) does not necessarily mean “You have become a disembodied spirit as we.” Most likely, “You are dead like us.”

This verse is commonly used to define the meaning of repaim as weak “shades” because they are supposed to be only disembodied spirits. But their weakness derives from the fact that they are dead, not disembodied. In the Old Testament, the dead are weak because their soul or vitality is gone. As Johannes Pedersen concisely states, “The dead is a soul bereft of strength. Therefore the dead are called ‘the weak’—repaim (Is 14:10).” (p.180). So the dualist with their conclusion is based on gratuitous assumptions that hardly can be supported by the usage of repaim in the texts cited.

These people are in a state of inactivity. “There is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going” (Eccl 9:10). It is evident that sheol, the realm of the dead, is the place of unconscious non-existence. “For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward; but the memory of them is lost. Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished, and they have no more for ever any share in all that is done under the sun” (Eccl 9:5-6). The main argument here is that death puts an abrupt end to all activity “under the sun,” and what follows death is sheol, the realm of the dead where there is a state of inactivity, without knowledge or consciousness. Such a state is best described as “sleep.”

How long are the dead asleep in sheol? until the End. “A man lies down and rises not again; till the heavens are no more he will not awake, or be roused out of his sleep” (Job 14:12). “Till the heavens are no more” is possibly an allusion to the coming of the Lord at the end of time to resurrect the saints. In all his trials, Job never gave up his hope of seeing the Lord even after the decay of his body. “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27; NKJV).

**State of the Dead in the New Testament**

In the original Hebrew of the Old Testament scriptures the dead were said to go to Sheol. The comparable Greek word in the New Testament was the word Hades. When the Judean translators of the Septuagint Bible (280 B.C) came to the word Sheol, they always rendered it with the Greek Hades. An example:

“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Hebrew “sheol”]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Psalm 16:10).

“Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, [Greek “Hades”] neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:27). The problem is that Hades was used in the Greek world in a
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vastly different way than sheol. While sheol in the Old Testament is the realm of the dead, where, as we have seen, the deceased are in an unconscious state, hades in Greek mythology is the underworld, where the conscious souls of the dead are divided in two major regions, one a place of torment and the other of blessedness.

This Greek conception of hades influenced Hellenistic Jews, during the inter-testamental period, to adopt the belief in the immortality of the soul and the idea of a spatial separation in the underworld between the righteous and the godless. The souls of the righteous proceeded immediately after death to heavenly felicity, there to await the resurrection, while the souls of the godless went to a place of torment in hades.

This view of hades as a place of torment for the wicked eventually entered into the Christian Church and influenced even Bible translators. It is noteworthy that the word hades, which occurs 11 times in the New Testament, is translated in the KJV 10 times as “hell” and 1 time as “grave.” The RSV transliterates the word as “Hades.” The translation of hades as “hell” is inaccurate and misleading, because, the term refers to the grave or the realm of the dead, not to a place of punishment, as we shall see.

In the Gospels, Jesus refers to hades three times. The first use of hades is found in Matthew 11:23, where Jesus upbraids Capernaum, saying: “And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades” (cf. Luke 10:15). Here hades, like sheol in the Old Testament (Amos 9:2-3; Job 11:7-9), denotes the deepest place in the universe, just as the heaven is the highest. This means that Capernaum will be humiliated by being brought down to the realm of the dead, the deepest place in the universe.

The second use of hades in the teaching of Jesus occurs in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:23). (For a Full Study Read our Booklet on the Subject).

The third use is found in Matthew 16:18, where Jesus expresses His confidence that “the gates of Hades shall not prevail” against His church. The meaning of the phrase “the gates of Hades” is illuminated by the use of the same expression in the Old Testament and Jewish literature (3 Macc 5:51; Wis. Of Sol 16:13) as a synonym for death. For example, Job asks rhetorically: “Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?” (Job 38:17; cf. Is 38:18). The underworld was pictured as enclosed with cliffs, where the dead were locked in. Thus, what Jesus meant by “the gates of Hades” is that death shall not prevail against His church, obviously because He had gained the victory over death.

Like all the dead, Jesus went to hades, that is, to the grave, but unlike the rest He was victorious over death. “For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor let thy Holy One see corruption” (Acts 2:27; cf. 2:31). Here hades is the grave where Christ’s body rested for only three days and, consequently, did not “see corruption,” the decay process resulting from a prolonged interment. Because of His victory over death, hades—the grave is a defeated enemy. Thus, Paul exclaims: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave [hades] where is thy victory?” (1 Cor 15:55, KJV). Here hades is correctly translated “grave” in the KJV since it is in parallel with death.
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Christ now holds the keys to “death and Hades” (Rev 1:18), He has power over death and the grave. This enables Him to unlock the graves and call forth the saints to everlasting life at His coming. In all these passages, hades is consistently associated with death, because it is the resting place of the dead, the grave. The same is true in Revelation 6:8, where the pale horse has a rider whose name “was Death, and Hades followed him.” The reason “Hades” follows “Death” is obviously because hades, as the grave, receives the dead.

At the end of the millennium, “Death and Hades” will give up their dead (Rev 20:13) and “then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire” (Rev 20:14). These two verses are significant. First, because they tell us that eventually hades will give up the dead, which indicates again that hades is the realm of the dead. Second, they inform us that at the End, hades itself will be thrown into the lake of fire. By means of this colorful imagery, the Bible reassures us that at the End, both death and the grave will be eliminated. This will be the death of death, or as Revelation puts it, “the second death.”

This brief survey of the use of hades in the New Testament clearly shows that its meaning and usage is consistent with that of sheol in the Old Testament. Both terms denote the grave or the realm of the dead and not the place of punishment of the ungodly.

Death Portrayed As the Enemy

Is death an enemy of man? From the various theories out there by other religions about life after death it is not. But what does the Bible say?

When you go to a funeral, the Priest or Pastor will preach that the person in the coffin is in heaven saying, “He is gone to be with the Lord.” You see, his body was just a clay temporary home for him, and now his soul is in heaven sitting at the feet of the Master, Jesus Christ. What he is really saying, is, that this man did not really die, he just passed from one existence to another, leaving his body for the living to bury.

Before that person died, he probably had expensive doctors and medical equipment trying to keep him alive (in many cases), but why? If he had a far better life waiting for him, why keep him alive? You’ve heard the saying “No one wants to die but everyone wants to go to Heaven.” The inconsistency what they claim to believe, and what they really seem to believe as testified by their actions. Is this because they know deep down inside, in their in innermost being, that God is right that death is NOT A FRIEND BUT AN ENEMY?

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is DEATH!” (1 Corinthians 15:26).

We should not feel that we are different if we treat death as an enemy. Hezekiah, in the Old Testament knew death was NOT a friend. When Isaiah prophesied that he would die, “Hezekiah wept sore” (Isa. 38:3). He then prayed to God to spare his life, and God gave him another 15 years. Why was Hezekiah unhappy about dying? Did he not believe that he would be with God when he did die? Hezekiah himself gives the answer: “For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.
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“The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth” (Isa 28:18-19). Hezekiah understood death to be an enemy. He believed that when he died, he would go down to the “grave,” he would not be able to praise God or hope for his truth.

The fact that death is taught as an enemy is also taught in the New Testament. Epaphroditus one of Paul’s disciples: “...was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow” (Philippians 2:27).

Both Hezekiah and Epaphroditus would have been deprived many years of life, had not God in his mercy intervened. Their lives were spared, and they rejoiced that God added more years to their lives.

Another example showing death to be an enemy is found in Jeremiah 31:15-16: “Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. “Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.” Matthew tells us that this prophecy was fulfilled when King Herod tried to killed Christ when he was born, and killed all the children 2 years old and under. These children “were not” meaning they were killed.

“The land of the enemy” is not heaven, but death, the state described by the words, “they were not.” The “not” in the Greek here is “ouk” which always expresses full and direct negation (independently and absolutely). The weaker and conditional negative was not used. The stronger negative was also used in Jeremiah 31:15.

The Bible says that Rachel shall see them when they “come again” (are resurrected) from this land of the enemy. Yes the Bible speaks about when the “…dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live....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 [Judgment]” (John 5:25, 28-29).

Therefore we see some very godly people who thought of death as an enemy and hated and feared it.

Is there Death after Life?

In Romans 5:12 we read: “Therefore, even as though one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed though into all mankind, on which all sinned” (Concordant Version). In other words as a consequence of Adam’s sins, death has “passed though into all mankind,” and it’s on account of death operating in mankind that all men sin. For light on the meaning of the term “death” let us turn to the historical record of the event mentioned above in Rom 5:12.

After God formed man from the ground he placed upon him a well known restriction: “And the
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LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:16-17). The marginal reading of the last phrase is significant: “Dying thou shalt die.” In other words, the dying process (i.e. morality) was to begin to operate in Adam the very day he ate of the forbidden tree, and this was to ultimately result in his actual death.

In Genesis 3:19 the “death” which Adam ultimately was to die is graphically described: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

It appears that none of the living creatures of Genesis 1 has any existence prior to their creation, and Adam had NO prior existence before God formed him from the ground and made him a “living soul” (Gen 2:7). Thus God must of meant by that last verse that when Adam died and returned unto the ground, he would return to the PREVIOUS STATE OF NON-EXISTENCE. According to the early chapters of Genesis then, death can simply be defined as the OPPOSITE OF LIFE.

If this is true, then there should be other Bible passages which treat life and death as opposites.

Consider the following:

1. Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. (Gen 42:1-2)

2. And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. (Gen 43:8)

3. Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate. (Gen 47:19)

4. Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites: But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden: But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die. (Num 4:18-20)

5. Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few. (Deut 33:6).

6. Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. (2 Kings 18:32)
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7. In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. (2Kings 20:1; Isa 38:1).

8. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. (Psalm 118:17).

9. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (Ezekiel 18:21).

10. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (Ezekiel 18:28).

11. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 6:23).

The scriptures teach the Adam’s sin brought death to us, and Christ’s death and resurrection brought life unto us. Therefore we can conclude that death is NOT another form of life; death is the OPPOSITE of life, and in fact, death is the ABSENCE of life.

Death Is a Return

There is a significant point that Christendom seems to have overlooked. God does not say he formed man’s body of the dust of the ground. No, God says he formed MAN of the dust. Only theologians say it was the body. Note carefully the wording of the scriptures: “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.” (Gen 2:7).

That Adam was made truly of the earth is made especially clear in the Concordant Version of 1 Corinth 15:45: “The First man Adam, became a living Soul”...the first man was OUT OF the earth, soilish...” Adam was complete physically, but he was without “life.” Upon receiving life, he them became a living soul.

The important point to remember is that, except for the breathe of life itself, man was totally from the dust of the earth. That is why the Bible itself states that when life leaves man, man himself returns to the dust from whence he came. Notice God’s own explanation in the book of Genesis: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (3:19).

“All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust” (Job 34:15).

“Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men” (Psalm 90:3).

“Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust” (Psalm 104:29).
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“His breath goeth forth, he \textit{returneth} to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:4).

“All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again” (Eccl 3:20).

Note the personal pronouns thy and thou in all the above passages. If our theologians and Bible teachers would read them, they would see that man himself returns to the dust—not just his body with himself then going somewhere else.

Now that we understand what man is composed of, the concept of Biblical Wholism, as opposed to classic Greek Platonic dualism and its origins. We can understand and read the scriptures as they truly are. With our Biblical Wholist glasses on, the following scriptures that dualist used to legitimize their view of heaven, hell and the immortal soul can be understood, and shows the Bible to be consistent about death and the afterlife.

\textbf{Objections Answered:}

1. \textbf{Rachel’s Soul Departs (Gen 35:18).}

“And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.” The NIV correctly renders it, “As she \textit{BREATHED} her last-for she was dying.” As we have shown, the dying process is the exact opposite of living. God “breathed” into the nostrils of Adam, and he became a “living soul.” At death the body returns to the earth, Gen 3:19, and the “breath” returns to God who gave it, see Ecclesiastes 12:7. “When there is a ‘departing’ (Gen 35:18) of the nephesh from a man, or of its ‘return’ (Lam 1:1), the basic idea of the concrete notion of the ceasing and restoration of breathing...\textit{The phrase ‘her soul was departing’ most likely means that her ‘breathing was stopping,’ or we might say she was taking her last sigh. It is important to note that the noun ‘soul-nephesh’ derives from the verb by the same root which means ‘to breath’ to ‘respire,’ ‘to draw breath.’}’’ (Immortality or Resurrection, Biacchiocchi, p.56, emphasis added).

2. \textbf{The Soul of the Widows Son 1 Kings 17:21-22}

“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.” This passage is similar to Rachel in Genesis 35:18. “The translators of the NIV understood the phrase by rendering it as ‘the boys life returned to him’ (ibid, p.57). Elijah was praying for the Life, the Breath of Life, that life principle that gave Adam his ability to come alive and become a living soul, or being.

Another indication that shows that he was praying for the Breath of Life from God to return to the boy so he can become alive again is, “[in the] Hebrew verse 21 literally reads: ‘Let this child’s soul come into his inwards parts again.’ This reading, which is found in the margin of the A.V., puts a different construction on the passage. \textit{What returns to the inward parts is breathing. The soul as such is never connected with some ‘inward’ organs of the body. The return of}
breathing in the inner parts results in the revival of the body, or, we might say, the body becoming again a living soul” (ibid, p.57, emphasis added).

3. Samuel’s Resurrection 1 Samuel 28:7-20

In this passage God refused to answer Saul’s prayer, so Saul went to the witch at Endor and asked her: “I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.” (v.8).

When the witch asked who he wanted to bring up, Saul said “Bring me up Samuel”( v.11). It appears from the next verses that Saul did not see anyone and asked the witch who she saw, and she said, “An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel,” (v.14). Saul “perceived” from her description that it was Samuel, not from what he saw himself but from the description of the witch, which led him to another error, accepting the voice as that of Samuel. I Chronicles 10:13 tell us plainly that Saul had inquired after a familiar spirit and NOT of Samuel the prophet: “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 inquire of it;” Scripture says that Saul died for consulting a familiar spirit which is against God’s law (Deut 18:10-14). The witch deceived Saul into thinking that it was Samuel, just like Mediums and Spiritist do today.

4. Elijah’s Trip to Heaven 2Kings 2:11

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.” Many people use this scripture to justify the belief that when we die we go to heaven. But wait! Doesn’t this contradict what Jesus said? “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). No man has ascended to heaven. Does the Bible contradict? Absolutely not! When man’s ideas are trying to be worked into the bible, then you get contradictions. There is no contradiction here when we examine the scripture about Elijah.

The word heaven used here is from the Hebrew shanayim meaning “the Heavens, the sky or the atmosphere.” The word is used in Genesis 1:7-8, where God placed the water above and below the firmament and then God called the Firmament Heaven. In other words God said that there was water above and below the Heavens.

Elijah, contrary to popular opinion did not ride on a chariot to heaven. The account says that the chariot “parted them asunder.” After Elisha was some distance away that Elijah “went up by a whirlwind” (or tempest, not the chariot of fire). Since there is no wind in outer space, the whirlwind could hardly have transported Elijah all the way to heaven. Thus the heaven that Elijah went was simply above ground, the “sky” to use the modern term.

Question? Why is it, after this event that the prophets of Israel were looking for him, and Elisha even gave them permission to look for Elijah? If they knew he went to heaven, why would they come up with the notion to look for him on earth?
“And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

“And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.

“And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.” (vv.15-17). Why look for him? These were men of God? It did not even come into their minds about him going to heaven. If they did not believe you go to heaven when we die, then why should we?

The Bible even records that Elijah was still on this earth 20 years later during the days of King Jehoram: “And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah.” (2 Chronicles 21:12). As one can plainly see, Elijah was not dead nor in heaven at this time. The letter shows us that Elijah (1) was still in this earth and (2) he was acquainted with temporary events.

5. Isaiah’s Soul and Body Isaiah 10:18, Matthew 10:28

“And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.” First we must notice the both soul and body will be CONSUMED. So first, the passage does not suggest an immortal soul. Now who is this person that Isaiah is speaking of? Well, he is speaking of the Assyrian that will put Israel in slavery and captivity at Jesus second coming (v.12). He is the Beast of prophecy that will be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10). See our book Germany in Prophecy for details about the Assyrian and the Beast.

The King James says “both soul and body.” But it really should read in the, “Hebrew, ‘From the soul to the flesh;’ that is, entirely. As the soul and the flesh, or body, compose the entire man, so the phrase denotes the entireness or totality of anything. The army would be totally ruined.” (Barnes Notes, emphasis added; see also Gill's Commentary).

Douay Rheims Bible translates it this way, “And the glory of his forest, and of his beautiful hill, shall be consumed from the soul even to the flesh, and he shall run away through fear.” What God is saying here is that the fire will consume the entire man, from the inner part of the soul (the mind and heart) to the outer part of the soul (the body or flesh).

Notice what Whedon’s Commentary states, “Literally, from soul even to the flesh; beginning at the vitals and working to the outward frame; that is, the consumption shall be total.” (emphasis his and mine). From the inside out! So when Jesus said the entire man will be consumed in Gahenna, it was from the inner part of the soul—where the mind [spirit] resides, to the outer part of the soul—the flesh, the body, the outer part of the person—from the inside out!

As mentioned above the body and soul cannot be separated into two separate entities. We must look at this with the understanding of Biblical wholism, not Greek dualism. “In the Old
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Testament the soul and body are two manifestations of the same person. The soul INCLUDES and presumes the body” (Bacchiocchi, p.54, emphasis added).

In fact, Mork writes, “the ancient Hebrews could not conceive of one without the other. Here was no Greek dichotomy of soul and body, of two opposing substances but a unity, man, who is bashar [body] from one aspect and nephesh [soul] from another. Bashar then, is the concrete reality of human existence; nephesh is the personality of human existence” (The Biblical Meaning of Man (note 13), p.41, emphasis added).

As noted above, in the scriptures, the following are identifying marks of a conscious personality are ascribed to the soul:

1. Knowledge (Joshua 23:14 ; Psalm 139:4; Proverbs 2:10; 19:2)
2. Thought (Esther 4:13; Prov 23:7; Psalm 13:2)
3. Memory (Lam 3:20; Deut 4:9; 11:18)
4. Love, Joy & Delight (Deut 6:5; 13:3; Psalm 35:9; 86:4; 94:19; Matt 22:37)
6. Mourning, Sorrow, Grief (Job 14:22; Jer 31:25; 1 Sam 2:33; Psalm 42:5)
7. Abhorrence, Hate (Lev 26:15; Psalm 11:5; 107:18; Isaiah 1:14).

In the soul there is a spirit, the consciousness of man, the mind that thinks and feels, it is one part of the soul as the body is another part of the soul.

Now Jesus made the statement in Matthew 10:28: “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body [physical life now and in the end time as demonstrated in the Old Testament] in hell [Gahenna].” Now Jesus repeated the same words as Isaiah the 10th chapter of the Assyrian or the Beast that will be thrown into the Gahenna fire, see Rev 20:10. (Explained later)—since both deal with the fate of the wicked, notice that, in both Isaiah and Matthew, the specific order “both soul and body.” are used— Jesus was repeating an Old Testament idiomatic expression.

Now Jesus was quoting Isaiah who said in the Hebrew “from the soul to the flesh,” meaning entire man, from the inner part of the soul (the mind and heart) to the outer part of the soul (the body or flesh). Now as noted earlier that “the link between the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament is the great Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament made at Alexandria in the third century B. C. The translation was made by Jews, who of course understood the meaning of the Hebrew words and intended the Greek they used to answer it. Thus the Septuagint follows the Hebrew and the New Testament follows the Septuagint. The Septuagint version was not inspired, but in the providence of God it provided this valuable linguistic link between the Old and New Testaments.” (Basil F. C. Atkinson, Life and Immortality (Taunton, England, N. D.), p. 12.). The Hebrew is “from the soul to the flesh.” The LXX is “both soul and body.” Jesus followed the LXX. As the source above noted the LXX is not inspired but provides a valuable linguistic link of the two testaments. So the passage Jesus quoted from Isaiah really should be the “from soul to the flesh.”
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Jesus is plainly saying here that man cannot destroy the entire person. Man can kill the body (the outer part of the soul) but not the *whole* soul. The inner part of the person (soul), the mind of man that is part of the entire person (soul), that part man cannot touch. Here is proof in the words of Jesus: “And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell.” (Luke 12:4, 5).

Cullmann writes, “We hear in Jesus saying in Matthew 10:28 that the soul can be killed. The *soul is not immortal*” (Immortality or Resurrection, p.36f, emphasis added).

Fudge says, “Lest one *read into* Matthews account any *Platonic dualism*…This passage does *not* teach the immortality of every human soul but rather God can kill the soul as well as the body” (The Fire that Consumes, p.105, emphasis added). Men can only kill the body and take away the physical life. God will cast into hell [Gahenna] and take away—not only will their bodies be destroyed in that fire, but the entire soul that consist of body and the mind, the entire soul that will be snuffed out for all eternity.

How does the soul [psuche], the individual die? Many passages of Scripture show that there is a “spirit” IN man! (Job 32:8, 18; Zech. 12:1; I Cor. 2:11). This spirit is *not* the man—*it* is something that in IN the man. Joined with the physical brain of the man, it forms the human MIND. It imparts to man's brain his unique powers of intellect and personality---the ability to think rationally and make free will decisions. It imparts the ability to learn mathematics, languages or other types of knowledge such as music, art, carpentry, flying. This is the conscious part of man also called the “spirit IN man.” “The spirit is used to represent the seat of insight, feeling and reasoning...This accounts for many uses of the term ‘spirit’ in the Old and New Testaments. ‘Man’s spirit is stirred’ (Ezk 2:2), or troubled (Gen 41:8); is hardened (Deut 2:30). A man being patient in spirit (Ecc 7:8)...ruling one’s spirit (Prov 25:28)...” (Immorality or Resurrection, p.97).

This is *not* a spirit being as many in the Christian world believe—an immortal soul. This essence is power, like God's Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the power and mind of God. But that is eternal, the spirit of man is temporal just like the rest of man. Jesus plainly said that the spirit, the life, the ruach, or psuche (breath) is destroyed in Gahenna. That power in us can be put out by *God alone (who is spirit, and can deal with the spirit in man)-* just like shutting off a light switch. The source is only temporal not eternal. It functions *with* the body as James says, “For as the body without the spirit is dead,” (James 2:26). They function *as one not separate*, body and spirit—the whole soul, and when one goes, so does the other. So the entire soul, body and mind that function as one, dies.

But the spirit that man *cannot* kill because *man is material and can only deal with the material*, is not destroyed but preserved in the Human being. Even though it is not functioning because the body is dead, the essence is still there-dormant, waiting for the resurrection (see part 3).

Paul said, “To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the *spirit [pnuema]may be saved* [Grk. “sozo Strong's #4982 “to preserve; keep safe” (Thayers)] *in the day of the Lord Jesus. ”* (1 Corinth 5:5). It lies dormant and preserved, kept safe for the coming of
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Jesus Christ, and God will resurrection the whole soul once again for either the resurrection of the judgment, or the resurrection to eternal life to live in the kingdom of God.

Nowhere does the bible say man is immortal. In 1 Timothy 6:15, 16 it says, “Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality…”

6. Enoch: Dead or Alive? (Gen 5:24; Hebrews 11:5)

“And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him…By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” Again people interpret this to mean that Enoch was translated into heaven. Yet Jesus said no man has ascended to heaven John 3:13. And twice in the 11th chapter of Hebrews it says, “These all died in faith, [including Enoch] not having received the promises,” (v.13) Does scripture contradict? No! Again this is man’s beliefs trying to work it into scripture.

Let’s examine these passages to prove to you that Enoch, like the rest, will be resurrected. Your Bible plainly says he died! Hebrew 11:13. So what does it mean that Encoh “did not see death”? The Greek word “metatithemi” meaning “translated” is also found in Acts 7:16; Galatians 1:6; Hebrews 7:12; Hebrews 11:5 (twice) and Jude 4.

This word means “carried over-Removed”! Notice Acts 7:16 using the identical Greek word: “And were carried [metatithemi] over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulcher that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.” Here the very word “translated” is used as “carried over” concerning the bodies of Jacob and others of the fathers.

Now notice the next example: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed [metatithemi] from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:” (Gal 1:6). Notice how none of these expressions have anything to do about being taken up to heaven. The other examples show a substituting or a changing.

Now notice, the Apostle Paul said “he was not found.” Why was he not found? Because there were those who were looking for him! Why?

Enoch “walked with God” and because of this “God took him.” But where? It does not say Heaven! Jesus said no man has ascended to heaven, (John 3:13). People were looking for him on earth and they could not find him. Where did God take him? The Bible just does not say, but why did God take him? Who was looking for him? During the time before the flood Enoch walked with God, and those looking for him, were people that were going Satan’s way, the enemies of God and his prophets. We are given none of the details, but it is interesting to note that Jude quotes Enoch saying: “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, [Satan inspired false prophets and followers] saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,
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“To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” (14-15). Enoch was one of God’s prophets living in a violent time Gen 6:11, a sinful period and he was preaching the Gospel as a witness and a warning to those sinful satanic people. So why did God take him? God took him or REMOVED HIM AWAY FROM those people who were LOOKING FOR HIM TO KILL HIM! God decided to spare his life from murder at the hands of these antagonists, just like Elijah! God “took him away” and “he was not found” (by those who were looking for him). Then obviously at some later date Enoch died and is in the grave and he is awaiting his resurrection!

7. Moses and Elijah on the Mount Matthew 17:1-3

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

“And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.”

“And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.” This a favorite passage of those who try and prove that we die and go to heaven, we have to look no further than the immediate text to dispel that belief.

“And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, *Tell the vision to no man*, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.” The disciples saw a VISION of the future kingdom and the glorification of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom. Moses and Elijah appear with Christ in the vision in Christ’s post resurrected state showing that Jesus fulfilled both the Law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah). He would be exalted and glorified. Moses and Elijah appeared not in person but in vision. Just before Jesus said about his glory: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

“Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Matthew 16:27-28). Jesus promised that his disciples would see him in glory in his kingdom before they died, and they did in the vision.

8. Not the God of the Dead (Matthew 22:29-32)

Some who insist that Jesus taught that the dead are alive quote half of Matthew 22:32 to prove their point: “God is not the God of the dead but of the living.” Like other arguments where part of the passage is used, we must read more to find out the truth.

Verse 23 tells us to whom Jesus was speaking and what they believed: “The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection.” With this in mind let’s read the whole passage: “Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven [asexual].

“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,
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“I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” (vv.29-32).

Thus Jesus was refuting the Sadducees’ doctrine that there is no resurrection of the dead. He is not attempting to prove that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were alive right now, but that there WILL BE a resurrection from the dead. As Luke 20:37, 38 says, “Now that the dead are raised…For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.”

This has to happen in order for God to be their God. The Companion Bible concurs with this interpretation in its comment on the passage: “The only conclusion being that they must rise and live again in the resurrection in order that he may be their God.” The reason why Jesus spoke in the present tense, is to let the Sadducees know that the Fathers are saved, their destiny is set, and will be alive in the resurrection. As Jesus told them, “ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.” (Luke 13:28).


“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Many use this verse to support their position that the dead are really alive. However the context proves otherwise. The thief just asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. “And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom” (v.42).

It is obvious that Jesus was not on his way to his kingdom as he was hanging on the cross. In his first advent he came to die: His second advent he will come to claim his kingdom. At his present time, Jesus still has not come as the triumphant conqueror to set up his kingdom and reign on this earth with his chosen (Rev 5:10). The Thief was “thinking of the time in the distant future when Christ would return in glory to establish His kingdom upon the earth.” (Is your Soul Immortal, by Robert Leo Odom, p.92). Thus when the thief asked to remember him in the kingdom, Jesus assured him that he would be with him in paradise.

Did Jesus side step the thief’s question? Or is it possible that he understood the kingdom and paradise to be IDENTICAL? Isaiah 51:3 reads: “For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.”

The Septuagint renders it this way: “And I will be comforting you, O Zion, and I comfort all her deserts, and I will place her deserts as PARADISE and he wilderness as the LORD’S PARADISE. They shall find gladness and exultation in her, confession and the voice of praise.” The Septuagint version is very important to our study, because it shows how the Judeans two centuries before Christ used the word paradise in translating the Old Testament. We see from the above that they used the word paradise in place of Eden and the garden of the Lord. The word paradise obviously was a reference to the Garden of Eden. It was used to describe the original condition of the earth before sin entered. it was also used to describe the future, perfected Kingdom of God, when the earth would again become a “Paradise.” The Septuagint Version is the version of the Bible that they used in Palestine in Jesus day!
The Apostle Paul knew a man who went to paradise: “It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” (2 Cor. 12:1-4).

This passage as well is used to prove that someone went to heaven or paradise when he died. But if the man had died, he would not have been able to tell Paul of the experience. Verse one makes it clear that Paul was speaking of “visions and revelations of the Lord.”

Thus the man had a vision of paradise. He went there in the “spirit” only, as John did (Rev 1:10). He saw paradise, the Kingdom of God in its restored condition, which the elect will inherit at the resurrection.

But how can we reconcile this with Jesus seeming to say that they both would be in paradise on the day of their crucifixion? Luke 23:43 as written in most modern version appears to teach just that: “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” However a study of the original Greek text tells a different story. The following is the Greek with the literal English Translation: “To you I am saying today with me you will be in the paradise [Kingdom of God]”

You will notice that it reads “saying today” rather than “you will be today in the paradise.” In other words, Jesus told the dying thief THAT DAY: “You will be with me in paradise” (The future kingdom). Thus Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible renders’ this verse: “And he said unto him Verily I say unto thee this day: With me thou shalt be in paradise.”

The Concordant Literal New Testament reads: “And Jesus said to him, “Verily, to you am I saying today, with me shall you be in paradise.”

And George M. Lamsa, in his translation of the New Testament from Aramaic sources, renders it as follows: “Truly I say to you today, You will be with Me in Paradise.”

Also, “In the original text of the Bible there was no such punctuation between words as we have today in the English translation. The translators, supposing that men go either to heaven or to torment immediately after death, inserted a comma before the word “today,” so as to make Jesus say it that way. This is obviously an error.” (ibid, p.92, emphasis added).

The phrase “to you I am saying today” may sound strange to our ears today. However, there were many occasions in the scriptures when “today” or “this day” was used to emphasize a noteworthy day. For example Moses told Israel: “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.” (Deut 30:15-16).
The Companion Bible agrees in its notation on Luke 23:43-Today. Connect with this “I say,” to emphasize the *solemnity of the occasion;* not “shalt thou be.”

Thus we conclude that Luke 23:43 teaches that the repentant thief on the cross shall receive a place in the Kingdom of God at the resurrection. The passage cannot be used to prove that the thief was alive that same day in paradise in Heaven.

**Did Jesus lie? John 20:17 — “Jesus said, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:”** Wait! **This was three days and three nights later! Did Jesus lie to the thief on the cross saying “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise”?** Does the Bible contradict? No! As noted above he promised him a place in the future kingdom. “On that very day when he asked this of Jesus, the Saviour assured him that his petition would be granted.” (ibid, p.92, emphasis added).

**10. Spirits in Prison (1 Peter 3:18-20)**

“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 sometime 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.”

This passage is often taken to mean that Jesus went to hell and preached to the people there and then led them into heaven—but does it really say that?

First it speaks of the resurrection of Jesus after his passion in the “flesh.” Then it says, “by which” which should be rendered “in which” which “basically means ‘in the thing already mentioned’” (italki.com) “the A.V., following the Genevan alone among these earlier English Versions, wrongly renders ‘by which.’ The sense is, ‘in which,’ i.e in the spiritual form of life which has just been noticed.” (Popular New Testament, emphasis theirs; see also Vincent Word Studies).

So Christ after his resurrection “he went and preached” Barnes’s Notes, “The literal sense is, ‘he, having gone, preached,’ etc. *πορευθέντας* poreutheis. It is well known that such expressions are often redundant in Greek writers, as in others. So Herodotus, ‘to these things they spake, saying’ - for they said. ‘And he, speaking, said;’ that is, he said. So Eph 2:17, ‘And came and preached peace,’ etc. Matt 9:13, ‘but go and learn what that meaneth,’ etc. So God is often represented as coming, as descending, etc., when he brings a message to mankind. Thus, Gen 11:5, ‘The Lord came down to see the city and the tower.’ Ex 19:20, ‘the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai.’ Num 11:25, ‘the Lord came down in a cloud.’ 2Sam 22:10, ‘he bowed the heavens and came down.’ The idea, however, would be conveyed by this language *that he did this personally, or by himself, and not merely by employing the agency of another.*” (emphasis added). So Jesus *personally* went and “preached.” This word does not mean some sort of revival sermon. The word comes from the Greek “kerusso,” which means to “cry or proclaim as a herald” (Young’s)
Barnes explains further, “The word used here (ἐκήρυξεν ekēruxen) is of a general character, meaning to make a proclamation of any kind, as a crier does, or to deliver a message, and does not necessarily imply that it was the gospel which was preached, nor does it determine anything in regard to the nature of the message. It is not affirmed that he preached the gospel, for if that specific idea had been expressed it would have been rather by another word - εὐαγγελίζω euangelizō. The word used here would be appropriate to such a message as Noah brought to his contemporaries, or to any communication which God made to people. See Matt 3:1; Matt 4:17; Mark 1:35; Mark 5:20; Mark 7:36. It is implied in the expression, as already remarked, that he did this himself;” (emphasis added).

Now since Noah is mentioned in the next verse, the context of Christ proclamation to this group was not the gospel. What then was it? What did Noah preach? Notice 2 Peter 2:5-9, “And [God v.4] spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;
“And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;
“And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:
“(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)
“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:” Noah preached the righteousness of God and the righteous judgment of God upon ungodly sinners. Other examples include Sodom and Gomorrah and Lot being righteous told them of the judgment of God. This is what Christ preached, that in Righteousness, God is going to punish the ungodly-like the flood of Noah all the ungodly were put to death by water; and in the end time all the ungodly will be put to death by fire (see Rev 20:11-13).

Now Jesus proclaimed this to the “spirits in Prison” Who are these spirits?

One clue in the next verse says, “Which sometime were disobedient” This author states:
“Looking at the construction, apeithēsasin pote, there are words left out in ellipsis. In Greek, as in English, prepositional phrases are adverbial. When a prepositional phrase appears to be describing a noun, there will be an understood verb. In this case what the modem reader, as well as the ancient reader, understands is ‘to the spirits who are in prison.’ Thus there are two verbs which the participle πνεύμασιν could be modifying. With the first verb already ruled out as an option, the participle must be connected to the second understood verb. A causal function fits the context perfectly, reading ‘He preached to the spirits (who are) in prison because they were formerly [“in the past,” ibid, p.87] disobedient.’ This would communicate the reason for the spirits’ imprisonment.” (An Interpretation of 1 Peter 3:18-22, by Jason M. Hauffe, p.86, emphasis added). Now “The language here does not imply that they had ceased to be disobedient, or that they had become obedient at the time when the apostle wrote;” (Barnes Notes). So at some time in the past these “spirits” became rebellious and were put in “prison.” Now these spirits cannot mean people.

Men are never called spirits in the Bible. They are always called souls, as it is said of Noah and his family in the same passage: “eight souls were saved by water.” (v.20)
Some may object to this on the grounds that Hebrews 12:23, that speaks of, “the spirits of just men made perfect.” However the context of that verse shows that it is speaking of the “church,” the true Christians whose spirits are perfected and matured. The Bible speaks of the human spirit or mind which is being perfected with the mind of God, and obedience to his laws. These spirits are not the immortal souls of people, but the minds of human beings (souls).

Now men are imprisoned in death as Jesus said, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” (Rev 1:18). The grave is known to have a “gate” (Matthew 16:18), that imprison humans. But they are not conscience; they sleep so they cannot hear the preaching of Jesus. These spirits however are conscience, so it cannot be human beings.

This can only mean the angels that sinned in the past and became rebellious towards God and these became demons. Satan the Devil is imprisoned (Rev 20:1-3) with a “great chain.”

Above we quoted 2 Peter 5-9. This is the same context as 1 Peter 3:18-20. Verse 4 sets the context of the rest of the verses and says, “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;” Notice the angels are in “chains” and are “reserved” like a prison, and they “sinned.”

Notice Jude 6: “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” These were spirits in “Hell,” the Greek word is “Tartaroo.” Tartaroo means a “condition of restraint.” They are locked in the chains of darkness on this earth until the second coming of Christ. (Read our booklet Is there Really a Hell Fire for more about Tartaroo).

Also, Peter’s use of “spirits” is consistent with its use in the gospels (see, for instance, Matthew 8:16; 12:45; Mark 3:11; 5:13; 6:7; Luke 11:26; etc.). In the gospels, “spirits” consistently denotes “evil spirits,” “demons,” “wicked spirits.” It is highly likely that Peter refers to demons in 1 Peter 3:19.

This article states, “The term ‘spirits’ in the plural occurs thirty-four times in the New Testament. About twenty of these thirty-four refer to demons, two or three to angels (all in Hebrews), four to the seven spirits of God (all in Revelation), about five to human spirits, and one to spiritual gifts (in 1 Cor). According to verse 20 these spirits were disobedient. Therefore they cannot be God’s spirits, angels, or spiritual gifts. Only two options remain: They could be demons or humans. Since the expression is predominantly used for demons and rarely for humans, one can assume that the spirits are demons.” (Article, 1 Peter 3:18-22 Ekkehardt Mueller p. 2, emphasis added).

In fact when referring to humans one can easily understand the meaning as the human spirit, mind, or breath as opposed to a disembodied spirit like a demon or an angel, so the obvious conclusion one comes to is that these spirits are demons.

Now what of the rest of the verse? “Which sometime 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.” (1 Peter 3:20). First, we must “Omit the word ‘once’
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(ἁπαξ), which is without authority.” (Pulpit Commentary; see also Jamieson Fausset and Brown and Popular New Testament).

Remember the context, after the resurrection of Jesus he went and proclaimed the righteous judgment and condemnation of God to the wicked spirits in prison—that is a condition of restraint; locked on this earth with chains. Then it says, “…when… 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.

“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” (vv.20-21). Peter is comparing the old world of Noah to a future time when the spirits will receive the full measure of God’s judgment and condemnation. Another baptism is coming for the wicked, a “baptism” by “fire.”

Notice Peter said, “God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” What happened during that time? The book of Hebrews says, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” (11:7). Noah was preaching to the wicked that the judgment and condemnation of God was coming upon them.

Jesus was proclaiming to the spirits (demons) that once sinned that as in the days of Noah their condemnation will be like the flood of Noah, but theirs will be a “baptism” by “fire” as opposed to the flood which was a type of baptism (1 Peter 3:21).

Notice what John the Baptist said about the righteous and the wicked, “And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matthew 3:11-12; see also 2 Peter 3:10-13).

Notice verse 21 again, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh [which is what happen to the wicked in Noah’s time], but the answer of a good conscience toward God, [as Noah and his family did]) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” Jesus was reminding the spirits that he has victory over death and all are subject to him (v.22) including them and the condemnation of the wicked will be by the Baptism with fire, like the condemnation of the old world with the baptism of the flood that killed the wicked.

11. 1 Peter 4:6 Gospel preach also unto them that are Dead

“For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”
Some cite this as proof that Jesus went to Hades and preached to them that are dead. However Christ’s name is not mentioned here, and the passage is really referring to people who have heard the Gospel before they died and are dead now.

The key to understanding this, is that the Gospel has been preached to the world since Adam, (Acts 14:17; Psalm 19:1). God himself: “preached before the Gospel unto Abraham” (Gal 3:8). All of the Old Testament prophets preached the Gospel, “For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Heb 4:2).

12. He Led Captivity Captive (Ephesians 4:8)

Many people quote this passage to say that Jesus after the resurrection went to Hades or hell and took all the Old Testament prophets with him to Heaven.
“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” This verse is obviously a verse about the ascension of Christ.

But there are some questions we need to ask first:

(1) What were the gifts he gave to men, and to whom did he give them?
(2) What was the captivity that he led captive?

Before we answer these questions we must realized that Paul was simply quoting from the book of Psalms. This is the original text he was quoting: “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them” (Psalm 68:18). Those who teach that these gifts were given to them when they entered heaven fall flat when we see the scripture that includes the “rebellious also.”

We can be sure that the rebellious did not go to heaven with the believers. So there must be another answer to our first question; what were the gifts that Christ gave towards these men? Paul gives the answer a few verses later: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph 4:11-12). This passage makes it abundantly clear, why the “rebellious also,” were to receive these gifts. On the earth are righteous and unrighteous people as Jesus said (Matt 9:13). Jesus trained the Apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors and teachers, these are gifts given to us by God, “for the edifying of the body of Christ: ” the righteous. And, “for the perfecting of the saints.” The rebellious also; those in the church that have to overcome their old sins, but also the unrighteous in the world to hear the Gospel so they can repent and believe the good news. This is the “work of the ministry.” To preach the gospel to every creature (Matthew 28:19).

Why does God want the saints perfected? So “that the LORD God might dwell among them,” in this life when the church gathers together (Matt 18:20; Rev 2:1). But also, when the bride has made herself ready (Rev 19:7), then Christ shall come to earth and dwell with her: “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” (Rev 21:3).

Therefore to answer our first question, when Christ ascended into heaven he gave us ministers to perfect the saints.

Our second question was: What does it mean to “lead captivity Captive”? Does it mean Christ led believers to heaven? Not at all!

“Led Captivity Captive” is an old expression that meant that people had been freed from captivity. This phrase occurs in Judges 5:12 in the song Deborah sang after Barak delivered Israel from the Captivity of the Canaanites: “Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and *lead thy captivity captive*, thou son of Abinoam.”

A Newer translation clears it up, it says, “Awake! awake! Deborah: awake! awake! give a song: Up! Barak, and *take prisoner those who took you prisoner*, O son of Abinoam.”

So what kept Christ under its captivity? And now Christ has it under *his* control? Death and the grave! Notice Acts 2:24, “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be *helden* of it.” The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). Jesus was “without sin” (Heb 4:15), so death could not hold Jesus in its grips, in its prison.

But now does Jesus have control over death and the grave? Yes! Revelation 1:18 says, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades-the grave] and of death.” Vincent Word Studies says of this passage, “Rev., correctly, of Death and of Hades. Conceived as a prison-house or a walled city. See on Matt 16:18. The keys are the symbol of authority. See Matt 16:19; Rev 3:7; Rev 9:1; Rev 20:1.” (emphasis theirs and mine). So Jesus has control over his captors, and can release all of mankind from its grips which will happen at the second coming of Jesus Christ-so he *took prisoner those who took him prisoner*.

Therefore Christ, when he ascended to heaven, he seized control over his captors’ death and the grave, and he gave us ministers to perfect the saints.


Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

If the above translation is correct, it would contradict itself. Jesus said that believers who have died shall live. But in the next verse, Jesus is made to say that believers “shall never die.”

Let’s look at the more literal translation. The Concordant Literal New Testament reads: “Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who is believing in me, even if he should be dying, shall be living. And everyone who is living and believing in me, should by no means be dying for the eon. Are you believing this?”
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In other words Jesus said that even if his believers die before the Kingdom age (“eon”) comes; they shall be living (i.e. resurrected). And all believers who are alive when the eon comes “should be no means be dying for the eon.”

This verse does not prove we shall never die. It proves that whether we die before the Kingdom Age comes or live to see it come, all believers of every age shall live “for the eon.” At this point, we too ask the reader, “Believest thou this?”

Paul said the same thing in first Thessalonians chapter 4: “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” (vv.16-17).

14. Absent from the body-Present with the Lord (2 Corinth 5:8)

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

This verse is I think the one verse that is most quoted to prove that when we die we go to Heaven. Yet at the same time it is one of the most misquoted and misunderstood verse in all the bible. In order to understand this verse properly we must see the thrust of Paul’s argument in the preceding verses. Let’s study this verse in context, using a literal translation: “For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eonian in the heavens.

“For in this also [terrestrial tabernacle] we are groaning, longing to be dressed in our habitation which is out of heaven, if so be that, being dressed also, we shall not be found naked.

“For we also, who are in the tabernacle, are groaning, being burdened, on which we are not wanting to be stripped, but to be dressed, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life.

“Now he who produces us for this same longing is God, Who is also giving us the earnest of the spirit.

“Being then courageous always, and aware that, being at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord.

“(For by faith we are walking, not by perception),

“We are encouraged, and are delighting rather to be away from home out of the body AND to be at home with the Lord” (2 Corinth 5:1; 8 C.V.).

Verse one says there are two tabernacles, or bodies, one heavenly, and the other earthly (terrestrial). Verse 2 and 3 explain that at the present time we are burdened in our earthly bodies; but our hope is that some day we shall be “dressed” in the heavenly body, “that the mortal may be swallowed up by life” (v.3).

When will this mortal be swallowed up by life? The moment we die? No, for Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:52-54 that our mortality will not be changed to immortality until the “last trump,” Paul makes it Plain that he looked forward to the resurrection not to the day of his death: “...we are NOT wanting to be stripped [die], but to be dressed [resurrected]...” (v.3).
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Did Paul then turn around and say in verse 8 that when he died, he would be “present with the Lord?” Of course Not! He simply repeated what he said that (1) that this mortal body was burdensome, and (2) that he would rather be dressed in the resurrected body AND “to be at home [in his new body] with the Lord.”

Also, does Paul explain elsewhere when he and others that are saved will be “present with the Lord?” Yes! “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” (1 Thess 2:19). Now it is possible to quote 2 Corinthians 5:8 with the full understanding, “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body [to die], and to be present with the Lord [at his coming].”


Many people who believe in the immortality of the soul say that this is one of the strongest scriptures to prove their point.

People’s failure to recognize what Paul is saying is due to the belief that they have had all their lives of the immortality of the soul. They try and read that belief into the text itself. Paul statement here says, “My desire to depart and be with Christ” is a “relational and NOT and anthropological statement...it is a statement of the relation that exists and continues between the believer and Christ through death, not a statement of the ‘state’ of the body and soul between death and the resurrection” (Biacchicchi, p.178, emphasis added). We have to stop looking at these scriptures with Platonic dualist glasses on, and read the scriptures in context and with the understanding of what the Bible says is the state of the dead.

Also, if the reader would read verses 12-21 it will be clear what Paul is saying, that his death would be gain for Christ. Gain for the spreading of the Gospel. “to die is gain” (v.21). Gain for Paul or Christ? Let see!

Paul had been cast into prison, but instead of the other Christians hiding themselves, they were “confident by my bonds” and openly preaching the Gospel. Thus Paul says: “But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel” (v.12).

After spending much time rejoicing over “the furtherance of the Gospel,” Paul finally begins to discuss the possibility of his being executed for his faith: “...So now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death “For [because] to me to live is Christ, and die is gain” (vv.20-21).

We see that Paul is telling us that the Gospel of Christ would be spread further either by his death or by his life, and Christ would be magnified either way. As Tertullian testified in the second century A.D., “The blood of Christians is seed...” So was Paul to gain? NO! Christ was to gain by the furtherance of the gospel by either Paul’s martyrdom, or Paul life’s mission of preaching the Gospel to the world.
Now verse 23 we can understand now that we know what Paul is speaking of. “I am in a strait betwixt two,” or “I am being pressed out of the two.” Here is Paul’s dilemma which was for Christ’s gain not his, to be executed so Christ would be magnified, or if he was acquitted, Christ would be magnified as well. Paul could not decide which was best for Christ, so he decided not to state any preference to the Philippians: “...yet what I shall choose I wot not [literally “I am not making known”]” (v.22). Paul could not choose either of them, so Paul introduces a third choice which was his real desire: “having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better” (v.23). His third choice was far better. But does this verse indicate heaven? No it does not. “To depart” in the Greek is “analusai.” This word is found only one other time in the scriptures, where it is rendered “return.”

“And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return [analusai] from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately” (Luke 12:36). Notice Jesus uses this parable comparing it to HIS second coming. The “return” of their “Lord.”

The Companion Bible tells us this word is also used in the Apocrypha as well, where it was frequently translated “return.” It also states that “to depart” in Philippians should be translated “for the return.” So here we have Paul’s real desire “the return” of Jesus Christ and “to be” with him, “which is far better.” Paul third choice was to be in the resurrection and to be with Jesus, as he says in 1 Thessalonians 4:17: “so shall we ever be with the Lord.” And when you read verses 16-17 of that chapter Paul is speaking of the resurrection of the dead!

16. Spirit, Soul, and Body 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Another proof text that mainstream Christians says proves humans have an immortal soul is in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 that says, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit [pneuma] and soul [psuche] and body [soma] be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

A Few notes first.

First off, it’s a prayer, “I pray God” Paul says-it’s not a doctrinal statement!

Notice the context. They were to be “preserved blameless.” It’s got nothing to do with what man is composed of, but the life the Christian person leads, and these needs to be blameless. “your whole spirit [pneuma] and soul [psuche] and body [soma] be preserved blameless.”

Mr. Biacchiocchi writes, “We should observe, first, that 1 Thessalonians 5:23 is not a doctrinal statement but a prayer. Paul prays that the Thessalonians may be totally sanctified and preserved blamelessly until the coming of Christ. It is evident that when the Apostle prays that the spirit, soul, and body of the Thessalonians may be preserved blamelessly he is not trying to split human nature into three parts...Paul’s prayer for the Thessalonians to keep the body, soul, and spirit sound and blameless is not intended to list the structural components of the human nature, but to emphasize the total lifestyle of those who await Christ’s coming. The distinction between the
three is ethical and not ontological.” (S. Biacchiocchi, Immortality or Resurrection, pp.89-90, 91, emphasis added).

This other source agrees, “‘your spirit and your soul and your body,’ but this triple subject must not be pressed as if it contained a psychological definition of human nature. St Paul ‘is not writing a treatise on the soul, but pouring forth, from the fullness of his heart, a prayer for his converts’ (Jowett), (George Milligan - Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians; 1 Thessalonians 5, emphasis added).

Secondly, how did Paul view Human nature? Wholism? Or a tripartite being?

“It is useless to attempt to draw from these words a technical, psychological statement of a threefold division of the human personality. If Paul recognized any such technical division, it was more probably twofold; the body or material part, and the immaterial part with its higher and lower sides - πνεῦμα and ψυχὴ.” (Vincent word studies, emphasis added).

Paul speaks of “flesh and spirit.” (1 Corinth 7:34; 2 Corinth 7:1; 1Cor 6:20) Man is viewed as having a very definite dual nature 2 Corinthians 4:16. (See also James 2:26). The wholistic view is the concept of man’s nature that sees him as an irreducible whole, emphasizing the unity and interrelationship of that exist between the function of the body and mind.

Psalm 84:2 defines man as, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” The whole “soul” or “being” is composed of flesh and the heart of man. The word here for “heart” is “Labe” (Strong’s #3820). This means, “inner man, mind, will, heart, understanding 1a) inner part, midst 1a1) midst (of things) 1a2) heart (of man) 1a3) [inner part of the] soul, heart (of man) 1a4) mind, knowledge, thinking, reflection, memory 1a5) inclination, resolution, determination (of will) 1a6) conscience 1a7) heart (of moral character) 1a8) as seat of appetites 1a9) as seat of emotions and passions 1a10) as seat of courage” (Brown Driver Briggs, emphasis added).

So why are three listed spirit, soul and body?

First, we must NOT attempt to interpret this through Greek dualism and philosophy, but by Biblical Wholism. Bullinger is correct when he says, “To ascertain its meaning, it is useless to go to heathen authors. The Greek philosophers were at variance among themselves… We must therefore, let Scripture be its own interpreter.” (Appendix 110, emphasis added). Let the Bible interpret the meaning of the scriptures.

Nowhere does the Bible speak of the soul as an immortal entity capable of living apart from our body as the Greeks and the other pagan nations believed. Neither does it speak of the spirit as an entity which can exist independent of our physical nature. We are not made of independent parts temporarily connected, but of body and mind in one indivisible whole. Notice, James says, “For as the body without the spirit [pneuma] is dead,” (James 2:26). When one looks at the context of James 2:17-26, one can see that it means one cannot live without the other, not that one can function independently from the other. The body needs the spirit as the spirit needs the body. These two compose the “living being.” Neither in the Old Testament nor the New Testament
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does ruach or pneuma refer to an intelligent entity capable of existence apart from the body. This is a pagan concept and not from God and the Bible! Such a concept originated in the ancient pagan religious and philosophical systems of Egypt and Greece then made its way into Christian theology.

So why are three listed spirit, soul and body?

First, the word “spirit” “pneuma.” The context must be the priority to translate this properly. Again the context is the LIFE the Christian leads and must be “preserved blameless.” The context is the LIFE of the Christian! The word “pneuma” is translated “life” in one other passage in the Bible.

Revelation 13:15 states, “And he had power to give life [pneuma] unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” This source states, “The Greek word pneuma is the same as the Hebrew word ruach: see its meaning above. It is rendered both spirit and life. Rev. 13: 15, '- And he had power to give pneuma, life, unto the image,' &c. James 2: 26, ‘For as the body without the pneuma, spirit, is dead [the pneuma gives life],’ &c. In both these texts the translators put it ‘breath’ in the margin, as being as right as spirit and life; “ (Death not life: or, The theological hell and endless misery disproved : and the doctrine of destruction established, by Jacob Blain, p.33, emphasis his and mine). This why the inner soul [psuche] is also called the “life” because within the inner soul is where the [pneuma] the spirit in man resides; this gives life to the body.

We can conclude then that Paul is saying, “…and I pray God your whole spirit [Life]…” for the life of the Christian is the context! “be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now the “soul and body.” If one notices, the same phrase “and soul and body” (kai hē psuchē kai to sōma) is used by Christ in Matthew 10:28. Jesus said “both soul and body” (kai psuchēn kai sōma)

and (και G2532 ψυχην G5590 και G2532 σωμα G4983) (1 Thess 5:23)

both (και G2532 σωμα G4983) (Matthew 10:28)

As noted above, Matthew 10:28, in a thorough examination of its passages, Matthew 10:28 and Isaiah 10:18 in its context “From the King James Translators Notes, The expression ‘Both soul and body’ means ‘from the soul, and even to the flesh,’ or ‘from the soul to the flesh” (Fulfilled Eschatology By Tim Liwanag, p.182, emphasis added).

Notice this source that states, “Both soul and body — Hebrew, מנסחת ותד בשר, from the soul, even to the flesh, a proverbial expression. The fire of God’s wrath shall consume them entirely and
altogether.” (Joseph Benson’s Commentary on the Old & New Testaments, emphasis his and mine) The entire man shall be consumed from the inside out!

Again, the Whedon’s Commentary states, “Literally, from soul even to the flesh; beginning at the vitals and working to the outward frame; that is, the consumption shall be total.” (emphasis his and mine). From the inside out! So when Jesus said the entire man will be consumed in Gahenna, it was from the inner part of the soul—where the mind [spirit] resides, to the outer part of the soul—the flesh, the body, the outer part of the person—from the inside out. As Jesus said man can only kill the body, the outside part of the person, only God can save or destroy the inner part of the person—the mind, the heart, the inner part of the soul (Luke 12:4-5).

Paul and Jesus both being Jews were both quoting Isaiah who said in the Hebrew “from the soul to the flesh,” meaning entire man. from the inner part of the soul (the mind [spirit] and heart) to the flesh (outer part of the soul). Jesus and Paul were quoting from the Septuagint Version of the Bible which says “both soul and body.”

As noted, “the link between the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament is the great Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament made at Alexandria in the third century B. C. The translation was made by Jews, who of course understood the meaning of the Hebrew words and intended the Greek they used to answer it. Thus the Septuagint follows the Hebrew and the New Testament follows the Septuagint. The Septuagint version was not inspired, but in the providence of God it provided this valuable linguistic link between the Old and New Testaments.” (Basil F. C. Atkinson, Life and Immortality (Taunton, England, N. D.), p. 12.).

Jesus and also Paul followed the LXX; it was like the King James Version of the Bible for their day. This source writes, “The PRIORITY of the LXX in Pauline quotations has long been recognized.......Swete affirms that more than HALF of the Pauline QUOTATIONS were taken from the LXX without MATERIAL CHANGE and that, by any test, the LXX ‘is the principal source from which the writers of the New Testament derived their Old Testament quotations........Affinities with the LXX are not only evident in Paul’s quotations but EXTEND to his GENERAL STYLE and VOCABULARY as well........The careful student of the Gospels and St. Paul,’ concludes Swete, ‘is met at every turn by words and phrases which cannot be fully understood without reference to their earlier use in the Greek Old Testament.’” (Paul’s use of the Old Testament, by Earle Ellis, emphasis added). So the Septuagint passage Jesus and Paul quoted from Isaiah, really should read “from soul even to the flesh.”

In both (1 Thess 5:23; Matthew 10:28) even the contexts are the same, it speaks of the whole man, and his life; Paul said “God of peace sanctify you wholly;” This word means “holoteleis. In every part; completely” (Barnes Notes).

Clarke states, “The apostle prays that this compound being, in all its parts, powers, and faculties, which he terms, ὅλοκληρον their whole, comprehending all parts, everything that constitutes man and manhood, may be sanctified and preserved blameless till the coming of Christ…” (Clarke’s Commentary, emphasis added).
Jesus’ passage, “Both soul and body - Hebrew, 'From the soul to the flesh;' that is, entirely.’ the phrase denotes the entireness or totality of anything. The army would be totally ruined.” The only difference being, in the case of Paul, he prayed that the entire person and his life be preserved as opposed to Jesus where the entire person and life is being destroyed in Gahenna, or the entire army being destroyed in Isaiah.

Understanding this, the passage should then read, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly [the entire person]; and I pray God your whole spirit [life] [From the [inner part of the] soul even to the flesh [outer part of the soul]; be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” There is nothing in this passage that indicates an immortal soul.

17. Soul’s “under the Altar (Rev 6:9-11)

“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

“And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

“And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

Those who believe in the immortality of the Soul teach that this passage proves that the martyrs are in heaven. However they do not try to attempt to explain these following points:

- These souls are “under the Altar” rather than in heaven.
- Why are these souls were told to “rest yet for a little season?” Isn’t heaven an eternal bliss, a heavenly retirement?
- Why is that only the “slain,” only the martyred are mentioned? If this was heaven why is it only the slain are mentioned-there have been many millions of Christians that have died of natural causes and never persecuted, why aren't they mentioned? These explanations are never expounded and explained.

First of all, the word “soul” can be translated “Lives.” Bullinger comments, “used of man as an individual (just as we speak of a ship going down with every soul on board, or of so many lives being lost in a railway accident), occurs 14 times, and is rendered ‘soul’ : Acts 2:41; Acts 2:43; Acts 3:23; Acts 7:14; Acts 27:37. Rom 2:9; Rom 13:1. 1Cor 15:45. James 5:20. 1Pet 3:20. 2Pet 2:14. Rev 6:9; Rev 18:13; Rev 20:4.” (Appendix 110, emphasis added). So the scripture can read, “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls [Lives] of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.” This word can be rendered soul or life and is significant to understanding this event taking place.

Secondly, this scene of the opening of the 5th seal is a part of a vision of SEALS that John saw 2000 years ago, this occurred in vision!
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The book of Revelation especially, because most of the book is all in vision is a book of symbols. “…apocalyptic pictures are not meant to be photographs of actual realities, but symbolic representations of almost unimaginable spiritual realities...there are no ‘souls’ of martyrs in heaven squeezed at the base of an altar. The whole scene is simply a symbolic representation designed to reassure those facing martyrdom and death that ultimately they would be vindicated by God.” (Immortality or Resurrection, p.187 by Samuele Bacchiocchi, emphasis added). When one reads the vision of the seals, these are visions of events that are taking place and are all described in symbolism.

Thirdly is the correct context of the events of these visions taking place in this chapter! The first 8 verses deals with the symbolic four horseman. These are symbols of realistic events that are taking place ON EARTH! Verse 8 says, “And power was given unto them [the four horseman] over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” These events were taking place on earth and if we follow the logical sequence, the events of the fifth seal take place on earth as well as the events of the sixth seal! So this vision of the souls under the alter is taking place on EARTH!

So this vision is all in symbols and the Bible interprets its own symbols, therefore we can get its full meaning of what event is taking place on earth.

So what is the Altar? When one studies the language of this passage, and searches other scriptures in the Bible one can understand what this really means.

In the law of sacrifices-the Levites were commanded to offer bullocks upon the altar and “pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering,” (Lev 4:7). So this altar is the altar of Sacrifice. The blood of the sacrifices was always to be poured under the altar upon the ground. When the people killed animals for food, they too were commanded to pour the blood upon the ground and cover it with dust.

Now Leviticus 17 says that the soul(life) of the animal is in the blood; and the soul (life) of the animal was to be put in the ground as an atonement for our souls: “For the life [Nephesh “Soul”] of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul….For it is the life [Nephesh “Soul”] of all flesh: the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof:” (Lev 17:11,14). So when John says he saw the Lives or souls of them that were under the altar he means their blood (souls) was poured under the altar of sacrifice for their faith. When Jesus Christ the lamb of God was sacrificed for our sins, He “poured out his soul [blood] unto death” (Isaiah 53:12). Christ’s soul was made an offering for sin and His soul died.

Thus we see the blood is the soul (life) of the flesh, and the blood must be poured upon the ground in atonement for our souls. The fact that the soul of the animal was killed and placed on the ground to atone for man’s sin proves that man’s soul dies and goes into the ground; as well as God saying, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen 3:19).
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Notice that the use of the word “souls—psuchas” in this passage is unique for the New Testament, because it is never used to refer to humans in the intermediate state. The reason for its use here is suggested by the unnatural death of the martyrs whose blood was shed for the cause of Christ. A martyr is one who sacrificed his life for his faith Jesus Christ. In fact, any true Christian presents his life as a “living sacrifice” (Rom 12:1), and who is willing to sacrifice his life for his faith, “they loved not their lives unto the death” (Rev 12:11). Jesus “poured out his soul [blood] unto death” These are sacrifices! When one understands this-one can understand why they are at the base of this altar.

Where is this altar? As mentioned above the martyrdom, and the visions of the four horsemen take place on this earth. The altar of sacrifice is this earth. God told Israel, “An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.” (Ex 20:24). Sarah Peck writes, “The court [of the sanctuary] is the place where the victims were slain whose blood was to be ministered in the sanctuary ” (The Path to the throne of God, p.63). In the court was the altar of the sacrifice, and Jesus the sacrificial lamb was “…Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev 13:8). The court where the altar stands, is this earth and Christians are martyrs for their faith, sacrificing their lives for their belief in Jesus.

Now in verse 10, understanding that this is in vision, and that these are symbols, one must let the Bible interpret the symbolism used. The symbolic language used here is very similar to that used in the case of Abel. When Cain slew his brother, God did NOT say to Cain: “Your brother Abel’s soul came up to me in heaven and told me you killed him.” No, God said: “the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground” (Gen 4:10). Blood doesn’t have a mouth, this is obviously metaphor. This is a metaphor meaning vengeance for the crime committed; the martyr asking God to avenge him. The martyrs in Rev 6 say the same thing: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (v.10).

Notice Genesis 4:10 say the blood cries from the Ground, yet in Revelation it says from the base of the “altar”? Is there a connection? Yes when comparing all the scriptures, the martyrs blood is poured on to the ground at the base of the altar (Rev 6:9)-Cain slew his brother on earth (altar) (Gen 4:9), and then the blood of the martyrs from the ground cries to God for vengeance (Rev 6:10)-Abel's blood after he was slain cried to God for vengeance (Gen 4:10). The exact sequence is taking place in Rev 6:9-10.

We conclude that John did not see saints alive in heaven, but rather a VISION of the many saints who “were slain for the word of God” and who were “under the altar” (in the ground), where they shall “rest” (sleep) until all pre-resurrection events are fulfilled, where their “fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” (Rev 6:11). More sacrifices of saints will be added under the altar and poured on the ground, Then their “rest” shall end in the resurrection.

18. Twenty-Four Elders in Heaven Rev 4:8-11

“And the four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and
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is to come!’ Whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ‘You are Worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created’” (Revelation 4:8-11).

The Bible shows us that many thousands of angels appear before God’s throne, and they speak with loud voices. “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!’” (Revelation 5:11-12). We have seen that the Scriptures show no human has ever entered heaven. The voices referred to in Revelation 19, then, are those of angelic beings who surround God’s great throne.


20. John 14:2 “In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

In John 14:3, Jesus says, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

Since Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection, and since God the Father dwells in heaven, we might safely assume that the “Father’s house” of which Jesus spoke is in heaven. Moreover, since Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you,” we might safely assume that the “place” He is preparing is in the Father’s house in heaven.

But notice that Jesus did not say that His followers would go to heaven and take up residence in the new mansions He had prepared for them. On the contrary, He said, “I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” Jesus will receive His saints when He comes again not before! He will establish His kingdom right here on this earth, and the saints will reign with Him (Revelation 2:26, 27; 3:21; 5:10).

The term translated “mansions” is better rendered “rooms,” “abodes,” or “chambers.” The Father’s house, Jesus says, has many rooms, and He is now preparing a place for His disciples, but they will not take up residence in their new place until the Father’s house the Father’s dwelling place comes to this earth.

But what is the Father’s house? What does the Bible declare the Father’s house to be?

Nowhere does the Bible call “heaven” the Father’s house. The Father’s house is being built IN heaven, but it is not heaven! Heaven is never said to have “mansions.”
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The ancient tabernacle built under Moses had two compartments, the inner, called the Holy of Holies, being an exact picture of the throne of God - of heaven itself. It had no mansions. Read Hebrews 8:5, Rev 11:19 and 9:1-7 to see exactly what the pattern of heaven is like. No, Jesus was not referring to heaven. He is referring to a place being prepared in heaven.

When in the temple, Jesus said to the Jews who were selling doves and cattle therein: “Make not my FATHER’S HOUSE an house of merchandise.” (John 2: 16) Here is the simple Bible definition of the Father’s house. It was the temple which stood in Jesus’ day at Jerusalem. Luke 19:46 and Isaiah 56:7 mention the same thing.

But did the temple have many “mansions” or rooms and chambers in it? Certainly, read Jeremiah 35:2. It is in this temple that Jesus is preparing a place for his followers. Jesus promises, “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God” (Revelation 3:12).

There are only two texts in the Bible which tell us what is being prepared. The first is in Matthew 25:34. Here Christ said: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” The other text is in Revelation 21:2: “And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” The Bible says the only places that are prepared are the Kingdom of God and the New Jerusalem. So the Temple in Jerusalem was a type of the Kingdom of God and the New Jerusalem-this is the Father’s House, and “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” (Rev 21:22).

Notice that the dwelling place of God the “Father’s house” will be located here on this earth. But notice a “Place” can also mean a position of power as well as a geographical location. The Greek word is “Topos” (Strong’s #5117). Thayer’s writes, “2) metaphorically 2a) the condition or station held by one in any company or assembly 2b) opportunity, power, occasion for acting.”

In the fourth verse of Jeremiah 35, we notice that different chambers were for persons of different rank. Hanan, a man of God, had his chamber or room “by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door.” The various chambers or “mansions” corresponded to the ranks of the persons residing in them. Each room of the Temple - a type of the Father’s house - not only designated the residence of each official, but also indicated his position or office, whether he was a doorkeeper or prince.

Christians shall be “kings and priests” and they shall “reign on the earth” (Rev 5:10). This is what Christ is preparing. In Jeremiah the 35th chapter the various chambers or “mansions” corresponded to the ranks of the persons residing in them. This is what Jesus is preparing for us, the position we will hold in the kingdom of God, and the chamber we will reside in, in the New Jerusalem. Jesus said, “I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” When He returns we will occupy those positions, and reign on the earth, not heaven.
21. Philippians 3:20-21

“For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.”

This verse doesn’t say we go to Heaven to join our eternal body. It says our “citizenship” is in heaven, we don’t go to heaven. And Peter wrote, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” (1 Pet. 1:3-4; Col 1:5). The citizenship is reserved-The truth is, we look to the heavens for the Savior who will return at the resurrection with our glorious citizenship (reward, treasure, building of God, inheritance), and give it to us here on earth as he said in Matthew 5:5, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”

22. “Gave up the Ghost”

There is a common expression in the Bible when someone dies and it is one who “gave up the ghost.” Many believe that this is proof that one has an immortal soul and when Jesus gave up the ghost he told his Father, “…into thy hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23:46); so many believe that Jesus when he died went to heaven. Is this true? What does giving up the ghost mean, and did Jesus go into the hands of the Father when he died?

In Genesis 25:8 we read of the death of Abraham and it says: “Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age...” In nine other instances in the Old Testament in the (KJV) similarly speaks of a dying person. In all those ten cases a single Hebrew verb (gawa) is translated into the four-word phrase “gave up the ghost,” or “yielded up the ghost.” In other instances in that same version gawa is translated to “be dead” once “die” 11 times, “perish” twice, and (as a participle) “ready to die” once.

Now the King James translators many times used the biases and preconceived ideas to translate certain words. They believed in the immortality of the soul and Ghosts, so they applied it to some words in the Bible. However “There is no special reason for retaining ‘ghost’ in the English…” (Robertson’s Word Pictures).

In Hebrew “gawa” means “to gasp out,” “to breath out,” “expire” “die” (see Strong’s #1478). Hence it is no surprise to find the Revised Standard Version saying “Abraham breathed his last and died.” So also the New American Standard Bible, The New American Bible, and the Jerusalem Bible. The English Translation long published by the Jewish publications Society of America simply says that “Abraham expired.”

In the New Testament of the King James it is stated concerning four persons that each of them “gave up the ghost” when they died. In two such accounts the Greek noun pneuma is rendered “ghost.”
But in these instances (Matthew 27:50; John 19:30) the Greek term is used “as the equivalent of the Hebrew word ruach, and means the ‘spirit’ or the _breath of life from God_...” (Is Your Soul Immortal, Robert Leo Odom, p.34, emphasis added). When looking at the 4 Gospels the context is clear as the Old Testament scriptures that it means “breath” not “spirit,” pertaining to a supernatural entity.

More modern translations correctly translate Matthew and John as “died,” “expired” or “breathed his last.” Notice:

- “Once again Jesus shouted, and then he _died._” (CEV)
- “Again Jesus cried out loudly and then _died._” (ERV)
- “Jesus again gave a loud cry and _breathed his last._” (GNB)
- “Then Jesus loudly cried out once again and _gave up his life._” (GW)
- “Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice again and _died._” (ISV)
- “Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, _expired._” (Webster’s)

Mark 15:37, 39 and Luke 23:46 the Greek verb ekpneo is rendered as “gave up the ghost.” The prefix ek (meaning “out”) and the verb pneo (“to blow, to breath”) are combined as ekpneo, which means “to breath out,” “to exhale,” or “to gasp.” (Bullinger’s Companion Bible) Several modern versions which are not paraphrasing rendered the verb as “breathed his last.” Some simply say he “died.” Interesting that this word is from “pneuma which is the _root of ekpneō, the verb in Mark and Luke._”

In mentioning the deaths of Ananias, Sapphira, and King Herod, the KJV states that they “gave up the ghost,” or “yielded up the ghost.” Acts 5:5, 10, 12:23. The Greek verb used here is eksucho, which is correctly rendered as “died” in several modern translations of the New Testament. No “ghost” is mentioned here.

Basically the breath of life when taken away results in soul becoming a _dead soul_. “In relating the story of the raising to life of the widow’s son at Zarephath by Elijah the prophet… the death of the boy is described as the cessation of breathing: ‘There was no breath left in him.’ This suggests that as the cessation of breathing caused the _soul–nephesh to die_, so the revival of breathing caused the return of the _soul-nephesh back to life_, a living soul.

What of Jesus, when he said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:”? What does this mean?

Jesus was actually quoting Psalm 31:5 when David being hunted down by his enemies said, “Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.

_Inthine hand I commit my spirit:_ thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

“I have hated them that regard lying vanities: _but I trust in the LORD._” (Psalm 31:4-6). The word “spirit” “may mean either ‘life,’ considered as the animating principle, _equivalent to the word ‘myself;’_” (Barnes Notes, emphasis added).

David put his _life_ in the hands of God and trusted that God would _deliver him out of the hands of his enemies!_
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Jesus was saying the same thing! He put his trust in the Father to deliver him from the enemy which is death (1 Corinthians 15:26). And 3 days and 3 nights later God did deliver Jesus from death and brought him back to life, “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” (Acts 2:24).

The K&D Commentary states, “[Jesus] Like David, He commends His spirit to God; but not, that He may not die, but that dying He may not die, i.e., that He may receive back again His spirit corporeal life, which is hidden in the hand of God, in imperishable power and glory.” (emphasis added).

23. Matthew 27:52-53

“And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”
Did these resurrected saints go to heaven with Jesus?

Let’s breakdown the scriptures and get the true meaning. Verse 51 tells us, “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;” This was a great earthquake, so much so that, “It was not confined to Judea, but was felt in other countries. It is mentioned by Roman writers.” (Barnes Notes).

In fact the Geology Review discovered evidence of the earthquake described in Matthew’s Gospel, at the Dead Sea, “We have tabulated a varved chronology from a core from Ein Gedi on the western shore of the Dead Sea between deformed sediments due to a widespread earthquake in 31 BC and deformed sediments due to an early first-century earthquake. The early first-century seismic event has been tentatively assigned a date of 31 AD with an accuracy of ±5 years.” (An early first-century earthquake in the Dead Sea, Jefferson B. Williams).

So this was a powerful earthquake which split the rocks, “That is, were torn asunder. Rocks are still seen at Mount Calvary thus rent asunder, which are said to be the ones that were convulsed when the Saviour died.” (Barnes Notes). This quake was powerful enough to open the Graves or tombs of dead people.

Notice the context, “And the graves were opened;” “‘Graves’ or sepulchers were most commonly made, among the Jews, in solid rocks or in caves of rocks. The rending of the rocks, therefore, would lay them open. The graves were opened by this earthquake…” (Barnes Notes, emphasis added).

Then it says, “and many bodies of the saints which slept arose” First, the saints were “sleeping” meaning death. Nowhere does it say that their immortal souls were put back into them and they became alive. It says the BODIES AROSE!

Does this mean “came back to life”? Yes in its proper context it does mean this, “1a) to arouse from sleep, to awake 1b) to arouse from the sleep of death, to recall the dead to life” (Thayer’s). But what is the context here? There is an earthquake, the rocks are split, and the tombs open and the bodies of the saints “arose.” This word also means, “to cause to rise from a seat or bed [dead
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bodies are often [lying down] etc…[to be] erect” (Thayer’s). This is what happened during the earthquake, the bodies stood up and were erect, *not* because they came back to life, *but because of the earthquake!*

**Who are the “Saints”?**

These “saints” just means “true believers, who are called saints in the New Testament.” (Pulpit commentary) Peake writes, “By “the saints” the writer probably meant devout Jews of the type of Simeon (Luke 2)…” These are People who worshipped God faithfully!

These “saints,” “Of course, *it is not known who these were,* nor what became of them. It is probable that they were **persons who had recently died,** and they appear to have been **known** in Jerusalem; at least, **had the ancient saints risen, they would not have been known,** and would not so soon have been credited as those who had recently died.” (Barnes Notes, emphasis added).

The “bodies” of these people were still intact and have not fully decomposed yet and were **known** to people in Jerusalem at that time. These were people who were recently alive and were dead. If these were ancient saints like Zachariah or Ezra etc…no one would have known who they were, and there would be no bodies just **bones,** how can one recognize a person when the person is all bones?

Now if this meant every holy person from the time of Adam until Jesus then this event it would border on absurdity to think that such a large-scale, literal resurrection would have gone completely unmentioned in the rest of the NT, as well as Jewish history! Why did Peter say that King David was “both **dead and buried,** and his **sepulchre** is with us unto this day… For David is **not** ascended into the heavens” (Act 2:29, 34)? Why wasn’t David resurrected and went to Heaven with Jesus as some believe?

If this meant all the Old Testament saints, then why does Hebrews 11 say, “These all died in faith, **not** having received the promises,” (v.13). This is speaking of the Old Testament Patriarchs-the saints. The New Testament says they are dead, and have **not** received eternal life!

The next verse states, “And [the bodies] **came out of the graves after his resurrection,** and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” (v,53).

Many have acknowledged that vv.52-53 is two separate events due to the word *Kai* which can serve merely as a simple conjunction or mark the beginning of a new sentence. We must look to context, as well as the wider Biblical record regarding the resurrection, in order to decide the chronology of these events.

The text themselves reveal bodies rising out of their graves at the *death* of Christ; And bodies coming out of their graves *after* the resurrection of Christ, so there is little doubt that these are two separate events that took place three days apart.

Now how did the bodies coming out of their graves in verse 52? By the earthquake! The *language* being the *identical* with verse 52, one can see that the bodies in verse 53 also came out of their *graves by an earthquake.* Was there an earthquake *after* the resurrection?
Matthew 28:2, “And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.” This was at the “end of the Sabbath” (v.1), and Jesus was risen already (v.6). One author writes, “The shaking of the earth served to split these (and possibly other) rocks, thus opening the tombs [Matthew 27]. It is significant that another earthquake will accompany another opening of a tomb in the very next chapter [Matthew 28].” (Exegesis of Matthew 27:51-54 A Closer Look at a Biblical Anomaly James-Michael Smith, pp.6-7, emphasis added). It was due to this earthquake in Matthew 28:2 that bodies were rising out of their graves and Jesus’ tomb was open. The similarities are inescapable.

Now the bodies “went into the holy city.” How did they get there? They did not come back to life. The context shows that they arose out of their graves due to the earthquake. The only logical explanation is that the people of Jerusalem and the Romans brought the bodies into Jerusalem. This conclusion is feasible due to the fact that the end of the verse it says the bodies, “appeared unto many.” The Greek word for “appeared” is “emphanizō” (Strong’s #1718), meaning “to manifest, exhibit to view” (Thayer’s). These bodies were publically displayed. Why were they publically displayed? So the families of these dead people can rebury them. This is how many knew that these were “saints” that recently died.

Another way the bodies could have gotten into Jerusalem was due to the earthquake The seismic shifts of the earth’s surface could have caused them to go into the city. One source writes, “others think that the simple meaning is this: - by the earthquake several bodies that had been buried were thrown up and exposed to view, and continued above ground till after Christ’s resurrection, and were seen by many persons in the city.” (Clarke’s Commentary). Either way, or by both methods, the dead bodies were brought into the city, by people or by the great earthquake and none of these were brought back to life and then went to heaven with Jesus.

24. Ecclesiastes 12:7 “Returns to God”

This passage in Ecclesiastes 12 is a favorite one for the dualist who believes that when we die we go to heaven. But what does the passage really say? “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” We must put all scriptures together and see what is really meant.

“Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.” (Psalms 104:29).

“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” (Psalm 146:4). In all the passages describing the same event, the word breath or spirit is “ruach.” Both animals and men have “ruach.” “Who knoweth the spirit [ruach] of man that goeth upward, and the spirit [ruach] of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Eccl 3:21). The verse before this one says that both man and beast go to one place, “All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.” The dust, not heaven or hell, but the grave. So the translation for that scripture when compared to all the verse should read, “the spirit [breath] shall return unto God who gave it” God gave the breath of life, and it returns to God who gave it because, “he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things… For in him we live, and move, and have our being;” (Acts
17:25, 28). It’s the breath that goes back to God, man himself as the scriptures say go to the dust of the earth.

In conclusion, the Bible says that men and women are composed of flesh, blood, the breath of life, and a human spirit or mind. When the person dies, the person returns to the dust from whence they came, and their “thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:4), and the “dead know not anything” (Eccl 9:5). In a deep sleep, the Bible says there they remain, not heaven, not hell as the pagans believe. But is there life after death? Is there any hope for us and our love ones who have perished for eternal life? Yes! The Bible speaks of a resurrection from the dead, and in that same resurrection, those who are alive still during that time will be caught up together with them, that is the dead in Christ, and shall live forever. In the next section, we will examine the resurrection.

25. “Great Is Your reward in Heaven”

WHAT DID Jesus mean when He told His disciples, “Be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven”? (Matt. 5:12.) And why — only a few verses before — did Christ say, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”? (verse 5). Do some of the saved — “the persecuted.” (verses 11-12) — go to heaven to collect their reward, while others — “the meek” — inherit the earth? Or did Jesus Christ contradict Himself in His very next breath?

The Apostle Peter was inspired to write, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” (1 Pet. 1:3-4). Notice it! The reward of the saved — the inheritance of true Christians — is reserved in heaven. That is where it is kept at this present time.

But do Christians go to heaven to receive their reward? Jesus Christ explained it in the Book of Revelation: “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” (Rev. 22:12). When Christ returns from heaven the second time He will bring the reward of the saved with Him! Though now temporarily reserved in heaven, Jesus will bring the reward of His saints (true Christians) to this earth!

Daniel wrote, “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (Dan. 7:27).

Jesus did not say Christians will inherit their reward IN heaven. Rather, the reward — authority, an office of power in the Kingdom of God — is being temporarily reserved in heaven because that is where Jesus is. But it will be brought to the earth, where Jesus will reward His saints, in the Kingdom of God, with positions of rulership and authority over the nations.
Part Three:
The Resurrection

Job Said, “If a man die, shall he live again?” (Job 14:14). The resurrection basically means to be raised from the dead. Jesus spoke of it, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the 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 [Gk. “Krisis” “judgment”]” (John 5:28-29). Notice Jesus says they “shall hear” so they are not in a state of bliss in heaven at the master’s feet, but unconscious “in the graves.”

The Resurrection is a RETURN from the dead. God says nothing about resurrecting men’s spirit’s out of heaven. It is axiomatic that the living cannot be resurrected, for only the dead can be raised from the dead. The story of man’s life, death and resurrection is summed up in Psalm 104:29-30: “Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou taketh away their breath, they die, and return to their dust... Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.” In other words, God removes his breath [spirit] from man, he dies and returns to the earth. The resurrection is a re-creation from the state of non-existence. In this way the earth and man will be renewed. Ezekiel says the same thing: “the breath came into them, and they lived...Behold, O my people, I will open your graves,...And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live,” (37:10, 12, 14).

Note some important things in this scripture, all of which are generally overlooked:

1. Breath came into them and they lived. It does not say-nor is it true that a “never dying soul,” or a conscious entity returned to their bodies and caused them to live.
2. God says, “I will...put my spirit [breath of God] in you, and ye shall live.” What cause them to live? The first part says it was the “breath” and the last part says “my Spirit;” the breath of God breathed into their nostrils as with Adam in Genesis 2:7.

The most complete set of references to the word resurrection that we know is found in Young’s Analytical Concordance and Strong’s Exhaustive. Here are the complete references in the New Testament of the resurrection: Matthew 22:23, 28, 30, 31; Mark 12:18, 23; Luke 14:14; 20:27, 33, 35, 36; John 5:29; 11:24, 25; Acts 1:22; 2:31; 4:2, 33; 17:18, 32; 23:6, 8; 24:15, 21;
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Romans 1:4; 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:12, 13, 21, 42; Phil 3:10, 11; 2 Tim 2:18; Heb 6:2; 11:35; 1 Peter 1:3; 3:21; Rev 20:5, 6; and Matthew 27:53.

The above references speak of “the resurrection,” the “resurrection of Jesus Christ,” and most frequently, “the resurrection of [or from] the dead.” You may be surprised to hear that no single instance do we read of the Resurrection of the body. Meaning the body and the soul separate. When the Bible speaks of the body, it is biblical wholism that we have seen which constitutes the whole person. Here are some examples:

In Isaiah 26:19 we read: “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust....” The first part of this verse speaks of “thy dead men,” not “the bodies of those who have died.” The last part of the same verse says, “ye that dwell in the dust;” not “the bodies of them that dwell in the dust.” These two parts of the same sentence do not mention “bodies” at all.

“My dead body” does not suggest that Isaiah’s body will just be raised, while his soul or spirit comes down from heaven and re-enters his body. This passage simply illustrates that one cannot separate the body from the person. Isaiah equates himself his body with the dead MEN. This is biblical wholism which we have seen shows that you cannot separate the person from his body.

Notice the Apostle, how he also equates our bodies with our being, the person: “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

“It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:42-45). Do you see how the Apostle Paul wrote about the body and then Adam, and how he became a “living Soul” or being which constitutes the whole person as we have seen above.

The Three Resurrections

The Bible speaks of three resurrections. When we read the scenario of the three resurrections it makes total sense. It shows God’s willingness to give all of mankind a chance for salvation. It also reveals God’s mercy and justice. To understand the resurrections, we must understand what the Judgment is. We read all over the Bible about judgment and condemnation. Many seem to mix these two, and misunderstandings creep in to what the texts really mean.

What is the Judgment?

Jesus addressed the fact of more than one resurrection when He said that “the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation [or judgment]” (John 5:28-29). The word “condemnation” here is the Greek word “krisis.”
Peter said, “For the time is come that judgment [Gk. Krima] must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17). Christians right now are under the Judgment of God. Peter used the word “krima."

Notice the scripture: "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world” (1 Corinthians 11:32). When we are “judged” we are “chastened” or corrected by God that we are NOT “condemned.”

Habakkuk writes, “Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction” (Hab 1:12). God’s judgments that God laid down in his law are for our correction. To show us what sin is, and to avoid the action altogether. “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;” (Psalm 94:12). This is the process of repentance. God tells us to repent and keep his ways, his laws and judgments so we are corrected, and walk in the ways of God, the right way. God’s people in this present day, and also those in the past who have die in the Lord were also in this state of judgment. Let’s examine these Greek words and come to understand what they mean.

Krisis- The Greek word “krisis.” This word refers to a process of evaluation rather than an act of punishment. Vine’s writes, “...the process of investigation, the act of distinguishing and separating, ...a judging, a passing of judgment upon a person or thing” (W.E. Vine, Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1985, p. 119). Jesus uses this word when he refers to the second resurrection of all of mankind. Jesus said that, “The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment [Krisis] with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the Wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.” (Luke 11:32). They rise together in the same judgment and the queen will “condemn” them. Again we see “Judgment” and “condemnation.”

Other scriptures that reveal the same time setting are Mat 10:15, Mat 11:22, Mat 11:24, Mat 12:36, Mat 12:41-42, Mar 6:11, Luke 10:14. These Judgments are found in the law of God, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, [krisis] mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Mat 23:23; see Luke 11:42). These Judgments in God's law are for corrections to show the right way to live.

“That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment [krisis]” (Matt 12:36). This will be the time of giving an account to God of things said, and done, and evaluated. JFB and other commentaries say it’s “estimating character in the day of judgment.” A persons character is evaluated, estimated, to evaluate how much character building the person needs and then “counts the cost.” (Luke 14:28). This is done to become a “disciple” of Jesus, and to understand what one is getting into. “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

“And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.
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“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?
“Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,
“Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.” (Luke 14:26-30). When all of mankind stands before God, being evaluated, these must decide whether to accept the Lord and his ways, or reject the Lord and receive the condemnation of death. 2 Peter 2:9 says, “to reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment [krisis] to be punished:”

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment [Krisis]:” (Hebrews 9:27).

Krima- Krisis is to be distinguished from Krima, that the Apostle Peter used and it refers to “the process of Judgment leading to a decision 1Peter 4:17” (ibid, p.119, emphasis added.). We Christians are in the process of Judgment, of correction, and chastisement; to live God’s way, to shed the old man, and to live a new life of righteousness. Notice what Hebrews says, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:
“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.
“If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?
“But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.
“Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence:
shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?
“For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he [God] for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.
“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Hebrew 12:5-11). This chastening leads to holiness and righteousness.

The word for chastening in Greek is “paideia” This means, “the whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment) It also includes the training and care of the body, “2) whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing passions.
“2a) instruction which aims at increasing virtue” (Thayer’s). This is the purpose of God’s Judgments to correct us, and teach us the ways of God.

This process leads to the decision of salvation, or condemnation, if a Christian accepts or rejects the Lord. Hebrew 6 explicitly says, “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
“And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
“If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.
“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:
“But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.” (vv.4-8). These Christians if they don’t repent the decision is to be condemned to the lake of fire. This is the Judgment that Christians are under and eventually all people will be under when they come to the knowledge of the truth.

**Krino**-The Greek verb *krino*, meaning “to distinguish, choose, give and opinion upon...” (ibid., p. 119). This again is the evaluation process beforehand that goes into coming to a decision. As Christians overcome and ask for forgiveness through the blood of Jesus and are cleansed and saved (1 John 1:7). “...the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Romans 2:4). By being corrected and keep the laws of God it leads to the decision of receiving eternal life. Without repentance it could lead to eternal death in the lake of fire. As Romans 5 says, “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” (v.21). Notice sin reigns “unto” death, righteousness “unto” eternal life. Those who repent and overcome, those who do not repent, leads to one or the other! This is the Judgment of God! The time of correction for the believer! If he sins “in the law shall be judged [Kino] by the law.” Being evaluated, and without repentance, or repenting and being forgiven, the decision will render them sentenced to eternal death, or given eternal life. This is why is the next verse Paul says, “(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified” (Rom 2 v.13). This is how you become just before God by repenting and keeping God's law.

**Katakrino**- The word that is used as the sentenced pronounced on an unrepentant sinner is “Katakrino.” meaning “condemnation.” Vines says, “a strengthened form of ‘Krino’, signifies ‘to give judgment against, pass sentence upon;’ hence ‘to condemn’ implying (a) the fact of a crime, e.g., Rom. 2:1; 14:23; 2 Pet. 2:6; some mss. Have it in Jas. 5:9; (b) the imputation of a crime, as in the ‘condemnation’ of Christ by the Jews, Matt. 20:18; Mark 14:64....In Rom. 8:3, God’s ‘condemnation’ of sin is set forth in that Christ, His own Son, sent by Him to partake of human nature (sin apart) and to become an offering for sin, died under the judgment due to our sin” (p.119, emphasis added). Strong's says the same, “to judge against, that is, sentence: - condemn, damn.” (2632). this is the word used by Jesus for the condemnation of the unrepentant sinner.

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned [Katakrino].” (Mark 16:16). As we have demonstrated above, judgment and condemnation. “But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned [Katakrino] with the world” (1 Corinthians 11:32). This word always leads to the death of a sinner according to the law of God. “Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned [katakrino] him to be guilty of death.” (Mark 14:64). “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrrha into ashes condemned [Katakrino] them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;” (2 Peter 2:6). Sodom was an example to all the ungodly that reject God, burning in the lake of fire, eternal death.

People in God’s church are receiving their chance for salvation now. They are “called, chosen, and faithful” (Rev 17:14). These will live forever and not be subject to the “second death.” “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand
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years.” (Rev 20:6). These are the people of God now. Called, chosen and faithful, being judged, corrected by God now, with the Holy Spirit in them, overcoming this world, and to be resurrected with the saints of God throughout all of history, and to live forever with Christ in a new resurrected, or changed body.

Only the dead can be raised to life, but the living saints who are still here when Christ comes, the Bible says their bodies will be changed, “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent 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.” (1 Thess 4:15-17).

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; 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 incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” (1 Cor 15:51-52). Paul said not all will “sleep” or die. But those who remain will be “changed” into their new spirit bodies.

This is the fate of all believers in Christ. Those who have the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in them, and are being chastened, corrected, judged right now who overcome unto the end shall be saved and will receive eternal life in a new resurrected or changed spirit body. (see 1 Corinthians 15 the whole chapter).

Two Types of Death

The scripture says that those who are in the first resurrection are not subject to the “second death.” This means, all others in the second resurrection and those still alive at Jesus second coming are subject to it.

We have seen in Genesis 2:16-17 that the penalty for Adam’s transgression was mortality, that is, a dying process. We have also seen according to Romans 5:12, that this mortality was passed down to all men as a consequence to Adam’s sin, rather than our own. In other words God did not wait until we committed our first sin to make us mortal. Rather we are all born mortal, not as a result of our own sin, but as a result of Adam’s sin.

Therefore this type of death which we call mortality is experienced by all meaning indeed by all creation. “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminenence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again” (Eccl 3:19-20).

However there is another kind of death that ONLY the wicked unrepentant sinner will experience. It is called the second death: “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part
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in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death....And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev 21:8; 20:13-15). The righteous shall not experience the second death they will be resurrected to eternal life, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” (Rev 20:5). These people will be subject to the second death. This means they are not resurrected immortal like the saints, but brought back to life in their same flesh and blood bodies, and RECEIVE THEIR FIRST CHANCE FOR SALVATION!

The Second Resurrection

The second resurrection is the resurrection all people who never had a chance for salvation. This is the “rest of the dead.” These are the ones who never heard the name of Jesus Christ. They never had the truth revealed to them or maybe they were little babies who were killed or died of malnutrition that never got a chance to be saved. The Apostle Paul said, “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

“Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. ” (I Tim 1:12-13). The Apostle Paul was ignorant, he did not know the truth and God showed him mercy, and his truth, and was saved. Surely those who were ignorant of the truth of God-people who have come and gone and did not know the truth, as God showed mercy to Paul, surely God will show mercy to them and he will in the second resurrection. Whatever the situation, these will finally get a chance to know God, and to begin the process of salvation in their lives and to get to know the true God of the Bible. This is called the Great White Throne Judgment!

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Rev 20:11-12).

This is the time of Judgment. Right now, the Judgment is for God’s people being judged right now according to their works. Peter writes: “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? [willingly reject God’s truth, explained below]” (1 Peter 4:17). God judges his people. The Bible is very clear on this point: “For the LORD shall judge his people,” (Deut 32:36).

Many people believe that the time of Judgment is for the wicked when they receive their sentence to the lake of fire. But this contradicts the scripture: “Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.” (Psalm 1:5). The ungodly, the Bible says will not stand in the Judgment. Only repentant sinners will stand in the judgment who have been made right through the blood of Jesus Christ, as the church of God is being judged right now, repenting, and being corrected. The people in the second resurrection
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will go through the SAME PROCESS! These people during that time, if they refuse to obey, and this includes those who are kept alive during the second coming of Jesus Christ, will be subject to the second death. These are people who know the way of God, receive their chance for salvation and TOTALLY REJECT IT! Matthew 25:31-46 clearly makes this obvious with the separation of the sheep and the goats. These are the nations that survive the tribulation and the wrath of God. Those who will not obey the Lord during the time of correction and judgment will receive the second death, and those who do obey will receive eternal life.

The Third Resurrection

Now when we get to Rev 20:13-15 we read of the third resurrection and those subject to the second death:

“And the sea gave up the dead [third resurrection] which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged [“krino”] every man according to their works.

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Notice it says “they were judged,” past tense. They went through the evaluating process, the Judgment, their chance for salvation and have rejected it!

Notice also that the book of life is not mentioned in these passages. Why? These people had their chance for salvation and rejected it. Notice what Jesus says to his followers who were sinning, “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” (Rev 3:5; Ex 32:33). Jesus said those who overcome, and continue on the path of salvation will he not blot out of the book of life. Those not in the book will be resurrected into the lake of fire. These people, God will judge, sentence and execute: “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

When a person repents and is baptized and receives the Holy Spirit, that person is added to the book of life. “Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.” (Psalm 69:28). Only the righteous are in the book of life. God said, “Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.” (Ex 32:33). If “all have sinned” then the majority of mankind is not in the book of life. Revelation 13:8 speaks of the whole world that follow the beast and it says, “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” This is why in the second resurrection, “…the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life:” (Rev 20:12). People in the second resurrection will repent, obey God and be added to the book of life, those who do not will be thrown into the lake of fire and be consumed and die forever, permanent death, and a state of nonexistence.

But the scripture also says this, “And the sea gave up the dead [third resurrection] which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.” Who are these people whose names are not in the book of life? These are those who have known the way of God and have rejected it in this life, from the time of Adam until the second coming of Jesus.
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There are scriptures in the Bible that show that you can lose salvation, and that is totally up to the individual. The result without repentance is the lake of fire: “Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

“When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

“Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

“So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

“While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

“For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

“But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?

“And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

“So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.” (Hebrews 3:1-8). The apostle Paul speaking to believers who know the truth using the example of Moses in the wilderness showing that because they disbelieved and fell away from God they could not go into the promise land.

And then he says the same can happen to us. We will die and not enter into the kingdom of God [the rest, see Isaiah 11:10]. This is the second death.

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

“And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

“If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

“But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned” (Hebrews 6:4-8). The fruits which we produce, righteousness in our lives, will either be gathered and enter into God’s kingdom and the ones who will not produce the fruits of righteousness will be burned in the lake of fire if they do not repent, see Matthew 3:8,10-12;7:16-20; 2 Corith 9:10. So if we reject the calling of Jesus Christ, his truth revealed to us, and begotten by the Holy Spirit, then we can lose salvation and be part of the second death.

Some people take this scripture to show the time of Judgment is a time of punishment:

“…reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished.” (2 Peter 2:9). But the NIV translation renders it “unrighteous for punishment UNTIL the day of judgment.” The Jewish New Testament renders this passage: “holds the wicked UNTIL the day of judgment while
continuing to punish them.” When you look at the context of the scripture Peter is speaking of the past acts of God. Of what he did with Noah, saving him, and punishing the wicked in the flood. Also, Lot, saving him and his family, but PUNISHING Sodom for their sins. Peter said, “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations..” (2 Peter 2:9). So the context of the scripture is, God will reserve the wicked “UNTIL the day of Judgment,” so they can repent and get their first chance for salvation “while” God still in this life, “continues to punish them” for their wickedness. (Jewish New Testament).

To study in more detail about the resurrections and the truth about Hell, we urge you to log on to our website at www.british-israel.ca and read our articles on the Resurrections. Is There Really a Hell Fire? Lazarus and the Rich Man. These articles will go into great detail about the subject of life after death as well. But plainly, we, humankind, will be in a resurrection from the dead, or a change from flesh to spirit, human to divine. There is life after death, there is hope!